

MOORS MESSENGER

News from Moor, Coast, Forest and Dale

www.northyorkmoors.org.uk

PLANNING MATTERS

Make sure your views do too...

THE 'Local Plan' for the National Park, the 20 year document on which planning permissions in the National Park are based, is being updated.

Each year the Authority receives between 700 and 1,000 planning applications and it's up to our Members and Officers to take a view on whether to say 'yes' or 'no' to the requests. The decisions are based on the guidance in the 'Local Plan' so it's really important that we consult as widely as possible to ensure your views are heard and considered.

The revised Local Plan for the North York Moors National Park Authority will cover the period from 2016-35 and it's exciting to think that we can all have a say. Issues such as local housing and occupancy restrictions, employment, agricultural development, tourism and protection of nature will all form part of this important document.

We know that we won't be able to please everyone – planning is contentious wherever you go, and we do need to think about the long term future of the North York Moors.

Deciding factors

Paul Fellows, Head of Strategic Policy at the North York Moors National Park Authority explains: "The biggest deciding factor in planning decisions is whether a proposed development is in line with local planning policies – the 'Local Plan'. We have just started to write a new plan, and the challenge is to continue to protect what's special about the North York Moors on the one hand, whilst addressing the needs of those who live and work here on the other." At this stage we need to under-



Fridge Productions Ltd

stand what we value about the North York Moors, what needs to improve, and how the National Park may change in the future.

To start the ball rolling we'd like to invite you to think about:

– Are there any features or areas that you would like to see altered or improved?

– What approach do you think should be taken to new development in the National Park?

– If you were writing a new Local Plan what do you think are the main issues it needs to address?

We've received lots of useful comments from our recent residents' survey, for instance – there are more

residents worried about relaxation of planning rules than about them being too tough. Now we want to build on these by understanding your views on the above topics.

Please let us have your thoughts by emailing policy@northyorkmoors.org.uk, or by writing to the address at the end of this newsletter.

New development

We've also published what we're calling our 'First Steps' documents. They have been produced to help seek your views and provide you with more context and information about the Local Plan itself and the issues it may seek to address.

We are also asking people to let us know about any possible opportunities for new development they know about (particularly brownfield sites) or the location of any areas which they would like to see protected as valued local green space.

You can find the First Steps documents on our planning policy web pages at www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/FirstSteps or at our offices in Helmsley, and our visitor centres at Danby and Sutton Bank. They are also available in local libraries.

Once we've considered all the responses the next step will be to come up with some options for how our plan can carefully manage new development in the North York Moors. We hope to invite comments on these early in the New Year, after which we will produce a full draft of the plan and ask again for your views.



Dear Residents,

WE HAVE just received the results from our five yearly survey of visitors. The three things that visitors to the National Park most want the Authority to do are:

- Protect it from inappropriate development
- Conserve the landscape and wildlife
- Look after footpaths and public access

One of the few areas where visitors' views diverge from residents' is that visitors were more concerned about educating young people about the National Park than residents.

There appears to have been a shift in the visiting public's perception of the National Park. Compared with five years ago, more visitors today see the open space, remoteness and tranquillity of the North York Moors as an essential quality.

It also appears that the efforts we have made to promote the North York Moors have paid off. The current upward trend in visitor numbers tells this story in its own way, but there is also a much greater awareness among visitors to the area of the existence of the National Park and of what makes it special. In particular, appreciation of its great diversity has grown – the fact that we have wonderful woodland, delightful dales, a classic coast as well as majestic moorland.

Occasionally someone comments to me that they are bothered about increased visitor numbers – but it is only an occasional comment.

Hopefully, modern methods of visitor management and the fact that visitors are increasingly travelling to the North York Moors to enjoy its peacefulness rather than to disturb it, are helping us to a win/win situation.

As I write these words, I can hear people rushing to their computers to remind me of the problems of illegal off-roading and ancient rights of way ruined...we will continue to work with the police and the highways authorities to try to remove the worst aspects of this problem.

