

North York Moors National Park Authority

Finance, Risk, Audit and Standards Committee

1 September 2026

Item 12, External Funding and Project Progress

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To update Members on the work currently being undertaken, as at 30 June 2026, to secure external funding which will help support the Authority's Business Plan priorities.

2. External funding position

- 2.1 Figure 1 below illustrates the total value of funding awarded each year to the end of Q1 2026/27. It is important to note that the figures represent the total funding awarded in that year, although the actual funding may be distributed over the duration of each project, as shown in Figure 2 (see paragraph 2.8). This provides an overview of the Authority's external funding performance, and the success achieved by teams involved in securing funding across the Authority.

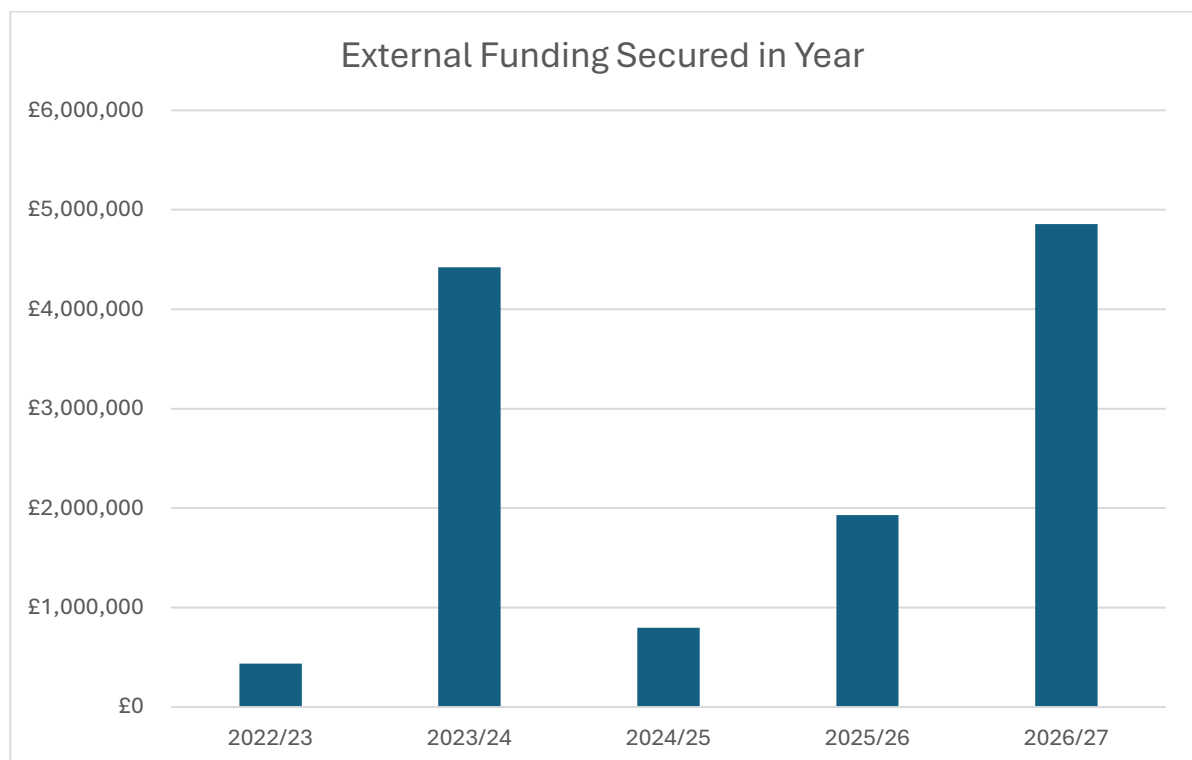


Figure 1

2.2 Funding applications submitted to end of Q1 2026/27 and awaiting a decision:

Project title	Description	Funder(s)	Partners	Staffing implications	Total grant value (£)	Status
Linking Levisham	To establish a flagship site of national importance for landscape-scale nature recovery and climate resilience within a working and culturally rich landscape. Further details in 2.7 below.	Defra's Landscape Recovery Programme (Round 2) - Project Implementation Phase	Forestry England North Yorkshire Moors Railway Yorkshire Wildlife Trust Ministry of Defence - RAF Fylingdales Natural England Land Mangers and Licensees Historic England.	15 members of staff and trainees	£56.5 million (95% Natural England/Defra, 5% match funding)	Following completion of the 2-year Project Development Phase, funded by the £701,910 Landscape Recovery grant, the submission for the 20 year Project Implementation Phase was sent in April. The first stage, a completeness check, has been received and a response submitted. The assessment panel met at the end of July and the outcome is expected in early August. Subject to a positive decision, the project will then enter an Assurance Phase and then a Negotiation Phase. Expected to take up to 12 months.
East Cleveland Flood Alleviation Project	To facilitate enhancement of access, wildlife and water quality in the Skinningrove catchment, including the north of the North York Moors National Park.	Northumbrian Water Group – Blue Spaces Programme	Environment Agency, Tees Valley Wildlife Trust, Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council and Tees Community Forest	Full time project manager and part time engagement officer.	£98,959.21	Application written by the Authority, with Tees Valley Wildlife Trust the accountable body if the funding is successful as fund is open to charitable organisations. Submission sent in April 2026, with notification in September.

2.3 Project proposals recently funded

Project title	Description	Funder(s)	Partners	Staffing implications	Total grant value
