

Langdale Moor Fire Update

Online Public Meeting
18th September 2025

Area Manager Ben Illsley
Head of Emergency Response and Training



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Scene Setting

- Spring 2025 was declared by the Met Office to be the warmest and sunniest since records began.
- Summer 2025 was declared by the Met Office to be the hottest on record.
- North Yorkshire had endured significant periods of drought in 2025 and there'd been a hosepipe ban in place since 11th July 2025.
- The location of the fire was extremely remote with limited water sources and lengthy access and egress for resources.
- The area of moorland on fire was historically used as a military training range.
- The area of moorland on fire was in the close vicinity of RAF Fylingdales.



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Incident Overview

- Fire was reported near RAF Fylingdales on 12th August 2025.
- Fire was declared Make Pumps 10 (MP10) initially and then scaled up to Make Pumps 20 (MP20) on 13th August 2025 and declared a major incident.
- During the period from 13th August 2025 and 25th August 2025 the fire began to be brought under control and measured approximately 5 square kms.
- On the 14th August 2025 a separate seat of fire was attended approximately 3 km away.
- On 25th August 2025 the fire progressed rapidly and travelled a considerable distance in a northerly direction.
- Since the 27th August 2025 the fire has been contained, and further control lines have been established to prevent further escalation.
- NYFRS and partners have maintained a constant presence on scene to control containment and proactively dampen hotspots and extinguish flare ups.

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NYFRS Pre Planning and Capabilities for Wildfire Response

- Wildfires are a known and prominent risk. Climate related incidents have been assessed and highlighted in NYFRSs recently updated Community Risk Profile.
- NYFRS prevention teams undertake periodised and focused work to raise awareness of the risk of wildfires.
- Strong prevention push on social media over the summer, sharing key safety messages and advice inc. several TV and radio interviews to reach wider audiences.
- NYFRS have developed significant off-road capabilities to effectively extinguish remote wildfires.
- In 2024 NYFRS identified the need for an in-service national wildfire Tactical Advisor.



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Timeline of Events

12th to 13th August 2025

- NYFRS were alerted to reports of a fire in the forest and moorland near RAF Fylingdales.
- The fire spread quickly in hot, dry and windy conditions.
- The fire spread quickly, fuelled by the heather on the surface and the peat beds underground.
- Up until this time, NYFRS were able to deploy normal wildfire firefighting procedures including argocats and boots on the ground firefighting.

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13th August 2025 (Major Incident Declaration)

- On the 13th August 2025 the wind driven fire was spreading quickly towards RAF Fylingdales land.
- A MP20 message was sent from the incident ground to Fire Control.
- Immediate assistance was requested and received from neighbouring Fire and Rescue Services including Cleveland, Humberside and West Yorkshire.
- Outstanding firefighting actions prevented the fire from spreading onto RAF Fylingdales land.



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13th August 2025 pm (First Exploded Ordnance on scene)

- During operations on the afternoon of 13th August, a loud explosion was witnessed by crews working to the north of the incident.
- Ten minutes later a second explosion was heard in another area of the incident ground.
- Operational tactics changed significantly at this point.

