

# North York Moors National Park Authority

3 October 2016

## Summary of Results from the 2016 Residents' Survey

### 1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an overview of the results from the recently completed Residents' Survey.
- 1.2 To give Members the opportunity to discuss any issues arising from the results of the survey which they may wish to address.

### 2. Background

- 2.1 The National Park Authority has been carrying out regular residents' surveys since 2002. There has been a consistency of approach in asking a number of key questions so that the outcomes can be compared and tracked consistently across the last 14 years.
- 2.2 The aim of the survey is to gauge residents' satisfaction with National Park Authority services. This in turn helps to inform decision making, allocation of resources and improvement of services. In addition more specific questions may be asked to inform particular plans and policies that the National Park Authority is developing. An understanding of customer satisfaction with a range of services is also a key part of the Authority's success in Customer Service Excellence.
- 2.3 In the 2016 survey, questions were asked about residents' priorities for Authority programmes of work, concerns for the future and views on current planning policies. These questions were included to inform the next three year business plan and the initial development stages of a new Local Plan for the National Park

### 3. Method

- 3.1 Hard copies of questionnaires were sent out with the Moors Messenger newsletter to every household (11,800) in the National Park. Respondents could choose to fill in the questionnaire and post it back freepost or fill it in online. Residents were given six weeks over the summer to complete and return the questionnaire. The vast majority (643) of respondents returned hard copies, with 16 respondents filling the questionnaire in online. The data from the hard copies was input into Survey Monkey to facilitate proper analysis of the results.

### 4. Summary of Results

#### 4.1 Respondents

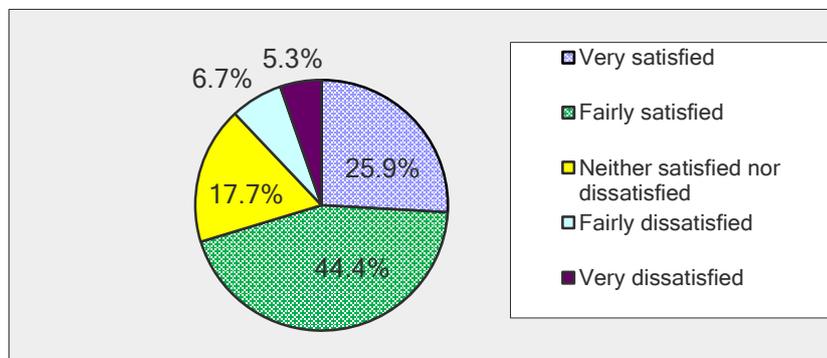
There were 659 responses to the residents' survey, compared with 557 in 2012, which equates to a response rate of 6%. Of these 659 responses, 79% answered the open question about their concerns for the North York Moors. Officers were pleased with the fact that such a large proportion of respondents took the time to answer this question and with the thoughtful, constructive nature of the majority of the responses.

4.2 49% of the respondents were aged over 64, 50% were aged between 25 and 64 and less than 1% were aged under 25. While the last figure may indicate the low number of under 25 year olds who are householders, it does also demonstrate that the Residents' Survey is not an effective vehicle for seeking the views of young people. In addition, 3% of respondents considered themselves to be in a minority ethnic group and 13% considered themselves to have a long standing health issue or disability.

4.3 **Overall Satisfaction**

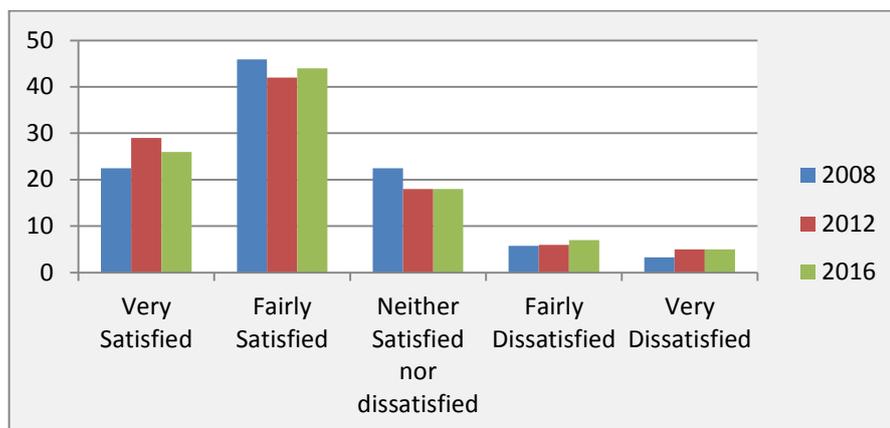
90% of respondents to the survey answered 'yes' to the question of whether they use the Authority's services. Of those people who use the Authority services 74% were satisfied with the service. **All** respondents were asked to rate Authority services whether they use them or not. Taking all of these responses into account 70% of respondents were satisfied with Authority services

