



spring 21

The Journey

Coastal thrills

Heading to the seaside for adventure

Natural England

An interview with the chief executive

Let's go!

Four pages of kids' fun and games inside



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Hello

...and a very warm welcome to the first issue of 2021 of The Journey. The past year has been a challenge unlike any other, but it's also been a time of resolve, and as chinks of sunlight continue to shine through the clouds, we want to join you in facing the future with enthusiasm and hope. One of our central tenets - that everyone is welcome - has never felt more important. Friend, it's really good to see you.

The landscapes and cities of England and Wales are as full of drama and spectacle as they always have been. Our National Parks still rumble out to the horizon. Our coastal cliffs still tower over the sea. Our forests still sprawl, our rivers still flow and our walking trails still wind across the countryside. And we're still here too, now a full 90 years to the good, determined to continue our work in bringing adventure and opportunity to the people who need it most.

Back in January of this year, when the national lockdown was announced, the temporary closure of our hostels meant we were left with £11,000 of pre-ordered food and no hostellers to serve it to. When our supplier suggested we donate it to food charity FareShare, it felt 100% right.

We share this story here as a way of showing that, when there are problems to be overcome, working together can be a powerful thing. The future still holds uncertainty, but we know that by continuing to find a common cause with our partners, our fantastic staff and volunteers, our donors and of course you, our much-missed members and guests, the months and years ahead can hold great things.

We're enormously proud of our network of hostels, and the endless potential they hold for building memories and experiences. From Cornwall to Northumberland, Snowdonia to the South Downs, and the Peak District to the Lake District, we'll continue to be here for you, offering escape and adventure at an affordable price.

In this issue you'll find thoughts on the future, a range of inspiration for your coming travels, our regular Let's Go! section for young hostellers, and an interview with Marian Spain, chief executive of Natural England. We hope you enjoy the read.

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Win a Fjällräven Abisko Lite Trekking Jacket worth £245

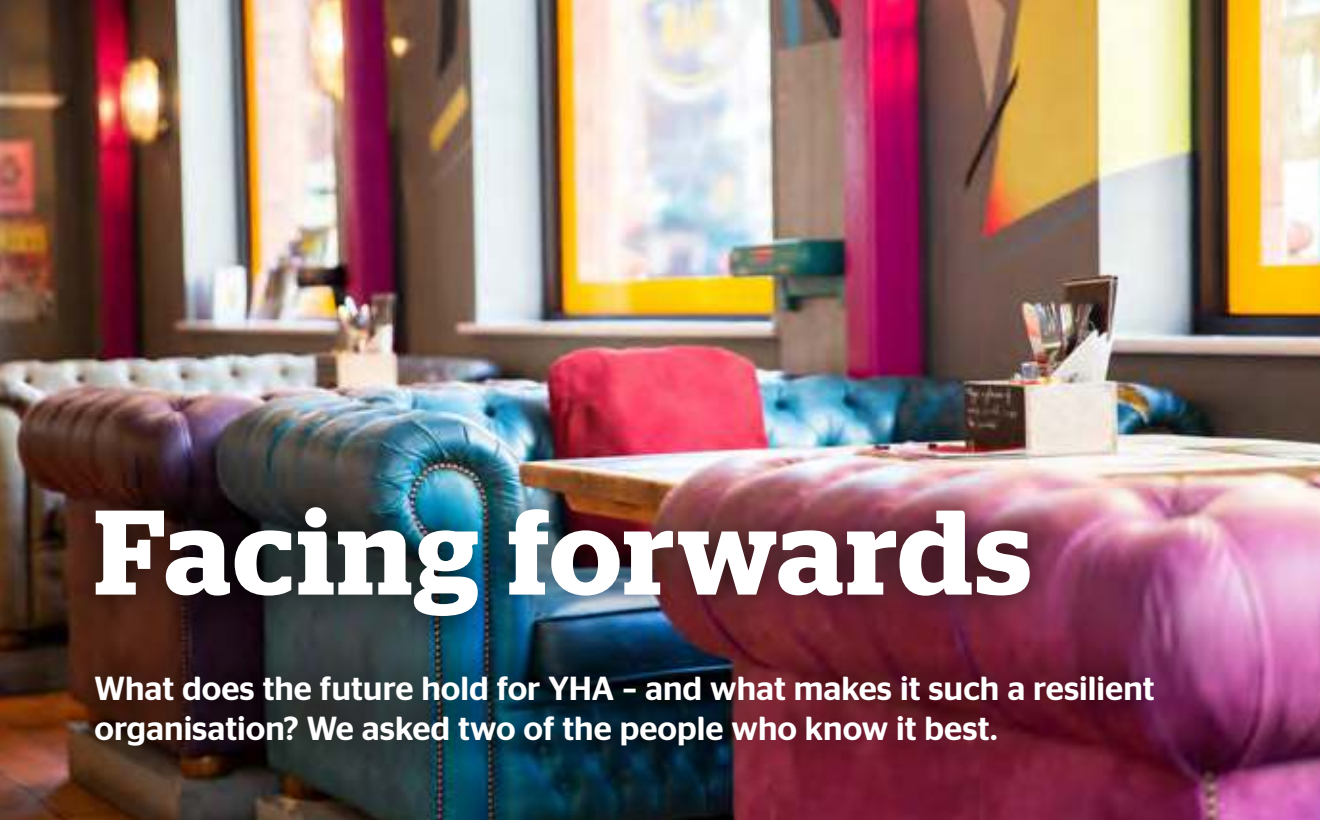
Give your stay some shine

Just look at the gleam on that bodywork. These handsome Airstream caravans are now available as accommodation at four of our hostels, bringing some vintage glam to YHA Borrowdale and YHA Windermere in the Lakes, YHA Manorbier in Pembrokeshire and YHA New Forest in Hampshire.

Dating from the 1950s and 1970s, the American caravans are renowned for their shiny aluminium exteriors - but you'll find plenty to admire inside, too. They comfortably sleep two (in a double bed with pillows and bedding included), and also feature heating, USB charging points, storage, lighting and space to sit and relax. What's more, you'll have a table and two chairs outside, plus full use of the other hostel facilities. Bring your own retro sunglasses.

yha.org.uk/airstreams





Facing forwards

What does the future hold for YHA - and what makes it such a resilient organisation? We asked two of the people who know it best.



Duncan Simpson,
YHA historian,
writer and former
hostel manager

“When news of the pandemic first broke, I talked with friends and old colleagues about youth hostels. I had just finished writing the biography of YHA’s adventurous first national secretary. I was revising my history of youth hostels, *Open to All*.

I knew youth hostels had survived a world war and found a renewed role in its wake. But we all worried.

Now, after this crisis has gone on for longer than we imagined, it’s clear youth hostels have managed their way through the pandemic well, keeping their staff and us as safe as they can and opening when they are able.

I am sure they will bounce back because nothing is like a youth hostel. From a group of excited children returning for the night from

visiting museums to a solo cyclist on a round the world journey, youth hostels encourage us to fresh adventures and new hopes.

They’re all about bouncing back, in our own lives and in the places we visit. Whether those are new places or old familiar haunts, we bounce back because of them.

They’ve also always changed and kept up with the times. From bars, private rooms and en suites to camping pods and 24 hour opening, they’re no longer what they were. A reputation for bare boards, no frills and rules has gone.

History tells me they will change and it won’t be easy as they adapt. Some changes we may not like and others we will welcome.

But at their heart, they’ve always been warm, companionable, practical places because there’s nothing more practical than beds, showers, food to eat and places to sit, nothing more companionable than sharing a table with someone you’ve only just met.

They’ll adapt, change and bounce back. The history I’ve explored in my books shows they always have.”



