

North York Moors National Park Authority

Date 22 March 2021

Item 16, Reports from Members on outside bodies

1. Purpose of the report

1.1 To consider reports from Members attending meetings on outside bodies as representatives on the Authority

2. Background

2.1 It has been agreed that Members attending meetings of bodies where they are representing the Authority should present a report, either verbal or written

3. Campaign for National Parks

3.1 At appendix 1 please find an update from David Jeffels, CNP Rep.

4. Welcome to Yorkshire

4.1 At appendix 2 please find an update from David Jeffels, W2Y Rep.

5. Disability Advisory Group

5.1 At appendix 3 please find an update from Sarah Oswald.

6. Financial and staffing implications

6.1 There are no financial or staffing implications.

7. Legal and sustainability implications

7.1 There are no legal implications.

8. Recommendation

8.1 That the report be noted.

Contact Officer:
Vanessa Burgess
Committees Officer
01439 772700

Appendix 1 - Campaign for National Parks

Due to the pandemic there have been no “live” meetings of CNP council which is frustrating especially as NPs in general are seeing an increase in people walking, riding and rambling. However its work continues to safeguard their landscapes especially in the face of further relaxation of current planning regulations.

CNP has teamed up with Ramblers Holiday Trust and Countryfile Magazine for this year’s awards. They recognise the staff and volunteers working in NPs and the theme for this year is, “Innovation and Agility in the face of the Global Pandemic”. The first prize is £1000, with two runners up awards each of £500. There is also an award this year of a People’s Choice for Volunteer of the Year - three nights in a holiday cottage in the Lake District. Deadline for entries is February 28.

An article in the influential House of Commons magazine focussed on National Parks and the Green Recovery which is recognition of MPs taking an active interest in this important issue.

CNP is awaiting the next steps on planning reforms planned by the Government. Latest proposals out for consultation indicate more additions to permitted development rights which allow for change of use or extensions to existing buildings without the need for planning permission. CNP says no changes should apply to designated landscapes such as National Parks.

CNP says there is a need for more ways of providing opportunities for people to visit NPs in less environmentally damaging ways but recognises that cars have a role to play in bringing people to the parks. This debate will doubtless continue for a long time.

Following the success of the Dark Skies initiative in the Moors and Dales National Parks, six other NPs are joining the new NPs Dark Skies Reserve. The NYMNPA’s Dark Skies Festival was held virtually this year between 12-28 February due to the ongoing covid situation. The CPRE’s annual Star Counting took place between 6-12 February.

If anyone would like more information on CNP or on this report please let me know

David Jeffels
NYMNPA Rep – CNP

Appendix 2, Welcome to Yorkshire

Members will no doubt have seen the extensive coverage in the Yorkshire Post of W2Y's annual report. It has obviously gone through a torrid time in the past couple of years or so, but fortunately under the new Chief Executive, James Mason, its future looks much more buoyant. This is very fortunate because the National Park and Yorkshire as a whole relies considerably on the tourist industry as do the many scores of small enterprises.

The agency has set out a three year business plan and to increase its commercial revenue, despite being a smaller organisation than it was previously.

Without public funding such as £500,000 loan from NYCC it seems W2Y would have collapsed.

Now a slimmed down organisation, and under James Mason's leadership, the prospects look promising – though challenging in the wake of the Covid pandemic.

W2Y has put forward a Roadmap out of the lockdown, with its new Walkshire initiative, aimed at getting more people walking, cycling, and enjoying the outdoors on the Moors, being a key part.

Social media statistics have been extremely encouraging with 16,800 engagements, 6,000 click links and 1.2 million impressions by people taking part in the agency's Walk of the Day schemes.

Cycle Friendly workshops are being held in March aimed at encouraging accommodation providers to identify and capitalize on opportunities, develop their business and cater for cyclists and its market.

Such routes for cyclists include Way of the Roses; North York Moors Cycleway, Yorkshire Dales Cycleway, Wolds Cycle Route.

As England comes out of lockdown altogether, hopefully in June/July, W2Y's influence on the tourist industry will gather momentum. It has been particularly encouraging to see a significant number of tourism programmes fronted by a wide range of presenters such as Susan Calman, Kate Humble, Joanne Lumley, Bill Nighy and Robson Green promoting the UK as a great staycation holiday destination.

There is much optimism that the North York Moors National Park will be a significant beneficiary of the new vision and dynamism being shown by W2Y's new leadership very ably complemented by the NPA's own first class marketing and tourism team.

If anyone would like more information please contact me.

David Jeffels

NYMNPAs Representative on Welcome to Yorkshire

Appendix 3, Disability Advisory Group

The Disability Advisory Group (DAG) met on 19 February online. The small group of attendees were given the following updates and discussed:

Land of Iron

Improvements made to the route for accessing Rosedale Track at Blakey which seems to have addressed the issues. It will likely need regular maintenance.

The legacy work currently underway on the project and the plans for a further project to address the conservation of the Stone Kilns. Members were asked to flag up any maintenance issues they experience on using the paths.

Changing places

Members of DAG are keen to see the NPA address the provision of these facilities within the National Park. This was discussed in the context of the NPA's 5 year rolling plan to refurbish toilet blocks and to look into funding for this work. Sutton Bank is suggested as a key potential location for a changing place toilet.

The above can also be considered in the context of the NPA's review of properties (including visitor facilities) which will be put to members.

As a Board member and also a NYMNP Trust Member, Sarah Oswald has committed to raising this with both the NPA and the Trust and ensuring that members of both are aware and supportive. The Trust may have the potential to reach funding for Changing Places. It was suggested that the NPA should look at what other NPAs have/are doing as a benchmark.

Sutton Bank

NY Highways has agreed to moving the crossing point at Sutton Bank which will make it safer to access the White Horse Walk and make it possible to be advertised as part of the Trumper scheme.

Toilet refurbishment

The Moors Centre toilets are being refurbished in time for Easter and there is a longer term plan for a new disabled toilet outside. This is going to require architect plans, planning permission and funding. Ravenscar and Chop Gate toilets, including the disabled toilets, are being refurbished.

Rights of way/access

Work on these has been impacted by the weather conditions.

New pay by card car park machines are being installed in Feb/March and will be operational straight away. Pay by Phone is available in some car parks. Both are offering improvements for users.

Any other business

The NPA was congratulated on the virtual walks that have been running via the Volunteer Team and two volunteers. Two virtual walks were provided for Ryedale Carers Support and were really well received. David Brewster (who raised this) is being trained up along with another volunteer to run them. The NPA volunteers have 20

virtual walks already prepared. It's hoped that the virtual walks will develop further as a partnership.

The proposed Youth Panel being developed by Mary Jane Alexander was also raised.

Sophie Lyth from the Volunteering Team and Mary Jane from Education will be asked if they can come to the group to talk about initiatives they are pursuing.

The discussion touched on the research and evidence that connecting with nature can benefit health (Exeter University research and also the People and Nature Study for England) and links were shared afterwards for interest.

The next meeting is on 30 April, 10.30am.

Sarah Oswald