Guidance for Outdoor Events

North York Moors National Park
The National Park is a great place to hold organised events and has for many years hosted a variety of successful outdoor events, including mountain biking, orienteering, fell races, pleasure rides, long distance walks and motorcycle events.

The National Park Authority has a statutory purpose to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the National Park, and any recreation events should be consistent with those qualities and do nothing to damage them. We seek to promote good practice and actively engage with organisers to mitigate any negative effects their events may have.

Recreation events, such as challenge events and charity walks, can have an adverse impact on the environment and affect other users, local communities and the local economy in one way or another.

The North York Moors National Park Authority does not decide which events can go ahead and which cannot – this is generally left to the relevant land managers (generally the owners or tenants), in consultation with others.

It is the responsibility of event organisers to produce risk assessments, arrange volunteers to help with events and liaise with owners and authorities. The National Park Authority does have a role in:

- promoting best practice in organisation of events in the National Park
- ensuring events are contributing to the aims of the National Park
- minimising any potential impact on the National Park
- assisting event organisers to contact the relevant land managers
- assisting with liaison with Natural England, if required.

Andy Wilson
Chief Executive
Flowchart for Organising Recreation Events

Is the event, in general, consistent with the overall aims of the National Park?

Yes → Might the event clash with other events?

Yes → Are the events compatible?

Yes → Consider necessary changes.

No → How can it be improved?

Research and Consultation

No → Might the event clash with other events?

Yes → Are the events compatible?

Yes → Consider necessary changes.

No → Consider necessary changes.

Planning and Implementation

No → Is the land manager’s permission required?

Yes → Has the land manager given permission?

Yes → Consider necessary changes.

No → Consider necessary changes.

Are there any other permissions/consultations required?

Yes → Have all necessary permissions/consultations been obtained and completed?

Yes → Run the event.

Complete post-event liaison and reflect on the lessons learned.

No → Consider necessary changes.

Restoration and Review

No → Has the land manager given permission?

Yes → Consider necessary changes.

No → Consider necessary changes.

Are there any other permissions/consultations required?

Yes → Have all necessary permissions/consultations been obtained and completed?

Yes → Run the event.

Complete post-event liaison and reflect on the lessons learned.

No → Consider necessary changes.

Restoration and Review
The ground nesting bird season is 1 March to 31 July. This will affect any event taking place on moorland and will require Natural England consent and landowner approval to uphold these protections.

Please also refer to the important dates on page 9 of this guide.

Your event may have to be cancelled or the route changed at short notice if severe weather or high wild fire risk occurs.

Types of events covered by these guidelines

These guidelines apply to events which:

- are formally organised and designed to attract large numbers of participants and/or spectators;
- use public rights of way, permissive trails, open country or moorland over which access is allowed or has been agreed;
- are competitive or just for fun;
- are profit making or raise funds for charity;
- are held on foot, bicycle, horseback or any form of vehicle.

Discuss the event early in your planning

It is important that the National Park Authority is contacted as early as possible whilst there is still flexibility in your plans.

We will give you advice on timing, suitable routes if there are any other events running and important contacts. In particular, we can help with providing information on landowners and other organisations which may need to be contacted. Please contact our Technical Assistant for the Ranger Service who coordinates events within the National Park.

Contact details: 01439 772700
Email: general@northyorkmoors.org.uk

Identify event centre and possible routes to be used

Select start and end venues carefully. There are few venues of sufficient size in the National Park to handle large-scale events, but there are others around the edges of the National Park. You will need to consider:

- dates and timing of the event
- sufficient car parking for the number of competitors. National Park Authority car parks are usually not suitable because of the impact this has on other people wanting to use the facilities, but choose a time away from peak demand and we may be able to help;
- sufficient toilets for the number of competitors;
- provision of drinking water;
- collection of litter;
- shelter for event staff;
- ensure that any temporary infrastructure must not block Public Rights of Way.

Decide who you need to consult with, and who you need permission from

All land is owned by someone – individuals, businesses, organisations or public bodies. To cross any land not on the public rights of way network requires permission from the landowner or manager. Even if your event is entirely on public rights of way it is helpful to consult with landowners who may be affected. You will need their permission to put up any markers or establish any checkpoints/controls needed for your event. Organised recreation events do not have a right to use open access land – again landowner permission is needed.

