

## Fylingdales Moor fire recovery update

Date: 17.10.25

### North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service update

This remains an active incident for North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, and crews are still doing regular checks of the moorland and forestry. There are still some localised areas with heat in the ground which continue to smoulder, however flare-ups (visible flames) have considerably reduced over the last few weeks.

If anyone spots flare-ups, they should call 999 and ask for the fire service. Our fire investigation team are continuing to investigate the cause, and we'll report on the outcomes in due course.

### Recovery Coordination Group update

Significant progress is being made on identifying impacts and costs to the community, businesses and the environment. This is important to ensure that every opportunity to recover costs for those impacted by the wildfire is pursued.

This is broad work covering everything from direct impacts on a small number of businesses from the smoke and flames; to much wider impacts, due to the extensive smoke plume and wildfire spreading beyond the immediate vicinity.

The recovery coordination group are preparing a detailed case to put to government to ask for urgent help for the landowners, people, communities and businesses which are facing otherwise unrecoverable costs.

It's important to say that this includes environmental impacts linked to the firebreaks necessary to stop wider spread, and the complex nature of the site, including unexploded ordinance from WWII and the fact that the moor is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It's not as simple as putting everything back – which was removed during response – into the channels which were dug.

The response to the fire was very much influenced by the presence of the unexploded ordinance, which means it's different from other wildfires elsewhere.

## Environment and Infrastructure subgroup update

Assessments of the damage caused to the natural and historic environment continue, with more than 35 per cent now complete. One of the immediate environmental concerns is erosion, with bare peat soils highly vulnerable to wash-off over the wet winter months. This would further damage moorland habitats, hamper recovery and potentially reduce the water quality in local rivers and streams. Emergency restoration work is planned, with a focus on preventing further degradation of the exposed peat and historic landscape features.

There's visible regrowth in certain areas, including 'greening up' of some singed heather. For the areas worst affected by the fire, for example patches of bog habitat that are in some cases still smouldering, full ecological recovery will take many decades, if not centuries. Other areas however, may recover well within 10 years.

The vast majority of the North York Moors National Park can be enjoyed safely, with businesses open as usual. However, the landscape in the area of Fylingdales Moor remains both hazardous and extremely fragile to further damage and erosion.

Public Rights of Way remain closed and Open Access to Fylingdales Moor is suspended due to the risk posed by unexploded ordnance, to allow careful assessments of the landscape to take place, and to ensure that footfall does not contribute to further erosion before emergency restoration work can be completed. People must continue to respect these closures and not walk or cycle in areas damaged by fire.

Motorists are asked to continue driving with care, especially along the B1416 Ruswarp Road, where there is an increase in walkers due to the partial closure of the Coast to Coast route.

Further information, including diversions for walking routes, can be found on the [North York Moors National Park's website](#).

## UXO and firebreaks subgroup update

The risk of exposed and unexploded ordnance (UXO) remains a concern, reinforcing the need to restrict public access to the Fylingdales Moor area for safety reasons.

Coordinated surveys are ongoing, with more scheduled to take place in the coming weeks involving relevant partners, to identify the presence of UXO and determine appropriate next steps. Given the hazardous nature of this work, it's expected to be a careful and time-consuming process and requires specialist input, including from the MoD.

A range of options are being considered for reinstating the moorland affected by firebreaks. These include allowing low-risk areas to recover naturally, undertaking full regrading and re-vegetation, and exploring opportunities for habitat enhancement such as wetland creation.

The North York Moors National Park Authority is developing an assessment framework to guide this restoration work, which will be shared with partners to ensure a coordinated approach before any formal decisions are made. Priority will be given to areas requiring urgent

intervention or those that are straightforward to address, with more complex sites considered in due course. Funding opportunities are actively being explored to support this work.

## Humanitarian and Community Engagement subgroup update

### Fylingdales Moor fire recovery community support event

Don't forget, on Monday (20 October) from 2pm to 7pm a drop-in event will be held at Whitby Pavilion to help those affected by the moorland fire. The event will provide an opportunity to ask questions, share feedback and find out more about community support available.

Organisations involved in the fire recovery work will be there to provide information and advice. These include North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, North Yorkshire Council, North York Moors National Park, North Yorkshire Police, National Farmers' Union, other support agencies and local organisations.

Free parking will be available at Pavilion Drive and Pavilion Top car parks (YO21 3EN). The pavilion is also accessible by public transport, and transport assistance may be available from Whitby, Scarborough and Ryedale Disability Action Group (please contact 01947 511 118 for further details).

Anyone unable to attend this event but would like to share their views, or find out more about the support available, should email [community.recovery@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:community.recovery@northyorks.gov.uk). This is the first community support event but there will be more soon. Any queries about future community engagement, can be emailed to [stronger.communities@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:stronger.communities@northyorks.gov.uk).

### Air quality update

Regular air quality monitoring continues to show normal levels and there are no public health concerns.

## Economic subgroup update

The status of UXO remains unclear and therefore communications activity to support the recovery of tourism in the area is limited. Impact statements are being clarified as surveys close. Once there is a clear picture of the audience groups impacted economically and support offers are shaped, the economic recovery narrative can drive proactive communications.

Invitations to the community engagement event on 20 October have been sent to local businesses and extended to supply chain businesses.

## Communications subgroup update

Communications leads from Forestry England, North Yorkshire Council, North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service, North York Moors National Park Authority, NHS, and the Combined Authority support all of this work and coordinate communications, including the updates above.

## Further information

Further information can be found on the following partner website pages:

- [North Yorkshire Council](#)
- [York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority](#)
- [North York Moors National Park](#)
- [North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service](#)