

Lime & Ice Project update

The Lime & Ice project seeks to involve people in exploring the distinctive landscape heritage of the south-west corner of the North York Moors National Park and the northern part of the adjoining Howardian Hills AONB. The key aims are:

- To enhance understanding of the area's vibrant natural and cultural heritage by providing a platform for people to be involved.
- To create enjoyable experiences for people to learn about the landscape through events, recreational activities, exhibitions and educational opportunities.

The project is structured and managed in such a way that people learn and engage with the 'Lime & Ice' theme through activity, participation, observation and simple enjoyment.

The project was developed as part of the Hambleton and Howardian Hills CAN DO (Cultural and Natural Development Opportunity) Partnership's activities. The project officially began on 1st August 2008 and will run until mid 2013.

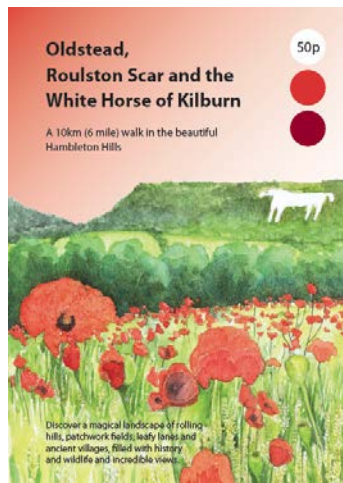
Lime & Ice is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (£500 000) and further financial support is provided by the North York Moors National Park Authority, the Howardian Hills AONB, Natural England, English Heritage and the Forestry Commission (£225 000 collectively). A project officer (full-time) and an assistant project officer (part-time) are employed to implement the project's activities.

The first half of the project focuses on local communities and the latter half will concentrate on disseminating information to visitors and wider audiences. There are twenty three initiatives encapsulated within the Lime & Ice Project. Over the last six months activity has increased greatly and many achievements have already been made. The following is a summary of the key points:

- Conservation works are underway at Hood Hill and relate to the improvement of the footpath across a Scheduled Monument (the site of a former medieval motte and bailey castle) to prevent damage currently being caused to the archaeology by walkers. Materials were airlifted to the top of the hill and contractors are due to complete work by Christmas. Volunteers were involved on the day of the airlift and helped to marshal as well as take photographs to record the event.
- A project focussing on Yearsley Moor has attracted the interest of 25 willing volunteers who are now being trained to undertake both a desk study and field work. Staff from the English Heritage Field Investigation Team have completed one training session and there is another to follow in November. The key aim is to investigate and improve understanding of the area's various historical features, from Bronze Age long barrows to the designed landscapes of Gilling Castle and Newburgh Priory. Ultimately the hope is to establish a number of walks, with associated interpretation which will include information gathered by the volunteers through their explorations, to enhance visitors' understanding of the area.

- A programme of varied events has been carried out since March including guided walks, talks and events for children. The subject of guided walks has varied from looking at the history of the vast and ancient Lake Pickering to celebrating local folklore and legends relating to various landscape features such as Lake Gormire and Hood Hill.

- An archaeological excavation was undertaken during September at Boltby Scar Iron Age Hillfort. There were several aims including recovering new evidence about the condition and nature of the site, gathering dating and environmental evidence, informing the potential reconstruction of the defensive bank (flattened in the 1960s by bulldozer) to re-establish it as a feature in the landscape and improving public understanding and awareness. One of the key achievements was the involvement of volunteers (19 in total) who were trained in excavation and interpretation techniques. An open weekend was held where members of the public were given the opportunity to take tours of the site, arriving by guided walk or using a shuttle bus service, with nearly 100 people doing so. Activities were held at Sutton Bank National Park Centre in conjunction and included a group of Iron Age re-enactors, who provided displays about food and cooking, textiles, jewellery and activities for children. 2,500 people visited the event across the course of the weekend.



- The first circular trail has been completed around the Kilburn and Oldstead area. Improvement works were undertaken to the various rights of way utilised, including the replacement of gates and vegetation. A leaflet has been produced with a route map and interpretation about what walkers can see along the way. Two further leaflets are now being finalised, with other routes in the same area. In future years similar sets of trails will be completed for other communities, with walks around Ampleforth and Oswaldkirk proposed as the next set of leaflets to be completed.

- In conjunction with the circular trails initiative children from Hushwaite and Sessay Primary Schools walked parts of the routes alongside the National Park's Education Service. They were told about the natural and cultural heritage and completed work back in the classroom including poetry and paintings in response to their experience. A weekend exhibition was held in Kilburn Village Hall to celebrate their achievements and also to act as a local launch for the first trail.