It may not be possible to get in touch with all landowners along your route, but there will be certain key owners who should be contacted. We can assist in identifying these people.

Contacting Parish Councils along your route can be useful as it will help with getting local knowledge of your event out into the community. They can also be a good source of local knowledge and may be able to assist in your planning. Contact details for Parish Councils can usually be found on the internet.

Large events based in or near villages and other settlements would also benefit from consulting with local community or resident groups.
Potential damage to route surfaces and environmental features

Consider whether the terrain is suitably robust for year-round use – or should it only be used in dry conditions? If the route would be unsuitable in wet weather, then you will need to change the route or have a wet-weather contingency plan.

Discuss whether any of the route or area to be used is particularly environmentally sensitive. The National Park Authority will help identify sensitive sites – both archaeological and important habitats and species – that should be avoided. These issues can normally be easily resolved by re-routing or ensuring that only small numbers of participants visit a particularly sensitive site.

Large parts of the National Park have national or international designations for their nature conservation interest. You should consult with Natural England if your activity could have an impact on land that is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), particularly if you are going to use areas away from established paths and tracks. Again the National Park Authority can help determine whether you do need to contact Natural England and can help identify who to get in touch with. Almost all of the moorland in this National Park is designated as SSSI.

Biosecurity

Human activity is a key factor. Biosecurity measures minimise the amount of soil, water and plant material we carry between sites. By taking some very simple routine actions set out in the Forestry Commission’s ‘Keep it Clean’ campaign we can reduce the spread of pests and diseases and give control measures a better chance of success. See www.forestry.gov.uk/england-keepitclean and https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-the-introduction-and-spread-of-tree-pests-and-diseases

Promoting the local economy

It is good practice to maximise the benefits to the local economy through the use of local suppliers. For example, use local printers for vest numbers and brochures, food and drink from local sources, and local companies for marquees, portaloos etc. Encourage participants, spectators and organisers to stay locally and buy local food rather than simply travelling to the venue on the day.

Promoting the North York Moors National Park

Events can play a key role in helping people to think positively about the North York Moors National Park, and to act as ambassadors for the area after the event. If participants have had an enjoyable experience as part of the event, they are more likely to treat the area with respect and stay longer when they return. Please promote your event as being “…in the North York Moors National Park” (NOT the North Yorkshire Moors) and consider marking the National Park on maps provided to participants.

Sustainable transport

How people travel to your event is likely to be one of the biggest impacts that it has. Large numbers of cars cause congestion, noise and disruption to local communities trying to get on with their normal day-to-day activities. We appreciate that many competitors and spectators will travel by car, but urge organisers to consider how this can be minimised.

Options could include promoting car share websites, such as racelifts.org, a free car sharing website developed by a runner, or highlighting public transport options.

For details of daily trains and buses, plus seasonal weekend and bank holiday services (including Moorsbus), see www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/travel

Plastic free

We know our oceans, coastlines and countryside are choking on plastic. Since David Attenborough’s Blue Planet series poignantly highlighted this, there is growing public support for reducing and eliminating plastic use. Here are some ideas for reducing plastic usage from a recreation event:

- Consider not providing plastic cups for refreshment checkpoints and ask participants to bring their own cups.
- Replace polystyrene containers with cardboard for food containers.
- Avoid laminating where possible and source reusable tie wraps or string.
- For chip timing, make sure the chips are reusable too.
Voluntary contributions

Successful events rely heavily on the co-operation and goodwill of a large number of people, many of whom see no direct benefit from the events that they have to live alongside. It is often a good idea for event organisers to ensure that something goes back into the local area to acknowledge this support. This can make it easier for you and other organisers to promote events again in the future.

Promoting the Countryside Code

The Countryside Code provides good common sense guidance on how people can respect, protect and enjoy the countryside, and you should ensure that participants, spectators and marshals follow the advice it contains. Events crossing moorland should follow the Moors Message.

