

*Reporting on the National Park Authority's work in 2013 and its plans for the future*

# THE YEAR IN PROFILE

**IT IS a top priority for us to raise the profile of the North York Moors, nationally as well as locally. The number and variety of articles in the national press and increased social media presence in 2013 helped to achieve this aim.**

Last year also saw the North York Moors host the Association of National Park Authorities Conference. This brought together representatives from all 15 of the UK's National Parks and partner organisations to take a closer look at the landscape of these treasured places, what it means to people and how it inspires.

We were delighted that Rt Hon Owen Patterson MP, Secretary of State for Defra, not only opened the conference but also presented the Authority with a National Apprenticeship Award for Medium Apprenticeship Employer (Yorkshire & Humber). This is the second year we have won this award and we have also been listed in the Top 100 Apprenticeship Employers in the country for three years running.

Representatives from the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Enterprise



**Accessibility still a top priority**

Partnership attended the Secretary of State visit and were impressed by the Authority's work on apprenticeships and how prominent the role of landscape is in the local economy.

Our Disability Advisory Group celebrated ten years of working with the Authority to ensure that not only our services, but the National Park itself, is as accessible as possible and we achieved full compliance in Customer Service Excellence, the Government's standard in recognising organisations that provide a good and responsive service to customers. This is the seventeenth consecutive year that we have achieved this, or its equivalent, award.



**Apprenticeship award for second year**

A meeting to determine an application for a second potash mine in the North York Moors was deferred at the applicant's request. The Authority is now working with York Potash Ltd under a new Planning Performance Agreement towards the submission of a new application.

Derek Statham, National Park Officer for the North York Moors National Park for 20 years, died in January. He will be very much missed.

One of Derek's ideas, the ground-breaking Farm Scheme, came to an end after more than 20 years of offering support and funding to farmers in the North York Moors. It was a pioneering scheme that had a big impact on the area's wildlife and landscape but had become largely superseded by national schemes. Grants for landscape and biodiversity work are still a priority for the Authority and we launched a number of new and ambitious grant schemes that are already proving to be popular.

The Moorsbus Network also came to an end; a high-profile casualty of the substantial belt-tightening that the Authority is having to undertake in light of extensive cuts to funding. Following the announcement of further cuts to our core grant for 2015/16 (bringing the total to over 40% in real terms), we are currently reviewing staffing levels and services again to meet the forecasted shortfall.



**Ground-breaking farm scheme: a legacy to be proud of**

If you have any comments on this report or any aspect of the Authority's work, please get in touch at [feedback@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:feedback@northyorkmoors.org.uk) or call **01439 772700**.

# Looking back — 2013 to 2014

● Work to strengthen the brand of the North York Moors continued with a new plan for Promoting the Park and the launch of a Green Traveller Guide. The North York Moors Tourism network now numbers over 400 people. Free to join, the network offers those who work in tourism and related businesses resources to attract people to the area.

● The highly successful North York Moors, Coast & Hills LEADER Programme finished. It saw £5.3million (including match-funding) invested in projects that supported 172 settlements in the LEADER area.

● Our aim is to engage with every child within ten miles of the National Park at least once during their time at school. The Education Team have met every primary school child in the 26 schools within the National Park plus the 36 schools within a couple of miles of the boundary. In addition they have engaged with pupils from 27 out of 36 neighbouring secondary schools.

● Around 700 volunteers carried out 9,000 days work, including helping to look after footpaths and bridleways, caring for wildlife and habitats, surveying historic buildings, giving information and assistance to visitors, running events, looking after our visitor centres, gallery and other visitor facilities.

● We welcomed over 180,000 people to Sutton Bank and The Moors National Park Centres.

● We gave over £55,000 in grants to conserve heritage buildings within the North York Moors including four grants for Buildings at Risk and eight Conservation Area Enhancement Grants. Thanks to this funding and working with partners including Natural England and English Heritage, eight buildings were removed from the at risk register.



● We have restored or enhanced 28 hectares of species-rich grassland through our Habitat Connectivity—Linking Landscapes project. Maintaining, improving and connecting the areas of quality grassland in the North York Moors is a big priority in the National Park Management Plan.



● The Community Access Project came to an end having worked with 20 communities to improve rights of way between villages. Over three years, the project worked with 122 local people to enhance 37 miles of easy access routes including installing new gates, seats and bridges.

● We were very pleased that the Government decided to exempt National Parks from changes to permitted development rights.

● The Authority's planning enforcement team achieved a number of successful prosecutions concerning damage to listed buildings – a finite and irreplaceable part of the area's heritage. While legal action is a last resort, in the interest of fairness to the vast majority who do abide by planning policies, we take action against harmful unauthorised development.

● Thanks to continued funding from English Heritage, we were able to take 25 scheduled monuments off the at risk register. Work included bracken control on prehistoric boundaries and burial sites in Wykeham Forest and medieval pillow mounds (artificial rabbit warrens) in Douthwaite Dale.

● Working with North Yorkshire County Council, we secured funding from the Department for Transport Local Sustainable Transport Fund to reinstate rights of way in the Esk Valley that have become overgrown or difficult to access. The Missing Links project is part of a wider scheme to boost sustainable tourism in Whitby and the Esk Valley which includes a park and ride site in Whitby and associated bus services into the town and to villages in the Esk Valley.

● A £10,000 grant from the Forestry Commission was used to fell 6.7 hectares of conifer plantation in the Newtondale SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) which will be planted with native broadleaved trees in 2014/15.

