

Healing our hedgerows



Linnet (female)



Yellowhammer



TRADITIONAL field boundaries in the National Park provide a livestock barrier between fields but also offer an insight into the past land use of the area as well as being a valuable habitat for wildlife.

Hedgerows and scrubby areas provide welcome cover, nesting sites and foraging areas for much of our wildlife and farmland birds such as yellowhammer, linnet and tree sparrow which would struggle to survive here without these features.

Hundreds of miles of walls and hedgerows exist within the North York Moors and it can be an expensive and time consuming business keeping them in good condition. Thankfully the introduction of Natural England's Environmental Stewardship schemes has seen payments introduced to help with the upkeep and repair.

In addition, along the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast, a National Park Authority initiative to target and restore hedgerows has been underway for the last two years. To date, over four and a half miles of hedgerow alongside the Cleveland Way National Trail to the north of Whitby has had gaps filled in.

The general mix of species used is 70% hawthorn with a 30% mix of blackthorn, holly, field maple and crab apple. Contractors have been employed to undertake the work, providing an added incentive for the landowners and tenants concerned.

John Beech, Coastal Projects Officer with the Authority, said: "This project helps landowners repair these valuable landscape features and we are already noticing a difference with the vast majority of the planting being successful. We've covered most of the boundaries between Staithes and Whitby and are hoping to roll this project out again in other areas of the coast over the winter months."

Funding for the project is being drawn from the Authority's Landscape Intervention Fund, an internal pot of money set aside for large projects that will have a positive impact on the landscape of the North York Moors National Park.

HOW ARE WE PERFORMING?

THE AUTHORITY continues to set itself demanding targets and works hard to maintain high levels of customer service and performance. The table below gives a snapshot of how we are performing against selected 'Headline Indicators'. Further information on our performance and how we have improved our services can be found on our website.

Indicator	Our target 2009/2010*	Performance April-Sept 2009	Status
Customer Service Standards for:	98%	98%	●
• Telephone calls answered personally within 5 rings			
• Written correspondence answered within 10 working days	98%	99%	●
Percentage of our meetings and events accessible by public transport	80%	88%	●
• Planning applications determined in 8 weeks	77%	78%	●
• Minor applications determined within 8 weeks	72%	68%*	●
• Other applications determined within 8 weeks	83%	84%	●
• Percentage of planning appeals dismissed (4 year rolling average)	75%	62%**	●
Area of the National Park managed in line with the Authority's conservation objectives	113,800ha	Calculated annually	—
Footpaths & other public rights of way:	85%	79%***	●
• That are easy to use by the public			
• That are signposted where they leave a road	90%	90%	●
Percentage satisfaction rating for users of 'promoting understanding' services.	88%	New indicator Data not yet available	—

* The minor applications category covers retail and industrial developments which generally require consideration by the Planning Committee. This can have an affect on the timeliness of determining an application. Encouragingly performance is improving.

** Increased resources and effort have been put into appeal submissions and representation at hearings in the first half of this year. As this figure is based on a four year rolling average there is a time lag before improvements in performance are reflected in this indicator.

*** Rights of way surveys take place in May and November each year. The performance figure has been calculated using a rolling average value calculated from November 2008 and May 2009 data. A detailed analysis will be available in November 09 once the survey has been completed.

Your Feedback

We value all customer feedback and carefully monitor your comments, complaints and compliments. We are delighted that the number of compliments received for the first half of this year rose by 34% compared to the same period last year (from 73 to 98). Thank you to everyone who contacted us.

In the first half of this year, we are pleased to report that the number of complaints about our services fell by 30% compared with the same period last year. Between April and September, 21 complaints were registered: two complaints are still under investigation but of the 19 complaints where investigations were concluded, 10 were found to be justified or partially justified and nine were found to be unsubstantiated.

NEWS IN BRIEF



Discovery Photography

Christmas Craft Fairs

GET Christmas all wrapped up by popping along to one of our seasonal craft fairs. There will be lots of stalls selling a range of food, crafts and gifts as well as children's activities and a visit from Father Christmas. The Christmas Craft Fair is at The Moors National Park Centre, Danby on 28 and 29 November and at Sutton Bank National Park Centre on 5 and 6 December between 10.30am and 4.30pm.

Wildlife exhibition

LOCAL artist, Andrew Hutchinson, has successfully exhibited all over the world and from 1 December to 12 January you can see some of his beautiful illustrations of wildlife and other animals at The Moors National Park Centre's Inspired by... Gallery.



PARISH FORUM CORNER

A joint meeting of the four parish forums was held on 4 August at Sneaton Castle Centre and was attended by representatives from 37 parish and town councils.

Philip Benham, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway's General Manager, gave a presentation on the history, management and future projects of the railway and talked about the current fundraising efforts to raise money for Bridge 30 which lies just north of Goathland station.

There was a presentation on the performance of the Moorsbus service and a discussion about the possibility of joint insurance for parish councils within the North York Moors National Park. The National Park Authority has agreed to look into this and write to parish councils with its findings.

Dates for next meetings:
COASTAL 1 February 2010
 Hawsker Methodist School Room
WESTERN 9 February 2010
 Whorlton Village Hall

NORTHERN 18 February 2010
 Sleights Village Hall
SOUTHERN 23 February 2010
 Hutton Buscel Village Hall.

All meetings start at 7pm.

Although these meetings are chiefly a way for the parish councils to discuss matters with the Authority, they are open to the public. At least one Director and frequently the Chief Executive will be present as well as Members of the Authority.

You are very welcome to come along and ask a question - though advanced notice of these will help us to give a full answer.



PLEASE HELP US TO HELP YOU -
Tell us what you think!

We hope you have enjoyed reading Moors Messenger

Please tell us how satisfied you are with Moors Messenger

1 2 3 4 5 6
 ☹ Very poor poor good excellent ☺

How much has your understanding of what is special about this National Park increased as a result of reading Moors Messenger?

1 2 3 4 5 6
 ☹ Very poor poor good excellent ☺

Which articles have you found most interesting/useful?

Please return to Rachel McIntosh, FREEPOST RSEE-CGYS-LXYT, NYMNP, The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley YO62 5BP. You can also email your answers to info@northyorkmoors-mpa.gov.uk or fill in the form online at www.moors.uk.net/moorsmessenger

Please return the form by 31 December 2009