

# Out and About

## in the North York Moors

The North York Moors National Park is a special landscape, rich in local distinctiveness, wildlife, history and heritage.

One part of the National Park Authority's remit is to promote understanding and enjoyment of the Park's special qualities.

However, our free annual visitor magazine – called 'Out and About in the North York Moors' – looked dated, while Authority budget cuts meant we had to focus on a smaller number of high-value projects. We knew we could do a better job with the same resources – re-launching 'Out and About' in 2014 and further developing it in 2015.

The revitalised magazine is the focus of our passion for this extraordinary place. We aim to inform, inspire, engage, enlighten and entertain – all in 48 vibrant pages that reflect both our local essence and national importance.

'Out and About' inspires readers to experience the Park's special qualities, and helps build relationships with partners, stakeholders and businesses. It reinforces a respected National Park brand by interpreting and promoting our landscapes, nature, history and heritage. It highlights successes and initiatives, to showcase the value to the public of the National Park Authority. It supports the work of our staff by featuring their specialist, high-quality work. And it reaches new audiences with its excellent writing and enticing design.



**NORTH YORK MOORS  
NATIONAL PARK,  
UNITED KINGDOM**

LOCATION

*'Out and About' is the annual, free visitor magazine for the North York Moors National Park (UK), and it inspires readers to experience those special qualities that make our Park unique.*



KEY WORDS  
VISITORS  
MAGAZINE  
INSPIRING READERS

## OUTCOMES/RESULTS

**1** 'Out and About' was shortlisted for 'Publication of the Year', UK Public Sector Communications Awards 2015 – recognising the value and quality of our work 'Out and About' was described as "A high quality piece of marketing work and a good reinterpretation of the more traditional national park newsletter" by the judges at the UK Discover Heritage Awards (AHI) 2015;

**2** We printed and distributed 80,000 copies, including to every local primary school – children and families are our future visitors, supporters, staff and volunteers

**3** Annual evaluation of the magazine is linked to a reader questionnaire – 74% of respondents said they were 'very satisfied' (highest score) with the re-launched magazine, and 91% said they had learned "quite a lot" or "a lot" about the North York Moors (highest 2 scores)

**4** 40% increase in advertising sales (2014 to 2015) to local businesses and stakeholders, who see an economic benefit in being associated with the National Park

**5** Walking is a key National Park leisure activity – the magazine promotes 50+ guided walks per year, attracting up to 1,000 walkers, and in 2015 supported our first National Park walking festival

**6** The magazine contains links to our website pages, particularly to walking and cycling sections (website downloadable walks pages received 97,252 unique visitors in 2014, up from 8,927 in 2013)

**7** Facebook post promoting Out and About – lifetime post total reach (unique users) of 3,122

### Direct feedback:

Holidaymaker - "I pick up a lot of tourist info for my holidays and I think this one is the best I've seen – beautiful and informative", Mrs K. Perkins

Journalist - "Congratulations, it reads easily and seems to me to compress the history well", Martin Vander Weyer, Business Editor, The Spectator

PR agency - @urbanmediaPR "Out and About Guide is out now – this is excellent"

Key partner - "Very happy to keep supporting Out and About", Danielle Ramsay, Marketing Manager, North Yorkshire Moors Railway

National Park Authority Member - "...invaluable to the many thousands of people...coming to enjoy our wonderful park", Councillor David Jeffels

## Project Background

The North York Moors National Park is one of 15 members of the UK National Parks family. It's an amazing place – where the largest continuous expanse of heather moorland in England meets a spectacular Jurassic-age Heritage Coast. It's an internationally important habitat for moorland birds, while 10,000 years of human history have left a rich legacy of farmed dales, ancient woodlands, thriving villages and historical buildings.

The 'Out and About' visitor magazine uses this underlying narrative to support various National Park themes:

- The National Park is free for everyone – as a landscape to care for and a place to enjoy
- The National Park is an important protected area of countryside, wildlife and cultural heritage
- The National Park is our 'breathing room', a place of relaxation and recreation
- The National Park offers social and economic value to businesses, communities and visitors
- The National Park is an exciting place of year-round events and activities

## MORE INFORMATION

### Interpretive planning

The existing Interpretation Plan for the North York Moors National Park Authority underpins all National Park interpretive content.

At its heart, the Plan aims to raise the profile of the National Park and increase people's understanding and enjoyment of what the area has to offer, without damaging the Park's special qualities. The Interpretation Plan also aims:

- to communicate National Park messages to casual visitors
- to cement awareness of the National Park 'brand'
- to put interpretation "where the visitors are"

As our core annual publication, 'Out and About in the North York Moors' is planned, written and designed to meet all these objectives.

#### It is:

- celebratory of the National Park's special qualities, with particular regard to their protection, conservation and enjoyment
- a 'light-touch' vehicle for getting key National Park messages to general readers, including the need for responsible behaviour in a protected landscape
- consistent in championing the brand that is the North York Moors National Park
- arrival print – available at visitor centres, tourist offices and local events, and at local businesses, stakeholders and partner organisations, ie, "where the visitors are"

### Target audience

There are 24,000 National Park residents and 6.9 million annual visitors to the North York Moors, as well as a wider national/international audience that is receptive to the aims and attractions of protected areas in general.

We speak to these audiences in different ways via our publications, website, social media operations and visitor centres. For example: National Park residents receive a twice-yearly newsletter containing National Park Authority news and views; the website covers issues as diverse as local planning regulations, visitor attractions and educational visits; while our Facebook page and blog is largely devoted to conservation.

