



YHA (England and Wales)

Youth Hostel Profile

compiled by the Association's volunteer archivist, John Martin, 2023-10-22

Youlgreave area Youth Hostels

at Youlgreave [Newlands], Lathkill Dale, Elton Old Hall and Youlgreave [Co-operative Store]

Youlgreave [Newlands] Youth Hostel 1934 to 1935

Newlands, Youlgreave, Derbyshire

Historic County: Derbyshire

YHA Region: North Midland

GR: SK 214645

Note: the village name is regularly styled *Youlgrave* locally, and the hostel has often been written in this way.



Trevor Key photographed Youlgreave's pre-war hostel some 50 years after closure.

No image of the hostel when operating has yet been discovered (YHA Archive)

Youlgreave's first youth hostel was a short-lived affair on Alport Lane, the main road out of the village to the north-east. The *YHA Rucksack* magazine of Summer 1934 advised:

Newlands, Youlgreave (warden, Miss Trueman) is a delightful stone house at the entrance to this fascinating interesting old-world village. The hostel overlooks the extensive village playing fields beyond which is the beautiful Bradford Dale, and behind it is the far-famed Lathkill Dale. Not far away is the Derbyshire 'Stonehenge' at Arbor Low.

The hostel is provided primarily to break the long tramps between Hartington Hall, Overton Hall, and Derwent Hall. It begins with 16 beds.

Curiously, the hostel did not make an entry in either edition of the national handbook for 1934 and, probably as a consequence, only 292 overnights were recorded in that year.

YOULGREAVE N/M		DERBYSHIRE
NEWLANDS,	Opposite playing field,	P.M.K.F.S.
YOULGREAVE,	entrance to village from	M.P.
DERBYSHIRE.	Alport.	S.B.H.
MISS A. TRUEMAN.	Maps: O.S. Peak District Tourist.	
	Station: Rowsley 3 m.	
	Bus: Bakewell—Youl-	
	greave; Matlock—	Hartington 10 m.
	Youlgreave.	Overton Hall 10 „
All Year.	Store: In village.	Derwent
M. 8; W. 8.	P.O.: In village.	Hall 16 „

Entry for the early hostel at Newlands, Youlgreave, in the 1935 handbook. The abbreviations on the right indicated: Plate, mug, knife, fork and spoon should be brought; Meals provided; Sleeping bag hire (YHA Archive)

The following March, *Rucksack* outlined the developing strategy behind opening a hostel in the village:

Park Hall, Mansfield Woodhouse, standing in its own estate of 200 acres, admirably situated to serve the Dukeries and Sherwood Forest, also has been secured and is to be equipped with 100 beds to be available at Easter. Thus the Midlands west-east chain is opening up along the line of Rudyard Lake, Hartington Hall, Youlgreave, Overton Hall and Park Hall, the latter lap being one of 16 miles.

It was all too brief. By the Winter 1935 edition of *Rucksack*, several of North Midlands Region's smaller adopted hostels were closing, in favour of fully regulated additions. The news ran:

Parwich and Linby hostels are now no more, and Youlgreave will close at the end of 1935, to be replaced as soon as ever a suitable alternative property can be found.

The North Midlands annual report of 1936 suggested that the hostel may have lingered a little – *closed by April 1936*, but this was probably just slow news. It would be almost 40 years before there was another youth hostel in the village, though there were intermittently others close by: the short-lived Lathkill Dale, opened 1939, and its replacement, Elton Old Hall, opened 1942, that operated for over 60 years.

Lathkill Dale Youth Hostel 1939 to 1942

Conksbury Old Hall, Over Haddon, Bakewell, Derbyshire

Historic County: Derbyshire

YHA Region: North Midlands

GR: SK 209656

Note: the usual spelling of the locality and the youth hostel was *Lathkill*, though *Lathkil* is occasionally seen.



Lathkill Dale youth hostel, an adopted property, opened on 1st July 1939, in Conksbury Old Hall, about a mile north of Youlgreave. It is a venerable stone house with heavily-moulded features, located on the western edge of the deserted mediæval village of Conksbury, and was Grade II listed in 1967. The British Listed Buildings website describes it as early 18th-century with an earlier core. There was a 19th-century addition, refashioned about 1970. The house stands in considerable grounds.

Left: 'Stepping out from Lathkill Dale hostel' (YHA publication image)



Conksbury Old Hall, the new Lathkill Dale youth hostel in 1939. This anonymous snap captured the solid appearance of the old stone building. A loose YHA sign peeks out from behind the wall (author's collection)



A beautiful study of Conksbury youth hostel, taken from a negative. Somewhere in this view may have been the 'toilet across a field' that Mavis Burton refers to below (YHA Archive)

The hostel was able to operate through the first years of the war up till closure in 1942. The warden was Ted Woodward. As with Newlands hostel, its first year of operation may have been hampered by exclusion from the national handbook, suggesting last minute arrangements. Only 332 overnights were registered in the first year, but thereafter Lathkill Dale became increasingly popular. The *YHA Rucksack* magazine of Summer 1940 advised that among the smaller hostels, Lathkill Dale continued to be booked to capacity every weekend.

Mavis Burton of Derby was a regular hosteller in the Peak District in the 1940s. She recorded a diary of her various visits that give an insight into these simple establishments, now held at the YHA Archive:

My first hostelling week-end was spent with Mary at Conksbury which had been a farmhouse in the Lathkill Dale. Now it has reverted back to a private house. The beds were top and bottom bunks. We were always broke so we took our own food and cooked in the 'self-cookers' – it was cheaper.