John Martin,
YHA volunteer
archivist

“I joined YHA at the invitation of a schoolfriend exactly 60 years ago. That simple act changed my life for good, and for the better.

I used hostels to find adventure and friendship as a teenager, then to flit between home and university and to walk between remote hostels in Wales. I hostelled with my wife, then my family. I hostelled abroad, and as a teacher took school parties around Yorkshire hills. For the past 16 years, as YHA volunteer archivist, I’ve hostelled to gather historical materials, to study and research. For me, since 1961, there has always been travel, and always YHA.

Recently it has been my greatest pleasure to observe each of these hostelling types in others - cheerful families at Hartington, university students at Canterbury, dogged walkers at Langdon Beck, spirited

post-A-levelers camping at Beer. The need for these freedoms will be greater than ever, and YHA will be well positioned to provide for them.

YHA survived great hardships in the War, in recessions and with Foot and Mouth, and adapted. The challenges will of course be at least as great now. There will be questions about how best to balance YHA’s much-loved traditional provision with its charitable aims, how to square financial stringency in 2021 with the sense of confidence and even expansion that held in 2019, how to develop YHA’s popularity and reputation in the National Parks without neglecting the rest of our wonderful landscapes and regions.

In 1931, when youth hostels first burst onto the scene, the fledgling Plymouth Region committee issued this prophetic notice:

‘Holidays at home are to be the fashion this year and the Youth Hostels Association is playing its part in helping the National Programme by the provision of hostels all over the country. Members can enjoy their stay and gaze on the marvellous scenery of their own countryside.’”

Edith Gray: 90 years young

YHA wasn't alone in celebrating its 90th birthday last year. The same milestone was also reached by hostelling fan Edith Gray, of South London, who remains an enthusiastic advocate for budget adventure in the UK. As recently as October 2020, in fact, just a month after turning 90, she stayed at YHA Treyarnon Bay with her daughter.

As with so many of our guests and members, of course, the joys of 'mature' hostelling are by no means a new thing for this outdoor-lover.

Edith was one of the original members of Hostelling 50 Plus (previously known as the Over-50s YHA group) at its formation in 1988.

She even had a stint as chair of the organisation, and still plays an active role within the organisation. In more normal times, the group's members meet up monthly at different YHA hostels around the country.

Edith remains active in other ways too. A keen swimmer, she also continued with her passion for cycling until just three years ago. So what is it that she enjoys about staying with YHA? "The wonderful atmosphere," she says. "It's the sharing and caring with hostellers from around the globe, and making so many lasting friendships. My favourite memories are going on rambles and enjoying many Christmases at hostels, particularly YHA Swanage."

Edith's late husband Maurice - another former chair of Hostelling 50 Plus - was just as big a fan. "He just loved hostelling, and always embraced it with great enthusiasm," Edith remembers. "Best experience ever."



Hostelling 50 Plus was originally set up by a group of people including former YHA warden Rosina Pinter, who noticed that many older members were travelling alone and might enjoy the extra companionship. The group amassed some 70 members within months, and is still going strong today.

The cost of membership is a mere £6 per year. For further information, email Carole Houghton at hostellingfiftyplus@outlook.com

A world of hostellers

In 2022, Hostelling International (HI) will celebrate its 90th anniversary. Over those nine decades, the organisation will have brought together more than 70 National Youth Hostel Associations, collectively covering more than 3,000 hostels. Across the planet, the organisation now has a community of some 16 million travellers, coming together in countries from Australia to Zambia to share experiences, cultures, food and friendship.

It's unlikely that when, in 1909, German school teacher Richard Schirrmann and conservationist Wilhelm Munker recognised the need for accommodation that would allow youngsters to spend time in the countryside, they would have envisaged quite how widespread the movement would be more than 110 years later, with presence everywhere from Uruguay to Pakistan. Schirrmann and Munker would, however, recognise the ethos of the HI mission statement.

Part of it reads: "To promote the education of all young people of all nations, but especially young people of limited means, by encouraging in them a greater knowledge, love and care of the countryside and an appreciation of the cultural values of towns and cities in all parts of the world".

Richard Schirrmann went on to found the German Youth Hostel Association in 1919 and would become president of the International Youth Hostel Federation (now Hostelling

International). Representatives from Britain joined others from across Europe at the first international conference held in Amsterdam in 1932.

Those founding members described the project as a movement, a group of people working towards a shared idea. And it's those same values - of inclusivity, of respect for the environment, of giving young people opportunities - that resonate now more than ever. It's a movement that has rolled over the last 90 years, bringing together people whether that's a backpacker taking a gap year in Australia or a volunteer in Sudan, a mountain biker in the Peak District or a family taking a holiday in Italy. Each of the 3,000 or so hostels in the global network provide an opportunity that matters: the chance to expand your horizons, and to meet like-minded people in an affordable and welcoming environment.



This year marks the 90th anniversary of Hostelling Scotland, which has more than 60 youth and affiliate hostels north of the border.

Green generations

Thousands of young people from diverse backgrounds are being given the chance to connect with nature.



© Unsplash/Nathaniel Ramirez

Good news hasn't always been easy to come by recently - but here's an exception. More than 100,000 young people are being given the opportunity to connect with nature through new jobs, training, volunteering roles, residentials and outdoor learning experiences. The National Lottery Heritage Fund, in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency, has awarded a £2.5m Green Recovery Challenge Fund grant to a coalition of outdoor education providers known as Access Unlimited, which includes YHA (England & Wales), The Outward Bound Trust, Scouts, Girlguiding, Field Studies Council and the 10 English National Parks.

YHA is leading the 15-strong coalition in the delivery of the project, known as Generation Green. It commenced in March 2021 and will be rolled out across England, prioritising young people from BAME groups, disadvantaged backgrounds and coastal communities. The 16-month project will retain 20 jobs and create 10 new ones, as well as funding a paid internship, 30 Kickstart placements and seven apprenticeships, on top of developing 659 skilled volunteer roles in the outdoor industry. It's also the first step in government support for the recommendation in the Glover Review that every child should spend a night under the stars in a National Landscape.



James Blake, chief executive at YHA, explained: "I am delighted at what Access Unlimited has achieved for the sector in a relatively short period. The award of the grant funding demonstrates the power of collective action.

"When developing YHA's new 10-year strategy we realised our scale of ambition to reach five million young people over the next five years was not something we could do alone; it was through partnership and collaboration. The development of Access Unlimited focused on bringing together our not-for-profit delivery partners to offer practical solutions to the fact that too many young people do not have access to connections or careers in nature.

"The steps we now all take together will deliver real opportunities to thousands of young people who have been impacted by the pandemic - many of whom faced lockdown without gardens or access to green spaces. It is a tremendously exciting and hugely positive end to an otherwise challenging year, not only for YHA but the outdoor education sector as a whole."

yha.org.uk/generationgreen

Three new books to inspire you

For many of us, our travels over the past year have come through the pages of books. Here are three recent titles that we highly recommend.

The Flightless Traveller

by Emma Gregg (Quercus Books)

The airline industry has come under the spotlight in recent years, and this timely book from award-winning travel writer Emma Gregg shows that overseas adventure is still perfectly achievable without getting on a plane. You'll find 50 different ideas for 'modern adventures by land, river and sea', ranging from green city breaks and European bike itineraries to epic trips that incorporate Africa, Asia and even Australia. It's just the thing for shaping future travel plans.



Quondam

by John Devoy (Quondam Books)

When a book gets endorsed by travel writing doyenne Dervla Murphy, you know it's worth taking notice. Irish author John Devoy turns 90 this year, but the journey he recounts so vividly in Quondam takes place in the mid-1980s, when he cycled across Europe to reach North Africa. The book recounts his subsequent 6,500-kilometre bike journey between Cairo and Nairobi, at a time when much of the technology we now take for granted was unheard of. A rich, immersive read.



