



**YORKSHIRE DALES**  
National Park Authority

## NEWS RELEASE

### Volunteers clear flood debris from bridleway

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Volunteers clear debris from Langthwaite bridleway

Arkengarthdale residents including Parish Councillors and farmers were joined by keen walkers and mountain bikers from across the north of England on Saturday (10 Aug) for a post-flooding clean-up of Langthwaite bridleway.

Flash flooding on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July swept away the aggregate surface of the bridleway and created a gully into which walling stone and other debris was deposited.

After a midweek call for volunteers, promoted online by Dales Bike Centre in Fremington as well as Richmondshire Today, National Park Authority rangers ended up being joined by more than 60 helpers.

In the space of five hours, the team cleared an estimated 150 tonnes of stone from a 750 metre section of the bridleway. Any walling stone was placed by the bridleway for re-use, while rubbish such as concrete and tarmac slabs and baling wrap was taken away.

The National Park Authority's Area Manager (North), Matt Neale, said: "I would like to thank all the people that came out. They were just superb. The work rate was amazing. Everyone wanted to help and get the job done. There will be future events that will be publicised in the same way – so keep an eye out on social media for requests for help."

The Authority's Member Champion for Recreation Management, Nick Cotton, said: "Experienced rangers have said they've never before seen a volunteer effort like it. People came from across the north of England, from Kendal to Hull to Bishop Auckland, to help. There were walking and mountain bike enthusiasts, as well as residents. It was an unusual and unique gathering of people who came together for a common cause.

The Langthwaite bridleway is not yet accessible along its full length, as there are at least three landslips between Langthwaite and Fremington, but there is a parallel public footpath that remains open for walkers.

Mr Cotton added: "Rangers are still receiving reports of damaged rights of way in Arkengarthdale and Swaledale, so are busy cataloguing and prioritising the repair work needed. It could be some time before everything is fully back to normal. Fortunately a large number of routes were unaffected by the floods, so there are plenty of opportunities to enjoy the two dales both on foot and by bike."