The kitchen had been built by the club to which I then belonged, the Amity. The toilet was across a field. Washing facilities were a little sketchy, a row of enamel bowls on wooden benches. Around the side of my bowl scuttled a large and juicy spider. Spiders were my pet aversion but I wouldn't have one killed just because of that so I dashed off and collected a few of the boys to get him out.

After supper we decided to go to the nearest village, Youlgreave, for a drink at the local. The village was supposed to be blacked out. True to say all the shutters were in place but they were so badly fitting that, in the surrounding darkness, Youlgreave shone forth like a beacon. Small wonder that one night a bomb, dropped close by, brought down the hostel ceilings.

LATHKIL DALE

Left: Wilf Lawson's rare 1941 hostel stamp, with alternative spelling (author's collection)

Bernard Edwards, North Midlands regional secretary at the time, later described to his successor Dave Allison how the Old Hall at Elton was bought when the region failed to buy Conksbury, across the fields from Youlgreave. A slightly larger hostel was the result. There was a slight overlap of the two hostels in the middle of 1942, and significant overnights in that year at both premises.



Another image from a negative in the YHA Archive. The two figures were probably the wardens. The garden appears to have been particularly productive, as would have suited the Government's wartime 'Dig for Victory' campaign

Elton [Old Hall] Youth Hostel 1942 to 2003

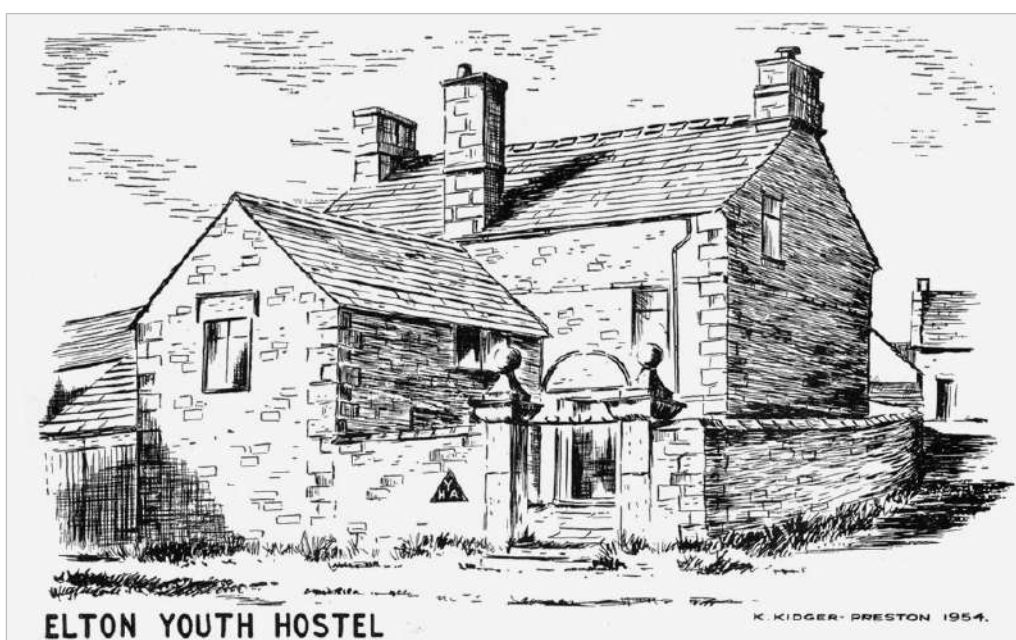
Elton Old Hall, Main Street, Elton, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 2BW

Historic County: Derbyshire

YHA Regions: North Midlands; Peak;
Central

GR: SK 224609

And so one Old Hall hostel gave way to another, at Elton, four miles to the south. It is a 17th-century house, Grade-II listed. It bears the dates 1668 and 1715, and is reputed to be even older.



K Kidger-Preston's neat sketch postcard of Elton hostel in 1954. Note the decorative ball finials on the gateposts, soon removed (perhaps as a hazard), and the limited glazing at the front of the side-on building compared with later views (YHA Archive)

The new establishment opened on 6th June 1942, and was to provide a larger establishment, at least that was the intention. It was obtained with the aid of a grant from the Pilgrim Trust. Bernard Edwards remembered a payment of about £650 for the property. An unidentified Derbyshire newspaper heralded the opening:

New Youth Hostel at Elton

Youth hostellers from Derby and district attended the opening of the Old Hall, Elton, as a Youth Hostel.

The ceremony was also attended by hostellers from other parts of the Midlands and by a number of residents of Elton who had taken a keen interest in the project. The Rev J Greenwood Parkinson, Rector of Elton, declared the hostel open. Mr LR Roberts, chairman of the North Midlands Regional Council, YHA, said the hall had been acquired by the Association with the aid of a grant from the Pilgrim Trust. The hostel would provide accommodation for 36 young people and would be a valuable addition to the chain of hostels in the county.

Elton was one of a growing number of fully-controlled establishments replacing smaller privately-owned adopted or accommodation hostels about this time. It was vested freehold in the YHA Trust on 1st June 1942. The Trust's property book recorded the cost somewhat lower than Bernard Edwards' recollection, at £450.

The warden in 1942 was Mrs Goodwin, and accommodation extended to 18 beds for men, 18 for women.



Like Lathkill Dale, Elton hostel was able to operate relatively unhindered by the war, though YHA Sheffield sub-region's Bulletin of January 1943 had to announce that accommodation had quickly been reduced to 25 to allow for a resident warden. In fact by 1945 it was only 18 in total. The new warden was Ted Woodward, previously of Lathkill Dale hostel; Mary Jephcott recognised him from the old place when staying in 1947. Under these reduced circumstances, it took 30 years for Elton to overtake Lathkill Dale's 1941 total of over 2,000 overnights. Ted stayed at Elton hostel until retirement in 1949. In that year a local contractor reroofed the hostel.