Wanderland

by Jini Reddy (Bloomsbury)

London journalist Jini Reddy became the first writer of colour to be longlisted for the prestigious Wainwright Prize last year, thanks to the thought-provoking journey she undertakes in Wanderland. In search of a deeper connection with 'magic in the landscape', she writes with clarity and honesty about the places and characters she encounters as she travels around the UK, on a quest that leads her everywhere from a remote Cornish labyrinth to the Scottish island of Iona.





© AdobeStock/dipe123

Coastal inspiration

Rarely straight, rarely level, rarely dull: following coastal paths is markedly different to following inland paths. Trails along cliff edges and beaches are less purposeful, more whimsical, and often exist for no other reason than the views they offer, and the soul-filling sense of being near the sea. Inland paths, especially those following ancient trade or market routes, are usually functional and pragmatic. By contrast – and although some of the oldest clifftop trails were created for coastguards – most of our coastal paths are simply there for us to enjoy.

There is, of course, a colossal variety of coast around our island (enough to sustain 10 series of Coast... and counting), from the scruffy bays and cowering headlands of Pembrokeshire to the open expanses of Norfolk, and from the seaside beaches of the North West to the white wavy cliffs of the South East. Coton in the Elms, Derbyshire (nearest youth hostel YHA National Forest) has the dubious honour of being the settlement farthest away from the sea. Coton in the Elmers (as the villagers are probably not called) need to travel to The Wash in Lincolnshire or perhaps White Sands in Cheshire to feel the salty air on their faces, but that's still only 70 miles away. No, we're never far away from the lapping of an ebbing tide. And perhaps more than ever, we need to experience the sea.

Dozens of hostels in the YHA network are either on or close to the sea, and many more a short trip away. Here are two stories to inspire your next trip to the coast.

Norfolk

by Ben Lerwill



The North Norfolk coast has a mammoth appeal. Not just mammoth as in big. Mammoth as in shaggy Stone Age heffalump that would trample you as soon as look at you. The stretch of coastline that extends either side of Sheringham can seem blissfully quiet at times, particularly heading east, but the past million years have been nothing if not a busy time here, particularly for the kind of animals that would have sent Palaeolithic humans scuttling for cover.

In 1990, the near-intact skeleton of an enormous steppe mammoth was excavated from a cliff base a few kilometres away, joining a prehistoric Noah's Ark of other super-sized beasts, from scimitar-toothed cats and three-ton rhinos to giant deer and fearsome hyenas. Go fossil-hunting on this part of the coast and you might find more bite than you bargained for.

Together with the fact that human footsteps dating back 850,000 years have also been found here, it makes Norfolk's new Deep History Coast footpath an enticing proposition.

It covers the 37 kilometres between Weybourne and Cart Gap, and I walk the route over two long days, pairing the modern comforts of fish and chips on the seafront – and a bed for the night at YHA Sheringham – with the more primeval appeal of the ancient past.

It's a cracking hike, following the Norfolk Coast Path for the vast majority of its length and allowing for regular beachcombing forays onto the long, birdlife-rich beaches that the county is famed for. There's also an accompanying app, which details the astonishing prehistory of the locations I'm passing through, as well as 11 'discovery point' information boards along the route.

I take my time. The joy of the walk lies in the way it combines the close-at-hand – the thrill of finding knapped flints and sea urchin imprints on the foreshore – with the gusty grandeur of North Norfolk's cliffs and sea views. Astonishingly, the region is the only part of northern Europe with evidence of habitation by four different human species. Those 850,000-year-old footsteps, found at Happisburgh along the route, have since faded from view, but it's fair to say that they – and the rest of the prehistoric bounty uncovered along this coastline – won't be forgotten any time soon.

deephistorycoast.co.uk

North Cornwall

by Daniel Neilson



The coast seems to hide in North Cornwall. The sea is always there, on the horizon, dominating views from the exposed uplands and the cliff edges. But the point where the sea crashes against the peninsula is rarely seen until you've almost got your toes wet.

There is drama at every approach, but that moment of seeing the meeting of water and land is always thrilling.

Thrilling at first and then mesmerising. There are people, I've seen them, who swim in the winter waves, and those who bob on little white boards, trying to tame the ocean - I've seen them too.

On my most recent journey to Cornwall (and getting to Cornwall always feels like a journey), my first glimpse of the coast is down the small road to the little cove of Trebarwith Strand - I never quite master the Cornish pronunciation - four kilometres south of Tintagel. The tide is high. Seafoam is bubbling up the road and occasionally leaping in the air. The cove naturally frames Gull Rock (a misnomer according to the local lifeguard I speak to; it does indeed look more like a gorilla's head).

We climb up onto the headland, and onto the South West Coast Path. We fight our way through the winds, amazed at the vivid colours over the Celtic Sea.

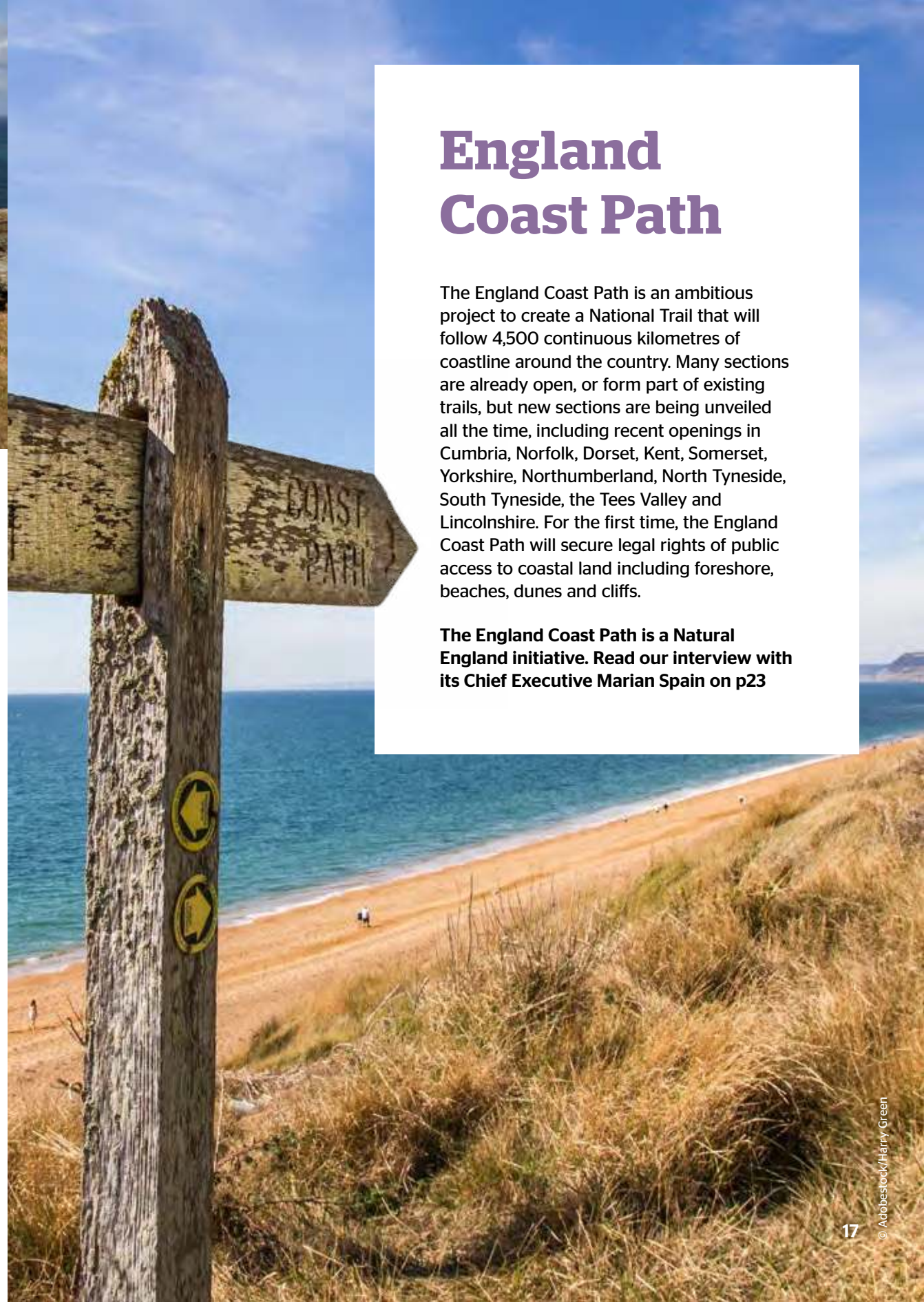
We haven't gone far along the cliff edge before we start our descent off the South West Coast Path towards Hole Beach - on another local tip-off - then down to Lanterdan Quarry. After a steep downhill climb (the faint-hearted should remain on the path), we step over a common adder and around gaunt slate pinnacles to an area that has been slowly civilised from slate, like an Incan outpost. Here we sit with sandwiches. We're told the sunset here is among the most beautiful anywhere. It's mid-afternoon, so we stay to explore, scramble, paddle, birdwatch. And this, for me, is the beauty of coastal walks. An infinite number of intricacies and curiosities of the coast that invite enquiry, time, and exploration.

