

Peak District Local Access Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 27 September 2012
at Aldern House, Bakewell

Members Present:

Edwina Edwards (Chair)	Terry Howard
Bob Berzins	Mike Johnson
Jon Clennell	James Kellie
Richard Entwistle	Adge Last
Henry Folkard	Richard Peart
Charlotte Gilbert	Jon Stewart
Clare Griffin	Ally Turner
John Hall	Nicola Turner
Caroline Hanson	Sue Weatherley

Others Present:

Mike Rhodes (PDNPA) Secretary	Rod Jackson
Abi Ball (PDNPA)	Carol Lavell (PDNPA)
Elizabeth Barnicott (Natural England)	Judy Gould (PDNPA)
Andy Farmer (PDNPA)	Gill Millward (DCC)
Sarah Ford (Barnsley MBC)	Richard Taylor (DCC)

1. Apologies and introductions

Apologies had been received from John Thompson, Ben Young and Jean Wharmby. The Chair welcomed Nicola Turner, the new National Park Authority appointee who introduced herself. Mike updated the Forum on John Thompson (currently in hospital) and everyone sent their best wishes. Many congratulations were passed to Adge Last for his daughter's success at the Olympics.

2. Minutes from the last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2012 were agreed as a correct record, apart from on page 9 under Any Other Business it was 600,000 young people not £.

Matters Arising

Teggs Nose Clare Griffin and John Thompson had received a response from Cheshire East – they are not planning to charge at all for general access to the country park. Currently they ask for £37.50 per day for groups from those organisations who charge their participants. Any group can purchase a climbing wall licence.

Andy Farmer reported that in conjunction with the Forestry Commission and United Utilities, the National Park Authority is considering charging for car parking in the Goyt Valley. Income would help finance toilets and improve other facilities. There will be public consultation on this. Henry said there had already been comments in the press.

Water recreation - MR has e-mailed Andrew McCloy and will follow up. **ACTION: MR**
Roaches – Clare said that the Potteries Orienteering Club has sent a map relating to its use of this area and is interested in running events. There is dialogue with

Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and the possibility of more bridleways. Information gathering is currently taking place and the management plan will be started in 2013. **High Peak Moors Masterplan** – National Trust is aiming to publish the draft plan on 16 October – it will be available on the website and circulated to MR. **ACTION: JS** Henry mentioned that the **Sheffield Moors Draft Masterplan** is also out for consultation and includes proposed bridleways/ concessionary routes. **Cycling Strategy** – information forwarded by Forum members to John Thompson has been consolidated and passed on.

National Trails' consultation - comments have been received.

Burbage Valley – the central and bottom sections and are subject to on-going maintenance; Sheffield City Council volunteers are carrying out resurfacing works. Henry said the concessionary Right of Way in Burbage is part of the Sheffield Moors Masterplan – the proposals are extensive. Mike encourages anyone with an access interest to look at the proposals in the plan – bridleways and footpath improvements are targeted www.sheffieldmoors.co.uk

Terry mentioned that LAF representation was needed on the working groups associated with the Sheffield Moors and Eastern Moors partnerships. Henry and Terry attend workshops on behalf of their respective organisations and it was agreed they should represent this LAF.

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

An e-mail on this subject had been circulated by Mike - Edwina and John are happy to continue as Chair and Vice Chair respectively. John Thompson had nominated Edwina as Chair, this was seconded by Jon Clennell and was voted unanimously. John Thompson had been nominated for Vice Chair by Sue Weatherley, seconded by Clare Griffin and voted unanimously.

4. Paths for Communities

Elizabeth Barnicott, from Natural England's People and Access Local Delivery team, covering Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire gave a presentation on the Paths for Communities grants scheme – worth £2m over two financial years. Funding is for communities working with landowners to develop new, permanent Rights of Way; creating new paths or upgrading existing footpaths to bridleways which will benefit local people, businesses and visitors in a rural area. Grants (European funding) are between £5,000 and £150,000. Match funding is encouraged but cannot be from Lotto, parish councils or Government. Partnership working is essential, supporting local strategies and grants will only be made to a legally constituted group with a bank account.

