

CSNEWS

CountrysideService

Winter 2006/2007

*'looking after our heritage and our environment-
in our countryside and our towns and villages'*



Join us for the 2007 annual historic environment day!

North Yorkshire is well known for its rich archaeological heritage found in medieval market towns, historic villages and the countryside.

Following the successes of last year's *Pearls of the Past* conference, celebrating 30 years of the County Council archaeology service, we are pleased to announce our first annual North Yorkshire historic environment day.

The aim of this day is to give all those interested in North Yorkshire's heritage a chance to find out about recent work and research within the county area.

Talks include:

- recent work at Beningborough Hall and gardens
- archaeological conservation work of the MOD
- Spofforth Anglo-Saxon cemetery excavations
- Northallerton Priory excavations

- Towton Battlefield archaeology
- recent work at Blandsby Park
- the Defence of Yorkshire project and bookstall.

The event will take place at the **Golden Lion Hotel on Northallerton High Street, on Saturday 24th February** from 9.30 am for teas and coffees, with talks commencing at 10am. Entrance is £6 and pre booking is advised, contact Nick Boldrini (Historic Environment Record Officer) on 01609 532331 or via email archaeology@northyorks.gov.uk.

Better paths for Potto

Countryside ranger Andy Brown and a team of dedicated countryside service volunteers have been busy this autumn improving footpaths and bridleways in the parish of Potto, near Stokesley.



Countryside service volunteers Michael Mason and Leslie Kinsman are satisfied with their new hand gate at Potto.

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Many of the routes around the village had previously been brought up to a good standard with funding from the parish paths partnership, and latterly the community paths initiative.

Following on from this the parish council has continued to be active in surveying their rights of way and had identified where further improvements could be made. In particular they were keen to see popular routes made more accessible for elderly or less mobile people.

So far over four kilometres of footpath have been improved by replacing stiles with gates and clearing overgrowth. Existing gates, stiles, signs and bridges have also been checked and repaired if required.

Potto resident Lol Bailey said of the work: "Andy and the volunteers have done a first class job of upgrading the paths around Potto, clearing overgrowth and erecting new gates and stiles. Potto is quite isolated from the rest of the footpath network, being surrounded by main roads, so to have such good paths close to the village is so important to the local community."

Ryedale Biodiversity Fair

Discover wildlife and the environment, and learn ways in which you can make a difference by visiting the **Ryedale Biodiversity Fair** at the **Milton Rooms in Malton** on **Saturday 10th February 2007**.

Some of the activities on offer will be to collect a free tree to plant at home, make a hedgehog box, learn about bats and barn owls, discover how to be a wildlife friendly gardener, buy local produce, and make a 'Bee Boudoir'!



Bumblebee - one of the species for which Ryedale is important.

Organised by North Yorkshire County Council, Ryedale District Council and the Ryedale Biodiversity Partnership Group the fair will celebrate the launch of the Ryedale biodiversity action plan – a vital tool in the quest to protect the environment in the Ryedale area.

The event will run from 10am to 4pm and entry is free. To find out more please visit our website at www.ryedale.gov.uk/biodiversityfair or ring Susan Bragg on 01653 600666 extension 333.

Gas pipeline passes through North Yorkshire

Work started on a project to build a major new pipeline in April 2006. The 94 kilometre pipeline stretches from Pannal near Harrogate to Nether Kellet near Lancaster. The pipeline will be one of four which will link to carry gas from a terminal at Easington on the Yorkshire coast to the North West.

In planning the construction of the pipeline, a detailed Environmental Impact Assessment was carried out by environmental, conservation and archaeological specialists. This was overseen by the conservation specialists within the heritage section of Business and Environmental Services, who advised on areas of sensitivity in terms of landscape, ecology and archaeology and the subsequent mitigation.

Once the pipeline is in the ground the landscape will be restored to its former appearance; returning the topsoil, replanting hedgerows and restoring dry stone walls.

During construction, public rights of way staff from the countryside service worked hard to ensure that footpath and bridleway closures were effectively managed throughout the area.



Pipeline under construction near the steam railway at Draughton, Craven in summer 2006.

Network Archaeology investigated a number of archaeological sites along the route of the pipeline and new discoveries included a number of charcoal kilns showing an interesting evolution of technology dating from the 16th and 17th centuries AD, as well as an enigmatic Iron Age/Romano-British site which is interpreted as an agricultural and / or industrial processing centre from about 2000 years ago.