Fully brief marshals and entrants

Marshals provide the essential contact between competitors and the general public, so an effective explanation of their role, supported by a written statement of their duties, is crucial to the smooth running of the event. You will need to consider the ratio of marshals to entrants as well as their positioning, and determine whether or not you need roving marshals. They may need to wear High Vis or be otherwise easily identified.

Initial information in written form is important. Safety issues and equipment must be covered, along with details about the event and how to get there. We also encourage you to tell participants about the North York Moors National Park and how they can put something back into the area. We can provide text for you to use or you could provide a link to our website www.northyorkmoors.org.uk

Competitor briefing prior to the event is crucial. All competitors should read or hear this – not just the “leaders”. Messages, such as courtesy to residents and other recreational users, not leaving gates open, not leaving litter and avoiding causing erosion are essential. Keeping to the signed route and information about where they are legally entitled to go must also be provided. An equipment check may also be necessary. Remember, your sport will be judged on how your competitors behave.

Waymarks and road signs

Consider posting notices giving advance warning (10-14 days) of events in locations where conflicts with other users are likely. Some people will alter their plans for the event day and therefore make your life easier.

Any route waymarkers or road signs should be put out as close to the start of the event as possible. This reduces their visual impact and makes it less likely that they will be tampered with. It is then really important that they are ALL collected back in within 24 hours of the event. Failure to remove all items immediately will not only damage the reputation of your organisation/sport, but will also deter landowners from welcoming other events in the future.

Please do not post signs where they may impose a danger to livestock. Horses can be startled by poorly secured signs and grazing animals may eat them.
Prepare risk assessments and event plan

Remember that the primary duty of care for the participants rests with the organiser of the event and so it is essential that you prepare an event management plan and a full risk assessment. The National Park Authority does not provide assistance with these.

The Health and Safety Executive offers general advice on running an event safely.

In 2017, The Home Office published amended guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003. This is an Act to make provision about the regulation of the sale and supply of alcohol, the provision of entertainment and the provision of late night refreshment, about offences relating to alcohol and for connected purposes.

The Institute of Fundraising also publishes good guidance and fundraising guides for organisers of outdoors fundraising events, much of which is applicable to any type of large-scale recreation event.

As part of your planning you must arrange a suitable level of public liability insurance. Without this, the event will not be supported by the public authorities and emergency services, or permitted by landowners.

Benefit from your event location in the North York Moors National Park

National Parks are very special places and visitors love to enjoy them. So if your event is in the North York Moors National Park tell people!

Apply to use a North York Moors National Park logo

The North York Moors National Park logo provides a strong and consistent identity for the promotion of this area as a visitor destination. It's already a nationally-recognised brand. If your event is happening in the National Park, you can apply to use either the “Happening in the” or “Exploring the” North York Moors National Park specially-developed logos.

There's no charge to use it and in doing so you'll be benefiting from the National Park's own promotional power. It's simple to apply, just go to www.northyorkmoorstourism.com and fill in the form.
On the day!

Tidying up within 24 hours of the event is recommended to protect your reputation and the environment.

Organisers should ensure that the level of stewarding is sufficient to ensure all rubbish is cleared away, and that signs and any other temporary infrastructure are removed. It is sensible and responsible to liaise with the land manager on the day of the event to ensure that clearing up is done to the satisfaction of the land manager.

If conditions on restoration were part of the permission then these must be completed within the agreed timescale and to the satisfaction of the land manager.

Review

It is good practice to survey participants and all interested parties e.g. local residents, agencies and neighbouring land managers after the restoration work is complete, but soon enough so that everyone remembers the main elements of the day.

Event organisers may wish to consider keeping a written note of issues throughout the process of planning to the actual day of the event so that these can be included. For larger events a meeting may help draw out what has been learnt from the staging of the event which will help in the future.
Useful Information

Here is a list of sport governing bodies, useful websites and a list of important dates to consider when planning your event.

