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Howardian Hills

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

AONB NEWS

Issue 10

October 2009

NEW SUPPORT FOR AONB COMMUNITIES

Rural Action Yorkshire (RAY) is interested to hear the views of communities in the Howardian Hills AONB. They have started work on a 2-year Community Engagement project in the area, supported by the Howardian Hills AONB Sustainable Development Fund, which aims to strengthen communities through their working together.

RAY has held meetings at Castle Howard and Husthwaite to identify areas which communities want to address, such as local transport, access to services, improved communications and environmental issues. Having listened to all the feedback, RAY is developing a series of workshops which will take place over the next 12 months. These will include home composting, recycling, community websites and newsletters. More details will be advertised shortly and information sent to Parish Councils and Community groups within the AONB. Suggestions for other themes are welcome.

One of the most effective ways to increase community engagement and find out residents' views and ideas is by doing a Community-Led Plan.

Amotherby, Swinton, Slingsby, Thornton-le-Clay & Foston and Welburn are currently working on their plans.

Hovingham & Scackleton have recently completed their plan, which was based on feedback from over 80% of the residents. The comprehensive plan includes six main actions, each of which is now being run by an implementation group. This is a fantastic opportunity for the community to begin to make real changes.

To find out more about RAY's work in the AONB, please call me on 07825 380051, or Email maggie.farey@ruralyorkshire.org.uk

Maggie Farey,
Rural Action Yorkshire

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Community consultation at the Ryedale Show

ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2008 – MARCH 2009

In this regular feature, we tell you about some of the work that the AONB Unit funded or facilitated during the last financial year.

Landscape

- 1.5km of new hedge planting and gapping-up grant aided by the Joint Advisory Committee.
- 640 trees planted, in 2 woodland belts.
- 41 specific Planning proposals scrutinised. Comments submitted on 25 schemes, where a potential impact on the AONB landscape was identified or support was given.
- 11 consultations on other development (mainly within roads or verges) also scrutinised.

Landscape/Biodiversity

- Advised 5 farmers about Entry Level or Higher Level Stewardship.
- 6 English Woodland Grant Scheme consultations appraised for impact on the AONB; only minor comments submitted.

Biodiversity

- 45 new individual field/hedgerow trees and 2 groups of shrubs planted.
- Detailed surveys of 5 SINC's or other sites.
- Conservation grazing of 8 SINC's or other important sites by Exmoor ponies.
- Management works on 43 Special Interest Road Verges.
- 6 black poplar cuttings planted-out. Further cuttings taken for growing on by Thirsk Community Woodland Group.
- Scrub clearance and installation of water supply at Littledale SINC.
- Vegetation management on 4 other SINC's.
- Control of Himalayan balsam along 3.5km of Wath Beck.

Historic Environment

- Restoration of Listed threshing barn.
- City of Troy turf Maze maintained and re-gravelled.
- Restoration of 330m of historic Park wall.
- Restoration of 3 historic village name signs and 4 traditional direction signs.

Recreation and Access

- 3 guided walks/talks held, attended by 120 people.
- Condition surveying of Rights of Way by volunteers, to check for seasonal upgrowth.
- Litter removed from at least 12 sites, on a regular basis.
- CAN DO Lime & Ice Project launched.

Schools/Junior Ranger Club

- 159 pupils on 6 AONB Discovery Days.
- 67 pupils on 2 Hull/Welburn schools twinning days.
- 302 children on 14 Junior Ranger Club sessions.

Sustainable Development Fund

- 10 Whole Farm Energy & Carbon Audits for AONB farms.
- Eco-renovation audit for 1 village hall.
- The coppicing of riverside alders on the River Rye SINC, to improve invertebrate populations.
- The installation of a solar hot water system, connection of waterwheel to generator and building consolidation works at Howsham Mill.
- An apple recipe book.

- The provision of a mobility vehicle for use by disabled visitors to the Castle Howard Arboretum, together with a storage shed.
- The first phase of Rural Action Yorkshire's Community Planning, Engagement and Development project.
- An advisory visit to Hushwaite by an orchards specialist.

Publicity

- Maintained the 14 AONB Gateway Signs.
- At least 27 known press mentions for projects/AONB, worth at least £21,100 in advertising space.
- Managed the AONB website, which received nearly 70,000 visits during 2008/09.
- Published and distributed our 2007/08 Annual Report in July 2008.
- Published and distributed our annual Newsletter (AONB News) in October 2008.
- Used the AONB display boards at 7 consultations/events.
- Attended the Ryedale Show, running a quiz on animal homes, collective nouns, terms for young, etc.