**Chart 1. Overall satisfaction with Authority Services**



Over the most recent three surveys (2008, 2012, 2016) this overall satisfaction result has been very consistent with between 69% and 71% of respondents being very or fairly satisfied. The first survey which was undertaken in 2002 was presented slightly differently, but the overall satisfaction rate was comparable at 69%.

**Chart 2. Overall satisfaction rates 2008, 2012, 2016**



#### 4.4 Satisfaction with Individual Services

Respondents were asked to identify the Authority services that they had used in the previous year. The services most used by respondents were footpaths and rights of way (62%) and facilities for visitors (54%). 27% of respondents had used the planning service in the last year.

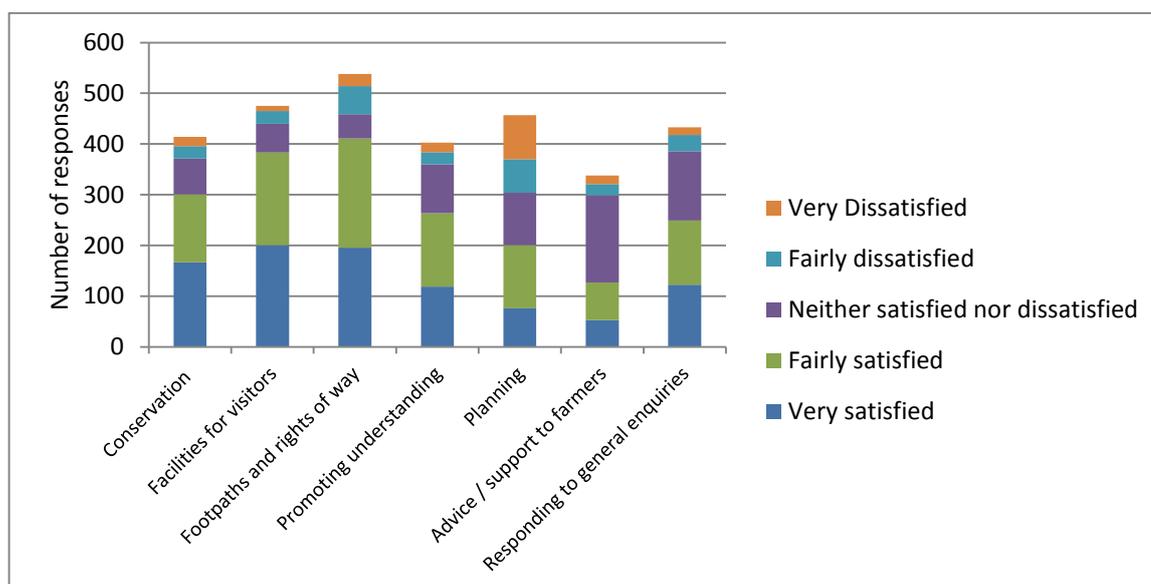
**Table 1. % of respondents using Authority services in the past year**

Service	% Used the service
Conservation (wildlife, habitats, archaeology, buildings)	40
Facilities for visitors	54
Footpaths, public access and other rights of way	62
Promoting understanding of the National Park	25
Planning	27
Advice/support to farmers	12
Responding to general enquiries	30

In terms of satisfaction rates, more than 70% of respondents who rated rights of way and visitor facilities were very / fairly satisfied with the service. 32% of respondents were fairly/very **dissatisfied** with the planning service and 50% of respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with advice and support to farmers. (This 50% is almost identical to the figure in 2002) The table below shows the full set of results.

