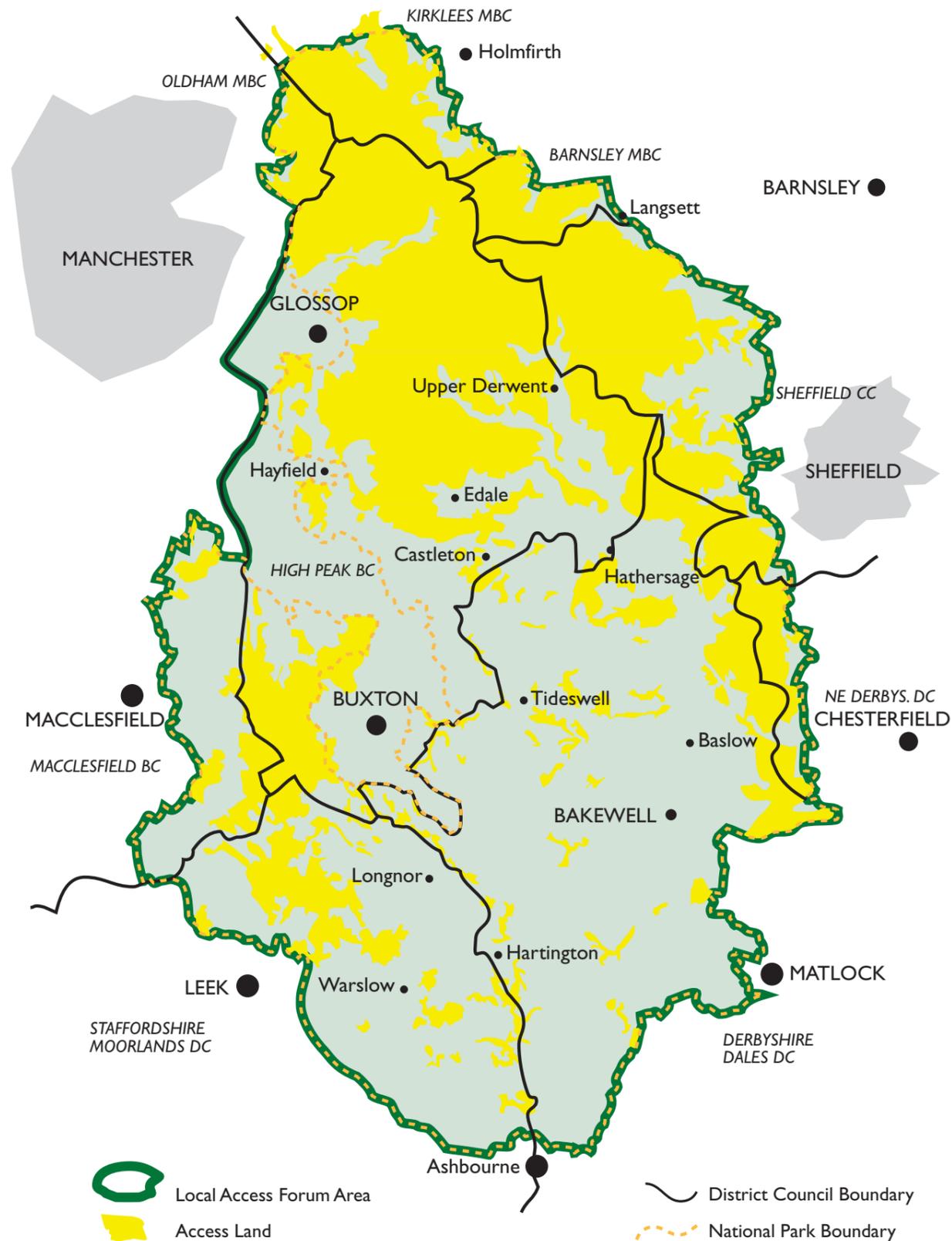


Peak District
Local Access Forum



Geographical Coverage of the Peak District Local Access Forum



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Chairman's Introduction

Access is one of those small words with big meanings. I say this because for a living I write books, articles and reports and all day long I wrestle with words, trying to put one in front of another so that together they make some sort of sense. But of course what sense they make depends on what you understand by those words. A few weeks ago I wrote an article about Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group and I interviewed its energetic and inspirational organiser. Access to her, from the perspective of someone who from a young age has gradually lost most of her sight, of course means regular exercise, social interaction and exploring new areas; but in particular it's about valuing a measure of personal freedom. She said that sighted leaders who take her group out for the first time learn that they do things at their own speed, not least because getting 20 partially sighted walkers and the odd guide dog over a ladder stile takes time! But the unhurried pace was also a reflection that the walks quite often took on a tactile element, with group members pausing on the middle of a moorland track to listen to the trilling sound of a distant curlew or feel the cold smoothness of a rock. Seemingly little things that actually mean a great deal.



It's a reminder of just how special the Peak District National Park is for so many people. Local Access Forum members recognise that – it's what motivates most of us to give up our time – and whether we look after the land, or peacefully and responsibly enjoy our recreational pursuits on it, all of us are aware that access to this remarkable landscape is priceless.

I hope you will find this report interesting and illuminating. I would like to thank all the members for their dedication and hard work and the officers for their continuing support.

Andrew McCloy

Chairman, Peak District Local Access Forum

Purpose of the Forum

The Peak District Local Access Forum is a statutory body, appointed jointly by the Peak District National Park Authority and Derbyshire County Council.

This appointment is a requirement of Section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000, which states that the purpose of the Forum is;

“To advise the appointing authorities on the improvement of public access for the purpose of open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area.”

In carrying out its function, the Forum will have due regard to the needs of land management and of conserving the natural beauty of the area.