Natural Health Service – a Protected Landscapes active travel behaviour change programme	An innovative behaviour-change programme within four protected landscapes enabling walking, wheeling and public transport use to create healthier, more active communities across the region	Active Travel Fund – York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority	North York Moors Trust, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority, Howardian Hills National Landscape, Nidderdale National Landscape	2 full time Facilitators and 4 part time Engagement Officers based within partner organisations	£499,924
North York Moors Inclusive Active Travel Programme	Improving accessibility on the Cinder Track by removing barriers and introducing adaptive bikes, enabling more people of all abilities to enjoy inclusive, active travel from June 2026 to January 2028.	Active Travel Fund – York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority	Whitby and Esk Valley Active Travel group, Experience Community, North Yorkshire Council	-	£130,635
Targeting INNS Sources in the Esk and Coastal Streams Catchment	INNS survey in the Esk and Coastal Streams Catchment. July 2026 to September 2029	Yorkshire Water - INNS control and rapid response fund	Esk and Coastal Streams Catchment	-	£7,500
Explorer Volunteer Scheme	Monthly outdoor learning and conservation sessions for children and their families aged 4–11 from areas of deprivation surrounding the National Park (including Scarborough). April 2026 to August 2026.	Ganton Education Trust	-	Part time Family Explorer post to continue	£5,000
Education Travel	To support the costs of travel for groups who find these costs a barrier to visiting with a priority to those schools with higher levels of free school meals	AJ Bell Futures Foundation Travel Fund - NPP	-	-	£14,400

Project title	Description	Funder(s)	Partners	Staffing implications	Total grant value
Coast to Coast nature corridor (Pre-development)	To transform the Coast to Coast into a vital corridor for nature recovery, connecting communities and landscapes to deliver lasting biodiversity and resilience. This 12 month pre-development phase grant will support the project to undertake community and stakeholder engagement, develop project governance structures, collate research, mapping and evidence of habitat and species data to inform delivery and research private financing opportunities. This phase will then inform a full development and delivery phase project.	National Lottery Heritage Fund	Accountable body is the Lake District National Park Authority. 4 Protected landscapes, National Trails UK and Local Authorities that the C2C National Trail passes through	-	£199,587. No allocation to NYMNPA in this pre- development phase, but the North York Moors National Park Authority will have an allocation of funding in the future delivery phase.
Local Plan	To support the implementation of new planning systems and executing local plan updates to March 2027.	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government - Local Plan Implementation Funding	-	-	£108,474.57
Wildlife Rich Habitat Fund (FiPL)	A new ring-fenced grant scheme, alongside FiPL, designed to accelerate the creation of wildlife-rich habitat within protected landscapes to support delivery of the Environmental Improvement Plan and Local Nature Recovery Strategies.	Defra	-	-	£300,000 in 2026/27, £485,000 in 2026/7 and 2027/8