When the sunset comes, we climb back up the path. From there, it's a short, twilight walk back to YHA Tintagel. From the hostel, the coast is far below but the sea dominates every view.

England Coast Path

The England Coast Path is an ambitious project to create a National Trail that will follow 4,500 continuous kilometres of coastline around the country. Many sections are already open, or form part of existing trails, but new sections are being unveiled all the time, including recent openings in Cumbria, Norfolk, Dorset, Kent, Somerset, Yorkshire, Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, the Tees Valley and Lincolnshire. For the first time, the England Coast Path will secure legal rights of public access to coastal land including foreshore, beaches, dunes and cliffs.

The England Coast Path is a Natural England initiative. Read our interview with its Chief Executive Marian Spain on p23



Blue sky thinking

Summer's for fun. So stay a new way.
Check out our accommodation range at

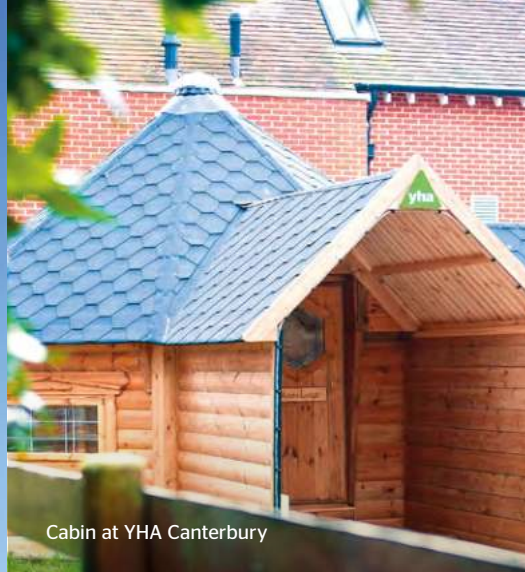
yha.org.uk/camping-and-cabins



Camping at YHA Patterdale



Camping pods at YHA Borrowdale



Cabin at YHA Canterbury



Tipi at YHA Hawkshead



Landpod at YHA Coniston Holly How

Let's go!



We love... ladybirds!

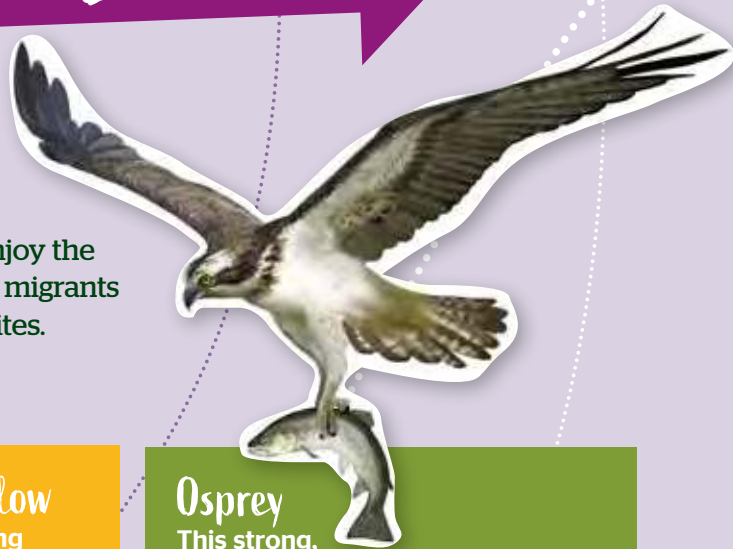
This is the time of year when ladybirds start emerging from their winter hibernation. But how much do you know about these colourful little creatures?

- 1** There are 46 different species of ladybird in the UK - and 3,500 across the world!
- 2** The most common types in this country are the seven-spot ladybird and the two-spot ladybird. They both have black spots on red wing cases.
- 3** Ladybirds are brightly coloured to warn predators not to eat them. Fortunately for these little insects, they don't seem to taste very nice at all!
- 4** They like eating even smaller insects like greenfly and blackfly. This makes ladybirds popular with farmers, because the smaller insects eat their crops!
- 5** Ladybirds often live for only a year, but they can gobble up thousands of other insects in that time.
- 6** Not all ladybirds are red with black spots. Some are yellow, others are orange, and some are almost completely black.
- 7** Ladybirds are flying beetles, and usually grow no longer than one centimetre. Females are often larger than males.
- 8** Ladybirds are known as ladybugs in the USA. They have 'lady' in their name after the Virgin Mary, who often wears red cloaks in old paintings.



The great bird migration!

Some birds, such as robins and blackbirds, live here in the UK all year round. Others spend the winter in other parts of the world, then come back every spring to enjoy the warm weather. We call these birds migrants - and below are four of our favourites.



Osprey

This strong, handsome bird of prey isn't very common. Only around 200 pairs come to the UK, and most of them travel to Scotland, but you might see them in Kielder Water, near YHA The Sill at Hadrian's Wall. They spend the winter in West Africa.



Swallow

Arriving in late March and staying until September, swallows fly about

10,000km to get here every year - that's all the way from South Africa! They like flying over farmland, and rivers and lakes, where they can snatch insects from the air.

Swift

Swifts only stay here for a few short months each year - they're often gone by late August - but these swooping, screeching flyers are always a lovely sight. They spend the winter as far away as the Indian Ocean, but they come to the UK each year to breed.



Cuckoo

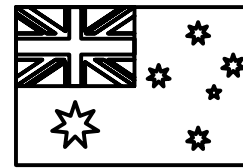
The two-note song of the cuckoo is one of the classic sounds of spring. These grey, bright-eyed birds are often found in woodland, among oaks and beech trees, but their winter home is very different - they spend half of the year in the tropical heat of the Congo Rainforest!



and back again...

Where in the world?