Road Running
www.englandathletics.org/england-athletics/road-running

Walking
www.thebmc.co.uk
www.ramblers.org.uk
www.bwf-ivv.org.uk

Trail running
www.fellrunner.org.uk

Orienteering
www.britishorienteering.org.uk

Cycling
www.britishcycling.org.uk

Horse Riding
www.bhs.org.uk
https://endurancegb.co.uk/main
www.trecgb.com

Motorcycle
www.acu.org.uk
www.trf.org.uk

Motor Rallies
www.msauk.org

Cleveland Mountain Rescue Team
https://clevelandmrt.org.uk

Scarborough & Ryedale Mountain Rescue Team
www.srmrt.org.uk

Natural England
www.gov.uk/government/organisations/natural-england

Forestry Commission
www.forestryengland.uk

Countryside Code
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-country-side-code

Moors Message
www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/visiting/enjoy-outdoors/walking/moors-message

Important Dates

Ground Nesting Bird Season - 1 March – 31 July

Shooting Season (No shooting on Sundays)
Pheasant 1 Oct – 1 Feb
Partridge 1 Sep – 1 Feb
Red Grouse 12 Aug – 10 Dec

Lambing 1 February – 30 April
Hunting 1 September – 30 April
**Checklist for Organisers**

**Initial research and consultation:**
- Identify suitable areas/locations/routes
- Identify event centre
- Check for clashes with other events
- Arrange provision for toilets and car parking; identify public transport options

**Discuss event with:**
- North York Moors National Park Authority
- Key landowners / managers / farmers
- Police if appropriate
- District, Borough/County Councils if appropriate
- Gain permissions from landowners and identify any out-of-bounds areas
- Consult with Natural England if the event uses designated SSSI land

**Detailed planning:**
- Complete detailed route / checkpoint planning
- Prepare risk assessments and event plan
- Arrange medical emergency / backup procedures
- Contact the relevant local Mountain Rescue Team
- Arrange insurance
- Locate usable mobile phone and/or radio communication sites
- Recruit helpers and marshals
- Inform any other affected landowners and residents
- Consider how to maximise the benefits to the local community such as by using local caterers
- Consider how to minimise the environmental impact of the event e.g. reduce single-use plastic
- Consider measures to reduce biosecurity impacts and promote best practice advice
- Consider how to put something back into the National Park, such as through the National Park Authority’s voluntary scheme for donations which go towards the upkeep of rights of way
- Recheck all route / checkpoint arrangements on the ground

**Running the event:**
- Put out checkpoints, waymarkers and road signs
- Fully brief entrants on out-of-bounds areas behaviour and so on
- Have someone briefed to deal with unanticipated land access or public relations problems
- After the event, remove all litter and event signs within 24 hours
- Remove all checkpoints, markers and other debris within 24 hours
- Get feedback from participants and the local community
- Thank and acknowledge those involved and affected.
The North York Moors National Park is a fantastic place to run an event, but faced with increasing demand, our public rights of way need ever more maintenance. Large-scale events, in particular, cause some damage and erosion as hundreds of feet, or wheels, pass over the same sections of path. Extreme weather also causes a number of problems, including coastal landslips on popular event routes. We work really hard to keep these sections open and allow all events to go ahead as planned, but support from event organisers is really important.

You can help us to look after the tracks and trails, ensuring that your event is sustainable for years to come and that other people can continue to enjoy the National Park.

There are a number of ways you can support our work:

- Donate a proportionate amount from entry fees. Many of the established events in the North York Moors National Park donate £1 per participant. This goes directly into rights of way maintenance. Smaller events can donate a smaller amount – perhaps 50p per participant.

- Sponsor a trail! If your event regularly uses one of our promoted or popular routes, speak to us about sponsoring annual maintenance on that route.

- Donate rights of way furniture items – for example, where gates and stiles need replacing, there is an opportunity to ‘donate a gate’ and have your event name on a plaque. This is a great way to show competitors that their entry fees are putting something back into the National Park.

- There are often opportunities to contribute to larger scale projects too – just give us a call to discuss.

When you make a donation to the National Park, we can give your event a shout out on social media and tell the world about the work your donation is funding.

How to donate

Visit www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/donations and donate by using your credit, debit card or PayPal account (the safer, easier way to pay online.

Call: 01439 772700 to discuss your donation in person – please ask for Julia Jewitt or email donations@northyorkmoors.org.uk

By sending a cheque - payable to the North York Moors National Park Authority - to The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley, York, YO62 5BP

All donations may also be given anonymously, please let us know at the time of your gift.