

Welcome...

to the winter edition. It brings you up to date with the latest from the coast between South Gare and Speeton. The Coastal Forum is made up of over 160 organisations and individuals who meet at an annual conference to discuss various topics that affect our coastline. The Forum's main themes are conservation, flood risk management, bathing water quality, recreation and marine issues.



Watching Whales from Whitby

Whale watching is becoming a popular pastime just a mile out to sea from Whitby piers. A great number of tourists have been lucky enough to see Pilot, Minke, Fin and Sei whales close to our shores over the summer months thanks to a new business set up in Whitby recently. Sightings of the marine mammals are most regular throughout the summer with September being the best month for watching. Records are being kept by the sea watch foundation and provide key evidence of what's happening in our inshore waters. Further information can be found at <http://www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk/recent sightings/>

Bathing Water Quality

The Environment Agency take water samples from each of our designated EU bathing water beaches from April to September each year and publishes the results. It's been a better year for our water quality partly due to the lack of rainfall over the summer. However, any sharp increase in rainfall brings problems with run off from surrounding land and storm water overflows.

The results for this season are available on <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/news/150763.aspx>

FEATURES IN THIS ISSUE INCLUDE...

- Notes from the annual conference
- Watching Whales from Whitby
- Linking landscapes
- Runswick Bay coastal defences
- Bathing water quality results
- Conservation grazing returns to the cliff slopes

Notes from the Scarborough conference

Over 60 members attended the annual conference of the Coastal Forum at the Scarborough Spa early September. News and updates on local coastal issues such as Cleveland Way National Trail maintenance, LEADER funding, coastal access and bathing water cleanliness being some of the main features of the day. We also had an inspiring talk from the Sand in Your Eye company who explained about the fine art of sand sculpting and drawing, expressing art between the tides. Members of the Forum split in the afternoon to join in with crafting sand dolphins below the Spa and visiting the waste water treatment plant for Scarborough currently under construction. Both groups learnt a lot from the activities and we had lots of positive feedback about the day. Thanks to all who attended and joined in.





'Spreading green hay alongside the Cleveland Way'

Linking landscapes

The North York Moors National Park Authority is making positive progress in developing the whole theme of habitat connectivity across the moors, dales and coast. Detailed habitat modelling has been undertaken to identify areas in most need of linkages and dedicated staff are gradually turning the modelling into a reality.

Numerous schemes are underway in the coastal area and most landowners are welcoming these ideas for projects that fix the broken links in these semi natural wildlife habitats.



CONSERVATION GRAZING ON THE CLIFFS

Cattle have returned to the undercliff at Wrack Hills SSSI north of Runswick Bay. As part of an active programme of works, hardy, native breed cattle are being put back onto the cliff slope to prevent the SSSI being swamped by coarse grasses, bracken and bramble to the detriment of its seacliff flower rich grassland interest. A partnership of the landowner, Natural England and the North York Moors National Park Authority are monitoring the scheme closely. Conservation grazing is being reintroduced on the cliffs wherever the land is suitable in terms of slope and access.



RUNSWICK BAY STRATEGY

Discussions are underway with strategic partners about the current sea defences at Runswick Bay. Work undertaken back in 2000 is maintaining the slope and car parks at the bottom of the bank but the concrete wall north of the lifeboat house is now the subject of discussion in terms of its condition and

lifespan. A coastal defence strategy for the village is currently being drawn up to look at all the various options for coastal protection and will be out for consultation in early 2014.