Details of the duties and responsibilities of the Forum are laid out in two statutory documents. These are;

- Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007
- Guidance on Local Access Forums in England Issued by Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for Local Access Forums under Section 94(6) (c) of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 (February 2007)

Membership

Membership of the Forum is reviewed regularly and appointments are made on three-year terms. Recruitment is made on the basis of 'expressions of interest' made to the Authorities in response to adverts in the local press and direct mailing. Interviews of applicants are then held to ensure that prospective members fulfil the requirements of the position.

The appointing Authorities are required to ensure a reasonable balance is made between the number of members from land owning, recreation, and local interests.

In 2007, five new members were appointed following a number of resignations during the year. At the time of writing, the Forum now has the has twenty one members out of a maximum possible number of twenty two. The new members are;

Felicity Edmeston

Felicity lives in Ballidon and is a keen horse-rider, participating in the sport of endurance riding for the last 20 years. She believes a compromise can be found which will enable all legitimate users to enjoy the countryside without spoiling it for anyone else. She serves on Ballidon and Bradbourne Parish Council, and formerly ran a

Contact Details

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Full details of the Forum, its background, minutes from meetings and information on members is published on the website. Meetings are open to interested members of the public. www.peakdistrict.org/access



[Access sign to Ramsden](#)

small sheep farm at Macclesfield Forest. Her work for Tarmac has given her an insight into conservation and regeneration work, developing presentations to publicise Ballidon Quarry's biodiversity work.

Richard Entwistle

Richard has lived near the Peak District for over 35 years and has been a frequent visitor to the National Park as a sightseeing visitor, a keen walker and occasional driver on the historic unsurfaced roads. He is very keen that all user groups have fair access to the countryside, and so has been involved with the Stanage Forum steering group representing the Green Lane Association (GLASS).

Sue Fisher

Sue is Senior Grants Officer for the Heritage Lottery Fund in the North-west Region, and has been involved in advising on a number of access improvement schemes in the Lake District National Park. She lives in New Mills and is a regular user of Rights of Way in the Peak District particularly by mountain bike, in which she has an interest both recreationally and in competition.