Income and Expenditure

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Natural England	153,930	Staffing	92,094
North Yorkshire CC	47,090	Office costs	15,238
Ryedale DC	6,795	Partnership running costs	1,475
Hambleton DC	6,800	Publicity	5,137
Heritage Lottery Fund (balance in-hand)	7,452	Management Plan	8,359
CAN DO Partnership	5,031	Sustainable Development Fund	69,703
FEP preparation	1,337	Landscape Enhancement	12,894
		Historic Features	4,992
		Enjoying the AONB	2,908
		Discovery Project (HLF)	6,047
<i>Brought forward</i>	<i>19,587</i>	<i>Carried forward</i>	<i>37,770</i>
		<i>Carried forward (HLF)</i>	<i>1,405</i>
	£248,022		£248,022
		(Resources from grant recipients)	75,976
		Total Value of AONB Unit Activity	£323,998

GROUND SOURCE HEAT AT CASTLE HOWARD

For some years management and the family have been looking at sources of providing heating and hot water in the house as an alternative to the oil-based system which was increasingly costly and resulting in high CO₂ emissions. After studying all the alternatives they opted for a ground source heat system, as the technology improvement has been enormous over the last few years.

The project started on 26th May and was completed on 14th August. The work involved draining the lake to accommodate the coils that tap the energy from the water, running a trench for the pipework from the lake to the house, removal of the old boilers and installation of the heat pumps and buffer cylinders.

An exhibit showing the installation and the CO₂ savings in real time will shortly be available for the public to view.

Hon. Simon Howard



Castle Howard ground source heat installation (photo supplied by Castle Howard)

HOWSHAM MILL

On an island in the River Derwent stands a Georgian watermill. Sadly years of vandalism and neglect have taken their toll and the Howsham Mill Project now aims to rescue the building before it becomes irreparable.

Their project is threefold:

1. Restoration of the Mill building as far as possible back to its original state externally, for use as an environmental study centre and bunkhouse.
2. Preservation of the existing natural environment.
3. Reinstatement of the waterwheel to once again harness the power of the river, this time to generate electricity and make the building totally self-sustaining for the 21st century, using revenue from power sales to fund future restoration and conservation work at the site.

Over the past five years the Trust have succeeded in restoring the waterwheel and granary building and have installed an Archimedes Screw to capture the power of the river. The next stage is to complete the ongoing restoration work that is taking place on the main building.

If you would like to find out more please take a look at:

www.rht.greenisp.org/HowshamMill



Archimedes Screw turbine at Howsham Mill

WELBURN VILLAGE HALL

Welburn Village Hall Institute used their SDF grant to purchase an air source heatpump and eight sunpipes. These features reduce the carbon dioxide emissions associated with operating community buildings, as well as reducing their running costs.



Welburn Village Hall – benefiting the community and reducing carbon dioxide emissions

A sunpipe is a super-reflective tube with an internal mirror finish that intensifies and reflects natural daylight, delivering outdoor light to the room below. They provide an energy-free way of bringing natural light into areas of the building that sufficient amounts cannot ordinarily reach.

Air source heatpumps extract heat from the air outside, even when it is as cold as minus 15°C, in the same way that your kitchen fridge takes the heat from inside it. This heat can then either be used in an air-to-water system, more suited to underfloor heating systems, or in an air-to-air system as is the case at Welburn Village Hall.

NORTH YORK MOORS, COAST AND HILLS LEADER PROGRAMME

The North York Moors, Coast and Hills LEADER programme is one of six LEADER areas in the Yorkshire and Humber region. The programme, funded by the European Union and Defra, and managed by Yorkshire Forward, is intended to provide a bottom-up approach to addressing the needs identified by local communities.

The North York Moors, Coast and Hills area is defined as the North York Moors and Cleveland Hills, Howardian Hills and the Vale of Pickering, along with the North Yorkshire and Cleveland Heritage Coast from Saltburn to Scalby.

The programme is keen to encourage a range of exciting and innovative projects that address local need, tackle an identified problem, or just allow something different to happen in a community. Further details of the 12 priority areas of LEADER can be found on the website – www.moorscoastandhills.org.uk

Funding of between £5,000 and £30,000 is available, with up to £100,000 for exceptional projects. Potential projects could include the provision of additional services or facilities within your community, interpretation of a local heritage feature, village enhancement such as improving the village green or local footpath, community eco-energy schemes, or developing and marketing local products and produce.