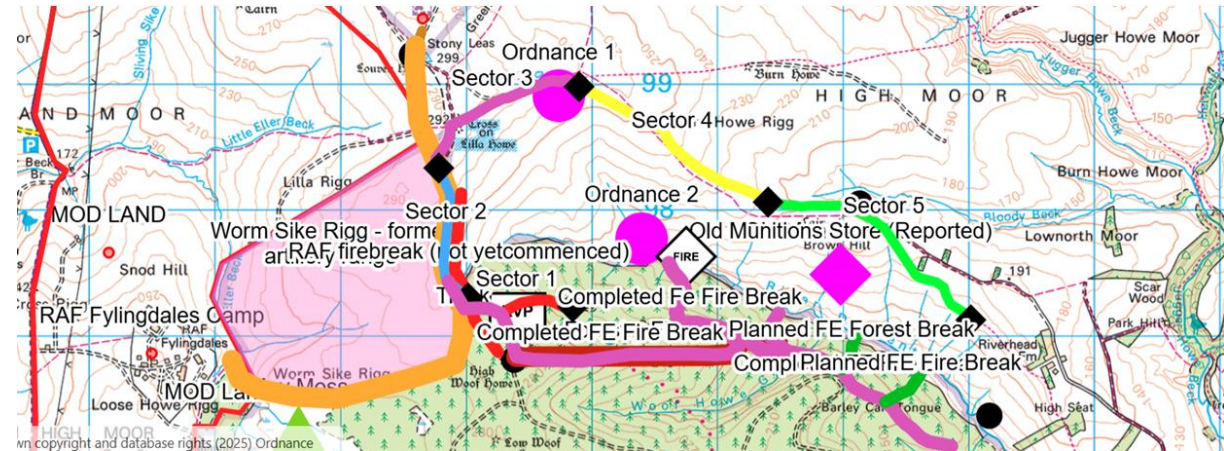


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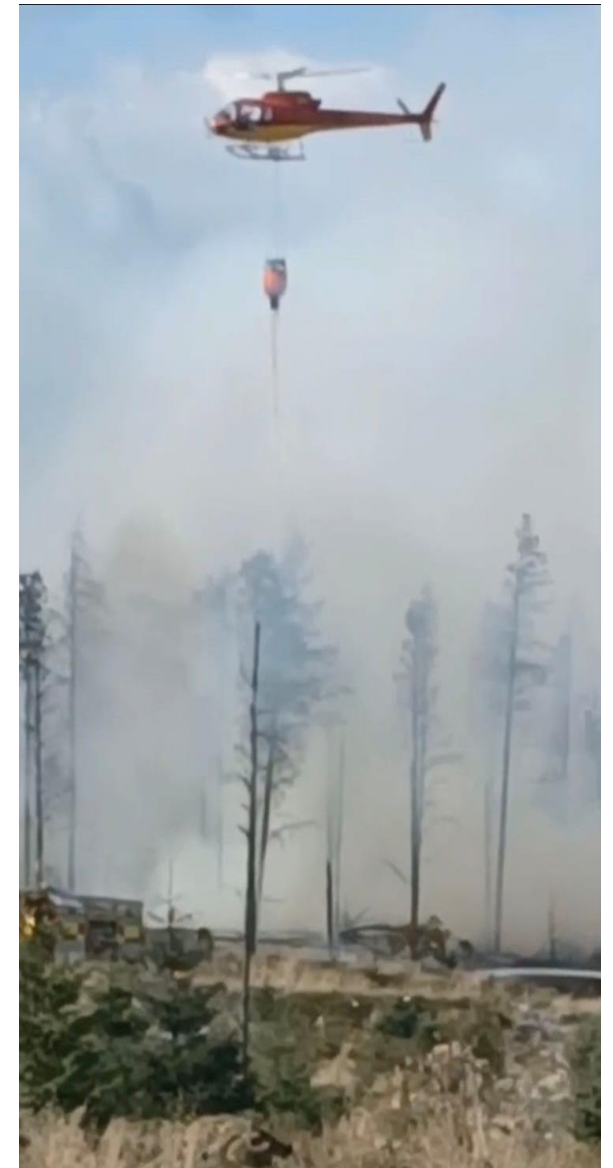
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The area involved in fire was approximately 5sq km in size, and to the east of RAF Fylingdales.



14th August to 24th August 2025

- Significant work was undertaken off scene within the Local Resilience Forum (LRF) with Strategic Coordination Groups (SCGs), Tactical Coordination Groups (TCGs) and other multi agency cells.
- NYFRS CFO authorised the use of helicopters, and contractors were sourced to support containment of the fire and create control lines (fire breaks).
- Daily assessment on scene of the resources required to achieve tactical plans.
- Priorities were to protect RAF Fylingdales, human life and property.
- Requests for national funding were made swiftly.



