



# **Campaign** for **National Parks**

Keeping beautiful places safe

**News from Around the Parks**

**Autumn – November 2013**



## News from Around the Parks

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# Brecon Beacons National Park

## Brecon Beacons NPA

### 1. Cross-party support for Wales' National Parks

Politicians from across the political spectrum at the National Assembly for Wales have signed a Statement of Opinion, the equivalent to a Named Day Motion at Westminster, recognising the sterling work of Wales' three National Park Authorities at Brecon Beacons, Snowdonia and Pembrokeshire. The Statement reads:

*This National Assembly commends the work of our three National Park Authorities and recognises their significant contribution to the Welsh economy - estimated to be in the region of £1billion. We further acknowledge that the National Parks of Wales play a pivotal role in the economic development of their respective regions that extends far beyond their physical boundaries. The specialised and consistent approach to the management of these natural assets ensures their protection and sustainability for the enjoyment of both residents and the 12 million annual visitors.*

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### 2. Chris Morgan at the Heart of Planning

“Wales' National Park Authorities have the unenviable but intrinsic task of striking the right balance between environmental, social and economic considerations. Nowhere perhaps is this more keenly felt than in the field of Planning and Countryside and Land Management where we strive to meet our dual objectives of conserving and enhancing the unique character of the national parks whilst at the same time providing the conditions that allow the Parks' communities to thrive and businesses to flourish.”

Chris Morgan is the Director of Planning at Brecon Beacons National Park Authority. This is an extract from his new monthly column in the Brecon and Radnor Express on planning matters at the National Park. The column aims to dispel a few planning myths and give readers a better understanding of the day to day work of the Planning team at the Brecon Beacons National Authority. In the month ending 26 September, 86 per cent of all planning applications handled by Chris' team at Brecon were determined within eight weeks and 100 per cent of all household applications within the same time frame. [Click here](#) to read Chris' column in full.

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### 3. Dark Skies the limit at Brecon Beacons National Park

Now that the winter nights are closing in, our International Dark Skies status continues to gather momentum with numerous dark sky events and initiatives taking place across the Park. From stargazing evenings to Dark Skies ambassadors, to holiday cottages offering customised viewing platforms telescopes, we are finding that the our dark skies are attracting not just visitors from far and wide, but also local businesses to get involved in the action. If you haven't seen had the chance to see our dark skies for yourself now is definitely the time to pay us a visit – and why not coincide your trip with one of our events.

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#### **4. Brecon Beacons National Park LDP 2007 - 2022 – Inspector’s Report Published**

On 4 November the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority published the Planning Inspector’s Report on the Examination into the Brecon Beacons National Park Local Development Plan 2007 – 2022.

After many years of public consultation, the Inspector has sent her final report (30 October) to the National Park Authority which concludes that, subject to ‘Matters Arising Changes’, the Local Development Plan (LDP) provides a sound basis for Planning within the National Park until 2022.

The conclusions reached by the Inspector are binding and the Authority must adopt the LDP, by resolution of the National Park’s Members within eight weeks of receiving the Inspector’s report. To this end, an Extraordinary General Meeting will be held to consider formal adoption of the Local Development Plan 10.00am on 17 December at the headquarters of the National Park Authority in Brecon.

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## **The Broads**

### **The Broads Society**

#### **5. Regeneration of Southern Rivers now extends right into the heart of Norwich**

Now in its second year the Broads Society’s project to revitalise the Southern Rivers of the Broads (the Yare, Waveney and Chet) has seen a significant rise in visitors at all destinations south of Gt Yarmouth. With the majority of the hire fleets now based on the Northern Broads the infrastructure on the South has suffered greatly with the lack of waterborne visitors allowing the rivers degenerate.

The Broads Society’s initiative has seen much improvement over the past twelve months with major restoration work on the River Chet and improved mooring facilities. This, together with input from the Broads Authority with a large section of its’ free newspaper *Broadcaster* dedicated to the delights of these wilder rivers, has done much to boost the local economy.

The Broads Society has now teamed up with the River Wensum River Parkway Project to restore navigation right through the city of Norwich to the head of navigation at New Mills. Representatives of all the major organisations in Norwich boarded a 40ft hire cruiser on 30 October so that they could see for themselves all that the river Wensum has to offer and the Society was able to stress to them the important fact *that Norwich is the only city (complete with two cathedrals) to lie within a National Park Boundary.*

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### **The Broads Authority**

#### **6. Second award for work benefitting navigation and nature**

The innovative restoration of a lost reed bed in Salhouse Broad has been awarded a second accolade in a year. The Broads Authority’s project has won international acclaim as a pioneering way of re-using dredged sediment. Now it has been awarded the UK’s first Working with Nature Certificate of

Recognition by PIANC, The World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure, which is one of only three certificates to be awarded in Europe.

The certificates are awarded to 'environmentally ambitious' navigation infrastructure projects which focus on identifying win-win solutions that maximise opportunities rather than simply minimising ecological harm. The accolade enables the project to be promoted as an example of international best practice.

Earlier this year the project received a commendation in the innovation category of the Waterways Renaissance Awards. Dredged sediment from the nearby river has been used to create the reed bed using innovative methods and within a year more than 30 plant species –some nationally scarce-- are growing there. The project, which cost £230,000, was part funded by the European Regional Development Fund under the Promoting Integrated Sediment Management (PRISMA) project.

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## **7. Broads Authority shortlisted for national green tourism award**

The Broads Authority has been recognised for its work in pioneering green tourism by being shortlisted for a prestigious national award.

The Green Destination Award will be presented to the organisation which has made most progress in raising awareness and delivering change in sustainable tourism at the annual Green Tourism conference on 8 November, the culmination of national Green Tourism Week.

Sustainable tourism has been at the heart of the Broads Authority's agenda since it was established in 1989. For 26 years it has been promoting environmentally friendly boating with its electric and solar powered boat trips, reduced tolls for electrically powered boats and helped set up the Broads' canoe and bike hire networks.

