

# Key Facts

- Nidderdale AONB was designated in 1994 to conserve and enhance the area's special landscape.
- It is one of 41 AONBs in England and Wales.
- AONB landscapes are recognised by Government as being as important as National Parks.
- A small team work for the AONB:  
Nidderdale AONB, Council Offices,  
King Street, Pateley Bridge, HG3 5LE  
Telephone: 01423 712950  
e: [nidderdaleaonb@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:nidderdaleaonb@harrogate.gov.uk)  
[www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk](http://www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk)



## What makes Nidderdale AONB's Landscape so Special?

- Fantastic contrasting scenery with wide open and remote moorlands, sheltered river valleys and rolling farmland - truly an area of outstanding natural beauty.
- Extensive moorlands provide a home to internationally important bird populations such as red grouse, golden plover and merlin.



- A wealth of important historic and archaeological sites with over 545 listed buildings, 126 Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Fountains Abbey - A World Heritage Site.
- Historically important ancient woodlands, hedgerows and veteran trees dating back more than 800 years.
- A wide variety of habitats, from moorlands and vales to rivers and reservoirs, are host to a diverse range of plants and animals - many of them rare and protected under British and even European law.
- Past generations have created a beautiful landscape through the creation of a network of dry stone walls, barns and small picturesque villages.



Welcome to Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). You have chosen a very special place to live. Along with 41 other AONBs across England and Wales, the area is nationally recognised because of its extremely high quality landscape.

Designated in 1994, the primary purpose of the AONB is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. As a resident of the AONB you can help to keep the AONB beautiful and protect the plants and wildlife - whether you live in a town or village, have a small garden or several acres of land - you play a vital role.

### 1. Buildings

Most alterations to houses and outbuildings require planning permission. Local authority planning departments deal with all enquiries and proposals and apply development control policies designed to protect natural beauty.



### 2. Gardens for wildlife

Gardens are more than a collection of plants - they are food, shelter and breeding sites for birds and animals. To increase biodiversity, avoid excessive tidiness (eg allow plants to seed); put up bird feeders; provide nest boxes; use native plant species; create compost heaps and dead wood piles.

### 3. Dry stone walls and hedgerows

Walls and hedgerows are important to the 'look of the landscape', as wildlife habitats and are often historically important. Restore lost hedgerows by re-planting with species native to the area. For maximum wildlife benefits cut hedgerows once every three years between January and February to a minimum height of 2 metres. Removal of hedgerows requires consent from the relevant local planning authority.



### 4. Woodlands

Woodlands provide important habitats for a range of plants and animals. Management of existing woodlands will help protect Britain's native tree species and the other species that thrive in this habitat. Planting of native tree and shrub species can provide excellent wildlife and landscape benefits especially where it links in with existing woodlands or hedgerows.

### 5. Rivers, ponds and wetland

Becks and ponds attract a wide variety of wildlife and are important in the life-cycle of many creatures. New ponds in the right location can benefit wildlife but you may need planning permission. All pond wildlife will fare better without fish. Don't drain wet areas of grassland as they can be botanically rich and are good for ground nesting birds and invertebrates.

### 6. Verge sides

Verge sides on tracks and private roads can be important wildlife habitats attracting small mammals and insects. To create the best habitat allow verge sides to grow longer cutting only twice a year. For new planting, use native species.



### 7. Rights of way

If a public right of way runs across your land you have a duty to ensure it remains free from obstruction. The condition of stiles and gates is the responsibility of the landowner although significant support is available through North Yorkshire County Council.



### 8. Archaeology

It is likely that you will have archaeological features on or near your land. Gate posts, dry stone walls, stone tracks, lead mining remains or 'humps and bumps' in the ground are all important clues about the area's past. Careful land management can protect these features.



### 9. Grassland

Grassland is made up of a diverse mixture of wild grasses and flowers - important for plants and a huge number of birds and animals including ground nesting birds like lapwing and curlew. The quality of the habitat is directly affected by the number and species of animals which are allowed to graze it, and the timing of grass cutting for hay or silage.

### 10. Protected Species

There are many birds, insects, mammals and plants that are protected under British and even European law. Here are some you may come across in the AONB:



**Bats:** All bats and their habitats are protected by law. When making any alterations to roofs or roof spaces you must check for the presence of bats by contacting English Nature. Help this threatened species by putting up bat boxes on trees or create summer roosts along eaves, near corners of buildings or at gable apexes.

**Badgers:** Badgers and their setts are legally protected from intentional cruelty and disturbance. Before any work goes ahead which will interfere with setts a licence is required from English Nature.



**Birds:** All wild birds are protected by law during the breeding season and many are protected throughout the year. This needs to be considered when planning woodland and hedgerow management and care should be taken to avoid disturbing ground nesting birds during hay and silage making operations. When making alterations to buildings, especially barns, make sure you create space for birds such as swallows and house martins to nest and breed.

#### Great crested newts and water voles:

Great crested newts and their habitats are protected by law. Newt habitat can be affected by changing the water level or drainage of ponds and altering the land around ponds. Water voles have declined in numbers to the point that their survival is now seriously threatened. It is an offence to destroy or damage water voles' places of shelter or protection on riversides. Information about these and other wildlife associated with wetlands is available from English Nature or the Environment Agency.

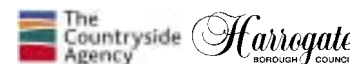


Everyone can play a part in keeping Nidderdale AONB special. Even small actions contribute to the ongoing care of the area. You do not have to pay for all of the costs with your own money. There are grant schemes and advisory services who may support your work.

### Useful contacts

Nidderdale AONB	t: 01423 712950 e: nidderdaleaonb@harrogate.gov.uk www.nidderdaleaonb.org.uk
<b>Planning</b>	
Harrogate Borough Council	t: 01423 500600 www.harrogate.gov.uk
Hambleton District Council	t: 01609 779977 www.hambleton.gov.uk
Richmondshire District Council	t: 01748 829100 www.richmondshire.gov.uk
<b>Wildlife</b>	
English Nature (Leyburn Office)	t: 01969 623447 www.english-nature.org.uk
The National Federation of Badger Groups	t: 020 7228 6444 www.badger.org.uk
English Nature Bat Helpline for Yorkshire RSPB	t: 01924 265549 t: 0191 2813366 www.rspb.org
Hawk and Owl Trust	t: 01582 8322182 www.hawkandowl.org
<b>Land management and advisory services</b>	
Environment Agency	t: 08708 506506 www.environment-agency.gov.uk
FWAG (North Yorkshire Office)	t: 01609 783632 www.fwagny.org.uk
DEFRA (Northallerton Office)	t: 01609 767400 www.defra.gov.uk
Forestry Commission	t: 01904 448778 www.forestry.gov.uk/england
Yorwoods	t: 01765 609355 e: info@yorwoods.org.uk www.yorwoods.org.uk
ADAS	t: 0113 2643233 www.adas.co.uk
<b>Archaeology</b>	
North Yorkshire County Council	t: 01609 780780 www.northyorks.gov.uk
English Heritage (York Office)	t: 01904 601901 www.english-heritage.org.uk
<b>Rights of Way</b>	
Skipton Area Office, North Yorkshire County Council	t: 01756 793344 www.northyorks.gov.uk

This leaflet is supported by:



Living in harmony with the landscape - Useful advice for homeowners