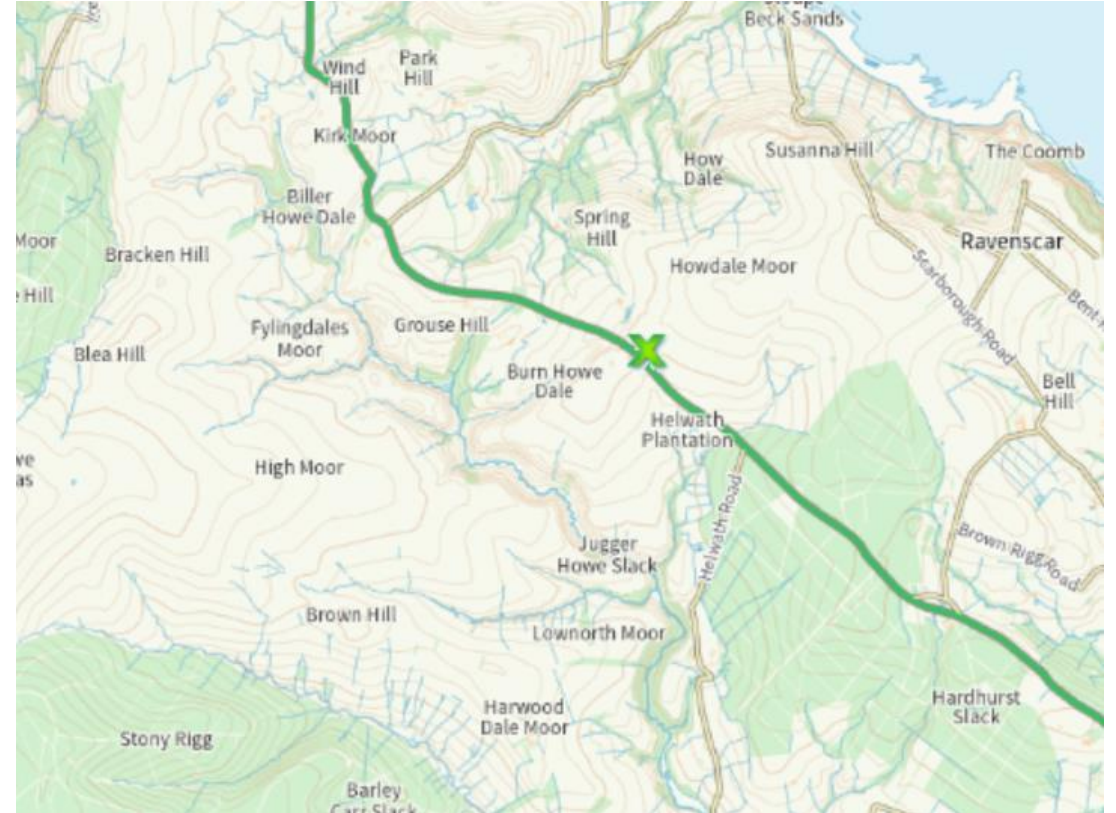
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Second fire attendance on the evening of the 14th August 2025

- Whilst responding to the Langdale Moor major incident, calls of another moorland fire were received by NYFRS Fire Control on the evening of the 14th August.
- This fire was reported to the east of the A171 near the Flask area.



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Second fire attendance on the evening of the 14th August 2025



- The second fire was attended by 6 NYFRS appliances, officers and local farmers.
- The fire was assertively extinguished but created great risk of spread towards east coast residential areas.
- The cause of this fire is currently being investigated.

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25th August 2025

- Sustained period of hot, dry weather with no rainfall continued to dry out the vegetation, and the peat beds continued to burn.
- Strong wind gusts created a large and powerful flame front and preexisting control lines were compromised.
- Fire spread at unprecedented speed and was powerful enough to jump significant fire breaks including the B1416.
- Nature and cause of this fire spread is being investigated by multiple agencies and partners.