In the 2002 survey 'net satisfaction' ratings were calculated by subtracting the percentage of dissatisfied respondents from satisfied respondents. In 2002 this 'net satisfaction' was 17% for planning and in the 2016 survey the percentage was 10%. This is the same result as in 2012, ie the fall in satisfaction appears to have bottomed out. It is interesting to contrast this change with the increase in satisfaction from those who have applied for planning permission (data from the 2015 Planning Satisfaction Survey).

**Chart 3. Satisfaction with Authority services**



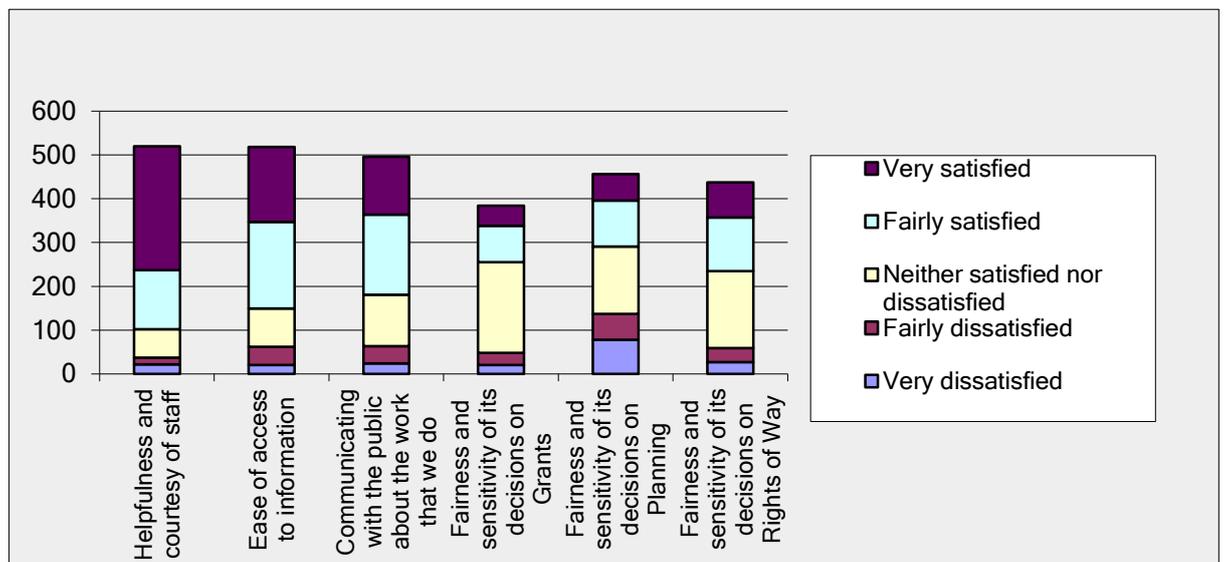
When these figures are analysed by postcode area, there are no particularly marked differences between different locations, indicating no major geographic variations in the results.

#### 4.5 Satisfaction with the Authority’s Approach and Attitude

Respondents were asked to express their levels of satisfaction against a number of statements related to customer service – results are set out below.

Highlights included - 83% of respondents were very/ fairly satisfied with helpfulness and courtesy of staff and 72% of respondents were very / fairly satisfied with ease of access to information. The chart below summarises the full set of results.

