SAME GOAL, different approach

A FURTHER round of significant staff redundancy and cuts in operational budgets was implemented this year.

With the value of central government grant now having fallen by 40% from its peak, strenuous efforts continue to be made to find more cost effective ways of delivering our services and get money from new sources. Despite financial woes, we were successful with the North York Moors Tourism Network in achieving a higher national profile for the area.

Our visitor centres, Sutton Bank and the Moors Centre had an excellent year, partly as a result of this and increased sales have helped our income.

We’ve set up a donations page on our website to make it easier for people to support our conservation and access work and were delighted that York Brewery became the first to use this facility by donating two pence of every pint of its Moors-ish Ale sold. The limited edition brew used heather from the NYMNPA’s Levisham Estate.

Staying on beer, this year also saw the Cleveland Way National Trail link up with Helmsley Brewing Company on ‘Striding the Riding’, a 4% pale ale inspired by the popular route that horseshoes around the North York Moors. The brewery will make a donation from the sale of each cask to contribute to the upkeep and promotion of the Cleveland Way.

Helmsley Brewing Company was one of the businesses visited by Brandon Lewis MP (Minister of State for Housing & Planning) on a visit to the town to see how the NYMNPA was working proactively with other organisations to support new and existing businesses and to help deliver much needed new housing. We hope to encourage more ministers and senior civil servants to visit the North York Moors to see the valuable contribution this area makes to the wider economy.

The year started with a different but no less important visitor – a specially designed baton to mark the 100th anniversary of the Women’s Institute (WI)! We were delighted to help transport the baton and members of the North Yorkshire East WI Federation from Helmsley to Whitby as part of the local celebrations.

The WI is an integral part of many communities in the North York Moors providing a place for friendship, knowledge and support. We were reminded just how supportive our communities and local businesses are during last year’s Pink Sheep campaign with over 200 wonderful and very imaginative creations springing up across the National Park.

Holiday makers fed back that they’d had great fun visiting new and different places in their quest for more pink sheep!

If you have any comments on this report or any aspect of the NYMNPA’s work, please get in touch at feedback@northyorkmoors.org.uk or call 01439 772700.

The text of this newsletter is also available in large print. Tel: 01439 772700.
Work to raise the profile of the North York Moors nationally and internationally continued in partnership with VisitEngland and VisitBritain. Highlights included a huge image of Sutton Bank at Heathrow Airport and the inclusion of the North York Moors in an advert that aired on Channel 5.

A huge amount of time was devoted to a rigorous examination of the application submitted by York Potash Ltd for a second potash mine in the North York Moors. (As readers will know, Members approved the application subject to condition and legal agreements etc on 30 June 2015).

Thanks to grants from the NYMNPA and others, last year saw 21 buildings in the North York Moors removed from the at risk register including the Grade 1 listed Ionic Temple in Duncombe Park.

Wildlife, communities, historic buildings, traditional boundaries and businesses all benefited from a range of grants given out by the NYMNPA. Funding from the Community Grant helped bring the big screen to the picturesque dale of Farndale by contributing to sound and visual equipment for the Farndale Film Club.

The WREN-funded project to carry out habitat improvement on the river Esk came to an end. Over the three years of the project we worked with volunteers and 36 farms to carry out 21,890 metres of riverbank fencing and to plant 1,765 trees. Funding recently obtained from BIFFA Award and People’s Postcode Lottery will enable us to continue this vital work.

To celebrate National Apprenticeship Week, apprentices from the NYMNPA and Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council swapped jobs to showcase the advantages of their respective training programmes. Our apprentices, both office-based and in the field, continue to deliver immeasurable benefits. Tasks completed this year include helping the Forestry Commission with its Gruffalo trail and resurfacing the daffodil path at Farndale. The NYMNPA was made an Apprenticeship Ambassador by the National Apprenticeship Service.

We launched our new website which has seen an increase of 33% in unique page visits compared to its predecessor. The site includes a great deal of new content aimed at both staying and day visitors including downloadable walks and cycle rides, a nature calendar and events calendar. Our social media presence grew considerably and we now have over 10,000 followers on Twitter putting us in the top four most followed UK National Parks.