136 Expressions of Interest have been received so far and the scheme is still open to new applications. The scheme started in May 2012 with final payment by March 2014, the last date for applications is October 2013. A map, FAQs and more information is on the website – www.naturalengland.org.uk Any specific questions can be directed via e-mail to the Paths for Communities team P4C@naturalengland.org.uk

Possible (discretionary) one off payments may be available to landowners. Promotion of route(s) is very important – and specifically local businesses which will benefit need to be identified. Grant officers are able to give assistance to applicants – contact via

website as above. Elizabeth is asking Forum members to spread the word to groups and communities to encourage applications. **ACTION: ALL**

Terry asked if permissive paths have been dedicated as Rights of Way are they eligible for funding? Routes adjacent to National Trust land have deteriorated and need action. Elizabeth will check and respond to Mike Rhodes. **ACTION: EB**

Nicola mentioned future maintenance –the Highway Authority needs to be on board for long term maintenance.

The local partnerships are aware of the scheme and a discussion took place regarding bridleways. Parish councils have been circulated with information. In terms of eligibility a group could constitute a geographical group or, say, a group of riders.

The Chair thanked Elizabeth for attending.

5. Recreational Motor Vehicles

Rod Jackson from the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF) spoke about the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for The Roych and Long Causeway. Whilst accepting the need for management he feels this approach discriminates against one user group in favour of other users. Vehicle users only have access to 2% of the network so the loss of an amenity is devastating in terms of that 2%. Their choice would be denied by a ban subsequent to a TRO. Natural erosion and lack of repair play their part in the damage - so why not ban walking? There have been many exaggerated and unconfirmed claims – he is aware of one minor incident in 8 years. The TRF code of conduct includes showing consideration to other users.

Rod feels the public are not aware of TROs or what they mean – it is not conducive to keeping parks open to all users, there being no compromise. He asked members of the LAF to bear this in mind if they haven't yet responded to the consultation on the future management of these routes.

PDNPA update and TRO consultations

Sue Smith had circulated a report and tabled papers. Terms of Reference – note the wider remit, name change to Local Access Forum Green Lanes Sub group and delegated authority to deal with TRO consultations.

Six week public consultations commenced on 20 September for Long Causeway and the Roych. Documents are available on the consultation page of the PDNPA website.

400 responses were received in the first week – the LAF sub group response to the first stage of consultation is attached in Appendix 2. At the July PDNPA committee meeting it was felt on balance that on-going harm outweighed continued use. All consultees have been notified of the proposal and have further opportunity to comment. The Sub group is considering the LAF response at its meeting on 18 October – please send any comments to Sue and copy Edwina in.

ACTION: ALL

This afternoon's Sub group meeting will be considering Cherpit Lane and Brushfield – again please comment or feel welcome to attend. Action plans are in a table in Appendix 3; key actions are summarised by tasks. Priorities identified in March may be affected by funding, legal obligations and Highway Authority works.

82 volunteer days have been spent on Washgate so far and more days are planned. With regard to the consultation process, welcome support had been received from both IT and Field Services admin teams. Advisory days with Police and Lake District NPA are planned. LAF contributions are very valuable. Ecological and archaeological information is being gathered for the final 8 routes. A report will be made in 2013 ready for the 2013/14 action plans.

A question was raised whether the LAF or Green Lanes Forum may be able to be a community group to obtain a Paths for Communities grant.

The Green Lanes Forum (GLF) met in June. The next meeting will be before the end of the year.