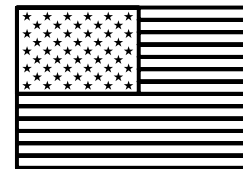
Match the country to the correct description and then colour the flags



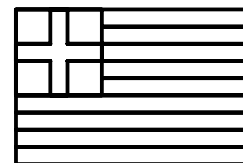
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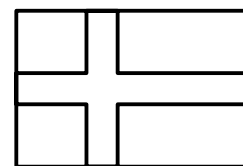
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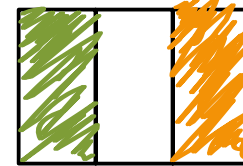
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GREECE



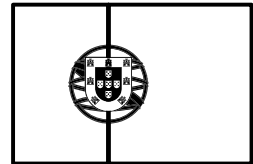
DENMARK



IRELAND

- Some of the biggest cities in this country are Dublin, Cork and Galway.
- This country has 50 different states, including Hawaii, California and Texas.
- The Eiffel Tower stands in the middle of this country's capital city.
- This country has around 6,000 islands, including Crete and Corfu.
- Home to the Sydney Opera House, Uluru and the Great Barrier Reef.
- Cristiano Ronaldo is the most famous football player for this sunny country.
- The 2016 Olympic Games were held in this country, in Rio de Janeiro.
- This country is famous for its flamenco dancers, and its capital city Madrid.
- Lego was invented in this country, which has Copenhagen as its capital.
- The Taj Mahal is one of the most famous sights in this country.

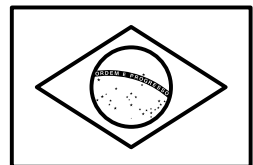
QUIZ and colouring



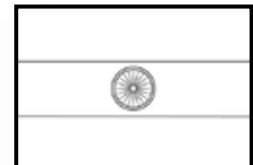
PORTUGAL



FRANCE



BRAZIL



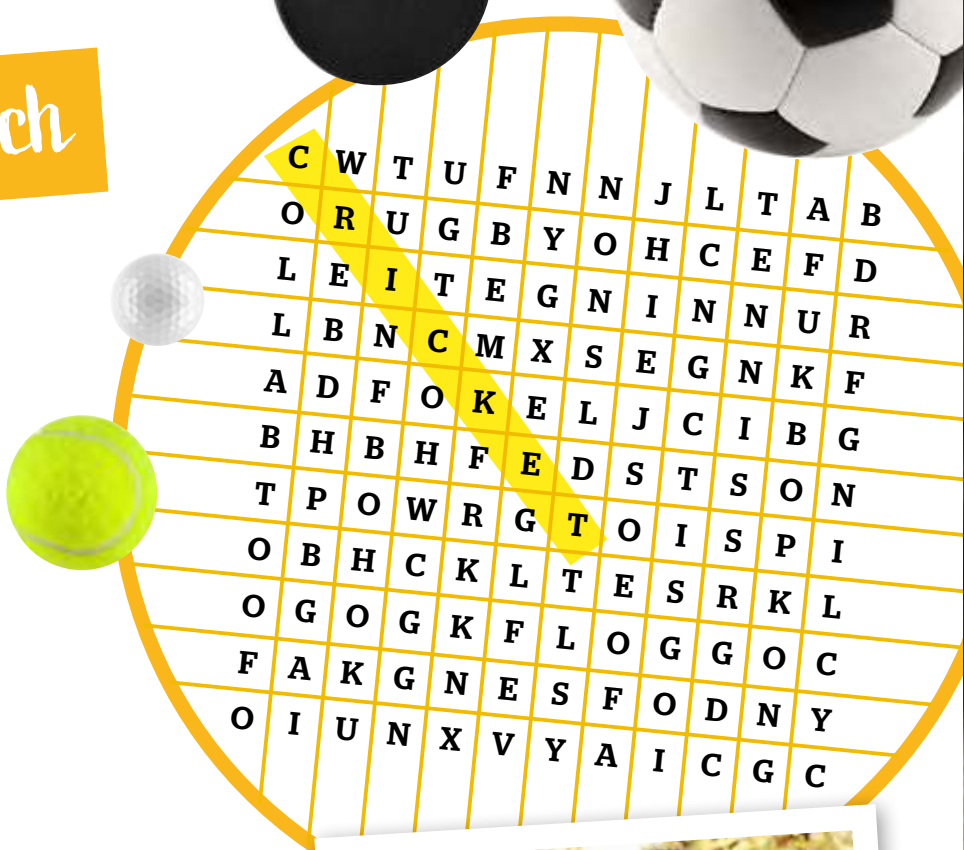
INDIA



Wordsearch

Can you find these outdoor sports in the grid?

- ✔ Cricket
- Rugby
- Football
- Running
- Cycling
- Tennis
- Golf
- Hockey



Let's get those knees muddy!

Three cheers for fresh air!

Spending time outdoors is one of the healthiest things we can do. But why?

It improves our mood

When we stay inside all day, we can sometimes feel stressed or tired without really knowing why. When we play outside and feel the breeze in our hair and the sunlight on our skin, our brains and bodies naturally feel happier.

It improves our physical health

There are lots of good things about going for a walk, playing an outdoor game or spending time in a park. Doing things like this gives us confidence and helps us to make new friends - and best of all, it also helps us to stay nice and fit!

It brings us closer to nature

Sometimes it's easy to forget just how amazing nature can be. We live in a world full of millions of other species, and paying attention to birds, trees, plants and insects can help us feel calm, relaxed and connected.

Q&A with Natural England's chief executive

Marian Spain knows a thing or two about the importance of the great outdoors. As chief executive of Natural England - the government's adviser on the natural environment - she also has a CV that includes work with Plantlife International, the New Forest National Park Authority, the Campaign for National Parks and the Environment Agency. In this exclusive interview, she shares her thoughts on the present and the future.



Q The past year has been unlike any other. What are Natural England's priorities for 2021?

Our current strategy is focused around two big themes, which in summary are more nature, and more people in contact with nature. In the 30 years in which I've worked in this sector, we've spent most of our time trying to stop life getting worse, trying to hang on to the nature we've got, and the big thing that's changed in the last few years is a recognition that it's time to start putting nature back. This means a much bigger focus on recovering nature, as well as thinking about nature everywhere, in town and country.

Linking neatly to the second theme, of people, is a recognition that we need nature as much as nature needs us. What we've learned over the last 10 years of research, and which COVID-19 has demonstrated in stark reality, is how important contact with the outdoors is for our health and wellbeing. The evidence is pretty irrefutable that nature is good for our physical health, but we can now demonstrate how good it is for our mental health too.

In March 2020 we were about to launch our new strategy, and then of course COVID-19 hit. We had a month or so of thinking 'is this still the right strategy?', but it quickly became clear that it was. The pandemic has shown us, through research and lived experience, that we need nature on our doorsteps - it's not good enough for it just to be in a National Park or a nature reserve. But it has also shown us just how unequal that access to nature is, that there are certain parts of society who don't have that day-to-day access to green space of any sort.

Q How do we make access to nature more equal?

The obvious thing is to have more nature, and there are various things that will help. It will be mandatory, once the Environment Bill is enacted, for all new developments to have more green space and more nature.

© Charlotte Graham



There are also standards for local authorities to think about, to make sure green space is of a good quality. But just as important is getting more people enthused and excited and wanting to get outside, whether that's through school programmes, health programmes or local activities.

I think, and hope, that we'll have learned from the pandemic. The big test will be how much the government really includes this approach in the Green Recovery plan. It's about whether this sticks in government policy, and all the signs are that it will. The other question is how much the habits that many of us have reformed will stick, and how much people will realise that spending time outdoors is something they want to keep doing. We can't prescribe for that, but what we can do is make it as easy as possible. The old adage is that something only becomes habit-forming if it's easy.

Q An updated Countryside Code is being unveiled at Easter. What should we expect?

We had a six-month consultation, speaking to charities like YHA as well as farming organisations and local governments, but we also had 4,000 responses from members of the public. It shows the Code still has a resonance. I think the two things you'll see that are different are firstly that it isn't just about the countryside - we're trying to say this is not just about rural areas, this is about the benefits of green spaces everywhere - and secondly that we want it

to be encouraging rather than a list of rules.

