

Animal anxieties

Horses



Concern about the danger of cattle is often expressed, but a recent incident involving a Scarborough group member is a reminder that caution is needed whenever any type of loose animal is encountered.

While the walker was using a public footpath to cross a field in Allerston parish, a horse approached, and for no apparent reason, kicked him, breaking his arm, which will be in a cast for several weeks.

Had the kick hit his head or torso, it could easily have proved fatal.

The farmer has now been notified of the presence of a dangerous animal (under both civil and criminal law, he is under no liability if he has no reason to be aware of the risk), and reports have also been made to the North York Moors National Park and Ramblers' Central Office.

Although horses can be a nuisance, following closely and snuffling over rucksacks, and even sometimes nudging walkers, a Google search suggests that a direct attack is very rare.

The advice from Central Office is to exercise the same caution as when meeting livestock.