

# MOORS MESSENGER

for the people of the North York Moors National Park

www.moors.uk.net

## Towards a sustainable future

**THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND (SDF) is an important new grant scheme designed to support projects that deliver social, environmental and economic benefits to the National Park. It also aims to develop and test new ways of achieving a more sustainable way of living in this area of great beauty and diversity.**

Last year's SDF made £125,000 available to sustainable projects in the National Park. The second year of this successful scheme has just begun and a further £200,000 will be available to encourage the development of similar ventures. Here are some of the projects from last year which were awarded funding from the SDF —

**Econoplas** John Gaskarth, of Stainsacre near Whitby, has developed an innovative drainage and irrigation product known as Econoplas. He received financial assistance from the SDF to help his business locate to adequate premises in order to start commercial production. Econoplas is made from recycled plastic and will utilise waste plastic generated by the local community, schools and agriculture. A hundred metres of Econoplas is currently being trialled in various locations around the Park by the National Park Rangers.

**Whitby Network's Furniture Store** This project involves the recycling and reconditioning of surplus furniture and electrical appliances for provision to those on low incomes. The reconditioning process itself provides training opportunities to community groups, volunteers and local people. There are environmental benefits too, as the furniture and appliances collected would otherwise have ended up as landfill. The project was awarded grant funding to provide a person to re-condition the items collected and to improve collection delivery arrangements.

**Energy Efficiency Advice Centre** The centre aims to beat fuel poverty in the North York Moors by training officers to recognise the signs of fuel

poverty in rural homes. Affordable warmth will also be promoted through the provision of advice and assistance in accessing energy efficiency grants. This should deliver increased grant funding for households that are often excluded as a result of their rural location and/or lack of mobility. The Centre was awarded a grant for tailoring a training programme for visiting officers of the Department for Work and Pensions.

**Fylingdales Young Reporter Bursary** A bursary scheme has been set up to encourage a young person from the Robin Hood's Bay and Fylingdales area to contribute articles to the region's monthly newspaper. It is hoped that the whole community will benefit from this scheme: by encouraging the greater involvement of young people with local issues, and also by increasing understanding and awareness of the views and opinions of the region's youth.

In total these four projects were awarded £35,035 from the SDF. With match funding the overall amount of the four projects is £316,880. Keir Brown, SDF Officer, commented: "Everyone at the National Park Authority is very excited at the benefits the Sustainable Development Fund can bring to the whole area. Indeed many of the Projects are innovative and ground



breaking and could have national and global significance."

The fund provides grants to organisations, individuals, community groups and businesses wishing to explore and develop projects that enhance and conserve the environment, economy and way of life in the North York Moors. Grants will normally be in the range of £200-£20,000 and in general the scheme will provide 75% funding. The maximum amount of grant per project is £40,000. Grants can cover the costs, in part or in total, of practical work, feasibility studies or research projects, group or partnership development and awareness raising and training about sustainability.

Achieving sustainable development requires working towards four main goals: social progress; protection of the environment; ensuring a diverse and prosperous rural economy and the prudent use of natural resources. For projects to attract funding they must be able to demonstrate that they integrate these four targets. Projects

should also demonstrate harmony with the aims of the North York Moors National Park, and wherever possible, support or involve local communities and partnership working.

### Assessing applications

A sustainability checklist will be completed and used by the Grant Advisory Panel and Officers of the National Park Authority to assess and determine all applications to the Sustainable Development Fund. A copy of this checklist can be downloaded from our website [www.moors.uk.net](http://www.moors.uk.net) or is obtainable by contacting the National Park Authority. The checklist enables potential candidates to judge for themselves whether their project fits the Fund's criteria for assistance, prior to submitting a formal application.

● Contact Richard Gunton, Head of Park Services or the Sustainable Development Fund Officer on 01439 770657.



*Dear Residents,*

WHAT makes this National Park special?

This question is important because Parliament has given us the duty to protect and promote the Park's special qualities. But Parliament hasn't defined 'special', that's up to us, up to you. We are currently revising the Park's Management Plan, so we want to check that we've got this right.

Here are some thoughts on the subject: diversity – the mixture of dale, woodland, moorland and coast is something special in itself. We have the largest expanse of heather moorland in England, which is undoubtedly special too. Then there's the native woodland in the south west of the Park – we are only just beginning to discover how immensely rich in wildlife this area is. As a whole, the Park has a greater proportion of woodland than any other English Park.

The coastal villages are another unique feature. The coast itself is famous for its geological importance. Villages throughout the Park are a vital part of a cultural heritage that goes back thousands of years. The ecclesiastical heritage is also fabulously wealthy; we've everything from moorland crosses to ruined abbeys.

What I notice about all of the above is that people have created them. English National Parks have long histories of occupation that have shaped magnificent landscapes. This may bring difficult decisions over management and planning but it places our Parks on a footing with the greatest in the world. Their beauty is a tribute to the generations who have produced this richness and to those who maintain it today.

We'd be delighted to hear your thoughts on what makes the North York Moors special, please contact the Editor with your ideas.

*Andy Wilson*

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Awarded for excellence

THE NEW Moorsbus services got off to a flying start on 6th April, with the popular Farndale Shuttle Bus carrying almost 500 passengers on its first day. But it's not only visitors who can benefit from Moorsbus. The service provides local residents with frequent, reliable and inexpensive public transportation throughout the National Park. Moorsbus enables residents who don't have a car to travel in and around the Park to places that would otherwise be out of their reach. The Moorsbus service started in May and operates every Sunday until the end of October. In addition, buses run daily in the school holidays from 20th July to 31st August.

Moorsbus also aims to reduce traffic on local roads by persuading those with a car to abandon it for all or part of their journey. With fares offering great

## MOOR BUSES, LESS TRAFFIC



The full service includes routes to Rosedale Abbey, Dalby Forest and the Cleveland Way. Timetables are available at many post offices, libraries, National Park and information centres or by phoning 01845 597426.

value for money, it's easy to see why many are opting to leave the car at home: it costs just £3 for an all-day, travel anywhere ticket in the moors area and there are hundreds of local single fares available too – such as 50p from Danby to Castleton, £1 from Osmotherley to Swainby or £1.50 from Coxwold to Helmsley. In 2002, about a third of passengers could have used a car on the day but chose to catch the bus instead.

One of the principles of Moorsbus is to build confidence by making gradual improvements to the service. In 2003 these include working more closely with other operators including York Country Buses and Yorkshire Coastliner. The former makes it easy for people from the Park to travel to York on Sundays, and the latter gives access to the Moorsbus Network for other communities (see *Spotlight on the Coast*).