Andy Wilson

Andy Wilson
Chief Executive
(National Park Officer)

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- England's National Parks cover less than 10% of the country's land area but contain over a quarter of its top wildlife sites
- Over 44,000 hectares of land in the North York Moors are internationally important for wildlife
- In 2014, 7.3 million visitors contributed £582 million to the economy of the North York Moors

- In common with many remote rural areas our population fell slightly during the last census – there were 4.2% fewer people living here in 2011 than in 2001
- 17% of all homes – about 1 in 6 – in the North York Moors are now not permanently occupied, compared to 4.3% nationally

- The population is ageing and retiring – 37% of our residents are over 60, compared to 23% in England as a whole
- 285 homes have been built since 2008 – 76% are restricted to occupation by local people only. 42% of the 285 new homes are also classed as affordable housing

PARISH FORUM

2017 DATES

NORTHERN
Thurs 6 Apr 2017 @ 7pm
Weds 4 Oct 2017 @ 7pm

SOUTHERN
Weds 12 Apr 2017 @ 7pm
Thurs 12 Oct 2017 @ 7pm

WESTERN
Tues 18 Apr 2017 @ 7.15pm
Tues 17 Oct 2017 @ 7.15pm

COASTAL
Tues 4 Apr 2017 @ 7pm
Thurs 26 Oct 2017 @ 7pm

Venues for all meetings to be confirmed. These meetings are open to all.

WHAT OUR RESIDENTS THINK

CONSERVING the North York Moors landscape and wildlife, and looking after footpaths and access – these were the two issues that residents told us were the most important priorities for our work over the next four years, according to the recently completed residents' survey.

660 households from across the National Park took the time to fill in the questionnaire, which focused on levels of satisfaction with the Authority's services, concerns and priorities for the future, and planning policies.

Overall satisfaction with the Authority's services has remained at 70% – very similar to the last survey that was completed in 2012. We were also pleased to see that 83% of people who responded were satisfied with the helpfulness and courtesy of staff.

The most common concerns raised related to fracking, conservation issues and the granting of planning permission for the potash mine. The information gathered will be used to help inform the Authority's Business Plan for the next four years as well as feeding into the development of a new Local Plan for the National Park.

Thank you to all those households who took the time to fill in and return the survey. Whatever your views are, it's really useful to hear them!



Volunteer Brian Nicholson

SPOTLIGHT ON APPRENTICES

Here at the National Park we're passionate about working with apprentices to help them gain confidence and new skills in a variety of roles. Apprentices make a real difference to the work we undertake, and we feel it's really important to provide training for young people so that they can live and work locally. Here are just a few of the activities our latest apprentices have been involved in.



Tony Bartholomew

Building on traditions

AS well as the more traditional countryside skills, such as dry stone walling, building fences and maintaining rights of way, we also recognise the importance of innovation and moving with the times.

Our outdoor apprentices are embracing new ways of working, and are being taught 21st-century countryside management skills to help with the challenges facing our environment today. One such example is constructing 'woody debris dams' in becks and streams to slow the flow of water in the innovative 'Slowing the Flow' project, which helps to prevent flooding.

The apprentices don't leave academic study behind (even if one or two of them would like to!) and they add to their practical skills by working towards Level 2 and 3 environmental conservation qualifications. We will be looking to recruit five outdoor apprentices in early 2017.

● For more information contact Donna Magson at the National Park Authority.

Trailblazing

THE way in which apprenticeships are delivered is being changed by the Government to place more power in the hands of the employers. Here at the National Park, Ian Nicholls, Assistant Director Corporate Services, is leading a group of other employers from around the country to develop a national standard for our outdoor apprenticeships.

It's expected that the first apprentices will start training under this new scheme in the autumn of 2017.

Ian Nicholls says: "These are exciting times at the National Park. Being able to help shape apprenticeships in this way will help us to create a programme that benefits both the apprentices and the local communities."

"It's extremely encouraging to see so many young people wanting to take on apprenticeships. Though at times it can make lots of us feel quite old when we have apprentices, such as Nathan Evison, born in 2000, join us!"



SKILLS FOR LIFE



Tools for the job

WE'RE very lucky to be supported by Makita UK Ltd, who provide our apprentices with tools and training so they get first-hand experience of the specialist equipment needed for their tasks.

"It's great to be working with these very focused young people, providing training sessions and ensuring they have the best kit to work with," says Roy Hobson of Makita.

"The outdoor apprentices are using Makita chainsaws, brushcutters and pole saws to help manage the public rights of way and wildlife habitat across a 100-square-mile section of the beautiful North York Moors, and we are very proud to support them."



Inside and out

WE currently have 16 apprentices who are all widening their experience and gaining their first foothold in the workplace. Each of our apprentice programmes offers something different, such as working outdoors, providing business and admin support, or helping visitors enjoy their time in the National Park.