In 2004 it was named as one of just six authorities, and the only protected area, to achieve Beacon Council status in the category of Promoting Sustainable Tourism. In 2006 the Authority became the first English National Park to be awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas, and it still holds the Charter today.

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## **8. Love the Broads funds first three projects**

The Love the Broads visitor giving scheme has funded its first three projects. A year on from its launch the initial pilot of seven businesses taking part has grown to over 50 and donations are about to hit the £9,000 mark, passing the £6,000 projection for 2013 with two months to go.

A total of £2,000 from visitor donations has been given to the Broads Authority to erect a further 15 new barn owl nesting boxes in the Broads area. The BA is working with the Hawk & Owl Trust to install the boxes on private land with suitable barn owl habitat to try to arrest the decline of this iconic bird. Funds will also be used to develop a barn owl education pack for environmental education providers in the Broads Area. £750 is being given to the Broads Bike Hire Association to improve cycle route signage in the northern Broads and Waveney River Centre is giving £1,500 to Suffolk Wildlife Trust from its donations to improve access on an all-weather circular footpath around the Carlton and Oulton Marshes nature reserve.

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## Exmoor National Park

### Exmoor NPA

#### 9. New Lynmouth Pavilion opened

Visitors, locals and invited guests mingled together recently at the opening of the new Lynmouth Pavilion which was completed in less than twelve months of construction work.

Andrea Davis, Chairman of Exmoor National Park Authority, who was instrumental in securing substantial funding from Devon County Council that opened the £1.2 million Pavilion building. The project to replace the old 1930s Pavilion, which was beyond repair, was jointly funded and led by Exmoor National Park Authority.

Miss Davis said: "The funding we received from Devon County Council's 'Invest in Devon' scheme enabled this amazing state of the art attraction to come about which will benefit tourism and businesses in Lynton and Lynmouth and the wider Exmoor area for years to come."

On the ground floor, the National Park Centre is a learning and experience hub which both local people and visitors are enjoying to learn more about Exmoor National Park. The Pavilion has been designed to have a mix of high tech and more traditional exhibits with everything from a large interactive touch screen table and ipads to the traditional seaside photo board. A short film, which has been specially commissioned for the Centre, offers new, aerial views of Exmoor National Park and runs in the audio theatre offering people a different view of Exmoor and encouraging them to explore further.

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#### 10. White Rock Cottage in Simonsbath

Exmoor National Park Authority has recently completed the purchase of White Rock Cottage (the former school site) in Simonsbath. The previous owners, West Somerset Council, agreed to sell the site once it became clear that plans to develop it for affordable housing, while conserving its historic importance, were not likely to be financially viable.

Chief Executive Dr Nigel Stone said: "The National Park decided to buy the property primarily with the objective of safeguarding the historic interest of this important site which formed part of the Knight estate and the 19<sup>th</sup> Century reclamation of Exmoor Forest.

"We are already working with the Parish Council and local community and a public open day was held recently when we welcomed people who wished to help shape our thinking on the best way to conserve and utilise White Rock Cottage and other heritage sites in Simonsbath. We intend that the project should be led and managed by a local group and would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to play a part in the development of the project. We would also like to hear from anyone who went to the school or has memories of the site in the past.

"In time, we hope to secure the funding needed to restore the buildings and provide public access so that, when combined with the many other locations of interest such as the landscape gardens in Ashcombe: the 19<sup>th</sup> century sawmill and pound building, Simonsbath can become an even more interesting destination in the centre of the National Park."

A recent report on White Rock Cottage commissioned by the National Park Authority reveals the former school site was built in the early 1800's as a 'picturesque' element – a cottage orné – within a designed garden landscape being developed by the Knight family. The original rustic cottage was extended in the 1850s to provide on-site staff accommodation and part converted in 1857 to use as a school within the newly established community of Simonsbath. The building has been used in the later 20th century as a research and study centre but has been closed for a considerable time.

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## The Lake District National Park

### Friends of the Lake District

#### 11. DECC Consultation: Review of the Siting Process for a Geological Disposal Facility

This is a national consultation with a response deadline of 5 December. In summary, Friends of the Lake District feels that the decision-making process contained within the consultation represents a step backwards. We call for the following fundamental changes:

- A broad membership National Commission to oversee the whole process, determining which areas go forward based on suitable geology and other safety and environmental conditions.
- The local decision making body to be truly representative of all the community interests, including County Councils, Parish & Town Councils and other affected organisations.
- A legally binding, continuous Right of Withdrawal at any stage.
- It is absolutely essential that the identification of safe and suitable geology conditions comes before the identification of volunteer communities.
- More up front information on all aspects of developing a GDF as part of the public awareness campaign before communities volunteer to participate.
- A local public referendum before any area enters the detailed siting stage.
- Community benefits should play no part in the process for identifying a safe and suitable GDF site.
- The siting and management strategies for medium and longer-term interim storage of existing legacy and future wastes must also be covered, not least in the event of a repository being delayed or no suitable site being ultimately being found.
- An environmental bottom-line must be established that intrusive borehole investigations, any potential surface infrastructure or GDF, should not be permitted within, or adversely affect, national and international protected areas, such as National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Sites or Special Areas for Conservation.

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#### 12. United Utilities Water Resources Management Plan 2013

Our response to United Utilities water supply proposals to serve West Cumbria for the next 25 years welcomed the proposals to reduce demand, abstraction and leakage and the introduction of more metering. Of the three options proposed for major new supply infrastructure we supported, firstly, the lowest cost plan using local supplies and solutions, followed by the Kielder option looking longer-term, and lastly new abstraction from Thirlmere. Our main concern with the preferred Thirlmere option is the landscape impacts and longer term water requirements which may put more pressure on Thirlmere and indirectly onto other Lake District National Park sources. Significant above ground

infrastructure would be required in the Lake District National Park and the SEA underplays the landscape impacts. We are requesting much greater information so that we can properly assess the relative impacts of the Thirlmere option versus less damaging alternatives.