● A further 3,020 metres of traditional farm hedgerow have been planted at strategic locations along the Heritage Coast to ensure connectivity of habitats within the coastal landscape. This makes up part of the total of 16,820 metres (or 10.5 miles) of new coastal hedgerow grant aided over the last five years – that's 110,000 hedgerow plants!



● New grants: The Traditional Boundary Scheme offers landowners funding to restore or create drystone walls and hedgerows; the Community Grant supports small scale local projects and the Tourism Fund encourages joint working to promote the area. The Authority will be running these schemes again in 2014/15 along with grants for connectivity projects and work to restore ancient woodland sites.

# Looking forward — 2014 to 2015



● We will continue our work to protect the built heritage of the North York Moors by consolidating 13 buildings at risk including the Ionic Temple at Duncombe Park (pictured), three temples at Nawton Towers, disused lime kilns in Old Byland, way marker stones on Goathland Moor and a range of farm buildings throughout the National Park.



● A survey of breeding waders such as curlew, lapwing and snipe (pictured) will be undertaken and, with the help of volunteers, we will survey and monitor species rich grassland in the National Park. The monitoring will help measure the effects of management work and enable us to make any necessary changes to benefit the habitat and our wider connectivity work.

● We are expecting three major planning applications connected to the mining of potash this year. Two are due from York Potash Ltd, for the development of a new mine near Whitby and a tunnel to move the product to Teesside. Cleveland Potash Ltd has applied for a new building to cater for increased production of polyhalite, the same form of potash that York Potash is hoping to exploit. Planning Officers will devote a huge amount of time and effort to understanding and processing these applications properly.

● Thanks to funding from Prior Pursglove College, we will introduce a new team of apprentices to gain experience on projects in the north of the National Park. Funding from Ryedale District Council will enable us to offer our first ICT apprenticeship.

● We will work with communities, the two Local Enterprise Partnerships that cover the National Park and others to develop a new LEADER Programme for the wider North York Moors area stretching from Saltburn to Malton, that, if successful in its bid to Defra for funding, will take effect from 2015.



● We will continue to raise the profile of the North York Moors. Today we no longer think of this as just being the National Park but the wider area and, in particular, the market towns which play a central role in maintaining a vibrant economy and cultural scene. We will work with a wide range of businesses and run A 'Lost Sheep in Pink Jerseys' campaign to encourage people to visit the area and explore different places.

● We will continue to work with woodland managers throughout the National Park on priority Planted Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS) to improve woodland flora and fauna.

● A new minibus outreach project will provide transport for those without a car to enable them to visit the North York Moors.

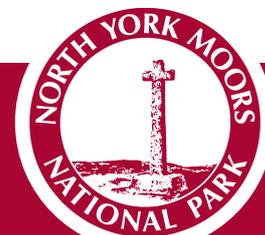
● Our work with communities and partners to secure funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund for the 'This Exploited Land' project will continue. The project focuses on the importance of the pioneering ironstone and railway heritage of Grosmont and Rosedale.

● Following approval from the National Park Authority, affordable homes should be built at Helmsley (five units), Runswick Bay (eight units), Egton (ten units) and Eskdaleside (12 units). We will continue to argue for effective national policies in this area.

● The Authority will lead on the development of a new Heritage Coast Management Plan for the 2015 - 2020 period. The plan will focus on promoting the natural and built environment to benefit the economy while continuing to manage the coast sustainably.

● We will work with various user groups to consider the future management of some of the green lanes within the North York Moors National Park.

# Judging our performance



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](mailto:feedback@northyorkmoors.org.uk) or write to the address below.

FUNCTION	INDICATOR	2013/14		TARGET MET	PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT ON 2012/13	TARGET 2014/15
		TARGET	ACTUAL			
Conservation	Percentage of National Park managed in line with NPA conservation objectives	79%	<b>79%</b>	☺	↔	79%
	Net annual change in area of National Park managed in line with NPA conservation objectives	+699ha	<b>+76ha</b>	☹	↑	+623ha
Recreation	Percentage of footpaths and other Public Rights of Way: • That are easy to use by the public	85%	<b>81%</b>	☹	↔	85%
	• Signposted where they leave a road	95%	<b>91%</b>	☹	↔	95%
Visitor services	Satisfaction rating for users of 'promoting understanding' services (Visitor Centres, Website, Education and Events)	90%	<b>94%</b>	☺	↑	90%
Planning	Planning applications determined in 8 weeks	80%	<b>81%</b>	☺	↑	80%
	• Minor applications in 8 weeks	65%	<b>81%</b>	☺	↑	65%
	• Other applications in 8 weeks	80%	<b>83%</b>	☺	↑	80%
	• Percentage of appeals dismissed (average over 4 years)	67%	<b>58%</b>	☹	↓	67%
	Planning cost per head of population (gross cost)	£32.22	<b>£31.84</b>	☺	↓	£31.51
Access to our services	Performance for answering: • Telephone calls personally within 5 rings	98%	<b>97%</b>	☹	↔	98%
	• Correspondence within 10 working days	98%	<b>97%</b>	☹	↑	98%
	Percentage of our meetings and events that are accessible by public transport	60%	<b>77%</b>	☺	↑	60%

## Actual 2013/14

Between April 2013 and March 2014 the Authority spent £6.8million. The majority of this income came from Government with additional funding from external partners such as Natural England, 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.*