2.4 Project proposals for the Wildfire Recovery funded (since August 2025)

Project Description	Funder(s)	Partners	Staffing implications	Total grant value
Moor to Restore: Fylingdales Moor and High Farndale Peatland Restoration to March 2027	Natural England - Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme	Yorkshire Peat Partnership and land managers.	Continuation of existing Project Manager and Project Officer.	£4,279,676 in total, including £109,000 for restoration of peatland on High Farndale outside of the wildfire site area.
Conservation work in the Esk and Coastal Streams Catchment and reduce run off from northern firebreaks.	Environment Agency Water Environment Improvement Fund - capital funding 2026/27	Esk and Coastal Streams Catchment Partnership	-	£132,500
Wildfire awareness campaign - support for Responsible Tourism marketing Campaign	North Yorkshire Council	-	-	£10,000
Beacon of the arts - Three new Seasonal Arts & Culture Festivals in 2026 designed to re-energise tourism following the wildfire.	Best of British Fund with Airbnb	North York Moors National Park Arts and Culture Partnership	-	£25,000
Procurement of a specialist drone, sensors, software, and training to build regional capacity for post-wildfire archaeological survey and monitoring from December 2025 to March 2026.	Historic England	-	Secondment for 2 part time members of staff	£100,000
Rapid assessment, erosion/runoff mitigation to end of March 2026.	Environment Agency – Local Water Environment Grant	Yorkshire Peat Partnership	-	£30,000
Firebreak reinstatement Research and Development mitigation to end of March 2026.	Natural England – Protected Landscape Funding	-	-	£20,000
Emissions reduction, peat stabilization, contractors, project manager/coordination of wildfire activities mitigation to end of December 2026.	York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority Net Zero Underspend	-	12-month secondment	£292,144

2.5 Funding applications in development as of 30 June 2026

Funder and project name	Project Description	Partners	Staffing implications	Indicative funding amount	Application Progress
The National Lottery Heritage Fund – Landscape Connections: Moor Connected:	This is a resubmission of the 2025 rejected application. Over 10 years the project will rebuild resilient ecological networks that connect habitats, reconnect people with nature, and connect communities together—particularly those most disconnected from the experience.	Buglife, Tees Valley Nature Partnership, National Trust, Yorkshire Marine Nature Partnership and Howardian Hills National Landscape, North York Moors Trust	3 FTEs in 2-year development phase and multidisciplinary core team in 8-year delivery phase.	£10,000,000	EOI was approved by the Heritage Fund and a full application is being developed for a submission in November 2026.
The National Lottery Community Fund – UK Fund: Our Natural Futures	Over 3 years the project will scale up the Young Rangers and Youth Voice models which have been successful in some National Parks. Accountable body will be the Yorkshire Dales National Park.	Delivery partnership of all 15 National Parks.	1 x FT Project Officer for each NP.	£3m overall with an allocation of circa £165,000 for NYMNPA	EOI sent in April 2026, interview with the Lottery set for July, outcome within 12 weeks.
National Lottery Heritage Fund: Tomorrow's Stewards	Building on 2 previous projects – a UK wide programme to support children's connection to nature from May 2027 to July 2030.	Field Studies Council, YHA, NPA's in England, Scotland and Wales, National Landscapes Association, Girlguiding, Scouts, and The Outward Bound Trust	For the NYMNPA - Part time project officer and a part time trainee	£11.1m, allocation of £121,773 for NYMNPA.	Co-written by all UK National Parks and partners but project enquiry submitted by the YHA – now through to full application stage for submission in November 2026. Field Studies Council have taken over the role of lead body due to lack of capacity within YHA.

2.6 Externally funded projects update: Applications that have been unsuccessful to end of Q1 2026/27

Project title	Description	Funder(s)	Partners	Rejection reason	Grant value
Artist-led creative workshops for secondary-aged young people	As a delivery partner, designing and delivering an inclusive creative programme for secondary-aged young people facing social, economic and geographic disadvantages	YNYCA Cultural Passport programme	North York Moors National Park Arts and Culture Partnership	Competition for funding. We are resubmitting in the next round 2027.	£10,000

2.7 Linking Levensham

2.7.1 Following the completion of the 2-year Project Development Phase, the Project Implementation Phase application was submitted to Natural England in April 2026.

The proposal seeks support for a 20-year landscape-scale agreement covering 2,803 hectares, with a total project value of £56.5 million.

The project vision is to establish a flagship site of national importance for landscape-scale nature recovery and climate resilience within a working and culturally rich landscape.