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### **13. Flora of the Fells Fell Care Days**

Our mass volunteer 'Fell Care Days' are a huge success, with Borrowdale engaging more than 200 school children, Mosaic champions, Princes Trust, College students and apprentices, many other volunteers and partners organisations' staff taking part in a day of intensive conservation work in the Borrowdale valley and fells. In just one day we:

- Fixed 26 km of fell paths (maintenance and drainage) to reduce soil erosion to protect water quality;
- Resurfaced 235 metres of existing woodland access paths;
- Coppiced 0.4 hectares of woodland to improve habitat for insects and birds;
- Restored 10 metres of dry stone wall at Watendlath;
- Canoeists on Derwentwater picked 17 bags of rubbish;
- 100 square metres of invasive rhododendrons were cut down; and best of all
- 400 pieces of cake were kindly donated and consumed by volunteers!

The Grange-Over-Sands Fell Care Day will take place on 13 November.

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### **Lake District NPA**

#### **14. LDNPA Local Plan**

We are seeking endorsement from our Authority in October for final section of our local plan which, for the first time, allocates land for housing and employment in the National Park. Following the Examination in Public this spring our proposals for land allocation were found to be sound. An important outcome for our plans for local and affordable needs housing and supporting business in the Lake District.

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#### **15. Organisational Change**

The National Park Authority is currently embarking on a second phase of organisational change as part of our response to on-going reductions in our national park grant. Our aim is to make sure we remain as a positive, vibrant organisation committed to delivering our vision in a tough financial climate. We are looking hard at how we can be more efficient, commercial, and innovative. This will help us save as many jobs and protect as many of our services as possible so we can minimise the impact of working within a reduced budget.

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## New Forest National Park

### New Forest NPA

#### 16. Multi-million pound funding boost to ensure New Forest National Park is fit for the future

The future conservation of the New Forest National Park's unique landscape, wildlife and heritage has been given a huge boost thanks to support from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). A £2.9m HLF Landscape Partnership grant has been earmarked for the National Park to restore lost habitats, develop Forest skills and inspire a new generation to champion and care for the New Forest.

The seven-year New Forest Landscape Partnership will be led by the New Forest National Park Authority and 10 key partners, who will contribute their own funding to increase the pot to £4.5m.

The aim is to make the Forest more robust and able to withstand modern day pressures such as trends in agriculture, climate change, and increasing demands from a growing population that is less connected to the countryside. [Click here](#) for further details.

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#### 17. Record number of passengers on New Forest Tour

The New Forest Tour enjoyed its best season yet with a record number of passenger journeys – helping take cars off the road and providing a boost to local businesses. Final figures for the seven-day summer bus service showed a total of 40,653 passenger journeys on the three open-top routes – up 40% on last year.

The Tour's success was helped by the good weather and the introduction of the new blue route in the south west of the New Forest National Park. Along with the green and red routes, it means the entire National Park is covered by the hop on hop off service which contributed an estimated £700,000 this year to the local economy.

Run by Go South Coast in partnership with the New Forest National Park Authority, the Tour has also helped take cars off the road, saving an estimated 223,000 private car miles this year. [Click here](#) for further details.

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#### 18. Laser mapping uncovers hidden secrets of the New Forest

Ancient secrets of the New Forest have been revealed thanks to high-tech images beamed back by lasers from aircraft. More than 3,500 new archaeological sites and monuments have been uncovered in the New Forest National Park, including prehistoric field systems, Bronze Age burial mounds and an Iron Age hill fort with its system of bank and ditches.

Many of these landmarks were hidden under dense forest until National Park archaeologists used a plane to fire harmless laser beams into the ground to build a 3D map of the surface. The Light Detection and Ranging technology (LiDAR) can penetrate the tree canopy, revealing features which cannot be seen by other means.

The New Forest is the first National Park in the country to have its entire landscape surveyed by LiDAR. The survey also mapped surrounding communities - an area the size of 92,000 hectares or 350 square miles.

Combined with more traditional aerial photography, infra-red images and field work, National Park archaeologists have a better idea of how archaeological sites are directly linked and often re-used over the ages. The public can see the results for themselves online, zooming in to interesting locations [here](#).

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### **19. New Forest Marque members sweep the board at Hampshire Life Food and Drink Awards**

New Forest Marque members are celebrating after sweeping the board by winning seven out of 11 categories at the recent Hampshire Life magazine Food and Drink Awards.

Managed by the New Forest National Park Authority, the Marque gives businesses a distinctive 'New Forest' banner under which to sell their goods and services, encouraging people to buy local and reduce the environmental impact of transporting food over long distances.

Two hundred guests, finalists and sponsors joined Hampshire Life at the Four Seasons Hotel, Hampshire, for the awards regarded as the Oscars of the local food and drink industry. They celebrate the finest produce that Hampshire has to offer and give valuable recognition to producers, growers, suppliers and hospitality venues.

For more details about the New Forest Marque scheme, which has over 130 members including producers, farm shops and restaurants, please [click here](#).

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### **New Forest Association**

#### **20. Commercial Recreation concerns**

There has been much concern over the last few months about commercial events on the Forest causing disruption of working activities. Matters came to a head when a Forest drift (pony round-up) was put off, for safety reasons, in favour of a large scale cycling event.

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#### **21. Strategy work continues**

Progress on education issues and natural environment strategy continues. The New Forest Association continues to provide input to DEFRA regarding the Public Forest Estate. A document *Recovering Lost Landscapes – Highland Water* has been completed to influence appropriate restoration of lowland heathlands.

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#### **22. Marketing Video**

A group of media students from the University of Winchester have been charged with making a video for the NFA entitled 'Why is the New Forest Association still needed?' This is part of their degree course and will not only give them a practical means of learning their trade but also learning something about the New Forest and provide us with a marketing tool.