Henry responded to Rod Jackson on the comments presented to LAF members; there is no blanket policy from this Forum – it acts in an advisory capacity and looks and comments on a route by route basis. The Long Causeway recommendation for 4x4 vehicles was not applied to trail bikes. The concern on Long Causeway was the damage to an historic structure, perceived to be caused by 4x4 vehicles and the LAF recommended that until engineers looked at it and a decision was made - 4x4s should be banned. For trail bikes it recommended a speed limit and one way downhill direction. It should be made clear that this LAF didn't brigade 4x4 vehicles and trail bikes together. Comments from Derbyshire Constabulary that they couldn't monitor the situation if there was a permanent TRO should be taken account of. Working with user groups is key to the solution of a big problem.

Equally horse riders had a raw deal as they couldn't use the route because of the damage. In a sense the LAF feels the challenge for user groups is more in how they work with their membership and non members to address issues of behaviour. This will do more to remove the problem than protests. The challenge is changing the perception of what is acceptable to the general public and wider environment amongst TRF members and those who cause damage. Neither this Forum nor the Derby and Derbyshire LAF are totally opposed to all off road activity – this is an access group – but it has to be reasonable and responsible, bearing in mind this is a National Park. Rod said this was refreshing and enlightening. He reiterated only 2% of the network was available with no alternative.

Terry commented that this LAF and the PDNPA have tried to accommodate everyone and gone the extra mile. One point of confusion – in the 19 page summary of consultation responses is a quote of 100% of the network being available for walkers – he feels this is misleading. There is less opportunity for cyclists and horse riders – how people choose to use the network is the difference. Charlotte felt that everyone can choose, but motorised vehicles have access to the surfaced roads and can enjoy all of the National Park that way – horses don't have that luxury. Also the routes are part of a wider network – damage done to a small section of a route affects access to longer sections. Nicola Turner clarified that the percentages of public rights of way quoted are those designated rather than those which are usable or passable on the ground.

A discussion took place about the number/ length of various designated routes and the PDNPA decision process on TROs. Mike Rhodes clarified that the Local Access Forum Green Lanes Sub group is kept to 8 members to make it manageable. The Sub group has to be representative with a cross section of users. As had been discussed at the last meeting – the GLF and LAF Green Lanes sub-group are independent. The Green

Lanes Forum is a separate and independent group (John Thompson is on that group). Bob asked if an agenda item on these meetings in future would be good.

The meeting voted and was unanimously in agreement with the Terms of Reference of the Local Access Forum Green Lanes Sub-Group.

DCC – Managing Green Lanes Policy and Action Plan

Richard Taylor, Derbyshire County Council said there was good news – the policy went to Cabinet on 24 July and was considered and approved. The report has been circulated and is available on the website:

http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/council/meetings_decisions/meetings/cabinet_meetings/2472012_cabinet.asp

This revised policy is for the whole of Derbyshire and is a significant change - including delegation of approval of an Action Plan to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport and recognition of the need to identify specific funding to be available. During the 3 month public consultation over 1200 responses were received which is very pleasing. Some revisions were suggested and set out in the paper. Richard then went through the 8 policy statements.

The Action Plan and associated expenditure was approved on 21 August for the management of green lanes during 2012/13.

[http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/images/\(4%206\)%20Management%20of%20Green%20Lanes_tcm44-209719.pdf](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/images/(4%206)%20Management%20of%20Green%20Lanes_tcm44-209719.pdf)

There is £140k for works on the ground plus £3,500 from Natural England for The Roych. Five schemes are to be undertaken this winter: Long Causeway in November/December; Cherpit Lane in October; Roych Clough January to March; Brough Lane January/April; and Eyam 32 before March. External funding is being sought where possible. There will be LAF involvement in developing the work programme and other actions include the provision of barriers and a website list of vehicle routes.

Adge asked about using recycled road planings on rural lanes, eg Bradley Lane is now a road; a big change of character. Richard responded that if it is a stone road DCC will try and put in what was there before - recycled road planings are environmentally friendly and low cost. Many routes were originally surfaced and this has to be taken into account. He appreciates the challenge is taken out of routes when they are improved. In response to Henry's concern about remedial work to the revetment on Long Causeway, Richard said his team had discussed the scheme with Mike and the ecologists; engineers have had a look and need time to consider solutions.

