

Press release: 4 March, 2010

## **Handbags and Gladraggs for ‘Glalkers’ in Pennine Yorkshire**

*Luxury and glamour demanded by new breed of walker*

**Walkers in Britain are becoming more discerning as they look to combine high quality accommodation, restaurants and bars – and even a touch of shopping – with their traditional hiking breaks in the countryside.**

Two thirds (65 per cent) of Brits questioned on behalf of visitor destination campaign Pennine Yorkshire, said they would be more likely to book a walking break if they could be guided towards trendy attractions, such as bars, gastro pubs and boutique shops.

A large proportion (57 per cent) of this new breed of glamorous walkers – nicknamed ‘Glalkers’ – claim moving away from the traditional image of walking holidays would encourage them to book additional trips, while 47 per cent rate quality accommodation as the single most important factor when considering a rural break.

With 27 per cent claiming the stereotypical ‘stuffy’ image of walkers is enough to deter them, whilst five per cent even blame traditional walking clothes for keeping them at home – suggesting that image really is king for some holidaymakers.

Catherine Chrystie, marketing officer at Pennine Yorkshire, said: “It seems that there is a real market for younger, more discerning walkers who want to integrate their glamorous lifestyles in rural breaks.

“Pennine Yorkshire is the ideal location for a traditional walking holiday and with a range of five-star accommodation, relaxing spas and high quality shops and bars, it also makes the perfect destination for dyed-in-the-wool urbanites who crave the buzz of city life in a rural location.

“What’s more, with 80 per cent of 18-34 year olds saying they would consider walking holidays if they could be guided towards trendy bars and shops, we have put together some guides, which not only include beautiful walks, but recommend high quality accommodation, bars, restaurants and boutiques very close to the routes.”

And the desire for ‘Glalking’ holidays is music to the ears of stylish attractions within Pennine Yorkshire, which are increasingly seeing younger, more urban guests visiting the area.

Ray Capeling, owner of Ashmount Country House in Haworth, added: “Recently, we have seen a real shift in booking habits with more and more people asking us to recommend popular bars and restaurants in the region, whereas previously the majority just wanted information on tea shops, cosy pubs and museums.

“Traditionally, we have catered for older markets, but with the increasing number of boutique clothes shops and wine bars in places like Hebden Bridge, we are seeing a younger more glamorous profile of ‘glalkers’ coming to town.”

Carried out ahead of the launch of Pennine Yorkshire’s bespoke guide to walking and cycling routes, the survey also revealed nearly half (46 per cent) use rural breaks as a way to see parts of the country they wouldn’t usually consider - good news for the region as it builds its reputation as an emerging visitor destination.

Perhaps the most surprising was that men are more image conscious than women when it comes to walking holidays. A third of men (31 per cent) versus a quarter of women (24 per cent) identified the ‘stuffy’ stereotype associated with walkers as the main deterrent to these types of trip.

For more information on ‘Glalking’ or details of what the Pennine Yorkshire region has to offer please visit [www.pennineyorkshire.com/glalking](http://www.pennineyorkshire.com/glalking)

Pennine Yorkshire is supported by the official tourism agency for the region – Welcome to Yorkshire – [www.yorkshire.com](http://www.yorkshire.com) and is the destination marketing campaign covering the honeypot towns of Hebden Bridge, Haworth and Holmfirth.

\*Research was carried out on behalf of Pennine Yorkshire in January 2010 by YourSayPays, a research panel operated by The Leadership Factor. A national sample of 1,000 people were polled.

**Ends**

**Notes to Editors:**

- The **West Yorkshire Tourism Partnership** is the official tourism body for West Yorkshire. **Pennine Yorkshire** is an initiative from the West Yorkshire Tourism Partnership, comprising five local authorities: Bradford, Kirklees, Calderdale, Leeds and Wakefield.
- **West Yorkshire Tourism Partnership** is supported by Welcome to Yorkshire and Yorkshire Forward – The Regional Development Agency. Yorkshire Forward funds Welcome to Yorkshire, which is charged with improving the Yorkshire and Humber visitor economy

**Key facts include:**

- **Pennine Yorkshire** is at the geographical heart of the UK, easily accessed by the M1, A1 and M62
- **Pennine Yorkshire** provides something to do for all, from outdoor pursuits in moorland locations to cultural and educational museums and gardens. It boasts a diverse range of attractions from rural scenery and industrial heritage; to trendy market towns and local nostalgia

**For further information:**

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