Sophie de Cogan, pictured above, is one of our newest apprentices. Working at the Sutton Bank National Park Centre as Tourism Apprentice, Sophie deals with the general public and spends a lot of her time 'front of house' representing the Authority. Sophie says: "Following on from my A levels I didn't feel university was for me so I looked into apprenticeships instead. It's really helped my confidence, and I'm thoroughly

enjoying my apprenticeship. It's great that I can also study for my Level 2 qualifications at the same time as working."

We've had a number of apprentices securing full-time work having gone through our programme. Callum Hymas, Finance Trainee, worked with us for three years, leaving in 2015 with his level 2, 3 and 4 AAT qualifications - he now works for Portacabin as a Finance Officer. For Kerry Barker, Business Apprentice, her qualifications and experience have given her the skills and confidence to move to a working farm in New Zealand.

Verity Allen recently completed her apprenticeship with us and has secured a full-time position at the National Park, working in Corporate Services. It's fantastic to see these young people develop and progress in this way.

A variety of tasks

THIS year the outdoor apprentice team has been carrying out a number of seasonal habitat management activities, such as tree and hedge planting.

The team has also been working closely with our tourism partners at the North Yorkshire Moors Railway, constructing access stairs for volunteers at Gouthland Railway Station. Other recent activities have included a crayfish rescue operation on the River Rye, bracken spraying, controlling invasive species and the ongoing maintenance of public rights of way.

It's wonderful that our apprentices are helping to shape and maintain the landscape in this way, preserving the special qualities of the North York Moors for future generations.



PEOPLE IN THE PARK

Marking a century

IT'S LONG been believed that the outdoors and fresh air play a vital part in our wellbeing and health, and that's certainly been the case for Vera Wood, of Hutton le Hole, who celebrated her 100th birthday this year.

Vera Wood was born on 1 August 1916, the same year as the Battle of the Somme, and has spent most of her centenarian life in the North York Moors. She went to school at Scarborough's Queen Margaret and spent much of her youth enjoying walking on Silpho Moors with her father. She also loved fossil hunting and horse riding, and could often be found feeding sheep with food from her mouth! Vera says: "Animals make the best people, they are very loyal. I've had lots of dogs over the years and currently live with my Jack Russell Lottie who is 17 years old." On being asked the secret to her long and healthy life Vera adds: "I put it down to the fresh air and a wee tod of whisky every morning."

Adventurous life

The family all agree that Vera has led an exciting and adventurous life. They particularly remember the time Vera came home with a bomb she had found on the moors, which she proudly displayed on the mantelpiece, much to the horror of the police who were asked to come and remove it! Luckily it turned out to be an empty shell.

Vera was married for 52 years and moved to Hutton le Hole in 1985 with her late husband John Charles Savile Wood, when their

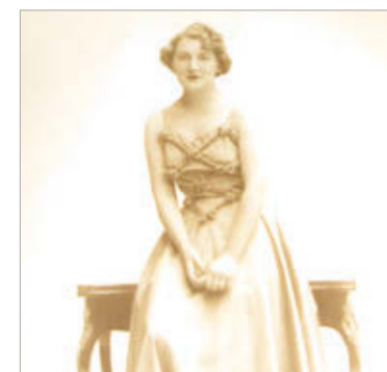


daughter Wendy was expecting her first child. Vera, now grandmother to five, can remember Wendy struggling to fit through the narrow door frames of the house.

With a love of village and community life, Vera was soon part of the WI and was a founding member of the Hutton le Hole art group, started by Bill Campbell Trotter in the mid 80s, where she exhibited and sold her paintings - mostly of purple moors and sheep! Vera celebrated her 100th birthday with a party on 31 July this year, at which her son Richard, who now lives in Jersey, also celebrated his 70th birthday.

The North York Moors National Park Authority is delighted with the number of older persons choosing to stay or move into this beautiful part of the world.

However, some people find that as they get older they feel more lonely and isolated. There are various organisations and groups available to help, such as Age Concern, and in the North York



Moors the National Park Authority supported the construction of Esk Moors Lodge, which provides one and two bedroom apartments for rent. There is also an organisation called Revival North Yorkshire, where Debbie Swales runs a number of activities. Debbie says: "Once a month I host a Memory Lane Lunch at Danby Village Hall for anyone over the age of 60. We see it as a positive celebration and deck the hall out with bunting and memorabilia of days gone by. We have themed lunches, such as

weather and washing days, where mannequins are dressed in vintage fashions and we display artefacts and photographs, such as ironing boards and dolly tubs, and show pictures on various topics like the floods that hit the Moors in the 1930's.