A comprehensive Project Management and Governance Plan has been developed, with the North York Moors National Park Authority acting as the single legal entity. Strategic oversight would be provided through a Scheme Board comprising all landowners, including the North York Moors National Park Authority, Forestry England, the Ministry of Defence/Defence Infrastructure Organisation, the North Yorkshire Moors Railway and the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, this would be supported by a Land Manager Forum. The project delivery team would comprise of 15 staff and trainees.

The Business And Blended Finance Model identifies £56.5 million of delivery costs excluding inflation. The funding model is based on 95% support from Natural England/Defra, with 5% secured from other funding sources (Section 106 funding, the Carbon Negative Challenge Fund) and project funding. During the implementation phase, the partnership intends to secure additional private investment, with a particular focus on grant funding, philanthropy and corporate social responsibility opportunities.

The proposed Land Management Plan places ecosystem function at the forefront of the project's ambitions. Management activity initially focuses on restoring and enhancing natural processes, with increasing scope over time for habitats to develop, self-regulate and achieve a more natural balance across the landscape. Ongoing management would be informed by comprehensive monitoring and evaluation. Key interventions include the following:

1. Reduction in the number and intensity of sheep grazing, and a transition to predominately mixed species herbivory, including cattle grazing, alongside ponies and pigs.
2. Transition towards more diverse and structurally complex forests using Low Impact Silvicultural Systems and extensive herbivory, with increased areas of broadleaf woodland, scrub and wooded heath.
3. Expansion of areas of species rich grassland, supporting a range of rare species.
4. Restoration and enhancement of areas of wet heath and degraded blanket bog
5. Increase in the canopy cover of trees outside of woodland habitats, restoring ecosystem connectivity and successional dynamism at a landscape-scale.

6. Increase in veteran trees and deadwood habitats.
7. No heather burning except for where necessary for wildfire prevention/control.
8. Wetter habitats, with restored hydrological functioning across the project's landscapes.

Collectively, these measures are expected to deliver a diverse mosaic of habitats that support greater biodiversity abundance, increase resilience to climate change and support viable land uses.

The Monitoring and Evaluation Plan has been designed around the project vision and Theory of Change. Two primary impacts have been identified: the creation of a more connected mosaic of thriving and abundant biodiversity that is resilient and adaptable to climate change, and people are connected to the place and are part of the story. Delivery will be supported through an evaluation framework and reporting database that sets out evaluation questions, indicators, baseline information and forecasting measures.

A detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan has also been developed, incorporating a Land Manager Support Programme, Education Programme, Events Programme, Volunteering Programme and Interpretation Programme. Alongside these activities, the Site Access Plan includes enhancements to existing access infrastructure, creation of new access opportunities, enhancements to support land management activities such as farming and forestry, and improved connections to wider transport and sustainable travel networks.

Following submission, the development phase has three further phases before implementation. The first stage, a completeness check, has been received and a response submitted. The assessment panel met at the end of July and the outcome is expected in early August. Subject to a positive decision, the project will then enter an Assurance Phase, involving detailed scrutiny of deliverables and clarification questions, followed by a Negotiation Phase, through which a bespoke implementation agreement would be developed. The timescales for these stages remain uncertain but are currently expected to take approximately nine to twelve months.

- 2.8 Figure 2 below shows the spend profile for all externally funded projects across the 5-year Business Plan period to highlight progress towards the funding target, updated to end of Q1 2026/27.