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## North York Moors National Park

### North York Moors NPA

#### 23. Rural Development - LEADER

More than 350 community projects in 172 villages have been successfully completed thanks to the European Union's rural grant scheme, LEADER. The work has been carried out over the last four years under the LEADER programme which comes to an end next March. It has funded arts festivals, apprenticeships, a quoits pitch, restored old buildings and a community orchard - and even turned an old telephone kiosk into a quirky village library!

The total cost of the projects was £5.3 million. The Rural Development Programme for England funded £2.6 million of the total cost and the remainder was financed by public and private contributions. A total of 172 villages out of the 199 in the LEADER programme area in the park have benefited from the money.

One of the most successful projects was an apprenticeship scheme run in conjunction with six North Yorkshire country estates, York University and English Heritage to provide three apprentices with specialist heritage conservation work on buildings and archaeological monuments. Now, a new plan is being researched and developed following the success of the current LEADER scheme.

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#### 24. Potash Mine – Update

The planning application for a second potash mine in the Park has been delayed until August next year. Sirius Minerals which proposes to build a mine near Whitby, asked for the decision in July to be deferred because it wants to re-examine the environmental impact of the wider project, including processing, port infrastructure at Teeside and a 26 km pipeline across the Park. Sirius has also accepted the need for improved monitoring of the existing environmental conditions at the proposed mine site so that impacts of traffic, noise and dust emissions on local residents, local rivers and ground water drainage can be more accurately predicted. A planning decision is now likely at the end of next year.

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### North York Moors Association

#### 25. Potash Mining Planning Application

The planning meeting which was to have taken place on 29 July to determine the application for locating a £1.7 billion potash mine in the North York Moors National Park was deferred indefinitely at the request of the applicant company. The applicant company Sirius Minerals /York Potash Ltd made this request on the 17 July, the day before the senior planning officer was due to present a report to the planning committee recommending approval or refusal. The report was based on a 300 page "Review of the Environmental Impact Assessment" and a report on the "Major Development Test" both produced by the NP consultants AMEC. An executive summary was released on the 15 July, which revealed many shortcomings and caused a massive drop in the Sirius Minerals share price. Although the planning officer's report was subsequently withdrawn, it seems clear that it would have supported a recommendation for a refusal of planning permission and the request for a deferral was recognition of this fact by the company.

In September Sirius minerals announced that they would resubmit their application in August 2014. However, this position was changed in October when the company said it was going to extend the application area. This will include an area outside the National Park boundary which will make the application a “Straddle Planning Application” with two determining authorities and will bring in the North Yorkshire County Council who already has a predetermined position of support for the project. The application has already cost the National Park over £600,000 and this is expected to increase with the submission of a new application next August. Three gas production projects are at different stages all within the NP and further seismic exploration work has taken place in the South of the Park.

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## Northumberland National Park

### Northumberland NPA

#### 26. Acres of Achievement in the Border Uplands

Threatened habitats in 123,500 acres (50,000 hectares) of upland landscape – almost half of the area of Northumberland National Park, have been restored over the past 8 months to link together fragmented wildlife habitats and make them more viable for a range of rare birds, animals, insects and plants. Areas of bog, woodland, streams, moorland grassland and hay meadows in North Tyne, Redesdale and Coquetdale have been identified and catalogued ready for regular monitoring and considerable on-the-ground conservation activity has taken place.

The multi-partner Border Uplands project was co-ordinated by Abi Mansley for a group of partners including Northumberland National Park Authority, Natural England, Northumberland Wildlife Trust, the Forestry Commission, the Tyne Rivers Trust, Northumberland County Council, the MOD, the RSPB and the Environment Agency. The projects have been funded by the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and through the Higher Level Stewardship scheme for farmers. The partners aim to use the improvements to enhance the benefits that we expect our countryside to deliver for both people and the environment such as cleaner water, natural flood alleviation, carbon storage and a richer biodiversity.

In October, Northumberland National Park Authority, the North Pennines AONB Partnership and Northumberland Wildlife Trust joined forces to protect Boddle Moss on Simonside, a precious wetland and SAC, as part of the shared work of the *Northern Upland Chain Local Nature Partnership*. Boddle Moss is a deep peat area that provides an important service to wildlife and the people in the Coquet Valley below Simonside.

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#### 27. Satellite cow-tracker reveals how cattle make themselves at home in the hills

If you visit the remote College Valley in the National Park this summer you may notice something a bit different about the native cattle grazing the slopes of Cheviot – some will be wearing collars, not with a traditional cow bell, but with a specially-designed Global Positioning System (GPS) unit to track their movements via satellite in real time.

The digitally-connected herd of native breed Luining cattle and farmer, Adam Waugh, are taking part in a major piece of agricultural research by Newcastle University to find out why cattle travel where

they do and how this affects the nationally-important plants and wildlife of the Cheviot Site of Special Scientific Interest.

The project is being supported and funded by Cheviot Futures, College Valley Estate and the Sir James Knott Trust and is being facilitated by Northumberland National Park Authority.

Understanding and managing livestock distribution is very important for conservation management and GPS technology is a state of the art tool allowing researchers to learn why animals make the choices they do about where to graze or take shelter and consequently the impact they have on the environment.

Recently, the established sheep flock which grazed the area of the Cheviot Massif within College Valley were removed when The Estate decided to lower livestock numbers and put an even greater emphasis on conservation management on this part of The Estate. The native cattle involved in this project will be the only livestock grazing the Cheviot Massif this summer. The cattle will not have grazed on The Cheviot before and will initially have to explore the area to find the best grazing, water and shelter. They will also be influenced by extreme weather events that seem to be becoming more common place as a result of climate change.