It's about reminding people that these are shared spaces. As far as I'm concerned, the more people using the great outdoors the better, but at the same time the more important it is that we understand and think about other people. There were certainly times last year when the number of visitors did overwhelm some of our countryside sites, so the more of those sites we have, the better off we'll all be.

Diversity is hugely important too - and by that I mean diversity of all sorts, including ages. This applies to YHA, of course. The more welcoming and inclusive the hostels are, the more they reach out to neighbouring towns and cities.

Q Have you stayed in many hostels yourself?

Yes! The main time in my life was as a teenager. I celebrated finishing my O-levels by going to the Peak District with five friends, for example, and we walked between three hostels. We also still use YHA hostels on some work trips, because of where they're located. The thing I've noticed is that it used to be that the guests were either teenagers or very serious walkers. The difference I see now is how family-friendly they are.

They're also great places to learn from other people, to have your enthusiasm sparked by a conversation you strike up. You might find yourself at dinner talking to someone who's really keen on birdwatching, for example. It gives that chance to come together, not with people who are all alike, but people who have something in common. That's how hobbies form isn't it? At Natural England, when we say nature, people think we mean wildlife, but we mean the natural world - we mean landscapes, we mean stars, we mean heritage, we mean history, all those things.

So to go back to the Countryside Code, for me it needs to be welcoming, but it also needs to point out that it's a privilege to access these wonderful places, and we need to respect and welcome each other.

What is Natural England?

Established by an Act of Parliament in 2006, its purpose is to help conserve, enhance and manage the natural environment for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

It lists its priorities for 2020 to 2025 as follows:

- a well-managed Nature Recovery Network across land, water and sea, which creates and protects resilient ecosystems rich in wildlife and natural beauty, enjoyed by people and widely benefiting society
- people connected to the natural environment for their own and society's wellbeing, enjoyment and prosperity
- nature-based solutions contributing fully to tackling the climate change challenge and wider environmental hazards and threats
- improvements in the natural capital that drives sustainable economic growth, healthy food systems and prospering communities
- evidence and expertise being used by a broad range of partnerships, organisations and communities to achieve nature recovery and enable effective regulation and accreditation
- being a values-led organisation that delivers excellent service standards to all partners, organisations and communities engaged in achieving nature's recovery

9 hostels for a great escape

2021 is going to be the year of the Great (British) Escape. An escape from the stress of the past 12 months and, frankly, just a change from your home. We've picked out nine hostels in out-of-the-way locations for long walks under big skies, reading books in cosy nooks, or cooking up family meals after a day exploring the countryside. This summer, some of our hostels will fully open, some will be weekend-only, and others will be Exclusive Hire.

YHA Black Sail

YHA Exclusive Hire - Our most remote hostel

The nearest road is four kilometres away, along a mountain path. The mobile phone coverage is exactly as you'd expect from a valley surrounded by some of England's highest mountains, and there are no electrical sockets. It's impossible not to be swept up in the romance of YHA Black Sail - at once extremely remote and effortlessly comforting. exclusive-hire.yha.org.uk/properties/yha-black-sail



YHA Grinton Lodge

Open - Commanding views over Swaledale

The 20-bed hostel, high above Swaledale in the Yorkshire Dales National Park, is a former hunting lodge built in 1817. Over the summer, the private rooms are open, plus there are YHA Camping & Cabins options in the grounds. Its location for windswept walks over the moors or thrilling cycling descents is unbeatable.

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-grinton-lodge

YHA New Forest

Open - In the heart of the forest

The New Forest is a bewitching place for newcomers, with a vast area of unenclosed land giving it an aspect like nowhere else in Britain. It has quaint market towns and unique habitats that are among the most wildlife-rich in the UK, with incredibly rare insects, mammals and reptiles. The 33-bed hostel is open all summer, as are its Airstream caravans, bell tents, camping pods and camping pitches.

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-new-forest



YHA South Downs

Open - Traditional Sussex flint farmhouse

Hidden among the folds of the South Downs, five kilometres downriver from the ancient town of Lewes, is this evocative farmhouse and barn. It will be open all summer, as will the adjoining camping pods and bell tents. The South Downs Way - a dream for runners, walkers and cyclists - pretty much passes through the property.

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-south-downs

YHA Holmbury St Mary Surrey Hills

Open weekends - Serenity in the south

Purpose-built in 1935, YHA Holmbury St Mary Surrey Hills is everything a great hostel should be. This 40-bed hostel and campsite is secluded at the top of a narrow country lane, and set in beautiful Surrey Hills countryside. It's popular with cyclists tackling Box Hill, and offers a quick escape from London.

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-holmbury-st-mary-surrey-hills





YHA Borrowdale

Open - A Lake District classic

YHA Borrowdale is often cited as one of the nation's favourite hostels, thanks to its Alpine lodge and its princely situation south of Derwentwater. Its tucked-away location inspires a bit of Lakeland lore with some of the best hillwalking anywhere in the country. It will be open throughout the season, along with an Airstream caravan and camping pods.

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-borrowdale

YHA Dalby Forest

YHA Exclusive Hire - Old school hostel in Yorkshire

Old school in the truest sense of the words, YHA Dalby Forest, near Pickering in the North York Moors National Park, is now a 21-bed converted village schoolhouse. Done your homework? Good. Now head off to explore the long ancient routes across the moorland, on foot or by bike, or jump on the North York Moors Steam Railway. exclusive-hire.yha.org.uk/properties/yha-dalby-forest



YHA Manorbier

Open - Remote Welsh getaway

Pembrokeshire has a sense of inaccessibility from most of the country, and that's just how we like it. Those who make the trip are rewarded with quiet cliff-top walks, little-used inland paths, and sandy beaches. This large hostel is perfect for a family getaway, with Airstream caravans, bell tents and camping pods.

yha.org.uk/hostel/yha-manorbier

YHA Blaxhall

YHA Exclusive Hire - For the best of Suffolk birdlife

YHA Blaxhall is at the edge of the Suffolk Coast & Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a place of rich biodiversity thanks to a range of habitats that span heathland, woodland, estuary and coast. It's also the place to see the famous redshank wader. This 43-bed hostel in an old converted school is open for Exclusive Hire through the season. exclusive-hire.yha.org.uk/properties/yha-blaxhall/



Help a struggling family take a break from the strain



Please support our 90th anniversary appeal to provide brilliant adventures and respite breaks for young people and families who need them most. With your help we can restore health and hope to those hit hardest by the pandemic.

yha.org.uk/give/project90

£15

could help towards the cost of a full-board break for a young carer, giving them two precious days away from their worries and responsibilities

£40

could pay for a night's stay for a key worker and their partner, after months putting themselves at risk

£90

could help a low-income family create happy memories on a break away, after spending so long without access to green space

This year we've all learnt what it's like to lack access to the outdoors, nature, activities and adventure. For most of us, this has been temporary. For children with challenging lives, lack of access is pervasive and much more permanent.

Two million families have faced lockdown without access to a garden. Following a year of travel restrictions limiting access to green spaces and historic places, our determination to tackle inequity of opportunity will remain vitally important as we pursue our impact priorities through 2021 and beyond. Thank you for your support.

YHA (England & Wales), Trevelyan House, Dimple Road, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3YH

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How to.. identify butterflies

The sight of rainbow-hued wings flip-flapping along hedgerows is one of nature's surest signs that the warmer months have arrived. But do you know your brimstones from your blues? Here are nine of our most common butterfly species - see how many you can spot this year.



Speckled wood

This cream-spotted butterfly likes to bask on sun-dappled leaves with its wings open. Unlike many other species, it rarely visits flowers, preferring to feed on honeydew. They're often seen spiralling in the air in pairs.