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25th to 27th August 2025



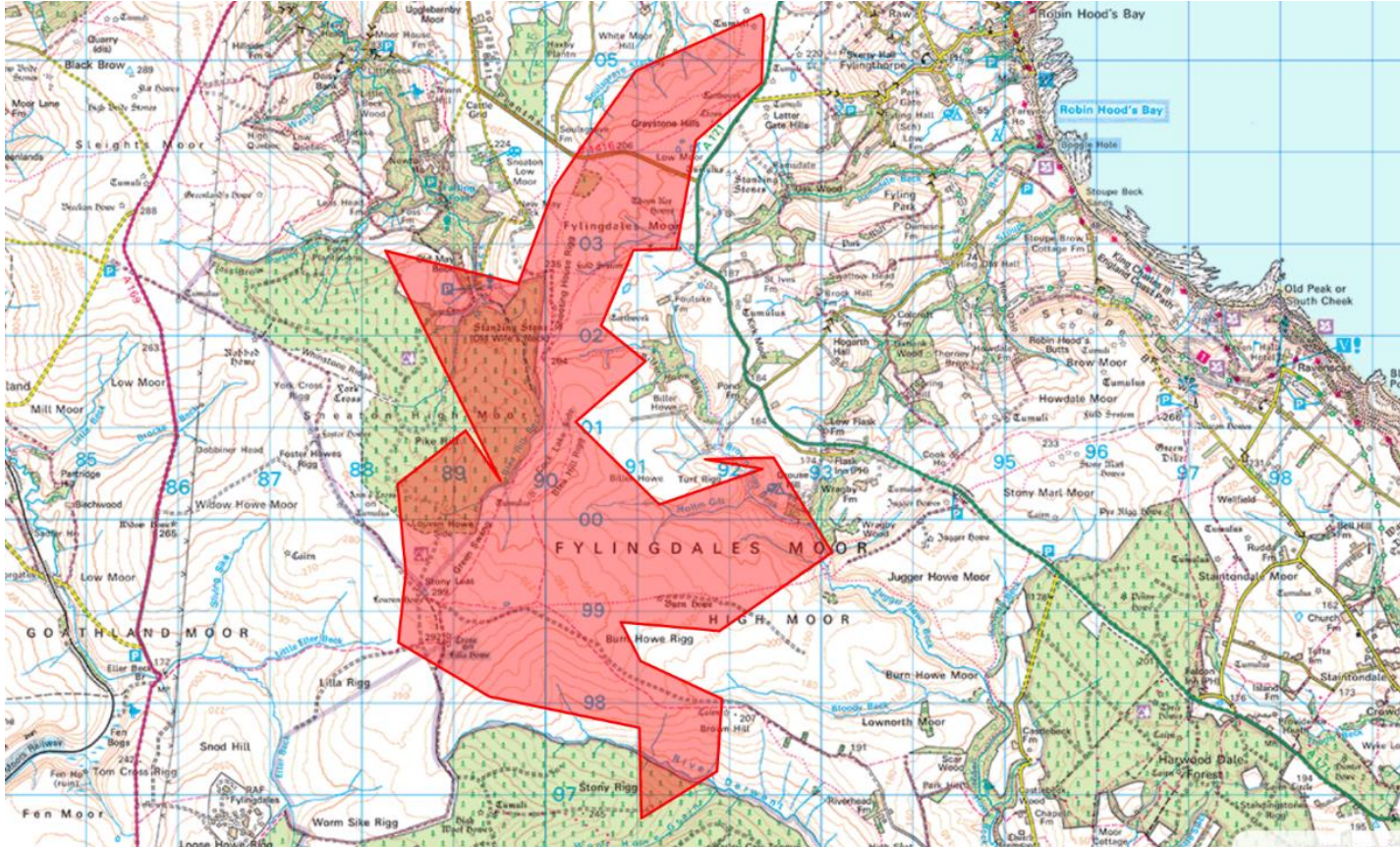
- Multiple partner agencies worked tirelessly to contain the fire and protect all life and property risks.
- Evacuations of sites such as holiday parks were recommended and roads including the A171 were closed.
- The local farming community were exceptional in supporting our emergency response and protecting local communities.
- The priorities continued to be protecting human life and property.
- Significant impact on wildlife and wildlife habitat.