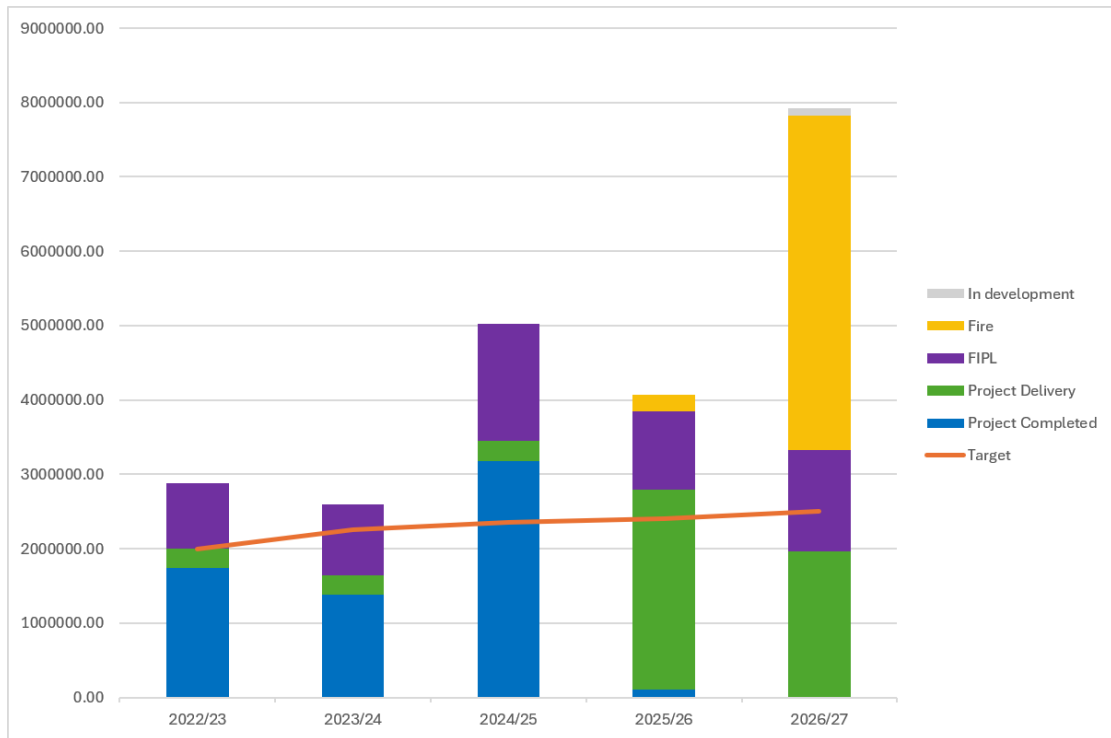


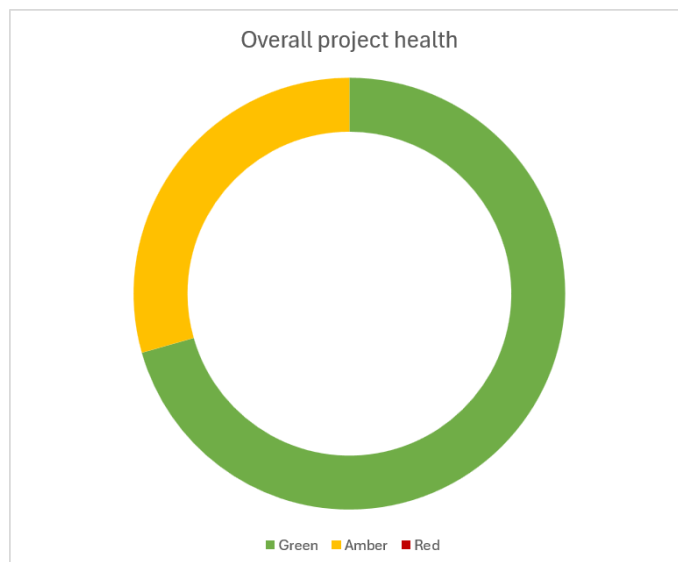
Figure 2

The graph details the following:

- The target line, set to increase up to £2.5m by the end of the Business Plan period (2026/27).
- Details of externally funded projects which are now complete (blue).
- Projects being delivered with secured external funding (green), plus confirmed FIPL (purple).
- External Funding applications submitted and awaiting a decision and projects currently being developed in our pipeline as a priority (grey).
- Wildfire funding separated out from Project Delivery to highlight levels of secured funding for recovery (yellow).

2.9 Further progress has been made in securing and developing projects for the new business plan period and 2026/7. The emerging programme now includes sufficient projects with confirmed funding, or very strong assurances of award, to exceed the funding target for that year, reflecting the strength and maturity of the current project pipeline.

3. Project Delivery health check



3.1 Figure 4 summarises the distribution of project health across the 2026/27 Quarter 1 programme portfolio. 16 projects are included in the latest base data, of which 11 are rated Green, 5 are rated Amber and none are rated Red. This means that 69% of projects are currently assessed as Green and 31% as Amber. The revised position removes the previous Red escalation, but the higher number of Amber-rated projects means the section should retain a clear exception-led focus.