Our aim to instil a love and understanding of the natural world in local youngsters continued through our education service and Explorer volunteering club. The latter saw children from the 1st Marston Moor Scout troop undertake a range of conservation tasks to achieve a John Muir Trust Discovery Award.

Staff from the NYMNPA, Forestry Commission and North Yorkshire Police teamed up for an action day to tackle illegal off-roading in the North York Moors. Action days are just part of our joint efforts to prevent trail bikes and 4x4 vehicles ruining footpaths and bridleways in the National Park and spoiling enjoyment of the area for other people.

We have joined forces with the Yorkshire Esk Rivers Trust to form the Esk & Coastal Streams Catchment Partnership that will pool knowledge and resources to improve and safeguard the river Esk’s valuable ecosystems. The Esk is home to the critically endangered freshwater pearl mussel but also a host of other wildlife including Atlantic salmon, otters and dippers.

A huge amount of work was carried out by the National Park Volunteer Services with over 12,000 days worked through the year. A new group of volunteers to monitor grassland was set up. Volunteers will be making visits to record the variety of species to see if changes need to be made to the grazing or cutting regimes. They will be looking out for species such as yellow rattle, orchids and crested dog’s tail. It is hoped these surveys, along with appropriate tweaks to the site management, will increase the number of plant species.
A second excavation at Roulston Scar, one of the largest hill-forts in the North of England, has been undertaken to enhance our understanding of the nature and scale of the defences there.

Work has continued with landowners and managers to improve habitat connectivity in over 70% of the ‘gaps’ identified as target areas to enhance the strategic connections in the ‘wildlife super highways’ across the National Park.

Staff have continued to work with owners of ancient woodland which has been planted with conifers to enhance the existing ecological and historic features whilst restoring predominantly native tree cover. Assistance has also been given to land managers to encourage woodland creation. Funding from the Environment Agency was secured for the planting of 29 ha of new native woodland.

The NYMNPA has retained its Customer Service Excellence status remaining fully compliant on all 57 criteria and keeping its six compliance plus categories. We added an additional compliance plus category in ‘Staff Professionalism and Attitude’ which covers how staff deliver customer-focused activities.

The NYMNPA was granted £455,000 from the Coastal Communities Fund for a project to showcase the natural, fishing, artistic and culinary heritage of villages between Saltburn and Cloughton. The ‘Sea Life, See Life’ will see a range of initiatives to benefit businesses and communities and enhance the visitor experience in these picturesque villages. The Coastal Communities Fund is funded by the Government, with income from the Crown Estate’s marine assets.

Our moorland wading birds survey returned promising results with the number of golden plover recorded at its highest level for 18 years. There was no further decline in breeding lapwing (pictured) and populations of curlew seemed to be holding steady, bucking a national declining trend.

An app to survey buildings at risk in the North York Moors was awarded the runner-up prize in the Campaign for National Parks’ Park Protector Award. Developed by the NYMNPA with funding from English Heritage, the app has speeded up the collection and recording of information about our historic buildings. Time is often of the essence in taking measures to bring these national treasures off the ‘at risk’ register.
Having secured £2.3 million of Government and European funding to deliver a second North York Moors Coast and Hills LEADER Programme, we will work with communities and businesses to grant-aid local initiatives. We received the third highest allocation out of 80 programmes nationwide awarded funding for the new LEADER Programme which will run from 2015 to 2020.

- We will continue to work with partner organisations on plans that will shape planning decisions. These include the Helmsley Plan (finalised) that identifies a number of sites for housing and employment development in the town and the Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan (in development).

- The Planning team will be maintaining a close dialogue with the Department of Energy & Climate Change (DECC), other National Parks, objectors and gas exploration companies for both conventional and ‘fracking’ gas exploration to enable the potential environmental implications for the Park to be fully assessed.

- We hope to secure additional funding from Historic England for the Monument Management Scheme which, since it began over five years ago, has seen more than 100 Scheduled Monuments (rare and well-preserved archaeological sites) in the North York Moors removed from the ‘at risk’ register.

- We will implement the new and ambitious Volunteer Strategy which aims to open up opportunities for more and more people to get involved in the work of the National Park Authority.

