

Title:

Fire risk in Yorkshire Dales National Park rises

Word Count:

290

Summary:

Continued extreme temperatures and drought have put the Yorkshire Dales in serious danger of countryside fires. In the wake of record breaking temperatures a warning has gone out not to light fires in the countryside or abandon portable barbecues - walkers are being asked to take extra care and all tourists are asked be extra vigilant to allow a fast response to any fires some open access land has been closed.

Keywords:

Yorkshire Dales walks walking holidays and accommodation

Article Body:

<p>Areas of the Yorkshire Dales National Park are now being closed to walkers as the continued high temperatures and drought conditions turn areas of the park to tinder.</p>

<p>An urgent plea to walkers and tourists comes as the Met Office announced that its Fire Severity Index for the Yorkshire Dales is now on 'High' and is expected to rise to 'Exceptional' - its highest rating - on if the weather continues.</p>

<p>The 'Exceptional' rating automatically triggers closure of Open Access land within the National Park, although all public footpaths and bridleways will remain fully open.</p>

<p>Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) Services Manager Alan Hulme said: "What this means is that walkers will be asked to use only public rights of way and will not be able to roam wherever they want to in parts of the National Park identified on maps as being Open Access land.</p>

<p>"Hopefully this temporary closure of some areas of the National Park will reduce the risk of fires.</p>

<p>"But we really do urge everyone to take extra care in disposing of cigarettes and empty bottles and to remember that strong sunlight shining through glass can easily start a fire. And we would also ask people not to have barbeques on roadsides or on moorland.</p>

<p>"The countryside is so dry now that a single spark could have devastating consequences for the flora and fauna in the National Park."</p>

<p>YDNPA Rangers have put up notices throughout the National Park advising walkers of the closures and to take extra care.</p>

<p>The Fire Severity Index is expected to peak at 'Exceptional' and then gradually fall to very low on when rain returns.</p>