© Maciej Oliszewski

Orange-tip

The orange-tip is another species which is early to emerge. Males have the unmistakable coloured wingtips from which they take their name, while females have no orange. Both sexes have mottled green undersides.



© Aynia

Peacock

A strong contender for the UK's most beautiful butterfly, it takes its name from the distinctive eyespots also seen on peacock feathers. The purpose of these spots? To startle or confuse any nearby predators.



© Salsarik

Small tortoiseshell

The small tortoiseshell is one of Britain's most recognisable butterflies, and a regular visitor to garden flowers right through until autumn. It's known for its attractive pattern of spots, bars and warm colours.



© creativature.nl

Red admiral

When this large, showy butterfly appears in the UK each spring, it may well have migrated north from Europe or North Africa - though some overwinter in Britain. It's thought that the name was originally 'red admirable'.



© Art Media Factory

Brimstone

One of the first butterflies to appear each spring, brimstones have bright yellow uppersides if male and greenish white uppersides if female. Their buttery colour is thought to be the reason why butterflies have their name.



© kathomenden



© Sandra Standbridge

Common blue

Our most widespread blue butterfly is this charming, sky-coloured insect, found in a range of different grassy habitats. Females, which can sometimes be almost completely brown, tend to be less conspicuous than males.

Meadow brown

The meadow brown might seem rather plain, but this neat little butterfly is also one of the most common in Europe. It looks similar to a gatekeeper - another abundant species - but has less orange in its wings.



© Estuary Pig

Comma

Easily recognised thanks to its raggedy, scalloped wings, commas declined in numbers during the 20th century but are now making a comeback. The brown underside has one white marking - in the shape of a comma!



© butterfly-photos.org



Did you know?
 All YHA members receive discounts at gear stores including Cotswold Outdoor, GO Outdoors, Snow+Rock, Runners Need and Cycle Surgery
yha.org.uk/membership/member-benefits

© Ben Waugh Photography

Tried and tested

Outdoor items put through their paces by The Journey team

LifeSaver Liberty

iconlifesaver.com

Treating water from hill-streams is essential, and fortunately the technology has moved on considerably from the days of foul-tasting iodine tablets. There are really two levels of water treatment: filtration and purification. Filtration systems - often found in portable bottles, including this one - take out toxins and pollutants and are fine for most types of UK backcountry water treatment. Purifiers remove most viruses, bacteria and cysts and used to be the realm of large complex equipment. No longer: LifeSaver Liberty is the first portable water purifier which is a bottle with an inline pump combined.

Daniel Neilson

- + Really compact water purifier
- + Comes with 5ft 'scavenger hose'
- + Easy to use
- Could be overkill for the UK



tentree Elms Tee

tentree.co.uk

We're big fans of tentree. The company has a commitment to planting - you guessed it - ten trees for every purchase made, and it goes to serious lengths to source eco-friendly materials. This approach would be diminished if the clothes themselves weren't up to scratch. Thankfully, they are. Made from a mix of organic cotton, recycled polyester and wood pulp fibre, this fair-trade t-shirt is soft and light to the touch, providing a quality, comfortable wear. Cracking design, too.

Tom Rhys

- + Kind to the planet
- + Super comfy
- + Attractive design
- Costlier than most tees



Salomon X Ultra GTX®

salomon.com

These hybrid hiking shoes are new for this spring - perfectly timed, you might say, for the anticipated loosening of restrictions. Head for the hills! And happily, they're not only stable and well supported from the moment you put them on, but lightweight too (the design borrows from trail-running technologies). A Gore-Tex membrane means they handle damp ground well. The shoes also use Salomon's quicklace™ technology: tucking in the no-tie loop can be a little fiddly, but overall this a high-quality option for spring and summer hiking.

Louisa Williams

- + Lightweight
- + Gore-Tex membrane
- + Great stability
- Lacing system a tad fiddly



Patagonia Nano Puff Jacket

eu.patagonia.com

Patagonia's Nano Puff insulated jacket has been around for a good decade now and its distinctive brickwork baffles are regularly seen on a hill near you. But as is befitting of one of the most sustainable businesses in the world - it is B-Corp certified and a campaigning powerhouse - it has been continually iterated to reduce the environmental impact of its manufacture. The shell, liner, labels and insulation are all 100% recycled. The Nano Puff is water-resistant, windproof and very light. There's a hooded version.

Daniel Neilson

- + Impeccable eco credentials
- + Packable and warm
- + Only weighs 337g
- A tad pricey



YHA Grasmere Butharlyp Howe

YHA Grinton Lodge

YHA Hartington Hall

YHA Hathersage

YHA Hawes

YHA Hawkshead

YHA Haworth

YHA Hawse End

YHA Helmsley

YHA Helvellyn

YHA Holmbury

YHA Honister Hause

YHA Hunstanton

YHA Idwal Cottage

YHA Ilam Hall

YHA Ingleton

YHA Ironbridge Coalbrookdale

YHA Ironbridge Coalport

Isle of Wight Brighstone

YHA Jordans

YHA Keswick

YHA Kettlewell

YHA Kings

YHA Kington

YHA Lands End

YHA Langdale

YHA Langdon Beck

YHA Leominster

YHA Littlehampton

YHA Litton Cheney

YHA Liverpool Albert Dock

YHA Liverpool Central

YHA Lizard

YHA Llanddeusant

YHA Llangattock

YHA London Central

YHA London Earls Court

YHA London Lee Valley

YHA London Oxford Street

YHA London St Pancras

YHA London St Pauls

YHA London Thameside

YHA Lulworth Cove

YHA Malham

YHA Manchester

YHA Mankinholes

YHA Manorbier

YHA Medway

YHA Minehead

YHA National Forest

YHA New Forest

YHA Newcastle Central

Easedale Road, Grasmere, Cumbria, LA22 9QG

Grinton, Richmond, North Yorkshire, DL11 6HS

Hall Bank, Hartington, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 0AT

Castleton Road, Hathersage, Hope Valley, Derbyshire, S32 1EH

Lancaster Terrace, Hawes, North Yorkshire, DL8 3LQ

Hawkshead, Ambleside, Cumbria, LA22 0QD

Longlands Drive, Haworth, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD22 8RT

Hawse End Cottage, Portinscale, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5UE

