DalesBus – Providing Access in and around Nidderdale for Everyone

Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is a superb asset for the area, with its beautiful scenery, peaceful environment and numerous attractions. However, access can be difficult without the use of private transport, which can be environmentally damaging and isn’t available to around a quarter of households nationally. Transport was raised as the number one concern in a survey of local residents conducted by Harrogate Borough Council and Nidderdale Plus in 2018.

In recent years DalesBus has provided a network of three bus services into and around Nidderdale AONB on Summer Sundays and Bank Holidays, connecting with the 24 bus between Harrogate and Pateley Bridge, as shown on the map below.

The network delivers a wide range of social, environmental and economic benefits to the area, including:

- **Reduced urban and rural isolation and loneliness** through access to the countryside with consequent important public health benefits, such as improved physical fitness, mental health and wellbeing, reduced tiredness and stress, and improved cardiovascular health thereby reducing the demand on the NHS and social care services. Two thirds of passengers cite improved physical health from exercise and 40% mention companionship and reduced isolation as benefits from the journey.

- **Reduced traffic congestion, parking problems and pollution.** Traffic congestion, parking and pollution are growing problems in the countryside. Reducing traffic to and within these protected landscapes is every bit as essential as in the urban environment and needed to help the UK to achieve its zero-carbon target. Greenhouse gases from transport now represent approximately a third of the UK’s total emissions and, despite recent improvements in fuel efficiency of new cars, cars still produce the vast majority of transport emissions. The provision of affordable, convenient, alternative transport options is essential to encourage car drivers to contribute towards reducing harmful emissions and respond to the climate emergency.

- **Rural economic benefits.** DalesBus services enable residents and visitors to access essential services, shops, families and friends, as well as bringing staff and customers to local businesses with spending of an average of around £14 per visit by DalesBus users.
The DalesBus network is managed by the Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company (D&BCIC), a not for profit social enterprise established in 2007. It is run entirely by volunteers, is part of the Yorkshire Dales Society (the Friends of the Dales), a registered charity. D&BCIC competitively tender bus services from commercial operators to ensure best value-for-money. Fares are kept at an affordable level to attract a broad range of passengers including younger people and those on limited means. Senior citizen and disabled concessionary passes are eligible for travel on Nidderdale DalesBus 821. However additional funding needs to be raised to meet the gap between operating costs and income received from fares and concessionary passes and enable the network to keep running.

In recent years these services have been provided with financial and marketing support from numerous local businesses and organisations.

Many thanks to everyone who has helped support these services in 2019, including:

- Fullers Foods
- Keighley Town Council
- Kendall’s Farm Butchers
- Leeds City Council MICE Fund
- National Trust
- Nidderdale Chamber of Trade
- North Yorkshire County Council
- Oldest Sweet Shop
- Otley Town Council
- Otley Walkers are Welcome
- Pateley Bridge Town Council
- Personal Donations
- Ripley Castle
- Yorke Arms/Jaytee Foundation

Following an 8% growth in the number of passenger journeys made on the Summer Sunday and Bank Holiday DalesBus network in Nidderdale in 2019 to 3,350 journeys, it is hoped to be able to provide a similar service in 2020.

The operating cost of the network is estimated at around £24,000, with £9,500 income from fares/concessionary reimbursement, leaving a funding requirement of £14,500. So far, funding of £7,500 has already been offered by the National Trust and other supporters, leaving a fundraising target of £7,000.

We would like to ask everyone who supported the service in 2019 for their continued support and would also like to request support from other local organisations and businesses to enable this service to continue for the benefit of the Nidderdale Area.

To offer your support or for further information please contact paul@dalesandbowland.com now. Donations can also be paid directly to: Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company

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Dales and Bowland Community Interest Company: dalesandbowland.com
Travel Information for Nidderdale: dalesbus.org/nidderdale
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