Andrew Murley

Andrew is employed as a business analyst and software engineer for Derbyshire County Council. Among his wide range of interests is the environmental sustainability of Derbyshire and the Peak District. He was a keen hill walker in his early years and a member of Buxton Mountain Rescue team in the 1980s, and has a strong desire to ensure access to the area is open to people of

all abilities. His post-graduate studies have additionally given him a fresh insight into the contrasts and conflicts that can be felt in the Peak District.

Councillor Jacque Bevan

Jacque has been District Councillor at Derbyshire Dales District Council for over 20 years, representing Hathersage, Grindleford and Eyam, a County Councillor for 8 years until boundary changes in 2005 and a Member of the Peak District National Park Authority for about 6 years. During her time as a county councillor, she instigated and was part of the scrutiny on motorised vehicles in the countryside and continues to follow progress at PDNPA and with the County Council. She has been a Member of Stanage Forum steering group since inception, including producing the Management Plan which was the first one to be produced principally by users.

Members

Member's Name	Background and Interests	Appointment expiry date
Andrew McCloy (Chair)	Freelance outdoors writer, walker, local community	August 2009
Andrew Critchlow (Vice-chair)	Hill farmer	August 2009
Bob Berzins	Fell running, conservation	June 2010
Charlotte Bright	Land manager, horse rider	December 2008
Jon Clennell	Outdoor pursuits, local community	December 2008
Felicity Edmeston	Horse riding, local community, conservation	December 2010
Edwina Edwards	Community transport, Girl Guiding UK	September 2009
Stuart Elliot	Farmer, holiday accommodation	August 2008
Richard Entwistle	Motor vehicle users	December 2010
Sue Fisher	Mountain biking	December 2010
Henry Folkard	Climber, conservation	August 2009
Sarah Harlen	Walker, social inclusion	Resigned June 2007
Terry Howard	Walker, access campaigner	August 2009
Mike Innerdale	Recreation and conservation management, National Trust	June 2010
James Kellie	Landowner, holiday accommodation	December 2008
Richard Marshall	Motor vehicle users	Resigned Dec 07
Andrew Murley	Conservation, social inclusion	December 2010
Geoff Nickolds	Recreation and conservation management	August 2008
Richard Peart	Outdoors education	August 2009
Keith Pennyfather	Walker, transport	August 2008
Alison Salmen	Access for people with disabilities	Resigned Sept 07

Lorna Wilson	Local community, Women's Institute	August 2008
Jacque Bevan	National Park Authority appointee	
Roger Wilkinson	Derbyshire County Council appointee	

The Work of the Forum

Meetings 2007

Formal meetings in 2007 were held at Losehill Hall, the National Park's Study Centre, near Castleton, and Aldern House, the National Park's Headquarters in Bakewell.

The dates for the meetings were:

Saturday 17th March, Losehill Hall

Thursday 14th June, Losehill Hall

Saturday 22nd September, Losehill Hall

Thursday 6th December, Aldern House

Major Issues for the Forum in 2007

Rights of Way Improvement Plans (ROWIPs)

Rights of Way Improvement Plans continued to be an important area of work for the Forum throughout 2007. The statutory deadline of the end of November 2007 for the production of ROWIPs by local highway authorities resulted in a large number of documents being presented to the Forum for consultation over the course of the year.



Derbyshire

Derbyshire's draft ROWIP was published in December 2006 for a three month public consultation. A Peak District LAF sub-group of the Forum met to draft a response which was then discussed and finalised by the Forum at the March meeting. The Forum felt that the ROWIP was an impressive document and acknowledged that a huge amount of consultation had taken place.

The results of the consultation, which attracted over 1,000 responses, were reported to the Forum's June meeting. This information, including a summary of the Authority's response to the comments which were made, is available on the County Council's website at www.derbyshire.gov.uk.

The final ROWIP was adopted by full Council on the 7th November 2007 and presented to the Forum at its December meeting when Forum members were thanked for their valuable contribution to the process. The first annual work programme for delivering the Derbyshire ROWIP was also circulated for comment.