Groups with a project in mind are encouraged to contact programme staff and to complete a Project Idea Form which can be downloaded from www.moorscoastandhills.org.uk

Hovingham Village Hall and Community Project has already been awarded £10,814 of LEADER funding towards improving the facilities and activities it offers the local community. In addition to extending youth facilities, it also plans to introduce a local producers market, cooking classes, pilates, regular coffee mornings and computer courses.



Hovingham Village Hall

For further details please contact:

**Mike Horrocks, LEADER Programme Manager, or
Amy Thomas, LEADER Programme Officer**

Tel: 01439 770657

Email: leader@northyorkmoors-npa.gov.uk

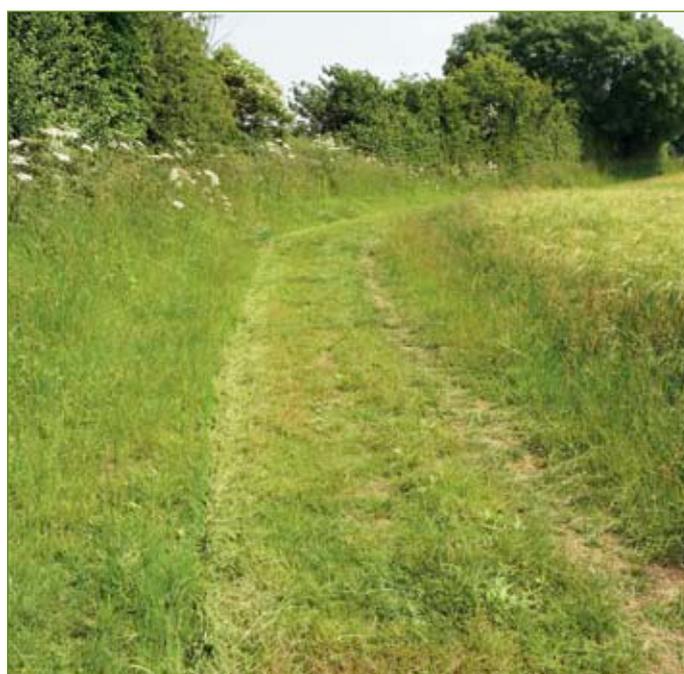


PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY UPDATE

The warm and wet weather we have been experiencing this summer has highlighted the need to keep on top of undergrowth on the public rights of way network.

Fortunately a partnership involving the AONB, landowners and North Yorkshire County Council has been ensuring that those routes in need of regular cutting are taken care of. The most popular routes which are subject to undergrowth problems have been identified and are now cut regularly, either by landowners or by contractors working for the County Council as part of a pro-active programme. The Council's Countryside Rangers have also been busy keeping on top of any other problem routes that aren't on the programme as they arise, making sure that residents and visitors can continue to enjoy the area in comfort.

For further information please contact:
paths@northyorks.gov.uk



Recently-cut field edge path

HIMALAYAN BALSAM

Himalayan balsam was introduced to the UK from Asia in 1939; it is primarily found growing in waterside locations.

An individual Himalayan balsam plant can produce up to 800 seeds, which can be dispersed in running water and germinate earlier and faster than those of many native plants. This, in combination with its ability to grow in dense stands, means that it out-competes most of our native species and has a significant negative impact on biodiversity and bank stability.

Funding secured via the Cultural and Natural Development Opportunity (CAN DO) has enabled a substantial strimming programme (prior to

seed maturation); starting at the headwater of Wath Beck, near Terrington, and working towards its confluence with the River Rye.



Himalayan balsam

In summer 2008 the land on either side of approximately 3.5km of Wath Beck was cleared of balsam. This included small blocks of native woodland, a section of public bridleway and Howthorpe Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, a site valued for its wet grassland flora. This year these sites have been cleared again and work has progressed further down the beck towards the River Rye. In 2010 we hope to assess the impact of the work carried out so far and to repeat the clearance where the plant has regenerated.

Thank you to all of the landowners who have permitted access for this work – it is only through your agreement that this work has been feasible and that its long-term success will be possible.