Construction of the next section of the pipeline is due to commence in 2007. This section of the pipeline runs from Pannal in Harrogate, to Asselby in the East Riding. Further information can be found on the website www.nationalgrid.com, or by telephoning the project hotline number 0800 652 8081. Information on the route of the pipeline and the paths to be closed is also available at local Tourist Information Centres.

Junior ranger days a great success in the Howardian Hills

The Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) team have hosted a series of activities for junior rangers at the Castle Howard Arboretum throughout December.



Junior rangers make special 'bird seed' cakes for the wild birds.

A sense of discovery both indoors and outdoors was evident as the wintry-themed sessions took place. Indoors, the emphasis was on a hands-on approach, the children made bird fat-feeders and hanging feeding stations, dissected owl pellets, took plaster casts of paw prints, made wreaths and Yule logs from natural materials, designed constellations and wove star dream-catchers.

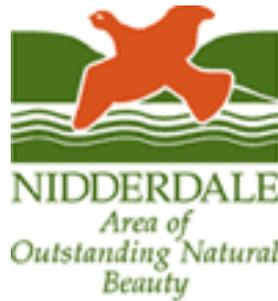


The inflatable planetarium enabled junior rangers to star gaze during the day!

Outdoors, junior rangers gathered signs of animal activity, visited the bird hide and used mirrors to

get a sense of walking along the branches. Tuesday afternoon was star gazing without stepping outside, with the help of Skywatch (the inflatable planetarium) and Dr Fred Stevenson.

For more information about the sessions, work undertaken with the AONB junior rangers and our future plans for the project, please contact liz.bassindale@northyorks.gov.uk. The Howardian Hills AONB junior ranger club is supported by Heritage Lottery Fund and delivered jointly by The AONB Team and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust.



Nidderdale Access Project

A new initiative has recently been launched in partnership with Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). Following the success of a similar project in the Howardian Hills AONB a few years ago, the aim is to systematically improve all the rights of way and to bring them up to a consistently high standard.



Walkers enjoying access to the beautiful countryside of Nidderdale.

All footpaths are being surveyed in detail by volunteers, and improvements are then being undertaken parish-by-parish on a phased basis, with the objective of completing the whole network within three to four years.

Paths will be way marked and signed to national trail standard using specially designed fingerposts. Once complete, the network will be maintained to this level in future years. The project brings together a commitment to maintaining the rights of way network to a higher standard, to improve access within this nationally important landscape.

Selby countryside management project

In December 2006 the new countryside management partnership between the County Council and Selby District Council was launched at Barlow Common nature reserve.

The countryside management project aims to provide a 'first stop shop' on countryside issues for the public. Two existing members of staff employed by the District Council and based at Barlow Common local nature reserve, will in future be managed as part of the County Council's countryside service.



Above: countryside ranger Rachel Stanhope leads a guided walk at Barlow Common nature reserve.

The partnership aims to ensure that Barlow Common and other Selby-owned sites will continue to be managed effectively for public access and nature conservation; it will also help to implement the Selby biodiversity action plan.

The project will benefit from the expertise and experience of the County Council's countryside rangers, countryside volunteers and specialist professional staff.

Ice house discovered at home of Scarborough poet

During 2006, the Scarborough Archaeological and Historical Society monitored development including a new extension at Wood End Museum; a grade II listed building in Scarborough.

Wood End was built in 1835 and before becoming home to the Borough's Natural History Collection, was a private house for the engineer and architect George Knowles and later home to the literary Sitwell family. The poet Edith Sitwell was born in Scarborough in 1887 into a family often described as eccentric. Her response to this implied criticism was:

'I am not eccentric. It's just that I am more alive than most people. I am an unpopular electric eel set in a pond of goldfish'

The archaeological work recorded wall foundations, garden features and finds of glass, pottery and clay pipe dating back to the 19th and 20th century. Also discovered was the footprint of a former ice house (pictured below), the first to be found in the town, connected by a tunnel to the service cellar of the house.

Ice houses provided a means of storing ice for use in food preservation in the house. In the days before modern refrigeration it was an indication of the wealthy status of the owner.



Left: the ice house uncovered as a result of work at Wood End, thought to be one of the first ice houses in the town.

North Yorkshire County Council countryside service covers the whole of North Yorkshire outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park, North York Moors National Park and City of York. For more information on the work of the countryside service, including a wide variety of volunteering opportunities:

**Email: countryside@northyorks.gov.uk Telephone: 01609 532987
Website: www.northyorks.gov.uk/environment**