Carlton Lane, Helmsley, North Yorkshire, YO62 5HB

Greenside, Glenridding, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 0QR

Radnor Lane, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6NW

Seatoller, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5XN

15 Avenue Road, Hunstanton, Norfolk, PE36 5BW

Nant Ffrancon, Bethesda, Bangor, Gwynedd, LL57 3LZ

Ilam Hall, Ilam, Ashbourne, Derbyshire, DE6 2AZ

Greta Tower, Sammy Lane, Ingleton, North Yorkshire, LA6 3EG

1 Paradise, Coalbrookdale, Telford, Shropshire, TF8 7NR

John Rose Building, High Street, Coalport, Shropshire, TF8 7HT

North Street, Brighstone, Newport, PO30 4AX

Welders Lane, Jordans, Beaconsfield, Buckinghamshire, HP9 2SN

Station Road, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 5LH

Kettlewell, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 5QU

Kings, Penmaenpool, Dolgellau Gwynedd, Wales, LL40 1TB

Victoria Road, Kington, Herefordshire, HR5 3BX

Letcha Vean, St Just-in-Penwith, Penzance, Cornwall, TR19 7NT

High Close, Loughrigg, Ambleside, Cumbria, LA22 9HJ

Forest-in-Teesdale, Barnard Castle, Co Durham, DL12 0XN

The Old Priory, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8EQ

63 Surrey Street, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 5AW

Litton Cheney, Dorchester, Dorset, DT2 9AT

25 Tabley Street, off Wapping, Liverpool, Mersyside, L1 8EE

Kansas Building, Mathew Street, Liverpool L2 6RE

The Polbreen, Lizard Point, Cornwall, TR12 7NT

The Old Red Lion, Llanddeusant, Camarthenshire, SA19 9UL

Wern Watkin, Hillside, Llangattock, Crickhowell, NP8 1LG

104 Bolsover Street, London, W1W 5NU

38 Bolton Gardens, Earl's Court, London, SW5 0AQ

Windmill Lane, Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, EN8 9AJ

14 Noel Street, London, W1F 8GJ

79-81 Euston Road, London, NW1 2QE

36 Carter Lane, London, EC4V 5AB

20 Salter Road, Rotherhithe, London, SE16 5PR

School Lane, West Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5SA

Malham, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 4DB

Potato Wharf, Castlefield, Manchester, M3 4NB

Mankinholes, Todmorden, Lancashire, OL14 6HR

Manorbier, nr Tenby, Pembrokeshire, SA70 7TT

351 Capstone Road, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 3JE

Alcombe Combe, Minehead, Somerset, TA24 6EW

48 Bath Lane, Moira, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE12 6BD

Cott Lane, Burley Ringwood, Hampshire, BH24 4BB

17 Carliol Square, Newcastle Upon Tyne, Northumberland NE1 6UQ

YHA Newport Pembrokeshire

YHA Ninebanks

YHA Okehampton

YHA Okehampton Bracken Tor

YHA Osmotherley

YHA Oxford

YHA Patterdale

YHA Penzance

YHA Perranporth

YHA Poppit Sands

YHA Port Eynon

YHA Portreath

YHA Pwll Deri

YHA Ravenstor

YHA Rhossili

YHA Rowen

YHA Scarborough

YHA Sheen Bunkhouse

YHA Sheringham

YHA Sherwood Forest

YHA Skiddaw House

YHA Slaidburn

YHA Snowdon Bryn Gwynant

YHA Snowdon Llanberis

YHA Snowdon Pen-y-Pass

YHA Snowdon Ranger

YHA South Downs

YHA St Briavels Castle

YHA St Davids

YHA Stratford

YHA Streatley

YHA Street

YHA Swanage

YHA The Sill at Hadrian's Wall

YHA Tanners Hatch

YHA Thurlby

YHA Tintagel

YHA Totland Bay

YHA Treyarnon Bay

YHA Truleigh Hill

YHA Wasdale Hall

YHA Wells Next The Sea

YHA Whitby

YHA Wilderhope Manor

YHA Windermere

YHA Wooler

YHA Wye Valley

YHA York

YHA Youlgreave**Lower St Mary Street, Newport, Pembrokeshire, SA42 OTS**

Orchard House, Mohope, Ninebanks, Hexham, NE47 8DQ

Klondyke Road, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 1EW

Bracken Tor, Saxongate, Okehampton, Devon, EX20 1QW

Cote Ghyll, Osmotherley, Notherallerton, North Yorkshire, DL6 3AH

2a Botley Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire, OX2 0AB

Patterdale, Penrith, Cumbria, CA11 ONW

Castle Horneck, Penzance, Cornwall, TR20 8TF

Droskyn Point, Perranporth, Cornwall, TR6 OGS

Sea View, Poppit, Cardigan, Pembroke, SA43 3LP

Old Lifeboat House, Port Eynon, Swansea, SA3 1NN

Nance Farm, Illogen, Redruth, Cornwall, TR16 4QX

Castell Mawr, Trefasser, Goodwick, Pembrokeshire, SA64 OLR

Millers Dale, Buxton, Derbyshire, SK17 8SS

Rhossili Middleton, Rhossili, Swansea, SA3 1PJ

Rhiw Farm, Rowen, Conwy, LL32 8YW

Burniston Rd, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO13 ODA

Peakstones, Sheen, Derbyshire, SK17 OES

1 Cremer's Drift, Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8HX

Forest Corner, Edwinstowe, Nottinghamshire, NG21 9RN

Bassenthwaite, Keswick, Cumbria, CA12 4QX

King's House, Slaidburn, Clitheroe, Lancashire, BB7 3ER

Nantgwynant, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 4NP

Llwyn Celyn, Llanberis, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 4SR

Pen-y-Pass, Nantgwynant, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL55 4NY

Rhyd Ddu, Caernarfon, Gwynedd, LL54 7YS

Itford Farm, Beddingham, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 6JS

St Briavels, Lydney, Gloucestershire, GL15 6RG

Llaethdy, Whitesands, St David's, Pembrokeshire, SA62 6PR

Hemmingford House, Alveston, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 7RG

Reading Road, Streatley, Berkshire, RG8 9JJ

The Chalet, Ivythorn Hill, Street, Somerset, BA16 OTZ

Cluny, Cluny Crescent, Swanage, Dorset, BH19 2BS

Military Road, Bardon Mill, Northumberland, NE47 7AN

Off Ranmore Common Road, Dorking, Surrey, RH5 6BE

16 High Street, Thurlby, Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 OEE

Dunderhole Point, Tintagel, Cornwall, PL34 ODW

Hurst Hill, Totland Bay, Isle Of Wight, PO39 OHD

Tregonnan, Treyarnon, Padstow, Cornwall, PL28 8JR

Tottington Barn, Shoreham-by-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 5FB

Wasdale Hall, Wasdale, Seascale, Cumbria, CA20 1ET

Church Plain, Wells, Norfolk, NR23 1EQ

Abbey House, East Cliff, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO22 4JT

Manor, Longville in the Dale, Shropshire, TF13 6EG

Bridge Lane, Troutbeck, Windermere, Cumbria, LA23 1LA

30 Cheviot Street, Wooler, Northumberland, NE71 6LW

Near Goodrich, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 6JJ

Water End, Clifton, York, North Yorkshire, YO30 6LP

Fountain Square, Youlgreave, nr Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1UR

Drying room

This beautiful image of a frosty fern was uploaded onto Twitter by Amy Turner, as part of our online #YHANatureChallenge. Taken a great photo that might inspire other outdoor-lovers? Whether it's captured in your own neighbourhood or further afield, we'd love you to share it on your favourite social channels.

🐦 📷 **Don't forget the hashtags**
#YHANatureChallenge
#LiveMoreYHA

Name the dawn chorus birds

WIN! Fjällräven's new Abisko Lite Trekking Jacket worth £245

By early summer in the UK, the heart-lifting sound of the dawn chorus is in full swing from the early hours of the morning. Identifying the different species by sound alone can be tricky, but here we've jumbled the names of five common garden birds. Can you unscramble them?

1. CHINCHAFF
2. CONDUNK
3. NORBI
4. NOGS SHURTH
5. BALDBRICK

To enter simply send us an email with your five answers to magazine@yha.org.uk by 7th June 2021. Feel free to share your thoughts on this magazine at the same time.



About the prize

Swedish outdoor company Fjällräven, is giving away one of its new Abisko Lite Trekking Jackets worth £245. It is available in either men's or women's. The new Abisko Lite Trekking Jacket is perfect for mild but mixed conditions where you still need some protection from showers or chilly winds. Featuring a technical hybrid construction that combines lightweight G-1000 Lite Eco (recycled polyester and organic cotton) and a 4-way stretch fabric on the back and under the arms, the Abisko Lite Trekking Jacket offers an ideal balance of weather-protection, ventilation and mobility. To find out more or to view the complete summer trekking collection, please visit fjallraven.com.

Last issue: congratulations to Antony Little, Louise Hopkins, Jude from Somerset, John Holden and Elizabeth Darlington, all of whom won copies of Duncan Simpson's new book about Jack Catchpool, YHA's first secretary.



We are YHA.

We transform young lives forever through travel and real adventure.

Because where you go changes who you become.

stay | join | give | volunteer yha.org.uk

YHA (England & Wales), Trevelyan House, Dimple Road, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3YH

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