Tracking animals, even something as large as a cow, can be very challenging in remote locations, especially during the night or in periods of bad weather, so remote positioning is very useful. Unlike radio collars, which have been used before for monitoring animals in the National Park, GPS collars enable the location of each animal to be recorded on the collar at a pre-determined interval without someone having to go out on the hill and locate the animal. GPS collars can also give an indication of what the animal is doing by recording how it is moving. The information stored on the collar can then be obtained via satellite link to a computer.

In addition to providing data for the research, the information will help Adam Waugh know where his cattle are on Cheviot, and provide a teaching resource for local schools and University students.

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## **28. Labour of love as National Park volunteers launch new College Valley path**

National Park Volunteers led an inaugural walk in July with over twenty visitors on a newly-reinstated footpath from Hethpool Mill to Southern Knowe in the College Valley: a cross-country walk of just under two miles that offers walkers total immersion in the tranquillity of the Cheviots.

This was the first of three, free guided walks of the new path with National Park Volunteers which took place on Saturdays in August. A downloadable map of the walk will soon be available from the National Park website.

The path reinstatement has been a real labour of love and many hours of work from volunteers and ranger staff have brought this delightful footpath back into use. The path links up with another Right of Way to give a challenging 10 mile hike, taking in Hethpool Linn and Wester Tor.

Wild Cheviot Goats can be seen during the walk, which follows St Cuthbert's way for a stretch. Visitors wholeheartedly agreed that the day was wonderful; that the knowledgeable voluntary rangers added so much additional enjoyment to the day and that they would be back to walk to path again in the near future.

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## **29. Coquet Valley legends brought to life at launch screening**

Fans of vintage film gathered in Rothbury in September for the launch of a newly digitised set of DVDs of films produced by the Upper Coquetdale Film Group on 16 mm which recorded the characters, way of life and legends of the valley from the 1960s onwards.

Technology moved on and the reels languished in sheds and lofts until they were saved for posterity by volunteers; catalogued and digitized to broadcast standard, and made available as DVD's with a grant from Northumberland National Park Authority.

The full archive documents a rural valley in Northumberland National Park as it slipped from timelessness into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Now future-proofed in High Definition, copies of the archive reside at the County Archives at Woodhorn and the National Film Archive of the North East at University of Teesside. As well as the six films, it includes hours of raw footage of valley characters talking about the valley in their own youth in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Many spoke in dialect and talked of the life of their parents in the previous century. The characters include Jack Redhead of Holystone, a roadman of the day whose favourite snack was a raw onion. Sound recordings of their voices exist on 3/4" reel-to-reel; thousands of hours of painstaking technical work was carried out by passionate volunteer, Keith Hartnell, helped by Rob Fitzgerald of Blagdon Studios.

The Upper Coquetdale Film Group was started in the 1960s by keen amateur film maker, Dr Keith Mackay. He loved the valley and its rural traditions and characters and could see that its way of life could be on a fragile cusp. He rallied a group of interested local people and formed the film group that continued producing until the 1980s. The film group are now in their later years themselves and are no longer active, but proceeds of DVD sales will go to keeping the archive alive through distribution and screenings.

The Rothbury screening was the culmination of eight years of work and fundraising by the group and the fulfilment of a great dream amongst the original group members who are now ready to hand over the baton to a new generation. DVDs are available online from [Northern-heritage.co.uk](http://Northern-heritage.co.uk).

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## **30. National Park pilots automatic wildfire detection system to protect landscape and livestock**

Northumberland National Park Authority is working with Northumberland Fire and Rescue Service and TMS Europe to trial an automated detection system designed to give early warning of wildfires.

The pilot – the first of its kind in the UK - will take place on the Debdon Hills, near Rothbury, overlooking the Simonside Special Area of Conservation, which is designated for high level protection due to the important habitat and species found there.

The project has been made possible thanks to a grant from Northumberland Uplands Leader through its independent local panel, the NULeader Local Action Group.

Dry springs and summers, like the long period of drought this year, have led to a number of wildfires across the heather moorland of the National Park in recent years. During wildfire events the peat soils, which have taken thousands of years to establish, can catch fire and burn down to the bedrock. They are irreplaceable, along with the forest, heather, game and wildlife that live on them. Wildfires are also a significant risk to rural businesses, livestock and to the health and well-being of local populations nearby.

The Automatic Wildfire Detection System to be piloted is an innovative method based on a hybrid system presently used in waste bunkers of inflammable materials (mandatory in Germany). Results will demonstrate its effectiveness for providing an early warning.

TMS Europe Ltd with its infrared camera specialist, DIAS Infrared GmbH, for whom it is the UK agent and distributor, has been awarded the contract to supply and install the fully functioning automatic detection system for wildfires. The infrared cameras and equipment will be mounted on an existing mast and will be capable of detecting wildfires to a distance of 5 miles from the mast (giving a theoretical coverage of over 50,000 acres from one camera). Any detection of heat will trigger an alarm and an operator from a remote site will train the infrared camera and live view camera on the identified area to determine if it's a wildfire before contacting the Fire and Rescue Services.

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## Peak District National Park

### Friends of the Peak District

#### 31. Major changes to FPD

In the last year we have downsized the organisation and staff, moved to shared offices with Sheffield Wildlife Trust, and had a very challenging 'Away Day' to think through the longer term implications of a different way of working. One of our away day conclusions was to reconfirm our main role as a campaigning organisation. Here are three recent examples.

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#### 32. Undergrounding success

A major project to put overhead power cables underground and enhance the landscape around the village of Edensor has been completed. This was a joint project between Western Power Distribution (WPD), the Peak District NPA, and the Friends of the Peak District with assistance from the Chatsworth Estate. Over 2km. of power lines have been removed and replaced with underground cables, restoring the beauty of the area. This is funded by the OFGEM Undergrounding for Visual Amenity allowance which has been running in NPs and AONBs since 2005.