Left: this location map for the hostel featured in the 1946 Peak District regional guide. The book described how the warden had been 'a good friend of YHA for many years, and there are few who have put as many hours of toil into his hostel';

Elton was another hostel that Mavis Burton knew well; here's a further illuminating memory:

Elton hostel is a tiny hall in the main street of Elton Village. It is quite popular with Derby ramblers as it's easy to get there on Friday evenings after work, but there was one time I went there when all the blankets were damp, this was many years ago. I endeared myself to the warden by asking, 'Where do you book in in this swimming bath?' We had to put our macs under the sleeping bags to keep the damp out. He was not at all pleased but it was about another eight miles to the next hostel.

There was another warden after that who was always trotting about amongst the hostellers 'helping' everybody. You would just get a kettle boiled and find she had made someone else's tea with it.

One Friday night Eunice and I went to Elton and arrived there just in time for supper and bed. We were the only two visitors. Imagine how we felt next morning when we got the job of cleaning out every room as our duty.

Eventually there was another warden who owned a little dog. This little animal would trot down the street greeting all ramblers like long lost friends but taking no notice whatsoever of anyone who was not in rambling gear.

Some years later I was instrumental in getting better washing facilities, there not being enough for the number of visitors. The YHA put this right.

Perhaps it was the same dog that Pat Packham met during a stay in 1966. She recorded wryly in her holiday log 'a Cycling Tour in the Peaks and Lakes':

I was greeted by a small dog called Joe. The warden came into the common room and told me that Joe was supposed to be vicious. He had bitten three tradesmen but no hostellers.



Details of later wardens at Elton were often not recorded: Mr Bailey arrived in 1958; Mrs Marshall retired in 1971, when Mrs Marshall (junior) took charge, staying until 1977. It was during her and her husband Peter's time here that overnights grew, from annual averages of about 1,500, to over 2,500. The hostel's limited capacity rose a little in 1954, to 26, where it stayed for 25 years.

Left: one-inch pin badge from the 1960s-1970s period (author's collection)



John Watts' photograph of Elton hostel in 1976. The ball finials had gone, but there were a new side entrance and downstairs window at the forward part of the building, the staff accommodation (author's collection)

Irene Carlile was appointed as warden in 1978 and was to have a lasting influence on the development of Elton and other associated local small hostels. She stayed almost to the end, retiring in 2001. Irene was able to increase the bed numbers to 30 in 1980. Among her added responsibilities was taking on bookings for the new Shining Cliff hostel, opened in 1978, with Meerbrook hostel (opened 1977) added a little later course.



YHA's final postcard of Elton hostel. The new side door to the staff lounge suggests that this may have been part of the 1985 improvement works (YHA Archive)

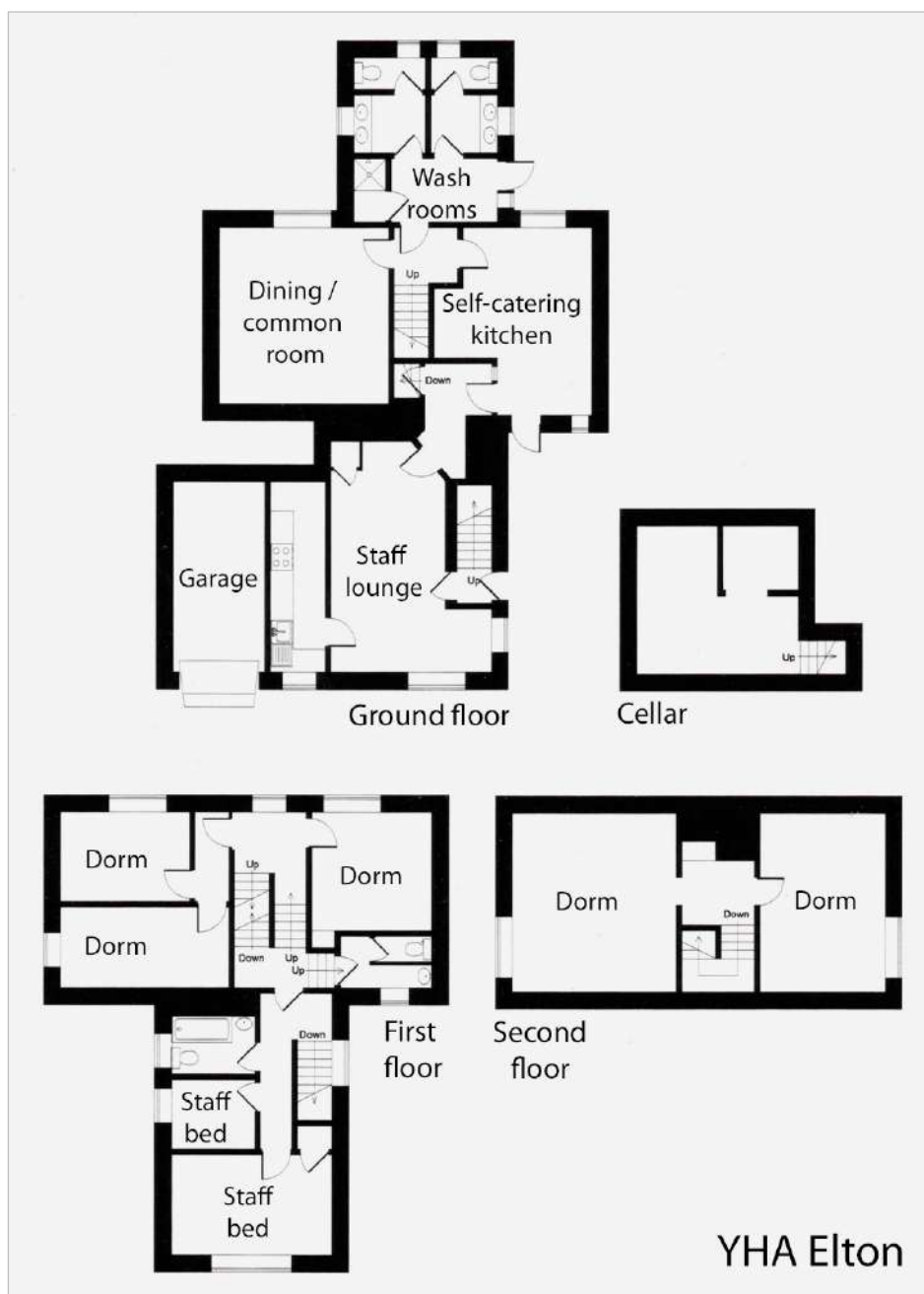
Elton was always a cramped hostel, but it gained a larger ablution extension at the end of 1985: *Triangle* magazine noted in the December issue:

Peak Region report that a new worker is helping on the extension to Elton Youth Hostel: warden Irene Carlisle was so impatient for completion she decided to pitch in!

Up to this time Elton was a 'no meals provided' hostel, but members gained the extra facility of a limited supper cafeteria and continental breakfast for a few years from 1987. In 1988 there were five rooms, one 4-bedded, two 6-bedded, one 8-bedded and one 10-bedded. A record was reached in 1992 with almost 4,300 overnights. By 1995 there were 32 beds, though surprisingly family rooms and Rent-a-Hostel were not advertised. The Spring 1996 edition of *YHA News* painted a picture of the dedication, sacrifice and enterprise of staff at these smaller hostels:

Irene Carlisle, the warden at Elton, acts as the booking point for both Meerbrook and Shining Cliff and so Rick Dipper, volunteer co-ordinator at these hostels has worked closely with Irene. He remembered 'the time I turned up at Elton to find her looking very unwell, I don't think she has ever stopped. I got to play Elton shopkeeper that night, much to the amusement of the local kids when I didn't know what a *Fizzy Wizzo Popper* was'...

...[it seems that Irene may well have operated a village tuck shop at the hostel too].



Plan of YHA Elton at the time of closure. The washrooms to the rear of the ground floor would have been the extension noted in 1985, though hardly convenient by modern standards. There was a garden and bike shed to the rear (YHA Archive)

By 2001 the hostel returned to self-catering only; the following year capacity was reduced to 22. The Old Hall hostel lasted through to 2003, when YHA was beginning to pick up the damaging costs of the Foot and Mouth epidemic.

After Irene Carlile's retirement, John Rowe and Dan Read looked after the hostel until closure, on 28th February 2003, and subsequent sale. The Old Hall was then converted to an accommodation centre for groups of up to 14.

Youlgreave [Old Co-op] Youth Hostel 1975 to present

Fountain Square, Youlgreave, Bakewell, Derbyshire DE45 1UR

Historic County: Derbyshire

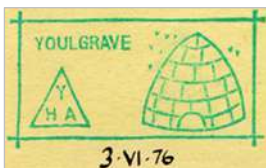
YHA Region: Peak, Central

GR: SK 210642



Well-preserved detail at YHA Youlgreave (author's image, 2011)

According to a well-researched display in Youlgreave's youth hostel, the village's Co-operative Society was formed in 1870 by Joseph Shinwell of Old Hall Farm, Tom Birds of Hall Farm and Joseph Smith. An ambitious Co-operative department store followed in 1887, of three storeys plus basement, built on the steeply sloping site of the original village school of 1762. The shop catered to much of the local population's needs. It also purchased instruments for the village brass (later silver) band and displayed them in the shop window shortly after opening.



Left: the author's hostel stamp from 1976. Note the spelling then in vogue at the hostel

The Society even supplied the village with electricity from 1910 until the nationalisation of the industry. In 1926 the Co-operative committed to supply ordered drapery and boots, and groceries and provisions of the best quality. Tinned fruit and jam were a speciality. By the 1920s, the controlling body was the Derwent Valley Co-operative Society Ltd, with branches at Youlgreave [sic], Rowsley and Two Dales. Members were permitted to receive goods on credit, paying for them when circumstances improved.



*1: this early image of the Co-operative store's staff features in hostel displays. Note the original recessed front entrance;
2: at the top of the building is this grand (and presumably expensive) carved datestone (YHA Archive)*

In World War II incendiary bombs caused considerable damage in the village. One such device slid down the ramp towards the basement of the Co-op and was kicked away by a guest at the Bull's Head.

Youlgreave Co-op finally ceased trading and closed its doors in 1968. Dave Allison, the Regional Manager for YHA's Peak District, describes how Harry Camm, a coach operator and developer, bought the Youlgreave Co-operative Department Store when the Society was wound up, around 1964. The sale also included a piece of the yard, round the back, enough for a parking space and to give vehicle access to the rear delivery entrance. A few months later the Secretary of the Society sold the yard and the cottages surrounding it to his daughter! – Mr Allison's exclamation mark.