Sheffield

Steve Tivey (Sheffield City Council) presented Sheffield's draft ROWIP to the Forum for consultation at the March meeting. The draft ROWIP contained 29 policies and action statements. Sheffield's final ROWIP was published in November 2007. A report was given on the completed Sheffield ROWIP at the Forum's September meeting. The cost to implement the ROWIP has been estimated at £6 million over 10 years.

Oldham

Terence Cavanagh presented Oldham's draft ROWIP for consultation at the June meeting. Oldham's final ROWIP was published in December 2007.

Barnsley

Final ROWIP published November 2007.

Staffordshire

Final ROWIP published 2007.

Cheshire

Final ROWIP published November 2007.

Kirklees

ROWIP is still at the draft stage.

[Access sign below Stanage](#)

Recreational motor vehicles in the countryside

The use of motorised vehicles in the countryside has continued to be a priority area of work for the Forum throughout 2007. The subject was discussed at each of the four meetings in 2007 and has been backed up by several site visits to look at issues on the ground.

At the March meeting the Forum received a presentation from Dave Luscombe, Business Development Manager and head of Local Authority Support at the Auto Cycle

Union. Dave outlined the work he is doing alongside Local Authorities attempting to turn a recreational nuisance into a social benefit.

The Forum has continued to be kept up to date with progress towards better management of recreational motor vehicles in the countryside. Following on from Derbyshire County Council's scrutiny review, the National Park Authority policy and strategy on recreational vehicle use has now been finalised. In addition, the National Park Authority has put in place a policy and procedure for making Traffic Regulation Orders under the new powers bestowed upon the Authority under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. The Forum played an active role in the development of the policy and was formally consulted at the September meeting.

Further work is taking place between the National Park Authority, Derbyshire County Council and the Forum in relation to the Unsurfaced Highways Sustainability Survey. The survey aims to identify routes currently used by recreational motor vehicle users in the National Park and objectively classify them based on their sustainability. Suitable management solutions will then be adopted for routes highlighted as unsustainable. A Forum sub-group has been set up to advise and contribute to the route assessment process.

Access to Open Country under CROW

Access to Open Country under CROW has continued to be an issue discussed at Forum meetings. A number of Forum members have been involved in efforts to open a dialogue between recreational user groups, landowners and Natural England. This was seen as a positive step by the Forum and the value of this important work in further raising the profile of the Forum in local issues was recognised.



Motor cycles and walkers on track near Bretton

General strategic lobbying work regarding implementing and upholding the CROW Act has continued during 2007, raising the political profile of CROW access issues in the current climate of financial constraint within the National Park Authority.

Ranger Service Review

A review of the Peak District National Park Authority Ranger Service was conducted in 2007 as part of the National Park's Audit & Performance rolling review. This was an internal review and had been welcomed by the Ranger Service who felt confident that a review was a good idea.

Audit & Performance Committee appointed three committee members and a Director to conduct the review, aided by Andy Farmer, Jenny Waller and Sean Prendergast. In addition, George Broughton, Countryside Manager for Cheshire County Council, was a critical friend. An external consultant facilitated the process consulting partners, user groups, parish councils and the public.

Five specific themes were identified from the information collected; Ranger Service delivery on NP purposes, the geographical spread of the Ranger Service, communications between HQ and other staff, partnership working, and the use of people and resources. Everyone in the Ranger Service had been involved, including part time and volunteer staff. A report was produced compiling the information gathered during the consultation exercise. The conclusion is that the Ranger Service is performing extremely well, doing a very good job, with limited resources. The committee requested a further review of guided walks (are they a broad enough range?) and of the role played by part time and volunteer rangers (could their skills be used elsewhere in the organisation?).

Overall the review was felt to be a positive experience. In particular the involvement of consultants and other external agencies enabled a more objective approach to the review of what is a complex service.

PDNPA Mountain Bike Seminar

A report was given to the Forum on the inaugural Ride the Peak mountain bike seminar held in April. Discussion at the seminar focused on partnership working and improved communications, options for the provision of purpose built trails, ideas for improvements of routes and improving links to urban areas. The Forum felt that the seminar had engaged well with the audience and was a very important step forward.