Unfortunately WPD are the only electricity company that are not willing to spend their full UVA allowance in the next spending period (2015-2023), meaning much less undergrounding will be achieved in the Peak and other areas, including Dartmoor, Exmoor and Pembrokeshire. Together with CNP and CPRE, FPD have campaigned against WPD's decision and asked OFGEM to decline to fast track WPD's Business Plan as unacceptable for this reason.

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#### 33. Take Back the Tracks

FPD has worked with other groups in the Peak District, notably the Peak District Green Lanes Association (PDGLA), the BHS and the Ramblers on a long campaign to prevent trail-bikes, quad bikes and 4x4s from using a number of routes in the Peak District. The NPA has been under severe pressure from both sides of the debate, with over 1000 objecting to one proposed TRO and more than 1235 supporting the ban.

The great news is that Traffic Regulation Orders will be served on two routes so as to protect the special qualities of the National Park. The orders are to be served on the Roych and the Long Causeway - both of which are in the Dark Peak.

This is an important decision for the National Park. FPD will continue to campaign to have TROs served on other routes where motorised use is unsustainable. The PDGLA, which FPD is a member of, has also lobbied the Government to make amendments to the draft Deregulation Bill which would remove all recreational motoring rights from byways in National Parks.

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### **34. Mottram Bypass and A628**

CPRE at national level recently published a report which highlights a number of threats to National Parks and AONBs in England. One of the case studies is the possible major upgrading of the A628 across the Peak District.

FPD has opposed this upgrading for decades. It would lead to more cars, lorries and increased carbon emissions. The last proposal failed at public inquiry stage some years ago but a caucus of local MPs and local authorities are now looking to resurrect a new scheme. We are remaining vigilant and continue to advocate more sustainable, lower cost solutions to the congestion problems that blight the area.

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## **Pembrokeshire Coast National Park**

### **Pembrokeshire Coast NPA**

#### **35. National Park numbers point to successful summer season**

Data collected by Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority revealed an increase in visitors to the area during this summer's tourism season. Between May and August 2013 counters on the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail recorded an increase of 14% compared with the same period last year, with the highest increase recorded at Abereiddi.

National Trails Officer Dave MacLachlan said: "This year we enjoyed some brilliant weather during the summer months and it's wonderful to see that so many people capitalised on that and enjoyed a walk on the Pembrokeshire Coast Path National Trail.

"The National Park Authority works tirelessly to ensure the Coast Path is maintained to the highest possible standards so that it remains accessible to as many people as possible all year round. This work is extremely important as the Coast Path continues to be one of the biggest tourism attractions in the county."

The Coast Path generates £14million of spending in the area every year, its views captivating hundreds of thousands of visitors annually.

National Park Authority Chairman, Cllr Mike James added: "These statistics make great reading and hopefully indicate a good season for the Pembrokeshire tourism industry as a whole."

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### **36. Top Award for National Park Poster Campaign**

A retro-style poster campaign featuring nostalgic images of the Park impressed judges at The Chartered Institute of Marketing (CIM)'s *Canmol*: Wales Marketing Awards recently, securing first prize in the category *Tourism, hotels, leisure, place & destination marketing, travel and transport*.

The campaign celebrated 60 years of the National Park, with six images displayed at train stations between Swansea and London Paddington in 2012, including key Olympic and Paralympic sites and tube stations.

Marie Edwards, the Authority's Communications and Marketing Manager, said: "Winning a Canmol: Wales Marketing Awards is a fantastic achievement for us, and a testament to the marketing team's determination and hard work.

"The campaign was a success not just for the Authority but for Pembrokeshire as a whole. The posters played a part in raising visitor numbers to the National Park during the campaign period, as well contributing to this year's 14% increase in walkers using the Coast Path".

"The posters, drawn by illustrator Gary Redford, captured the spirit and feel of the National Park, as well as capturing the public's imagination, with people calling from across the UK to buy copies, having seen them advertised at railway stations".

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### **37. Carew Castle keeps good company among Wales' top holiday attractions**

Carew Castle was recently named among Wales' top 20 favourite holiday attractions in a Wales Online poll, building on the site's reputation as a fun day out for families.

Interim Carew Castle Manager Andrea Griffiths said: "We are extremely proud that Carew Castle has been named among the best holiday attractions in Wales and are confident that recent investments, such as the replacement of the Lesser Hall roof and the new Visitor Centre and shop, will provide further reasons for people to visit.

"Being named in this list represents a fantastic boost and we hope the castle's success will also bring further benefit to the local economy."

The castle hosts activities and events annually, providing visitors with an opportunity to take part in medieval activities and learn more about the site's 2,000 year history.

In addition, three Pembrokeshire locations were also voted into the top ten of a Western Mail and WalesOnline poll of best holiday destinations in Wales; Tenby topping the list, St Davids finishing third and Saundersfoot finishing ninth.

National Park Authority Chairman, Cllr Mike James added: "Our Visitor Centres and attractions welcome 250,000 people a year and we continue to improve facilities and extend our events programme to increase this number".

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### **38. Nevern Castle dig throws up unexpected finds**

Archaeological excavations at Nevern Castle resulted in the discovery of remains of a cottage from the 1700s and a nit comb. The dig was led by Dr Chris Caple of the University of Durham, assisted by

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority Archaeologist Pete Crane, local volunteers and students from Durham and Cardiff universities.

National Park Archaeologist Pete Crane said: "This was the seventh season of work at Nevern Castle as we continue to piece together the turbulent past of this site".

The dig objective was to unearth the original castle's ditch, uncover more of the buildings discovered in a 2011 dig, and to uncover the original entrance to the castle.

The continuation of the 2011 excavation proved the castle was smaller than previously thought, leaving enough space on the promontory to accommodate 18 houses of civilian settlement.

Excavation also resulted in discovering a large amount of broken pottery, which helped identify substantial phases of clay-bonded slate construction in this part of the castle, dating back to the mid-1100s. Excavation is expected to continue in 2014 over June and July and possibly 2015.