A huge crowd in Fountain Square attend a blessing service for the annual well dressing at Youlgreave. The photograph is of interest as it was taken by Ivan Iklody, a well-known YHA photographer, but the image predates the youth hostel. The shop is clearly emptied, the original recessed shop entrance is still in place, and note the broken first floor windows and the lack of YHA insignia, suggesting a photographic date between shop closure in 1968 and YHA's purchase in 1974 (YHA Archive)

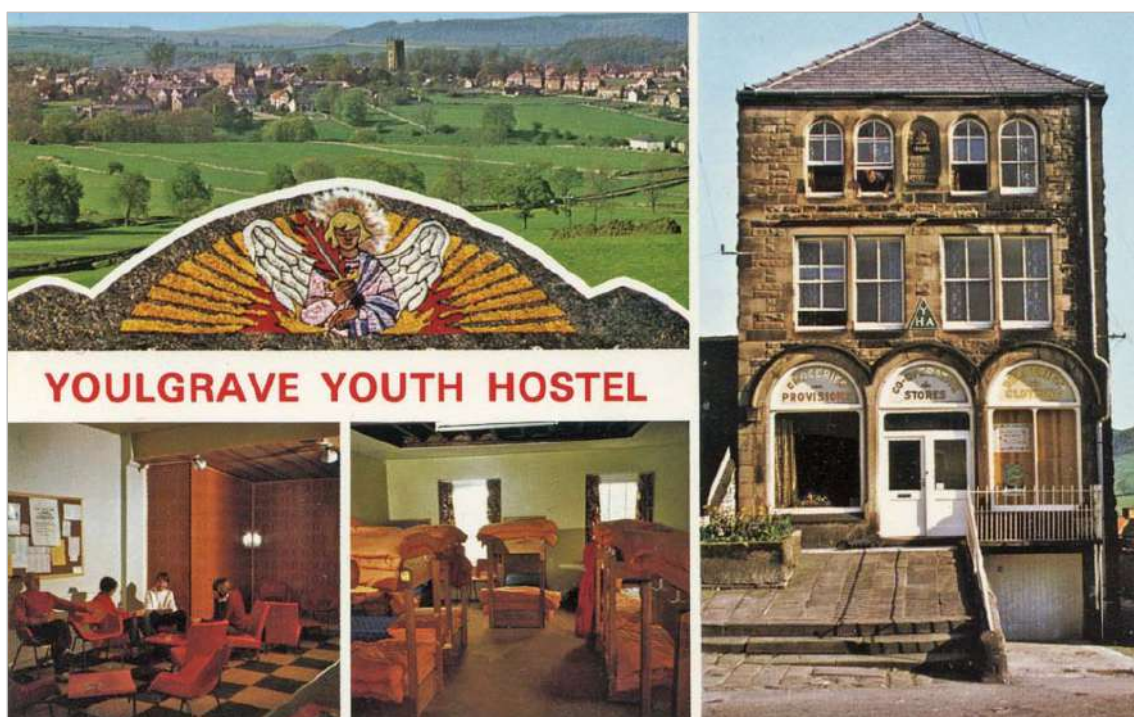
While in private hands, the building was used as a setting in the 1970 film of DH Lawrence's novel, *the Virgin and the Gypsy*.

Dave Allison recalls YHA's acquisition:

In 1974, we (YHA) bought the building and land from Cambro (Harry's company), for £6,000. We spent a further £30,000 converting it to a 48-bed Youth Hostel.

When we did the revenue forecast I based it on 4,000 overnights for the first year. Then Roger Davenport (Regional Treasurer at the time), bet me a bottle of whisky that it wouldn't make budget in the first year. When I transferred one of our star managers, Ami Edley, from Bakewell to Youlgreave to manage the new hostel, I was called a cheat. Thanks to Ami, it did over 5,000 overnights in the 1st season. I enjoyed that whisky!

Hostelling News of Autumn 1974 pointed towards the opening of Peak Region's new hostel in 1975, but as so often, preparations took longer than expected. The Spring 1975 magazine announced a delay until 1st May, the Summer edition gave no mention of the hostel's introduction, nor indeed did the national handbook amendment slip number 4 for the year, dated Autumn 1975. Yet the 1975 annual report gave a tally of a modest 1,603 overnights; these would have been registered before the end of the financial year on 30th September 1975. It was common practice at the time for hostels to be opened prematurely, even when unfinished, to take advantage of summer stays before the conclusions of works the following winter. It was 1977 before the full complement of beds reached the intended 48.



1: colour postcard from the earliest days of the hostel, with typical 1970s décor in the lounge and one of the two very large top floor dormitories. In those days the self-catering kitchen and associated dining area took up the whole of the front of the first floor, at the level of the YHA triangle sign. To the rear of that was a 6-bedded female dormitory, 'Ladies' Underwear'. YHA fitted internal fire escape stairs in the front right corner, behind the gold-coloured backdrop (YHA Archive); 2: Youlgrave youth hostel was barely a year old when this hosteller posed on the front steps in June 1976 (photograph Christine Martin)

Ami Edley stayed in post until 1979, when Jon Cant took on the warden's role, until 1986. In these first dozen years, the annual overnight total always exceeded that of the original 4,000 target by at least 1,000, and sometimes more than 2,000. Next to manage the hostel was Ken Rome, before he moved on to London Highgate in 1989, then the new Bristol hostel, and from 1992-97, Ilam Hall.

Two official inspections of Youlgrave hostel are recorded in the YHA Archive. Mary Corbould visited in October 1987 and found manager Ken and deputy Debby Oley to be most welcoming:

I arrived shortly after 5pm to find they had room (I had made no previous booking), ordered meals and was given a bed in 'Furniture'. Although the menu was not displayed, Deb gave me a wide choice from which I had difficulty in making up my mind. I was also offered a choice for breakfast and lunch. I was the only person having a hostel meal in the evening: it was very good and I nearly did not finish my pudding! The evening was spent in the common

room/ dining room, playing games and talking to other hostellers. For one family, it was their first time hostelling; they thought it was very good and they fully intended to make use of hostels in the future. There was a very warm and friendly atmosphere in the hostel. The members' kitchen is large and appeared neat and tidy and well used.

