

## Dear Householder,

This is the second part of a two-part public consultation carried out on behalf of the Wharfedale Trail Forum and jointly funded by Bradford Metropolitan District Council, North Yorkshire County Council and the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, in order to assess the level of public support for the Wharfedale Trail.

### WHAT IS THE WHARFEDALE TRAIL ?

The Wharfedale Trail is the name given to the proposal to create a new, safe route for walkers, horse riders and cyclists, from Ilkley to Bolton Abbey via Addingham. The scheme has its origins in a feasibility study carried out in 2005 by the sustainable transport charity, Sustrans. The Wharfedale Trail Forum was formed in response to this study, in order to promote and progress the project.

### WHAT ARE THE POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF THE SCHEME ?

**Economic** - Visitors and tourists help sustain local businesses.

**Health and Safety** - Safe, largely traffic-free route with links to bridleway and footpath networks, encouraging outdoor exercise in a society where obesity, particularly in the young, is a cause for growing concern.

**Environmental** - Sustainable transport route reducing reliance on motor transport, encouraging the appreciation of countryside and nature; opportunity to increase biodiversity by appropriate land management.

**Educational** – School nature study opportunity.

### WHO IS BEING CONSULTED ?

Part One of this consultation took place in Addingham and Bolton Abbey during June/July 2007.

Part Two, which is focused on the residents of Ilkley and Ben Rhydding, commenced in September 2007 and was scheduled to close on 20th October.

**Due to the theft of a significant number of completed response forms, it has not been possible to complete the process within this timescale. Therefore, in order to allow the people of Ilkley the opportunity to express their views, the consultation period has been extended until the end of January 2008.**

The views of Ilkley residents are very important and you are urged to read this leaflet and complete the attached Consultation Form, posting it by **31<sup>st</sup> January 2008**

*N.B: Previous responses returned after 18 October 2007, or submitted at the manned exhibitions in September 2007, are not affected by the theft and remain valid.*

Further details of the design, route and process can be found on the Wharfedale Trail website:

[www.wharfedaletrail.co.uk](http://www.wharfedaletrail.co.uk)

### TRAIL DESIGN

The design needs to provide for safe, comfortable sharing by different user groups. Past experience shows that the optimum width to achieve this is 2.5 metres (8 feet).

The surface of the path needs to be of a suitable material for all-weather use and requiring minimum maintenance, bearing in mind the need for sensitivity to the surrounding rural environment and the need to cause minimum disruption to the existing flora and fauna.

A sealed surface such as asphalt meets these requirements and has been successfully used on previous similar projects. The Forum would also like to investigate the use of various other surface materials; illustrations of these can be found on the website and the views of the public are invited.

Although much of the proposed route is already fenced, there will inevitably be areas where additional measures are necessary to ensure safety. Where required, fencing or hedgerow planting will be provided; the latter has the advantage of providing additional habitats for wildlife, therefore encouraging nature conservation in the longer term.

Standard access barriers will be included to deny access to unauthorised vehicles where existing rights of way connect with the new route, but access will still be available for legitimate purposes (agriculture, emergencies etc.)



### WHAT NEXT ?

At the end of the consultation period, The Forum will prepare a report on both parts of the consultation and present it to Bradford Metropolitan District Council and North Yorkshire County Council, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, along with local Parish Councils, for their consideration.

If the proposal gains the support of the local authorities, The Forum will ask Sustrans to take the lead in developing the scheme, negotiating with landowners, applying for planning permission and securing funding. This may take up to five years to achieve.