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### **39. National Park highlights commitment to local tourism trade**

Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority welcomed tourism operators from across the county to Carew Castle in June as part of a trade event promoting the site's new facilities.

The event highlighted the Authority's investment into the Norman castle, including works to install a new roof on the building's Lesser Hall and a new Visitor Centre.

National Park Authority Chief Executive, Tegryn Jones said: "The work at Carew Castle demonstrates the Authority's commitment to sustaining Pembrokeshire's position as a leading visitor destination and improving the county's tourism potential by investing in our tourist attractions wherever possible.

"We're aware of the importance of the National Park to Pembrokeshire as the county's most valuable tourism resource, generating over £68 million in income and supporting over 4,600 jobs".

Pembrokeshire Tourism Chief Executive Maudie Hughes added: "It has been our pleasure to help co-ordinate a trade event with the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Authority at Carew Castle, and in doing so encourage other tourism businesses in the county to come and see what is here.

Carew Castle is one of the schemes to benefit from Cadw's Heritage Tourism Project, which is funded by the Regional Development Fund through the Welsh Government. Funding has also been invested by the National Park Authority.

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## **Snowdonia National Park**

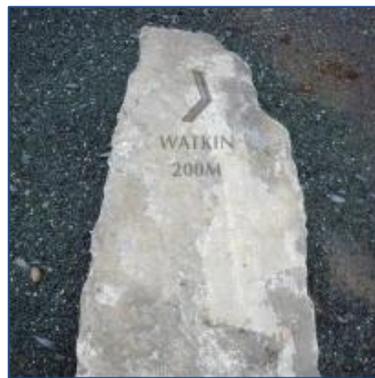
### **Snowdonia NPA**

#### **40. New Stone Pillars on Snowdon**

In recent years, it has become evident from Llanberis Mountain Rescue Team's reports that walkers tend to get into difficulties in the same places on Snowdon. As a result, and following detailed discussions with Snowdonia's MountainSafe Partnership and with the full support of the Northern Snowdonia Local Access Forum, the Authority decided that setting stone pillars would be more sustainable and less obtrusive than ordinary signage.

One stone pillar has been placed at the foot of each of the six main paths up Snowdon with the name of the path etched on its surface and others have been set in places which have proven to be problematic for walkers in the past such as Bwlch y Moch, Crib Goch and Bwlch y Saethau as walkers often make the mistake of walking along these dangerous routes.

The stone pillars are recycled from local disused buildings and the engraved work is by Cerrig of Pwllheli.



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#### 41. Recreating History at Plas

Through a new hydro scheme, Plas Tan y Bwlch, SNPA's Education Centre is now generating its own electricity, generating 100,000kwh of electricity per annum (enough to meet 70% of Plas' electricity needs). Opened in June by John Griffiths AM, the Minister for Culture and Sports said,

"I congratulate Snowdonia National Park Authority on the hard work and determination they have shown in completing this project. It is another example of the excellent work being carried out by Snowdonia, and the other Welsh National Parks, in reducing their carbon footprint through the development renewable energy projects. It has been a major undertaking but one which will deliver benefits for many years to come, and one which will undoubtedly encourage others to follow suit."

On behalf of the National Park Authority, Chief Executive Aneurin Phillips said,

"It was important for us to deliver a system that would be an exemplar of what can be done to reduce carbon emissions and respect the environment at the same time. Several community groups have already visited us to learn from our experiences. In producing electricity here, we will not only save money for the Authority, but any electricity that is not used will be sold to the National Grid."



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## 42. Birds of a Feather...

Snowdonia National Park Authority is looking for volunteers for its observatory at the Signal Box in Pemaenpool. It was originally built to provide service to the railway line that once ran from Barmouth to Ruabon at the end of the eighteenth century and although the line closed in 1965, the signal box remained and was eventually sold to the Park Authority. After many years of being vacant, the intention now is to use the building as a centre to provide information on the old railway line, the immediate area, but mostly, the wealth of wildlife in the valley.



It is one of the rarest spots in Wales where salt marsh, mudflats and sand, old oak woods, meadows and mountains can be seen within the same view. Nearby, some of the largest sedge beds in North Wales can be found, where a variety of warblers, snipe and water rail nest. Otters find shelter here also. In the autumn swallows roost here and during the winter and spring, the pied wagtail perches here. With every tide the little egret, curlew and flocks of geese often come within sight of the signal box. No wonder therefore that the area has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, a Special Area of Conservation and the river Mawddach one of the Wonders of Snowdonia.

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## 43. Firing the Imagination continues at Ogwen

Work on improving provision in the Ogwen Valley, replacing the old centre and the Warden's Office, began back in September 2012. Through the Cwm Idwal Partnership (an initiative which includes SNPA, Natural Resources Wales and the National Trust) as part of the EU-backed Communities and Nature (CAN) funding project, the work of building Ogwen was completed in July.

The new facilities include inclusive access to a new exhibition on the Cwm and surrounding mountains, an office, toilets, changing areas, and a food and drink kiosk. It is a high quality facility for visitors to Cwm Idwal, enhancing their experience of the Cwm, which in turn will support the outdoor sector in Snowdonia who use the Cwm as an educational and outdoor activity resource.

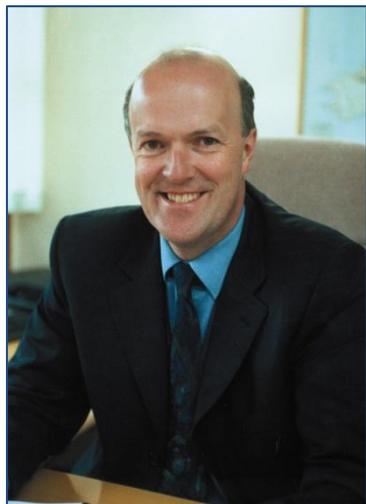
Opening the new centre, the Minister for Culture and Sport, John Griffiths said,

“It’s always heartening to see a project like this develop through effective partnership, in this case between the Snowdonia National Park Authority, Natural Resource Wales and the National Trust. Providing good facilities and information to visitors and potential visitors helps greatly in encouraging people out to the countryside. This type of exemplary project will only strengthen Snowdonia National Park’s brand which can then be used to encourage others to develop similar approaches.