For some time in the evening I was the only occupant of 'Furniture', a huge dormitory at the top of the building. Everything was clean, neat and tidy, and there was plenty of hot water.

My stay at Youlgrave was perfect. Deb made me very welcome right from the start. The reception area which was a corner of the warden's kitchen was attractive and quite well stocked. Signs throughout the hostel were very clear and in the right places. Someone had obviously gone to a lot of trouble to produce them. The common room had attractive notice boards filled with all kinds of local and YHA information. Everywhere was warm and pleasantly decorated. My thanks to Deb and Ken for looking after me so well.



A miscellany of cloth badges, hostel stamp and pin badges (author's collection)

Peter Mathison followed up with another inspection, in June 1988. He indicated that at that time the entrance was off the side lane, in the basement:

Up the stairs from the entrance at the side of the building and I was at the reception next to the warden's kitchen. A pleasant welcome from Deb and Ken each preparing for supper time. Yes, plenty of room and supper available with choice of beefburger or lasagne.

Made up my bed in the clean and comfortable dormitory and went downstairs again to the four showers next to the pleasantly tiled cubicles. The location is not very convenient but I gather that the site was chosen because of water supply difficulties, now overcome, but to move them would be out of the question.

The members' kitchen was very clean and is well equipped with adequate pots and pans etc. There is even a set of kitchen knives hanging on the wall. The four burners all worked well and there were three tables; it appears to be satisfactory layout. The fridge was clean and in working order.

In addition to myself and two other 'ordinary' members, the evening meal was taken by a party of nine-year old school children and their three leaders I was and impressed that Ken and Deb wheeled their trolley around and served the meals. Not the usual m  l  e at serving hatch. The meal was tasty and attractively presented.

The school party had been there for a few days and it was obvious that the wardens liked the kids and vice versa. Indeed as it was the last night of the trip, the children gave presents to Ken and Deb as well as to their leaders.

After supper the children had to write about their trip to Haddon Hall earlier in the day. The teacher told me that they write up their work each day, bind the week's work into a folder and then give a prize to the best.

The common room/dining room is very comfortable and well provided with books, magazines and games as well as plenty of local information.

The bed was very comfortable although I found the dormitory a little too warm. Being an English June, the heating had been put on! I slept in 'Ladies Underwear' – the rooms have names appropriate to the former use as shop.

On the lower ground floor, half-way along the side of the building, was the hostel entrance, from which the three flights of steep stairs led. The rest of the basement, the original shop store room, was then still largely undeveloped, though an internal door to the right of the entrance led to three or four showers. The cycle shed was also housed on this level. Jon Cant remembers that butchers' salting slabs, a remnant from shop days, were still to be found here during YHA ownership. On the upper ground floor were the common room at the front, and reception, hostel kitchen and a small assistant's room to the rear.

YHA's *1988 Datapack for Group Leaders*, a quality booklet, packed with hostel information, described the available sleeping accommodation at Youghreave in that year as 46, with one 19-bed room, one of 17, one of 6 and one of 4. The smaller rooms were on the floor above reception, with the manager's flat to the rear. The largest dormitory, called 'Bedding', was at the front of the top floor, with the slightly smaller example 'Furniture' to the rear. Though the largest dormitory was normally taken by men, rooms could be allocated on a flexible basis.

Debby Oley was Youghreave's new manager. She had been Ken Rome's assistant from 1986 and took on her new role in 1989.

After operating for more than 20 years, Youghreave hostel was ready for a major overhaul. *YHA News* announced at the end of 1997 that considerable work was under way to replace the two large dormitories (now described as both of 16 beds) by 4- and 6-bedded rooms, improve the hostel kitchen, provide separate toilets and showers instead of washrooms, relocate many of the facilities in the ground floor and basement areas and provide new furniture.

On 17th April 2001 the Derby Evening Telegraph ran a piece about the modern YHA in Derbyshire; National Office was moving to Matlock, and Youghreave hostel was in very good shape, though the Foot and Mouth epidemic was taking its toll:

Now the organisation is moving to Matlock to be at the centre of its hostels network. It is keen to show that it is a modern organisation, adapting to the demands of modern tourists.

The youth hostel in Youghreave is a good example of the changes that have taken place. It was refurbished three years ago. Gone are the linoleum floors, formica tables and large dormitories. The Fountain Square hostel now boasts carpets, pine tables, and up-to-date soft furnishings. The two large dormitories which used to sleep 17 and 19 people each have been converted into rooms which sleep between two and six people. Debby Oley has been the manager there for 16 years.

She said: 'Now there are nine rooms, and people don't usually have to share. We spread people and families out. Everyone likes to have a bit of privacy. Families with small children can have a key so that they can go in and out during the day. Neither do people have to do their own washing up any more. Ms Oley said: 'Some older visitors



who have been hostelling for years still ask if they can help with jobs and we say you can if you like, but there's no obligation now. We do all the clearing up, cooking and washing up.