The 'Out and About' magazine, however, is the only vehicle devoted entirely to inspiring visitors, helping them to understand, explore and enjoy the National Park's special qualities.

Within the huge potential audience there's also a widely diverse readership – families, walkers, cyclists, holidaymakers, local historians, outdoor adventurers, general readers, special-interest groups and day-trippers.

The magazine needs to communicate with them all, and does so by using a clear, contemporary, inviting design to draw in the widest possible readership.

By sharing our passion for the wonders of the National Park, we aim to turn our core audience into return visitors, who will spend time and money in local communities.

### Interpretation and information – design and delivery

Four key approaches help us tell our National Park story in the magazine.

### Project budget

The magazine is funded from the National Park's 'Promoting Awareness and Understanding' budget.

#### Officer time:

Interpretation Officer – writer/ editor

Graphic Designer – image selection, illustration, design consultation

plus:

£3,600 design

£12,701 print & production

£2,745 distribution

£19,046 total (2015 publication)

**New ideas:** we've moved decisively away from traditional visitor 'information provision' to a more contemporary, interpretive style that showcases the values and benefits of protected areas. It's not just a magazine, it's a passport to experiencing the National Park, and we find inventive and creative ways to draw readers into our world. We ask questions, invite engagement and spring surprises.

Layout and design: clear, contemporary, inviting, inspiring – those four words inform every page of the magazine. There's also a vibrant, design-led structure that enhances straightforward 'practical' sections (events calendar, local attractions listings).

**Writing:** there's a story to tell about the National Park – its history, nature, heritage and landscape – which we do in a lively, engaging, authoritative, jargon-free way.

Images: we make each page sing! Our eye-catching images sell the Park, and it's not just about amazing landscapes – we show a living, breathing North York Moors through its people, pastimes, produce and attractions.

Full integration with our online presence (via links and references on every page) means readers not only become National Park visitors but also web visitors, social media fans and supporters.

**Magazine content and philosophy helps drive this behaviour, for example (and see supporting material):**

- 'Wild about the Park'. The spotters' guide places the wildlife firmly in its landscape and encourages further exploration, while the feature also refers readers to the interpretive 'Discover' area on the National Park website where much more material is easily accessible.

- 'History of the North York Moors in 10 objects'. Regular readers tell us they like historical subjects, so we adapted a now-familiar concept to give an historical overview of our region. The content is sound and authoritative, for those interested in the history; the quirky approach is appealing to general readers; while describing each object encourages exploration of the National Park.

**Media and communication tools**

'Out and About' is a 48-page, full-colour, A4 format newsprint magazine. We print and distribute 80,000 copies, giving an annual readership of 160,000 to 200,000.

Although it's a print publication, 'Out and About' is closely allied to our website – in fact, the website is a key medium, since the interpretive material found there expands upon the magazine content. Thus, features send readers to the 'Discover', 'Walking' and 'Cycling' sections of the website, where – for example – archaeological sites or walking routes are interpreted within the North York Moors' landscape.

The magazine itself is available to view and download for free on the website (914,000 unique visitors in 2014), and is promoted via our successful social media operations (Twitter, 11,200+ followers, Facebook, 6,600+ Likes).

The magazine is also a key brand reinforcement at summer agricultural shows, enabling us to engage face-to-face with the public.

In addition, we send out regular press releases to regional and national media about the National Parks events and activities that are covered in the magazine and on the website.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

**Websites**

[North York Moors National Park](#)

[Out and About](#)

**Social media**

[Twitter](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

[Instagram](#)



Our wild spaces and protected places have an amazing story to tell, and fabulous experiences to offer, but it takes a coherent communications strategy to package these together in a way that both informs and inspires.

- 1 Know your brand and be clear about your key messages.** Your project will benefit from a clear focus. Our magazine is for general visitors, but each page is underpinned by our National Park themes and aims.
- 2 Be authoritative.** There are many competing products and sources of information about the North York Moors – but as a protected area, with expert, specialist staff, we are in a position to assert authority with our content and messages.
- 3 Quality of design and content is crucial.** Even with funding cuts and fewer resources, it's vital to offer the best quality product possible.
- 4 Don't compromise your content.** Although we plan to sell more advertising (to help pay for the cost of a better quality magazine), we will also only place advertising on selected pages, so as not to confuse key messages or undermine the authority of the content.
- 5 Integrate print, website and social media.** A magazine works best when it's integrated with other communications tools.
- 6 Work with partners.** Local partners, businesses, attractions and stakeholders not only support our magazine through advertising, but are also a valuable source of stories, information, images, readers' prizes, feedback and other critical support.
- 7 Support local products and businesses.** The National Park has a clear interest in promoting products and businesses that encourage the principles of sustainable tourism and development within protected areas. Our magazine articles often feature local businesses, who, as supporters and champions of the National Park, help to spread our key messages to a wider audience.
- 8 Involve staff from your organisation.** Many of our front-line staff and volunteers interpret the Park and communicate its unique qualities on a daily basis. In 'Out and About' they have both a champion for their work and an increasingly important outlet for its expression. Their stories, projects and passions help bring the National Park alive to locals and visitors alike.
- 9 Don't lose sight of the consumer.** It's important that a magazine for any protected area is interpretive and informative, and communicates key messages – but it should also be inspiring, engaging and fun.
- 10 Adopt robust evaluation methods from the outset.** This was the weakest element of our project, and we still lack qualitative research into the effectiveness of our magazine. This is something we are addressing for future years. For example, articles in the magazine often promote responsible behaviour with regards to wildlife or historic monuments, but we haven't yet done any

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