AONB PROJECT FUND



Restoration of a section of Wiganthorpe Park wall. Capstones will be added soon to protect the wall from weather erosion

The AONB Unit has continued its on-going programme of working with landowners and farmers, to restore the walls, hedgerows and wood pastures that typify our local landscape. Priority is given to projects that can be enjoyed by the public, from public rights of way and roads, or to schemes that link other valuable habitats so creating living corridors.

We have secured some additional funding this year to support the planting of boundary and in-field trees. If you are a land manager please get in touch with us if you would like to find out more.



Hedge planting near Firby and Westow



Hedge planting near Barton-le-Street



Landscape tree planting at East Newton Hall

DIAMONDS IN THE LANDSCAPE

2009 is the 60th anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. Passed in 1949, this landmark legislation established how the countryside could be protected and conserved for future generations.

The Act paved the way for the creation of today's family of 14 UK National Parks, 49 Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), 294 National Nature Reserves and 2,900 miles of National Trails.

Its effect has been to ensure that everyone living in the UK can enjoy areas of spectacular countryside and iconic wildlife, as places to relax and be inspired.



AONBs and National Parks cover almost every type of landscape, from wild coastlines and gentle lowland valleys to rolling wooded countryside and rugged uplands.

We can look back at the achievements of the last 60 years and be proud of the successes. This anniversary also provides an opportunity to encourage interest in the current issues facing Protected Landscapes, such as climate change, and discuss what actions might be needed over the next 60 years and beyond.

To celebrate the anniversary the AONBs and National Parks have produced a series of '60 walks for 60 years', which can be found at: www.diamondsinthelandscape.org.uk

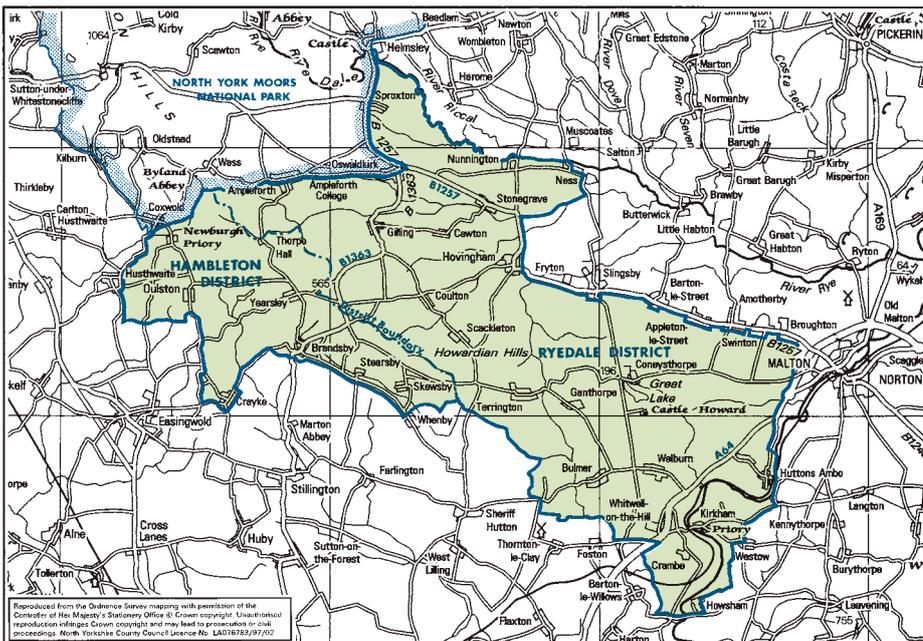
NEW AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN

The first 5-year review of the AONB Management Plan has now been completed, as required by Government legislation. Following the consultation period in November and December 2008, all the comments received were evaluated and the Plan amended accordingly. The new Plan was adopted by the County and District Councils in May 2009 and was also sent to Defra.

The Plan contains Objectives and Actions to help guide the management of the AONB over the next 5 years, up to April 2014. The updated Plan contains new sections on sustainability, to help address the challenges that lie ahead (particularly in relation to climate change), and on conservation of the geodiversity interest of the AONB.

If you would like to view the new Plan then please visit: www.howardianhills.org.uk/11/Management_Plan.html

HOWARDIAN HILLS AONB FACT FILE



- The Howardian Hills covers 204 sq. km (79 sq. miles).
- The area was confirmed as an AONB in 1987.
- About 9,300 people live in or immediately adjacent to the area.
- Over 15% of the area is wooded.

Supported by:



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