Left: Youghreave manager Debby Oley in 2001

'I think it's nice that people don't have to do housework or worry about what's for tea when they are on holiday. The hostel provides breakfast and an evening meal, although there is a self-catering kitchen that guests can use at any time. But walkers

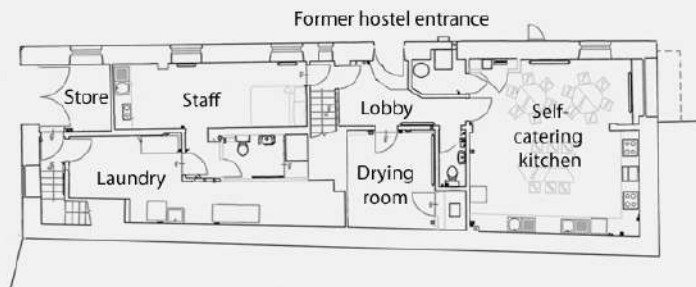
and families still do not have to pay through the nose to stay there.

At Youghreave, adults pay £11 a night, children pay £7.75. Breakfast costs £3.30 and the evening meal costs £4.90. Prices vary from hostel to hostel but they usually cost £8 to £12 a night for adults. London hostels can cost about £20. Assistant manager Aidan Forster said: 'Menus vary. We cater for vegetarians too and it's all good, home-cooked, food.'

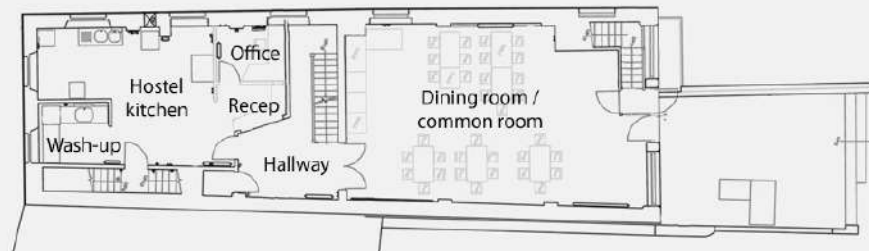
The hostel has seen a drop in visitor numbers since the foot and mouth outbreak began. Ms Oley said: 'We were full for Easter but bookings are down for the weekend after that.' She said school parties had cancelled because they could not go walking as they had planned. Footpaths around the village are still closed, although towpaths and railway trails are open. Ms Oley added: 'We won't see visitor numbers really pick up until all the footpaths are open.'



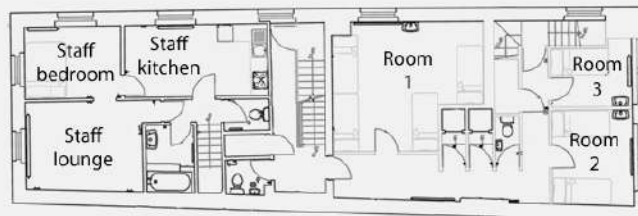
Typical shop stock and advertising ephemera, some perhaps saved directly from Youlgreave's former Co-op general store, make a fascinating hostel display and topic for discussion between hostellers, (YHA Archive, photographed in 2006)



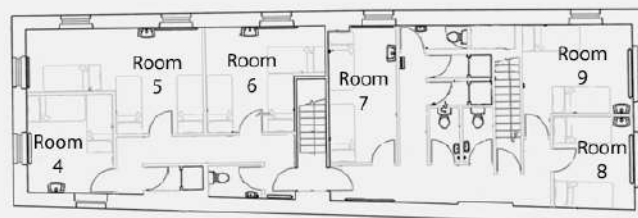
Lower ground floor



Upper ground floor



First floor



Second floor

YHA Youlgreave

Youlgreave Youth Hostel – ‘Existing floor plans, March 2007’. These show the relocated self-catering kitchen and assistant’s room on the lower ground floor, improved layout on the upper ground floor, and nine smaller bedrooms, all introduced in 1997.

*Room titles: **First floor:** Room 1 – Savings and Dividends; Room 2 – Grocery; Room 3 – Hardware*

***Second floor:** Room 4 – Furniture; Room 5 – Ladies’ Underwear; Room 6 – Haberdashery; Room 7 – Bedding; Room 8 – Gents’ Underwear; Room 9 – Provisions (plans redrawn by author)*



1 2



3 4



5 6



YHA publicity photographs from late 2006.

1: corner view, showing clearly the ramps down to the lower ground floor and up to the shop entrance. With brief exceptions, the main hostel entrance has always been located at basement level, half way along the narrow lane to the right of the building; 2: the basement entrance led directly to this smartly turned-out self-catering kitchen; 3: upper ground floor former shop space, forming the lounge and dining area; 4: attractive ephemera at the rear of the dining room; 5&6: hostel bedrooms (YHA Archive)



Other angles. 1: from the foot of the side lane. The nearer windows in the basement mark the staff accommodation and store; 2: the rear of the hostel building, emphasising the height of the structure. The rear top floor bedrooms, now rooms 4 and 5, have impressive views over Bradford Dale (author's images, July 2011)

The management structure changed in 2008 when Debby Oley left YHA. For a short time YHA Youlgreave came under the control of Hartington Hall hostel, and it is thought that the traditional entrance at basement level gave way then to the restored traditional shop entrance at the front, at ground floor level. In the winter of 2016-17 Youlgreave hostel received a light 'Springboard' refurbishment, mainly to update the self-catering kitchen with modern fittings and décor, but with attention paid also to communal areas and paintwork.

The final managers in YHA's full employment were John Tory, from about 2010 to 2014, Rebecca Bourne in 2015, Yvonne Barber and Amy Osbaldiston in 2016, Mike Lee in 2017 and 2018, and Hywel Lewis in 2019. During this period, YHA was using the post as a training ground for managers within the network. Mike Lee, for instance moved to the large hostel at Grasmere Butharlp How in 2020.

