

Date: 1 August 2007
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Dear Dr Willison

Thank you for your letter dated 15 November 2006 and your recent telephone call. I apologise for the delay in replying, caused by changes in staff responsibilities.

Due to the DEFRA moratorium last summer no grants were issued by the Yorkshire and Humber region under the access management grant scheme (AMGS) for 2006/2007. We understand this was a huge disappointment to those access authorities, such as Leeds, in Region 8, the last area of the country for the CROW rights to commence.

However, I am pleased to say that Natural England has made limited funds available in and I that we can again accept applications for grant for this one final year with a reduced budget and new priorities.

The new priorities for the AMGS in 2007/2008 are:

- Monitoring, especially in relation to nature conservation and public safety restriction reassessments where a better understanding of access use and patterns will enable us to implement the 'least restrictive option'
- Fire planning, to ensure access authorities are taking appropriate action in response to the FSI and to enable us to implement the 'least restrictive option' for fire restrictions
- Essential works in relation to nature conservation, public safety and fire cases where management will enable us to implement the 'least restrictive option'
- Staff to support these activities

In Yorkshire and Humberside there are four nature conservation restrictions all of which are located in the South Pennines. The area is predominantly moorland and prone to wildfire as the fires on Ilkley and Rishworth Moors last year shows. Given this it was decided to concentrate the limited regional budget on fire planning in the South Pennines.

The above priorities have now been addressed and there is still some money in the budget nationally. As a result the Region 8 authorities in Yorkshire and the Humber have now been approached to see if they would like to bid into the scheme. Initial correspondence with Leeds City Council suggests this may be the case.