3.2 The portfolio therefore remains mostly on track, with no projects currently rated Red. However, five Amber-rated projects require active management during the next quarter: GrubsUp!, Wildfire Recovery, Barrier removal works, REConnect and the Explorer Volunteer Scheme. The principal issues relate to programme timing, permissions and consenting, stakeholder management, resource capacity, partner coordination, compensation risk and recruitment of participant families.

Portfolio health summary

RAG rating	Project count	Share of portfolio	Reporting interpretation
Green	12	71%	Delivery is broadly on track, although some Green projects still have sub-risks that should be monitored.
Amber	5	29%	Specific risks require active management, clear mitigation and, in some cases, sponsor oversight.
Red	0	0%	No projects are currently rated Red
Total	16	100%	The portfolio remains mostly Green, but Amber exception reporting levels are higher than in the previous quarter.

Amber exception focus

3.3 Five projects require Amber exception reporting in the Q1 update. None are currently rated Red overall, but each has a specific issue that should be tracked through the next quarter. The narrative should explain the risk, confirm the mitigation already underway and identify where sponsor support or management oversight may be needed.

Project	Overall status	Current issue	Mitigation/support required
GrubsUp!	Amber	The project has significant delivery pressure around the species-rich grassland element because of the late EIA requirement and the short seasonal window for green-hay delivery. Stakeholder relationships around meadow creation have become strained, and resource limitations are affecting landowner engagement and timely preparation of proposals and agreements.	Continue sponsor and management oversight, pursue the requested project extension to encompass next summer, maintain communication with stakeholders and Natural England, and progress the internal departmental action plan on resourcing and delivery priorities.
Wildfire Recovery	Amber	Funding is secured and procurement is complete subject to execution, but the project has experienced a four-week slippage against the contractor's proposed timetable. Key risks relate to Natural England consenting and land management agreements with the Estate and Court Leet.	Use the available programme buffer, develop a phased consent approach with Natural England and the contractor team, and maintain dialogue with the estate and graziers on burning constraints, access and contingency arrangements.
Barrier removal works	Amber	The original Staithes barrier works were completed within budget, but rectification works are required because of HGV access issues. Compensation discussions with the land agent remain unresolved and create schedule, budget and stakeholder risk.	Continue close communication with the landowner and agent, progress rectification works within available resources, request evidence of income loss before any compensation decision, and retain sponsor and legal support through to project closure.
REConnect	Amber	The project is on track and achieving targets, but there are budget, stakeholder and resource pressures. Partner underspend, inconsistent partner-side capacity and limited dedicated project management capacity are creating risks to delivery pace, coordination and confidence.	Review project management capacity for REConnect and the Catchment Partnership, clarify partner roles and decision-making, maintain regular partner meetings and consider budget-management options that allow partners to manage quarterly underspend more directly.
Explorer Volunteer Scheme - Two Ridings funding	Amber	The project has struggled to recruit new families, although previous families are engaging to some extent. Schedule and outcome risks remain because further family recruitment is needed.	Continue active recruitment, adapt session dates to ensure all sessions can be delivered within the funded period, and encourage previous families to bring friends or new participants.

Delivery highlights and positive progress

3.4 Delivery highlights and positive progress

The Green-rated projects continue to provide evidence of delivery progress, mobilisation and positive engagement. However, the Q1 base data also shows that some Green projects have Amber sub-risks in budget, stakeholder relationships or resources.

Beacon for the Arts (wildfire) is rated Green. The project has seen good engagement from the North York Moors Arts and Culture Partnership, with events delivered across the spring and summer series. Social media activity is performing well, including a dedicated Instagram page with more than 200 followers and one post reaching nearly 7,000 views. A business toolkit is also being issued to the NYM Tourism Network, and York St John University is carrying out evaluation activity.

Active Travel (Active Travel England) is rated Green and is in early delivery. The Active Travel Officer is now in post, project scoping, schedule and risk-log work are close to completion, and early stakeholder meetings are helping to shape the governance structure. The next visible milestone is preparation of the first invitation to quote.

Championing National Parks for Everyone (Mosaic) is rated Green and is entering the final couple of months for local project staff. Community Champions have attended a celebration residential in the Lake District with champions from the Peak District and Yorkshire Dales. The budget may underspend against the original allocation, so spend profiling through to the end of engagement delivery in August 2026 should be kept under review.