"It's a fantastic way for people to come along and reminisce, and the memorabilia helps to break the ice if they don't know each other."

● For more information call Debbie on 07970 955407 or visit www.revivalnorthyorkshire.com

LOOKING A-MAZE-ING AT DALBY

A DRY STONE Wall Maze, situated at the heart of Dalby Forest, is being created as part of a partnership project between Mark Ellis, the Friends of Dalby Forest and the Forestry Commission.

Being built by Mark Ellis, and other local dry stone wallers, the outer wall will measure eighty metres square and the walls will stand two metres high. The maze has been aligned with the sunrise on the Summer Solstice, and from its centre the sun will rise between two standing stones. The maze will incorporate special stone features, some of which are traditionally found across the North York Moors, including bee boles, stone step stiles, squeeze stiles, smooth holes and kissing gates. Phantom gates and moon gates (large circular openings), will also feature in the design. Once complete, visitors of all ages will be able to enjoy the special features of the maze in the ultimate goal of finding the centre!



You can be part of this exciting project by purchasing a stone and having your initials carved into it. It makes an unusual gift and is also a unique way to remember someone special. Every stone purchased supports the construction of the maze. And special hands-on workshops will be held during 2017.

The 'carve your own stone' workshops will be held at the maze site, led by renowned local sculptor Jennifer Tetlow. Participants will learn how to carve initials into a stone, which will then be built into the maze wall. Jennifer works in stone, carving pieces inspired by wildlife and a love of the North York Moors which surround her workshop.

Once the maze is built visitors will be able to explore the many intriguing paths, features, nooks and crannies, while those that have carved stones can try to locate their initials.

● For more information about this 'amazing' project, visit www.drystonewallmaze.com

Enjoy a snowy night this winter

INFANT school groups visiting The Moors National Park Centre this winter are in for a treat, with an exciting activity based on one of Nick Butterworth's well-loved stories, 'One Snowy Night'.

Led by National Park Education staff, children will get to follow a trail around the grounds of the visitor centre, collecting animal characters from the story and getting involved in wildlife-themed activities and games. The trail finishes with story time and hot chocolate in a magical yurt, complete with wood-burning stove.

Education Manager Sue Wilkinson says "Some children rarely get an opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and learn about the local wildlife around them, so using this popular story is a great way of doing both. Our offer of free transport to selected schools from urban areas around the Park is also helping



children who would not normally get the opportunity to come here to experience the fascinating natural world on their doorstep". This activity is available for school groups only.

● For more information please contact the National Park Education Service. Tel: 01439 772700.



NEWS IN BRIEF

Christmas craft fair

THE Moors National Park Centre's free festive craft weekend takes place on Saturday 19 – Sunday 20 November in Danby. It celebrates the very best of local arts and country crafts, from jewellery, ceramics and luxury soaps to exquisite soft furnishings, leather goods and handmade chocolates. You can meet the makers and select a unique seasonal gift, while there's also a visit from Santa, traditional music and children's craft-making activities. Drop in any time between 10:30am – 4:30pm. Free entry. Call 01439 772738 for more information.

Winter walks

ALTHOUGH the weather is getting colder we still have some great National Park walks to warm you up. Sunday 4 December sees a 2.75 mile walk at Gillamoor from 10:30am – 12:30pm, meet at the Royal Oak, Gillamoor. On 7 December there's a four-mile walk around Roseberry Topping from 10am – 12:30pm – meet at Newton under Roseberry car park, A173. Booking is essential for both walks, call 01439 772738 for information.



Big Garden Birdwatch

28 and 29 January, 2017

JOIN in the RSPB's annual birdwatch weekend, with two days of bird crafts, trials and bird-counting at our National Park Centres.

How are we performing?

THE Authority strives to maintain a high level of customer service and performance. The table below gives a snapshot of how we performed in 2015/16 on our headline indicators. The Authority remains committed to maintaining Customer Service Excellence. More information can be found in the annual report on the Authority's website.

