

National Park Access Updates December 2022

DEFRA Accessibility Infrastructure Funding

We have received the first payment of a three-year Infrastructure project by DEFRA which seeks to improve access and accessibility within National Parks and AONB's. We have until March 2023 to spend the first tranche of £85,000, with no funding in year three and then £90,000 in year three.

The New Forest Walking and Cycling Festival 2022

This year's festival has gone incredibly well and a huge thanks to those organisations and businesses who have been part of it. We had a great mix of guided walks and cycle rides across the National Park with a variety of themes and topics including walks lead by local artists. The weather in the last week put some people off but generally attendance was good.

Volunteer Access Work

The November tranche of the ease-of-use path survey is underway. Both NPA staff and our regular volunteers are out surveying paths which will give us an overall score on how 'open and easy to use' the rights of way network is for users. The 2020 score was 75% and it looks like the 2022 score is approaching something similar.

National Grid Landscape Enhancement Project

We applied for this £150,000 November 2019. The application was delayed due to Covid, but we were given conformation of acceptance for this project in July 2021 with the expectation the funds would arrive by November 2021. We are still waiting for the funds and have raised this issue in combination with other National Parks who are in a similar position.

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