National Trails - Wolds and Cleveland Way is rated Green. Regular maintenance is continuing, capital projects are being planned, partner conversations have been positive and funding offers are being prepared. The developing arrangement for the apprentice to deliver maintenance work on behalf of NYC on the Wolds Way is also a positive operational development.

Local Plan is rated Green. The initial scoping consultation and call for sites was issued on 29 July 2026, providing a clear Q1 milestone and confirming that the project is progressing to schedule, budget and outcome expectations.

Tramper Extension is also rated green. Constraints checks have been completed, including the tree survey. The draft for permissive footpath agreement has been progressed with ROW Officer.

Projects in active delivery

- 3.5 Several Green-rated projects are in active delivery but include points that should be kept visible in management reporting. These are not currently overall Amber, but they contain budget, stakeholder or resource issues that could become more significant if not monitored.

Linking Levisham (Development Phase) is rated Green overall, following submission to Defra in April and a response to the completeness check in early July. However, the project has Amber budget and resource sub-risks. Forecasting remains dependent on Defra and ALB timescales, and staffing changes have reduced project capacity. Further escalation may be required next quarter if the impact on delivery becomes clearer.

Barrier removal works is now included in the Amber exception table. The key reporting point is that rectification works are being progressed, but compensation discussions and stakeholder fatigue need close management through to project closure.

National Trails - Coast to Coast is rated Green overall. A proposed work plan has been submitted for ongoing maintenance of the Coast to Coast path, and a one-year project is being developed to improve the fire-damaged path at Greystone Hills. The fire-site works may be slightly under-costed, so the project is exploring synergies with the wider fire recovery programme and a reduced delivery option that still meets National Trail quality requirements.

Restoring Roseberry is progressing against a revised delivery schedule. The project remains expected to achieve agreed outcomes, but the revised schedule should remain visible in future reporting until final milestone dates are confirmed.

Partnership, engagement and participation

- 3.6 The portfolio includes several projects where progress is evidenced through partnership working, engagement activity and preparation for wider participation outcomes.

River Esk Connect (REConnect) is progressing as planned. The steering group has been convened, farmer knowledge-exchange events have taken place, and family engagement activities, including Danby in the Dark, were delivered this quarter. This project merits a fuller paragraph in the final version because there is concrete quarterly activity to report.

Youth Voice Mentoring is in an active mobilisation and partnership-development phase. Preparation and engagement work is underway, including links to the Youth Voice Conference for the UK and Ireland through Europarc networks. Future reporting should clarify the next engagement milestones and measures of youth participation.

Mobilisation and planning

- 3.7 Several newer funded projects are currently in mobilisation. These projects are Green-rated, but have not yet moved into full delivery. The main focus of the health check has been on how funding awards are being converted into delivery plans, roles, milestones, resource commitments and governance arrangements.

Bransdale CNCF, Raisdale CNCF and Shallow Peat CNCF are all developing detailed delivery and resource plans.

New Headquarters is on schedule and budget, and is on track to deliver against the outcomes. Internal stakeholder engagement is going well, though community relationships remain an important area of focus.

Managed pressures and local disruption

- 3.8 A small number of Green-rated projects include managed pressures rather than material delivery concerns.

Raiding the Bank remains on target to deliver all outcomes within budget. A modest extension to the delivery date has been agreed to allow wider staff reallocation in support of wildfire recovery. This is a controlled response to wider organisational resource pressure, and not a delivery failure.

National Trails: Coast to Coast remains on track. Minor route diversions near the wildfire area are being developed, indicating a managed response to local disruption while maintaining the wider programme position.

4. Financial and staffing implications

- 4.1 Staffing requirements and resources are assessed as part of the process for each external funding application submission. The implications are dealt with within the body of this report.

5. Contribution to National Park Management Plan

- 5.1 The project contributes to the delivery of multiple objectives within the North York Moors National Park Management Plan 2022-2027. Alignment with the Management Plan is assessed during project development and forms part of the approval process for projects seeking external funding, helping to ensure that all funded activity supports National Park priorities and outcomes.

6. Legal and sustainability implications

- 6.1 None at this stage.

7. Recommendation

- 7.1 That Members note the content of the report and agree the current work being done to secure external funding.
- 7.2 Monitor quarterly progress, especially for pending and opportunity funding, to ensure the Authority's Business Plan objectives are met.

Contact Officers:

Ellen Cross, External Funding Manager

Mark Young, Project Development Manager

01439 772700