- Both of our popular National Park Centres will see new attractions open to encourage repeat and new visitors. At Sutton Bank a new creative play area (below) will be developed to provide a place for adventure, challenge and fun for children of all ages while at The Moors National Park Centre, Danby there will be a new riverside trail.

- Our work on the development phase of the ‘This Exploited Land’ (TEL) project will come to an end with the final submission in October to Heritage Lottery Fund Landscape Partnership Programme. If successful, TEL will document, conserve and protect the now fragile remains of the North York Moors’ pioneering ironstone industry.

- We will offer grants for traditional boundaries, community projects and joint tourism initiatives.
Looking forward — 2015 to 2016

- The Authority will commence a new enforcement cost recovery regime. This regime was borne out of the “polluter pays” principle in an attempt to reduce the net cost of planning enforcement work, within the National Park, on the public purse. This is achieved by recovering the costs of the enforcement process from those that wilfully or negligently breach the planning legislation.

- We will increase our income from a mix of retail sales, planning fees, licences, grants and car park charges.

- We will deliver the final pieces in our Missing Links project which has seen improvements made to six bridleways in the Esk Valley that all connect with public transport. The Missing Links Project has been run in partnership with North Yorkshire County Council and has been made possible thanks to funding from the Department for Transport’s Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

- Healthier walks and educational visits for children will continue and we will seek funding for an exciting new outdoor classroom to increase visits during the winter months.

- Continuing on from last year’s very successful Pink Sheep campaign which saw coverage in the Daily Telegraph and on BBC’s Countryfile, we will work with tourism businesses to position the wider North York Moors area as Britain’s Capital of Cake.

- New events such as our first walking and running festivals and an eclectic mix of bands and musicians at The Moors National Park Centre, Danby will be introduced to attract new audiences to the North York Moors.

- We will extend the range of apprenticeships we offer by employing a new Tourism Apprentice at Sutton Bank National Park Centre. Our apprenticeships help young people develop the skills and confidence to find jobs locally, therefore sustaining local communities.

- New events such as our first walking and running festivals and an eclectic mix of bands and musicians at The Moors National Park Centre, Danby will be introduced to attract new audiences to the North York Moors.
### We set high standards of customer service and performance that are measured and monitored through a variety of indicators, including the headline indicators shown below. If you have any suggestions about issues you’d like to see measured, please email them to feedback@northyorkmoors.org.uk or write to the address below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
<th>INDICATOR</th>
<th>2014/15 ACTUAL</th>
<th>TARGET MET</th>
<th>PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ON 2013/14</th>
<th>TARGET 2015/16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Percentage of National Park managed in line with NPA conservation objectives</td>
<td>79% 78%</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net annual change in area of National Park managed in line with NPA conservation objectives</td>
<td>+623ha</td>
<td>+1299ha</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>+1922ha</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation</td>
<td>Percentage of footpaths and other Public Rights of Way:</td>
<td></td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• That are easy to use by the public</td>
<td></td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Signposted where they leave a road</td>
<td>90% 92%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>92%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Visitor services</td>
<td>Satisfaction rating for users of ‘promoting understanding’ services</td>
<td>90% 90%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning</td>
<td>Planning applications determined in a timely manner</td>
<td>80% 80%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>80%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Major applications determined within 13 weeks</td>
<td>60% 50%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minor applications determined within 8 weeks</td>
<td>65% 77%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other applications determined within 8 weeks</td>
<td>80% 82%</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of appeals dismissed (average over 4 years)</td>
<td>67% 50%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Planning cost per head of population</td>
<td>£31.51</td>
<td>£31.07</td>
<td>↑</td>
<td>£30.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Access to our services</td>
<td>Performance for answering:</td>
<td></td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td>98%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Telephone calls personally within 5 rings</td>
<td>98% 97%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>↔</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Correspondence within 10 working days</td>
<td>98% 91%</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percentage of our meetings and events that are accessible by public transport</td>
<td>60% 60%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>↓</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Actual 2014/15

Between April 2014 and March 2015 the NYMNPA spent £6.1 million. The majority of income came from Government with additional funding from external partners such as Natural England, the Heritage Lottery Fund and English Heritage as well as earned income from fees and charges.

*Please note these figures have yet to be audited and may change.*