

NORTH YORKSHIRE
LOCAL ACCESS FORUM

WEDNESDAY 29th FEBRUARY 2012

PATHS FOR COMMUNITIES

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report deals with recently announced government funding measures which are relevant to the public rights of way network.

2.0 SUPPORTING RURAL TOURISM MEASURES

- 2.1 In his autumn statement the chancellor announced a package of funding measures aimed at supporting rural tourism.

- 2.2 The measures amount to a £25m funding package broken down into a number of specific areas:

- £12m investment in VisitEngland to promote rural tourism
- £10m fund to support local tourism initiatives
- Commitment to work with AONBs to develop an approach to supporting sustainable tourism
- £2m fund available to local communities to improve public rights of way
- £1m sustainable tourism initiative in the North East

- 2.3 Of relevance to North Yorkshire County Council are the £10m fund to support local tourism initiatives and £2m fund for improving public rights of way (In addition to the AONB initiative which is not specifically funded and which will be picked up by the AONB teams within the county).

3.0 PATHS FOR COMMUNITIES

- 3.1 Particularly relevant to the rights of way network is the £2m 'Paths for communities' fund.

- 3.2 Natural England are currently developing the scheme details, which will have the following aims:

- to encourage and enable local communities to work with land owners to develop and enhance local public paths in ways that deliver wider benefit; and

- to offer a network with more appeal to visitors and tourists, contributing to the rural economy through better support for local services such as shops, pubs, hotels, bed and breakfasts and equestrian businesses.

3.3 The scheme will be a competitive one, supporting proposals that offer best value for money. It is anticipated that it will be launched in April 2012.

4.0 CONCLUSIONS

4.1 It is likely that schemes can be identified within North Yorkshire which will meet the scheme criteria.

4.2 It is essential that we work with communities to ensure the best chance of securing funding.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 It is recommended that the Forum receive this report for information.

Contact:
Aidan Rayner
PRoW Team Leader
01609 533077