

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

23 February 2006

OPEN ACCESS UPDATE

1.0 Purpose of Report

1.2 The purpose of this report is to update members on the progress of Open Access in North Yorkshire.

2.0 Background

2.1 The whole of North Yorkshire has now gone 'live' for open access. The last area to be commenced was in the south of the county at the end of last year. We are currently in the second year of the Countryside Agency's Access Management Grant Scheme. The scheme was due to finish at the end of this financial year but there has now been an extension to the scheme for another year.

3.0 Access Management Grant Scheme

3.1 We were awarded a grant of £48,835 for the current financial year. The grant is made up of four different elements: infrastructure work; fire planning; volunteer expenses; and leaflets.

3.2 Infrastructure work mainly consisted of installing information points. New information points have been installed in the Forest of Bowland AONB and on Skipwith Common as well as individual locations around the county.

3.3 In terms of fire planning, we have been working with the Fire Service and the Mooland Association to update the information held by the Fire Service and to fill in gaps where there is no information currently available. This work is under way and will be completed before next summer. We are also in the process of producing an educational leaflet specifically aimed at moorland visitors to highlight the devastation that moorland fires can cause and tell people how they can help prevent them. We are also looking at the cost/benefit of providing fire beaters at certain locations to help tackle fires if they break out.

3.4 The grant for volunteer expenses is being used to support ongoing service costs and a small expansion.

3.5 We have produced a special edition leaflet with the Nidderdale AONB focusing on Open Access and have also updated the Countryside Service leaflet 'Open Access in North Yorkshire'.

3.6 We will soon be putting a bid together for next financial year. It is envisaged that the main element of the bid will be funding to support the volunteer service.

4.0 Open Access Volunteers

- 4.1 The access volunteers continue to provide an excellent service. There has not been a weekend yet when no volunteers have been out patrolling. We have grown the service by recruiting 10 more volunteers. Existing volunteers are training the new volunteers along side more formal classroom training.
- 4.2 Through the feedback we get from each patrol, we are developing a picture of how the new access rights are being received by the public. There is still little evidence of people using the rights in any significant numbers and there has been a reduction in walkers over the winter season. There have been a few isolated incidents of dogs in restricted areas. These incidents have been mainly dealt with by the volunteers and on more than one occasion the dogs and walkers have been local. The most reported incidences are of off-road bikes on bridleways and footpaths. Appendix 1 lists other issues reported by the volunteers.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 It is recommended that this report be received for information.

Author of report

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Description	Grid Reference	Date reported	Notes	Action
Camper van parking over night	SE156637	25/09/2005	Registration noted E298XDN	Informed the estate
Style in need of repair	SE140560	24/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Footpath needing waymarking	SE087730 to 099727	24/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Suggested a information point at car park to crags	SE178506	18/09/2005		Noted
Fly tipping at access point		17/09/2005	HBC already been out	Suggested some signs at car park to HBC
ROW obstructed by locked gate	SE118548	17/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Rubbish left in shelter	SE066773	15/09/2005		Removed by volunteers
50% off tea and cakes for access volunteers at Woodale Farm Tea Shop	SE073772	11/09/2005		Inform other volunteers!
Footpath hard to follow	SE195746 to 192752	04/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Path needs bracken clearing	SE639163	04/09/2005		Informed Skipton
Fly tipping at access point	SE178506	30/10/2005	On going issue	Talking to HBC
Footpath hard to follow	SE195746 to 192752	30/10/2005	Already reported	Route been formally surveyed, improvements due to start early 2006
Access point used to tip root vegetables	SE113638	29/10/2005		Access point moved to Miners Arms
Footpath needing waymarking	SE148798 to 143778	29/10/2005		Informed Skipton
Damaged culvert	SE038772	16/10/2005		Informed Skipton
Broken bench	SE056766	08/10/2005		Informed Yorkshire Water
Litter at car park	SE169553	27/11/2005		Picked up by volunteer
Damaged fingerpost	SE043782	20/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Damaged stile	SE152642	20/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Out of date closure notices	SE156643	13/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Ladder stile needing repair	SE552132	13/11/2005		Mended
Footpath hard to follow	SE195746 to 192752	13/11/2005	Already reported	Route been formally surveyed, improvements due to start early 2006

Broken stile	SE133554	12/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Broken stile	SE143564	12/11/2005		Informed Skipton
Fly tipping at access point	SE156637	06/11/2005		Informed HBC
Access sign removed	SE128593	31/12/2005		Reported to the police
Burnt out car	SE114596	31/12/2005		Informed estate
Broken finger posts	SE044783	18/12/2005	Already reported	Informed Skipton
Stile missing	SE111632	11/12/2005		Informed Skipton
Stile missing	SE109622	12/12/2005		Informed Skipton