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Fire Spread by 27th August 2025



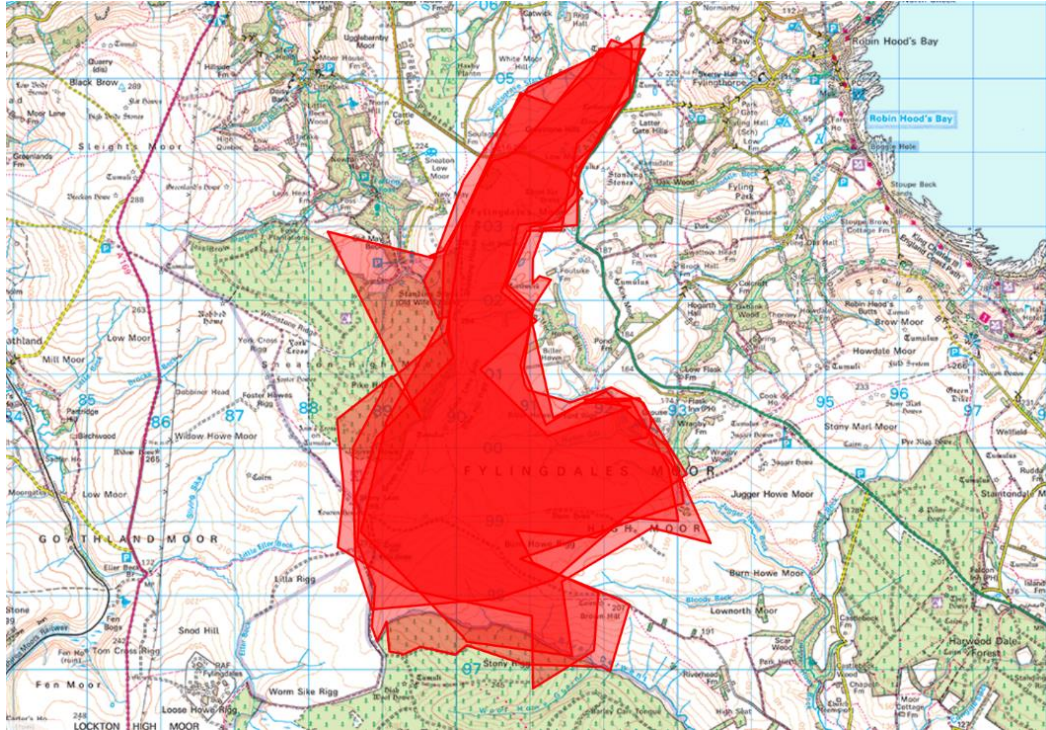
- By the 27th August the fire had spread mostly northerly.
- Effective control lines were maintained to the East, West and South.
- The fire predominantly followed the pattern of moorland and didn't spread significantly through other terrains.

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Fire Spread by 30th August 2025



- Through huge commitment and bravery of firefighters, farmers, partner agencies and contractors the fire was brought under control.
- National Resilience assets were requested and deployed to provide rest periods for NYFRS firefighters.

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Challenges

The predominant challenges encountered during this incident were:

- Multiple military munitions (both exploded and unexploded) were encountered throughout the incident
- Sustained periods of hot, dry weather and high winds
- Multiple seats of fire
- Large areas of significant peat depths and dry combustible vegetation
- Access, egress and limited water supplies near to the seat of the fire
- Limited natural or managed fire breaks/control lines in the moorland
- Increased volume of simultaneous incidents during this time