INDICATOR	2015/16	
	TARGET	ACTUAL
Percentage of National Park managed in line with NPA conservation objectives	80%	67%*
Net annual change in area of National Park managed in line with NPA conservation objectives	+1922ha	-16407ha*
Percentage of footpaths and other Public Rights of Way:		
• That are easy to use by the public	80%	78%
• Signposted where they leave a road	90%	92%
Satisfaction rating for users of 'promoting understanding' services (Visitor Centres, Website, Education and Events)	90%	96%
Planning applications determined in a timely manner	80%	80%
Major applications determined within 13 weeks	60%	83%
Minor applications determined within 8 weeks	65%	81%
Other applications determined within 8 weeks	80%	84%
Percentage of appeals dismissed (average over 4 years)	67%	60%
Planning cost per head of population	£31.07	£30.14
Performance for answering:		
• Telephone calls within 5 rings	98%	97%
• Correspondence within 10 working days	98%	93%
Percentage of our meetings and events that are accessible by public transport	60%	94%

* Final figures not yet available

MINERALS AND WASTE JOINT PLAN

Final chance to have your say

WE ARE currently working on our Minerals and Waste Joint Plan and are inviting you to comment on the 'Publication Draft version'.

The document has been produced to guide future minerals and waste development across the North York Moors National Park, the wider area of North Yorkshire (excluding the Yorkshire Dales) and the City of York, up to the year 2030. It has taken into consideration comments previously received.

We're therefore now seeking final comments to ensure the Plan is "sound" and "legally compliant" rather than commenting on the proposed approaches the Plan takes on mineral and waste development. The Authorities also want to understand whether representatives wish to take part in the independent examination of the plan.

The consultation and how to respond are available from the Joint Plan website www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/26218/Minerals-and-waste-joint-plan, or please contact the National Park Authority.



OTTERS

THESE beautiful creatures re-colonised the British Isles after the last Ice Age, but from the mid 1950s to the end of the 1970s their numbers crashed, due to the accumulation of chemicals in the food chain. However, in recent years their numbers have been increasing again after the chemicals were banned and other re-introductions were undertaken.

The only otter species in the UK is the Eurasian otter (*Lutra lutra*), one of a number of otter species found worldwide. Their diet is mainly made up of fish (75-95%), but amphibians, crayfish, waterfowl and small mammals are also consumed. Otters in England and Wales are mainly found on freshwater systems but they can live in coastal habitats too. An otter will occupy a 'home range',

which on fresh waters usually includes a stretch of river as well as associated tributary streams, ditches, ponds, lakes and woodland. For a male, this can mean an area of up to 40km or more of watercourse and associated areas; females tend to have smaller ranges (half the size) and favour quieter locations for breeding, such as tributary streams.

Most otters live for three to four years in the wild, although they can live longer. In fresh waters, otters are mainly active from dusk to dawn, when most people are unlikely to see them – though activity in daylight is becoming more common.

The activity of coastal otters however, is linked to the state of the tide, and they can often be seen during the day.

Update on Turtle Doves

In May's edition of Moors Messenger we featured Turtle Doves in our 'What to spot' item. Volunteers have been surveying these beautiful birds in Cropton Forest over the summer and their findings, together with other observations, have suggested that 'our' Turtle Doves are favouring locations with rich wild flower grassland nearby, as well as open ground with suitable nesting trees and bushes. Following the survey, we are now looking at how best to help this species and will keep you updated in a future edition of Moors Messenger. Thank you to everyone who sent in sightings, including residents from Hutton Buscel, Thornton Dale, Pickering, Broxa, Sneatonthorpe and Commdale; you are helping us to help them.

DESIGN AWARD WINNERS 2016

THE National Park's Design Awards were developed in 2010 to recognise and celebrate recent developments that added to the built heritage of the North York Moors. In highlighting excellent design within the National Park, the Authority seeks to inspire others looking to develop new or existing buildings and to demonstrate the positive contribution that good design can have on local communities. The awards are held every two years, and this year's winners are:

- Best New Dwelling** Uppgang, Westgate, Thornton le Dale
Judges Commendation: Alum Drive, Eskdaleside, Sleights (Affordable Homes Development)
- Best Extension to an Existing Dwelling** The Old Vicarage, Ingleby Greenhow
- Best Conversion** High Ewecote Farm, Chop Gate
- Best Non-Residential Development** YHA Boggle Hole, Mill Beck, Fylingthorpe
- Best Conservation Project** The Ionic Temple, Duncombe Park, Helmsley

● Design advice and information for those wanting to build or alter buildings in the North York Moors National Park can be found in the Authority's Design Guide available at www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/spd



Uppgang south elevation

The text of this newsletter is also available in large print. Tel: 01439 772700