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#### **44. Chief Executive announces that he is to step down**



In September, Aneurin Phillips announced his decision to step down at the end of April next year from his role as the Chief Executive of Snowdonia National Park Authority after more than 10 years in the post. He said,

“I have taken this decision because I wish to pursue other interests. This has not been an easy decision to make. I still enjoy working for the National Park Authority but I believe it is now the right time to hand over the reins to someone else to take the Snowdonia National Park Authority forward. Properly managed, a regular injection of new faces and new ideas is healthy for any organisation.

I’d like to take this opportunity to thank the Chairman, Vice Chairman and members of the Authority for their continued trust and support; also the Directors, past and present, and other members of the management and support team. In particular I would like to thank the Authority’s staff for their dedication and commitment to the Park, its values and what it stands for.”

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## **South Downs National Park**

### **South Downs Society**

#### **45. Rampion Offshore Windfarm**

The formal examination of E.ON's proposals for up to 175 turbines offshore from Brighton is expected to continue until January. Our Society has submitted its formal comments and is responding to a list of questions issued by the Planning Inspectorate. While not formally objecting to the scheme, the Society has continued to press for a full and transparent justification for routing the onshore transmission cables through the National Park and to demand an appropriate package of environmental improvements to compensate for the disruption and damage to the Downs. Our Policy Officer, Steve Ankers, has been working closely with Ruth Bradshaw, who has authorised him to speak on behalf of Campaign for National Parks at the public sessions.

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#### **46. St. Cuthman’s Stedham**

A proposal to establish a weekday boarding school for several hundred pupils at a former special needs school near Stedham in West Sussex has been modified to exclude, at least at this stage, a sixth form. This has not placated the vigorous local opposition. The Society will continue to oppose the development on the basis of its conflict with National Park purposes.

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#### **47. Solar Panels and the National Park**

The application (reported to Campaign for National Parks’ June Council) for an array of panels at Ringmer, close to the boundary of the Park and highly visible from it, has been withdrawn. Another

solar array further west in the Weald at Cooksbridge, somewhat further from the Downs, has been proposed and the Society has stressed the need for an environmental assessment. The Society has revised its policy guidelines on energy and climate change to include solar arrays and fracking while accepting that each application has to be considered on its merits.

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#### **48. Sussex Heritage Trust**

The Sussex Heritage Trust makes annual awards to recognise and reward high quality conservation and good design of newly built projects and encourage the use of traditional skills and crafts. The awards cover the whole county of Sussex both within and outside the National Park.

While recognizing that the awards do not extend to Hampshire - and a third of the South Downs Park is in Hampshire - the Society felt that it should in 2013 sponsor a Special Commendation for a winning entry that was situated within the Park. In the event two Commendations were awarded. One was for a new annexe to a church at Linch in the north west of the Park and the other at Stanmer Village, near Falmer, where a 17th century well pumphouse and an underground ice house have been refurbished. The Society felt that its involvement in the Trust's awards scheme was good publicity for the Society and for the Park. Moreover it brought the Society into contact with numerous Sussex-based architects, builders, and craftsmen.

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## **Yorkshire Dales National Park**

### **Yorkshire Dales NPA**

#### **49. Tree planting guide to make woodlands fit in**

The Authority has made available a Woodland Design Guide, giving expert help and advice to people wanting to plant trees within the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The free document was produced earlier in the summer, and is packed full of information about creating woodland which fits in harmoniously with its surroundings.

Geoff Garrett, the Authority's Senior Trees and Woodlands Officer, said: "New woodlands can have a major effect – both positive and negative – on the important landscape of the Dales, so it is essential when planning to plant that they complement the landscape and become part of it as the new trees mature. We think the 'Woodland Siting and Design Guide' is a major step towards helping land owners, as well as the many partners that we work with, to create woodlands of the right type and in the right place."

The 50-page Guide is available by contacting Geoff on 01756 751648. A pdf version is available to read and to download on the National Park Authority website, please [click here](#).

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#### **50. Young Rangers make life easier for visitors**

Members of a newly-formed group of volunteers in the Yorkshire Dales National Park have been hard at work improving access for visitors. The Young Rangers group was created to encourage young people who have an interest in the outdoors by teaching them new skills.

The group, based in Settle, is open to anyone aged 11 to 16 and meets every second Saturday of the month to do practical conservation tasks. Eleven members of the team recently resurfaced 120m of a footpath leading to Malham Cove, emptying tonnes of aggregate and spreading it along the section.

Ian McPherson, the Authority's Member Champion for Promoting Understanding, said: "the Young Rangers group is a great way for the National Park Authority to encourage a new generation to develop an awareness and love of this beautiful but fragile landscape."

Anyone who would like more information should contact [Catherine Kemp](#), Outreach Officer, on 01756 751623.

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### **51. New lease of life for building at risk**

A dilapidated former farmhouse in Coverdale has been restored to its former glory to save a slice of history. The work on the building in Coverdale means it has been preserved as part of the area's heritage for future generations to enjoy.

Top Building at Hall Farm at Gammersgill, a Grade II listed building, was on the Authority's 'at risk' register. Planning Policy Officer Thomas Harland explains:

"The property dates back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and is an excellent example of how buildings in the Dales have evolved over time. It started life as a house, later being extended and divided into two cottages, before becoming an agricultural building. It had considerable structural problems so there was a risk that, if left, we might have ended up losing this valuable building"

"The Authority has funded essential work to make it safe, which means it is no longer on our 'at risk' register and it can continue to be used. We will also be using it for educational purposes so other people can enjoy it and learn about its history."

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