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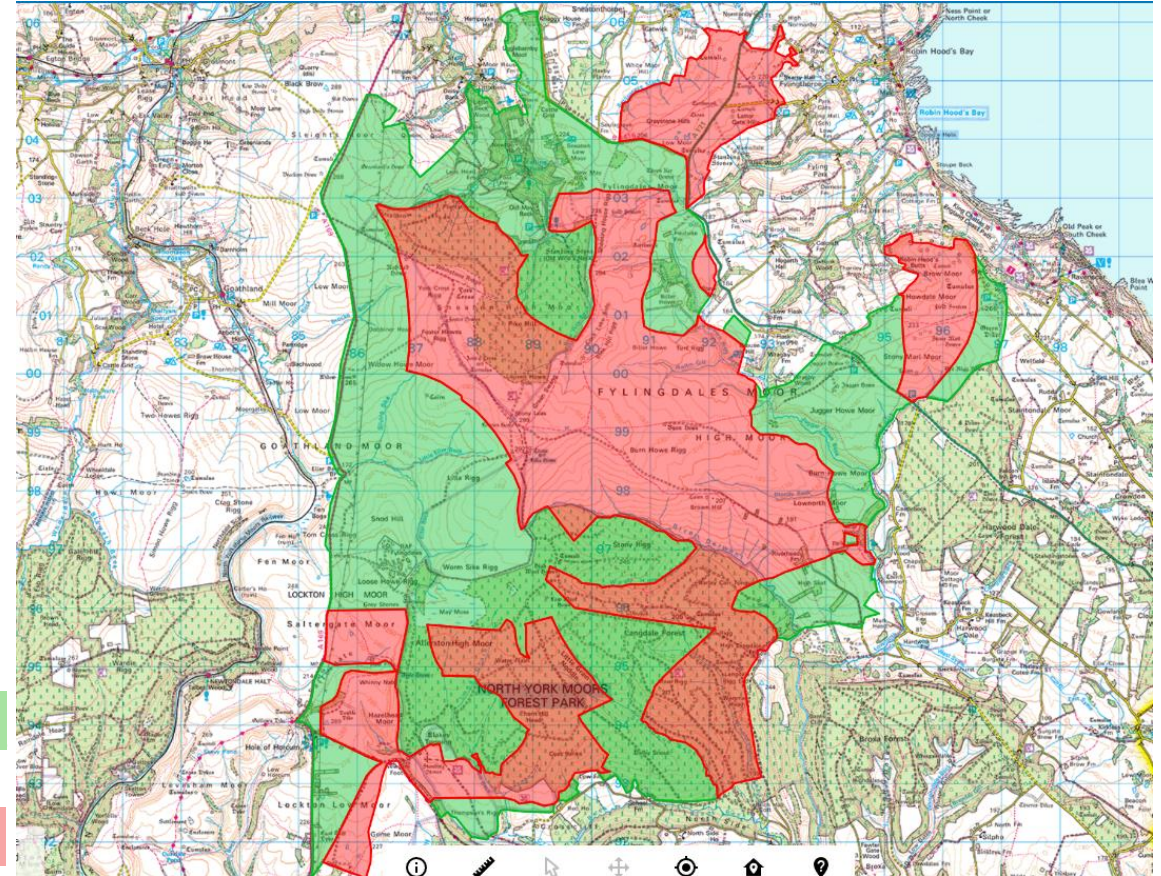
Previously unexploded ordnance

- NYFRS and partners worked extensively with the MOD throughout this incident.
- Multiple visits from Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams were made during the incident.
- Significant limitations in the operational tactics available to NYFRS as a result of this risk.
- In total, more than 20 explosions occurred during the incident and still occurring into mid-September 2025.

Lower risk -



Higher risk -



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Sustained periods of hot, dry weather and high winds

- Spring 2025 was declared by the Met Office to be the warmest and sunniest since records began.
- Summer 2025 was declared by the Met Office to be the hottest on record.
- North Yorkshire had endured significant periods of drought in 2025 and there'd been a hosepipe ban in place since 11th July 2025.
- High winds throughout the incident fan the flames and the peat beds creating flame fronts even weeks after the vegetation has burned off on the surface.