In this era a guided tour of the hostel, from the bottom floor to the top, would reveal:

Basement: reinstated hostel entrance, self-catering kitchen to the left, staff room to the right, stairs up from centre.
Ground floor: lounge / dining area at the front; front fire escape stairs enclosed to the side of the entrance door; reception and hostel kitchen behind the dining room; central flight of stairs up.
First floor: three guest rooms to front, staff rooms to the rear. With slight deviation from the pattern shown in the plan on page 6, the bedrooms were:
Room 1 – Savings and Investment, 8 beds, male dorm; Room 2 – Grocery, 4 beds; Room 3 – Hardware, 2 beds; Toilets and showers; Stairs up to the top floor
Second floor (rear): Room 4 – Furniture, 4 beds; Room 5 – Ladies' Underwear, 6 beds, female dorm; Room 6 – Haberdashery, 6 beds; Toilet and shower
Second floor (front): Room 7 – Bedding, 4 beds; Room 8 – Men's Underwear, 4 beds; Room 9: Bedding, 4 beds; Toilets and showers

In the period just before the outbreak of Covid in 2020 YHA placed Youlgreave on its sale list, encouraging the development of a privately-operated Enterprise hostel here, while maintaining its YHA network status. The pandemic delayed procedure during 2020, but Colin Trigg took ownership in April 2021; in that year the hostel operated on a reduced scale, with exclusive hire, under the severe limitations of Covid. In 2022 there was much greater use and some development of separate rooms for families and individuals along with exclusive hire. 2023 will continue this pattern.

Colin has started an extensive programme of improvements and reorganisation of facilities, most notably by removing the front stairs, by planning for modernised accommodation facilities, with most bedrooms to become en suite, and by exploiting the daytime potential for diversification of shop-front business within the local and tourist setting.

Overnights – inclusive periods each year as follows

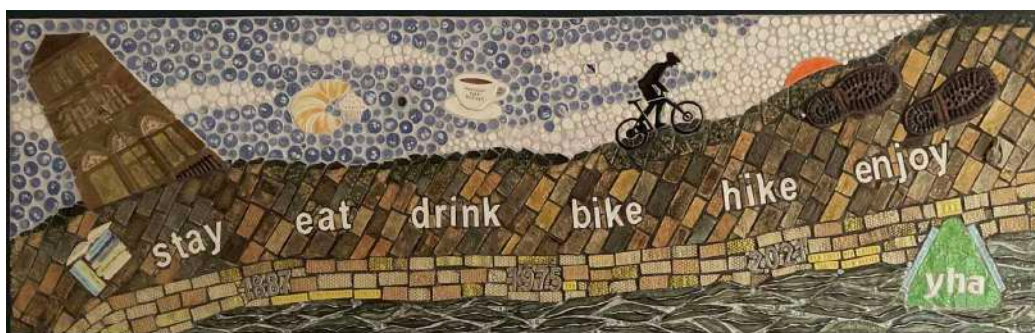
1934-1991: previous Oct to Sept; **1992:** Oct 1991 to Feb 1993; **1993-present:** Mar to following Feb

∞: Youlgreave (Newlands) youth hostel; §: Lathkill Dale youth hostel; o

¶: Elton Old Hall youth hostel; Δ: Youlgreave (Old Co-op) youth hostel; ø: Covid closure

•: the 104 overnights for the statistical year 1936 were probably recorded in the last 3 months of 1935
est: estimate; *: 17 month period; +: notional figure included for exclusive hire; E: Enterprise hostel

1930	1931	1932	1933	1934	1935	1936	1937	1938	1939
...	...	...	...	292∞	1540∞	104•∞	...	...	332§
1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	1948	1949
1642§	1959§	2134§	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
...	...	539¶	1472¶	1380¶	1198¶	1180¶	1122¶	1428¶	open¶
1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959
1334¶	1287¶	1114¶	1272¶	1415¶	1540¶	1349¶	1504¶	1339¶	1695¶
1960	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969
1614¶	178¶	1804¶	1804¶	1833¶	1884¶	1466¶	1628¶	1530¶	1890¶
1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	1978	1979
1707¶	1729¶	1850¶	2061¶	2396¶	2580¶	2718est¶	2681¶	2591¶	3154¶
...	...	...	...	...	1603Δ	5711estΔ	6328Δ	5325Δ	5917Δ
1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989
3348¶	2691¶	2217¶	2127¶	2505¶	2500¶	2021¶	2756¶	2822¶	3311¶
5915Δ	5625Δ	5474Δ	5007Δ	5313Δ	6000Δ	5354Δ	5617Δ	6403Δ	7257Δ
1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
3597¶	3863¶	5079*¶	3879¶	3853¶	3560¶	3290¶	3195¶	2947¶	2648¶
6339Δ	6307Δ	6896*Δ	4983Δ	5197Δ	4580Δ	5403Δ	4612Δ	4694Δ	5436Δ
2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
2584¶	2053¶	1722¶	2584¶	...	...	...	...	...	...
4841Δ	4449Δ	5421Δ	5031Δ	5093Δ	4834Δ	4798Δ	5930Δ	5898Δ	5711Δ
2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
5684Δ	4801+Δ	6746+Δ	6344+Δ	6478+Δ	6331+Δ	6176+Δ	6712+Δ	6248+Δ	8221+Δ
2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
øΔ	openEΔ	openEΔ	openEΔ	...	...	...	...	...	...



Mosaic specially commissioned for the new Enterprise arrangement at YHA Youlgreave by local artist Phil Smith. The display, featuring approximately 1,250 tiles of stoneware and porcelain clay, took four months and eleven kiln firings in the making, and has three local minerals embedded in the design. It was installed on the hostel lounge wall on 8th February 2023

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