The Chair thanked Richard for attending.

6. PDNPA Trails Management Plan

Abi Ball, Property Manager, PDNPA and Charlotte Gilbert gave a presentation on the Trails Management Plan for the Tissington, High Peak, Monsal and Thornhill Trails. Abi acknowledged work done in the 1970s and 80s by PDNPA and DCC re old railway lines – providing 34 miles of trails which are used by several hundred thousand people every year. Recently there have been significant changes on the Monsal Trail with the opening of the tunnels. More cyclists are using the Monsal Trail but this in turn has caused other issues. A management plan was initiated in summer 2011 with an open public consultation event which asked trail users what they valued most and

suggestions for improvements. There is a trails steering group (Charlotte is the representative from this LAF) - 4 evening workshops were held for the steering group. There was also consultation internally, as well as a public consultation – 21 responses were received (some very lengthy) and outputs developed into a 5 year vision and action plan.

The overall aim is greater respect amongst all user groups and greater connectivity with the wider Rights of Way network. There are 3 themes for the management of the trails and each theme has an aim which will guide actions over the next 5 years. The main issues apparent from the consultation on the Monsal Trail are conflict between walkers and cyclists and dogs not under close control. Each week e-mails are received about these issues and car parking congestion on lanes. Local communities should be consulted before developing the network further and sustainable links identified.

Key actions – status: Tissington and High Peak Trails are already dedicated bridleways. Consultation will be undertaken on designating Thornhill Trail as a bridleway. The Monsal Trail is concessionary and will remain so. It is intended to carry out one mile of resurfacing each year (cost is £25,000 per mile). This year north of Tissington car park will be resurfaced. Trailside management is to be enhanced; scrub encroachment etc – and grants will be applied for to help. The Code of Conduct is on the website – <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/cycle/monsaltrail/monsal-trail-code-of-conduct> It will be promoted across the 4 trails and there will be joint partnership working with DCC to foster consistent messages.

The Trails Steering Group has been extremely useful and will continue for the lifetime of the Plan - meeting at least annually for the next five years to discuss progress and other issues as they arise. In terms of costs in managing the trails there is a shortfall of around £326,000 in year one. There is a backlog of repairs to the trails (tunnels, bridges etc); the National Park Authority is liable for maintenance of viaducts and tunnels. Proposals to raise additional income include Higher Level Stewardship grass management; car park charges; more refreshment concessions - all additional valuable income source. The Authority is employing a consultant to write a business plan to identify wider activity, disposal, partnerships etc to secure a sustainable future for the trails.

All mentioned parking charges for horse boxes which are £1.50 per hour or £6 per day. Half or full day periods were suggested. Abi said this will be fed into the review of Park-wide parking charges over the next few months. Several members felt that the lights in the tunnels were turned off too early in the evening (especially in winter which discourages commuting). Henry and John Thompson thought the trails management plan was excellent work and remarked that the economic benefit from the trails doesn't feed that finance into the authorities.

The Chair thanked Abi and Charlotte for their work and the presentation.

7. Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan Consultation

A Draft Statement of Action for 2012-17 has been produced and is out for public consultation until 29 October. Details were sent to LAF members back in August, as well as to Parish Councils, District Councils and other interested groups. Members were encouraged to respond to the consultation and circulate it widely. **ACTION: ALL**

The on-line survey asks people to prioritise the RoWIP aims/ identified needs and to identify any missing actions. Paper copies are available on request or in local libraries and countryside centres.

[Improvements: Leisure and culture - Derbyshire County Council](#)

The joint LAF subgroup has met and commented on the document. Henry summarised the response – the sub group approach was felt to be very useful given the level of detail involved. In general the document was considered to be comprehensive and politically astute. Other members were happy for the sub group comments to be taken as the LAF's formal response. Terry was concerned that some of the 5 aims in the statement of action do not have an indication of timescales eg when will the PRoW network be open. Gill explained that the Rights of Way Charter sets out how enquiries are prioritised and the timescales for dealing with them.