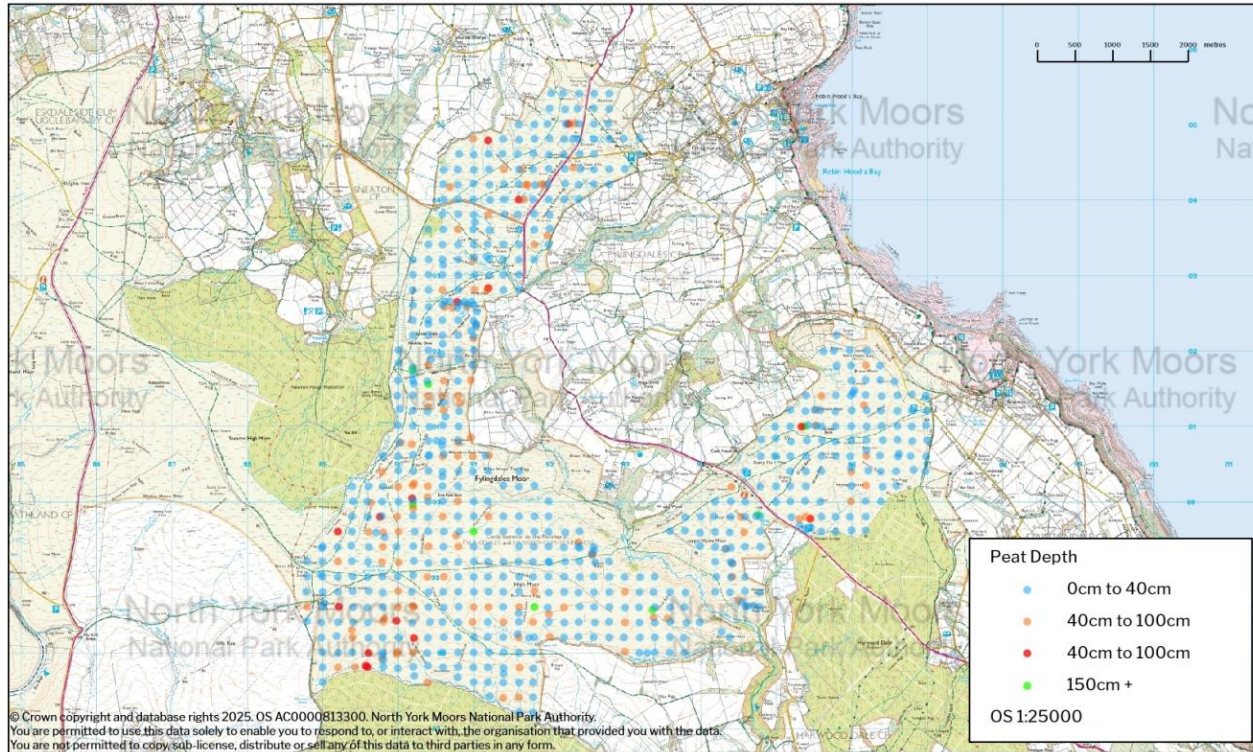


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Peat Depths



- Sections of the moorland involved in fire had peat depths in excess of 1.5 metres.
- Sections of the moorland in the vicinity of control lines had peat depths of between 40cm and 1 metre.

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Multi Agency Response



- NYFRS have been incredibly well supported throughout this incident by a multitude of partner agencies.
- Contractors, gamekeepers and the local farming community have worked tirelessly to assist.
- Strategic Coordination Groups (SCGs) – strategic leaders from more than 30 agencies including Gov and MoD to make decisions on the Major Incident by consensus.
- Tactical Coordination Groups have sat regularly with multiple agencies to set and progress tactical objectives.

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National Support

National Resilience

- Through our 13/16 arrangements, NYFRS has been well supported by our neighbouring FRSs since the first call and declaration of a major incident on 13th August 2025.
- Additionally, to provide suitable rest periods to NYFRS crews, a National Resilience request was made on 27th August 2025.

National Funding

- To request additional resources to manage the incident, NYFRS engaged with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) from the date of the first SCG on 15th August 2025.
- Approval of NYFRSs request to access the Bellwin scheme was received on 27th August 2025.

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Community Support

- NYFRS have been overwhelmed by the support from our local communities during this incident.
- The well wishes, social media comments, letters of support and welfare offerings have been great for sustaining morale at this incident.



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Recovery and Investigation

North Yorkshire Local Resilience Forum (NYLRF) have a recovery group which engages multiple agencies including NYFRS. The NYLRF have teams focusing on:

- Infrastructure
- Economic
- Environment
- Humanitarian Assistance
- Community Engagement
- Communications

North Yorkshire Fire and Rescue Service is currently working in collaboration with other agencies to ascertain the cause of the fire and analyse fire development.



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Acknowledgments

- NYFRS operational crews, Control teams, Officers and support staff
- Primary employers of on call firefighters
- UK Fire and Rescue Services
- Partner agencies and the Local Resilience Forum
- Local farming community
- Forestry Commission
- MOD
- On site contractors
- Mine response team
- Game keepers
- Local communities and businesses

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