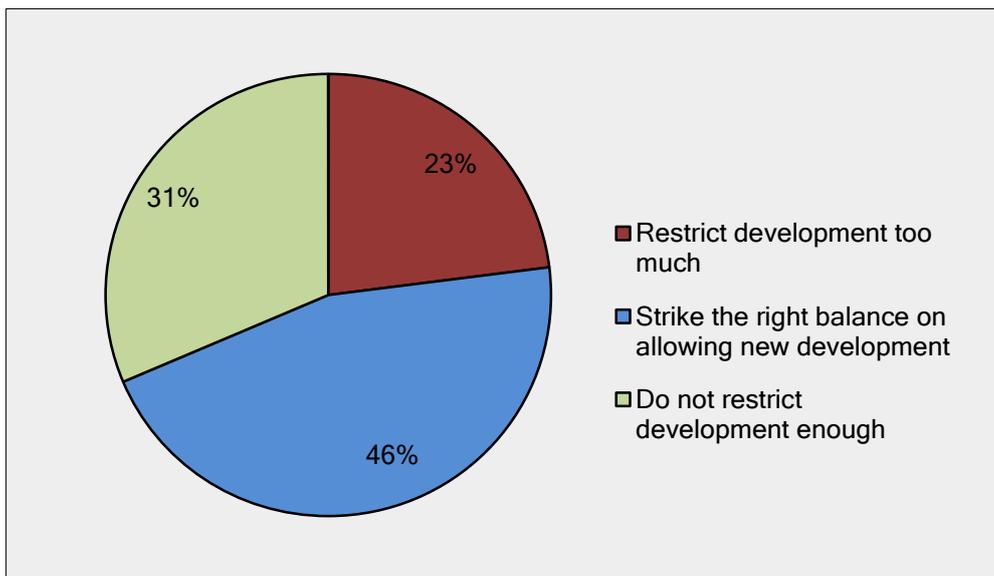
**Chart 4. Satisfaction with Authority’s approach and attitude**



#### 4.6 Question about Local Plan Policies

Respondents were asked to express their opinion on the Authority’s planning policies and the balance they strike on allowing new development, the chart below summarises the responses to this question.

**Chart 5. Current Local Plan Policies**

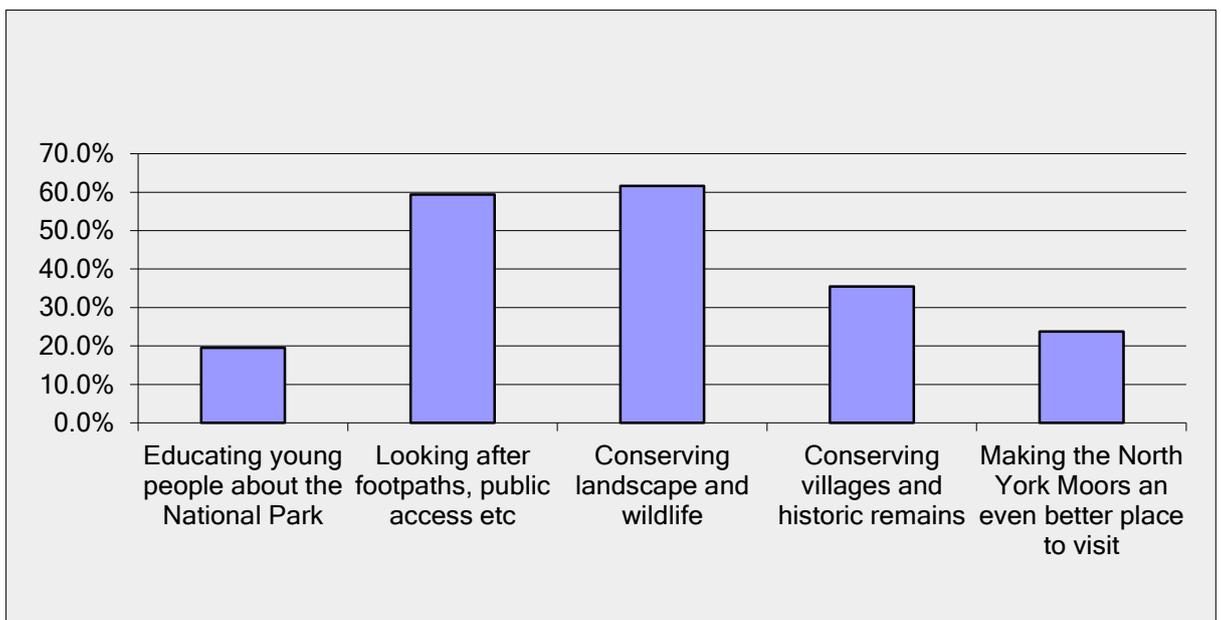


When analysed by age group and postcode area the overall outcome is the same with only minor variations in the size of the pie 'wedges'.