Gill tabled an equality analysis report at the meeting. This looks at the impacts the proposed actions would have on any of the Protected Characteristic Groups set out in the Equality Act 2010 eg religion/ belief, age, disability and what scope there was to mitigate their effects. The findings will be incorporated into the final statement of action and be reflected in Annual Work Programmes. Please forward any comments or suggestions for local groups to be consulted to Gill by 11th October. **ACTION: ALL**

8. Recreation Strategy update

Judy Gould gave an update on the 3rd year of the Recreation Strategy. The annual recreation partnership meeting took place in June. It is hard to monitor activity; some positive changes have been observed– more people are involved in organised events – the team is looking at voluntary donations/contributions from groups. Bob Berzins said that there was often a financial surplus from organising running events and a donation recognising the use of the area by event organisers would be a clear benefit.

There is a strong interest in cycling and promotion is on-going. A cycling festival is being considered for next year - aspiring to make the Peak District the UK destination for cycling. A 'Wheels for All' taster day is being held at Parsley Hay on 9 October for adapted cycles. The event is free and ideally people should register attendance:

<http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/news/current-news/pedal-your-way-to-parsley-hay-for-disability-cycling-day>

Mike will send a copy of the press release for the event to LAF members. **ACTION: MR**

The Chair thanked Judy for attending.

9. Peak Connections Travel Survey

Carol Lavell, Peak Connections Project Officer, told Forum members that Peak Connections is raising the profile of sustainable transport across the Peak District. For a number of years printed material has been produced; for instance, leaflets on 5 bus routes and rail timetables linked to the Monsal Trail, to encourage bus and train use.

A travel survey has been launched to see how information is wanted in future (across the wider peak district - not just the National Park). Feedback so far is that electronic information is preferred – all on one website. The survey runs until 27 October and

only takes a couple of minutes to complete. Members were asked to help promote this widely. [Public Transport: Peak District National Park Authority](#) **ACTION: ALL**

Terry felt that walking groups and local communities must be consulted as public transport is diminishing.

10. Feedback from Members

Henry reported that four members of the **Stanage Forum** steering group are here today which shows there is a good overlap. Jim Dixon hosted a meeting last week which was very helpful. The Stanage Forum is re-convening in a slightly different format – a draft constitution is being drawn up by Jacqui Bevan – it will mean that the Chair of the steering group convenes meetings; nuance is slightly different and it is good to resurrect. Contact is currently via Jacqui Bevan.

Clare gave an overview of the **Huddle** for LAFs. It is a webspace where LAFs can share best practice and information, discuss issues. There are three main areas:

- Whiteboards – eg noticeboard
- Files library: useful documents
- Discussion forum

Clare gave some examples of the sort of things on the site. Initially there were three licences per LAF – now more are available so if anyone would like to register let Clare know. It is 'customisable' in terms of the amount of information received and a useful tool. **ACTION: ALL**

This was flagged up as future agenda item and possible Natural England input. Sue Smith said that Fiona Groves is willing to deliver some training - possibly with another LAF.

Charlotte said that the **Charlesworth horse riding community** had given a presentation to Peak Horsepower to look at safety issues – they would like to make a similar presentation to this LAF.

11. Any Other Business

Mike Rhodes reported on behalf of the access sub group – Lesley Rechert is not here today and the meeting scheduled for 11 October has been postponed. A report to all members with a written update regarding the open access issues will be made in the near future. **ACTION: MR**

12. Date of next Meeting

Thursday 6th December 2012 at Losehill Hall, Castleton.

Suggested dates for 2013 - **21 March, 13 June, 19 September and 5 December**. Please let Mike Rhodes know if not convenient. Terry Howard suggested site visits.

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and their input.

The meeting closed at 1.10 pm.