

# From Peat to Paddling

## What constitutes a healthy river?

Want to debate or discover what can and should be done to improve the health of our rivers?  
Then please join us and our panel of experts...

**Friends of the Dales Annual Conference**  
Saturday, 24th September 2022, 1:00pm – 5:00pm  
The Devonshire Institute, Grassington BD23 5AZ

We've a great set of speakers including; writer and biologist Dr Amy-Jane Beer; Professor Rick Battarbee from UCL; Professor Jonathan Grey of the Wild Trout Trust; Dr Martin Christmas from the Environment Agency; Charlotte Simons of the Dales to Vale Rivers Network and Tim Thom, peat programme manager for Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. All will be exploring what constitutes a healthy river, using the River Wharfe from Oughtershaw Beck to Ilkley as a case study.

**FREE ADMISSION**  
booking essential

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River Wharfe, Victoria Benn

To join or donate visit:

[friendsofthedales.org.uk](http://friendsofthedales.org.uk)



Friends of the Dales is a working name of the Yorkshire Dales Society.  
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Friends of the  
**DALES**  
YORKSHIRE DALES SOCIETY

# From Peat to Paddling - what constitutes a healthy river?

## No such thing as a free lunch?

Join us for registration from 12:00noon – 12.30pm and enjoy a complimentary 'pie and slice' (donations welcome)  
All 16 - 25s can claim £25 towards their travel costs in attending the event. To find out more email: [victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk](mailto:victoria.benn@friendsofthedales.org.uk)

## Outline of the day:

12-12.30: Registration & complimentary lunch on arrival | 1.00: Conference starts – welcome and introductions  
1.15: Sequence of short presentation by our guest speakers (with a break for refreshments)  
4.45: Panel Q&A hosted by Friends of the Dales vice president, Mark Corner | 5.30: Close plus option to visit the River Wharfe for a paddle!



Prof Rick Battarbee

### *“How polluted is the Wharfe?”*

**Prof Rick Battarbee:** Vice president of Friends of the Dales, Rick and colleagues at UCL have developed methods to reconstruct the pollution history of lakes from the biological and chemical records preserved in lake sediments. He is a founder member of Ilkley Clean River Group which helped to designate the Wharfe in Ilkley as an official bathing water – the first of its kind in the UK.



Photo, Roy Halpin

Dr Amy-Jane Beer

### *“Thinking like a river.”*

**Dr Amy-Jane Beer:** The honorary and voluntary president of Friends of the Dales is a biologist turned naturalist and writer. She is also a kayaker, wild swimmer, conservationist and campaigner for nature and access.



Dr Martin Christmas

### *“Water management in Yorkshire, regulation and aspiration.”*

**Dr Martin Christmas:** has worked at the Environment Agency for more than 20 years and currently focuses on agriculture and water company regulation, groundwater protection and fisheries, biodiversity and geomorphology.



Prof Jonathan Grey

### *“Wharfe woes and trout tales.”*

**Prof Jonathan Grey:** His expertise lies in using natural tracers to understand how food webs are fuelled and how reliant upon terrestrial ecosystems aquatic organisms can be. Working at Lancaster University and as research and conservation officer for the Wild Trout Trust, Jonathan is working to improve river habitats in Yorkshire.



Charlotte Simons

### *“River health and what can be done to improve it.”*

**Charlotte Simons:** The senior catchment partnership officer for the Dales to Vale Rivers Network, which includes the Rivers Nidd, Ouse, Swale, Ure and Wharfe. Charlotte has worked for more than 30 years in conservation from agri-environment work on the ground to project management.



Tim Thom

### *“Wilder catchments and why we should give peat a chance.”*

**Tim Thom:** established the Yorkshire Peat Partnership in 2008 and is now one of the founder members of the Great North Bog coalition. Tim has overseen the restoration of over 36,000ha of upland blanket bog in Yorkshire and is now working with partners across the north of England with the ambitious target of restoring 700,000ha by the mid-2030s.