#### 4.7 Future Authority Priorities

A question was asked to find out more about what residents think the Authority's priorities should be. Respondents were asked to choose 2 from a list of programmes: looking after footpaths and conserving the landscape and wildlife came out top. (see summary of full set of responses below)

**Chart 6. Priorities for our work over the next four years (select two)**



This prioritisation produced the same result when analysed by age, geographic location and those who consider themselves to have a disability. The group of people who were from an ethnic minority answered slightly differently. This group prioritised 'conserving villages and historic remains' over 'conserving landscape and wildlife'.

Respondents were also provided with the option to say what 'other' areas of work they would prioritise. 106 people responded to this question and the main areas of work mentioned are listed below.

**Table 2. What other areas should the Authority prioritise?**

<b>Suggested priority</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Making the NYM a better place to live and work	22
Visitor facilities and tourism	16
Housing	12
Land management and conservation	12
Rights of way	11
Potash etc	7
Planning	6
Climate change and flooding	3

#### 4.8 Concerns about the North York Moors

Finally, respondents were invited to express that their concerns are for the future of the National Park. There were 519 (79%) responses to this question. The table below summarises the concerns that were raised most frequently.

**Table 3. Main areas of concern about the future of the North York Moors**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Number of responses</b>
Fracking	66
Conservation issues / land management. These issues were quite wide ranging from 'too much bracken' in the National Park to 'raptor persecution' to 'tree planting'	62
Over development and lenient planning decisions	54
Approval of the Potash planning permission	54
Ensuring high standard of Rights of Way and footpaths	36
Provision of opportunities to support young people to live and work in the National Park	28
Issues related to planning decisions, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning decision making not being consistent</li> <li>• Enforcement not being followed up</li> </ul>	28
Uncertainty in funding the work of the National Park	25
Not enough car Parking	21
Too many visitors coming to the National Park	20
Planning being too restrictive	19
Too much attention on tourism and visitors	15
Provision of public toilets	12
Provision of Public transport	11
Too much Litter	10
The National Park is 'Not a museum'	6
Level of support for farmers	6
Too many second homes	4
Not enough affordable housing	4

## 5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The results show that the partnership between those who live in the National Park and the Members, staff and volunteers of the Authority remains strong. It is particularly encouraging to know that, yet again, a large number of people in the Park were prepared to find time to fill in the questionnaire and that a very high percentage of these added additional comments about our work.
- 5.2 The consistency of the results with earlier years is marked. Helpfulness and courtesy of staff has received very high satisfaction ratings in all the surveys, fairness and sensitivity of planning decisions always being the most challenging. It is important to place this figure in the context of the very difficult planning issues the Authority has had to place over the last few years and Officers consider the outcome to be encouraging.
- 5.3 It should also be noted that the high approval figures in the survey comes after a period of great reduction in the Authority's core resources. This is tribute to the strong team work between Members, staff, volunteers, contractors and the Park's communities and individuals.
- 5.4 One factor does appear to have changed. This survey has shown a level of concern about threats from development in the Park which has not previously been recorded.

## 6. Financial and Staffing Implications

- 6.1 There are no significant financial or staffing implications to the contents of this report.

## 7. Legal Implications

- 7.1 The outcome of the Residents' survey will be used as part of the evidence needed to consider the impact of the Business Plan in line with the Equalities Act 2010.

## 8. Recommendation

Members are recommended to:

- 8.1 Note the results of the survey and comment on these.
- 8.2 Consider the results and outcomes of the discussions when agreeing priorities and other actions in the forthcoming Business Plan.

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## Background papers to this Report

1. Satisfaction Surveys and Monitoring of PI's, PM&M Committee, 21 February 2005
2. Customer Consultation and Feedback, NPA, 10 December 2001
3. Survey of Residents' Satisfaction with the National Park Authority's Services 2002
4. Analysis of 2002 Best Value Questionnaire, NPA, 26 November 2002
5. Analysis of 2002 Best Value Residents Questionnaire, PM&M Committee, 17 February 2003