A full report on the seminar is available from the Forum secretary.

Recreation and tourism policy in the National Park

Sue Marriott, Policy Planner at the Peak District National Park Authority, introduced the recreation and tourism policy which is being developed for the new Local Development Framework. A wide ranging discussion of the proposed policy followed giving some useful feedback both from landowning and recreational users' points of view.

Formal Consultations

In addition to those already mentioned, the Forum has responded to the following consultations:

Defra - Traffic Regulation Order making powers for National Park Authorities.

Defra - Right to apply for orders to extinguish and divert public rights of way.

Natural England - Fire Prevention Restrictions under CROW.

A628 Tintwistle Bypass Public Inquiry.

PDNPA CROW s25 access restriction proposal at Horseley Head Moss.

DCC Draft Greenway Strategy for West Derbyshire and High Peak.

Finance

Members' Travel	619.47
Room hire, refreshments and lunches	1381.05
Mini bus hire	60.00
Annual Report	385.00
TOTAL	2445.52

Derbyshire County Council contributed £1,500 towards administration costs. Net expenditure is met from within the National Park Authority's access budget.

Training and Liaison

In March, the Chairman and Vice Chairman attended a regional event organised by Natural England for all East Midlands Local Access Forums (LAFs) and their officers. The day provided a good networking opportunity, focusing on the future role and direction of LAFs along with ideas for making them more effective.

Angela Smith MP for Sheffield Hillsborough was present at the Forum's meeting in March.

During the year 11 Forum members have participated in training sessions provided by Natural England.

The Chairman has been invited to join the National Park Authority Management Plan Monitoring Group with an access and recreation brief. The Group will meet twice a year to monitor progress of the Plan.

National Access Forum

At the LAF Regional conference hosted by the PDLAF in 2006 a resolution was passed highlighting the need for effective regional and national representation in order to relay information and advice to key decision makers. The Peak District LAF has been one of a number of forums to take this forward and early in 2008 a meeting was convened between LAF representatives (including the Peak District LAF Chair) and Natural England to explore the possibility of setting up a national body to provide regular liaison and communication between the two parties. Although the precise working details have yet to be confirmed, it was agreed in principle to establish a National Access Forum that would consist of representatives from LAFs across the regions and senior officers from Natural England. Meeting perhaps three or four times a year, the idea was to examine key areas such as recreational policies, coastal access, ROWIPs and so on, and provide feedback and commentary from grass roots LAFs. There was an acknowledgement on the part of Natural England of the important role played by LAFs, across a number of fronts, and all agreed that a closer working relationship would be for everyone's benefit. Watch this space, as they say!

The Year Ahead

Some of the likely priorities for the work of the Forum in 2008 are outlined below.

- Examine the provision of opportunities for specific recreational groups, such as mountain bikers and horse riders
- Ongoing liaison with neighbouring LAFs and similar National Park forums
- Implementation of the National Park's Management Plan
- Delivery of Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- Look at measures to improve accessibility and encourage greater social inclusion
- Hold further training and workshops, in conjunction with Natural England
- Continue to raise the profile of the LAF among a wider audience, including the public, local government and statutory bodies
- Development of the National Park's Recreation Strategy
- Continue to appraise and offer strategic advice on the issues surrounding the use of recreational motorised vehicles in the countryside
- Encourage more officers from the Peak District National Park Authority and the seven constituent highway authorities to attend LAF meetings
- Dissemination, when published, of the LAF Handbook to enable members to fulfil their roles as effectively as possible
- Development and promotion of Greenways
- Brief members of the National Park and County Council on the work of the LAF
- Support the work of the new National Access Forum

Dates of Meetings 2008

Saturday 15 March

Thursday 19 June

Saturday 27 September

Thursday 4 December

Annex:

Members Attendance at Meetings 2007

✓ = attendance X = apologies n/a = not applicable

	17/03/2007	14/06/2007	22/09/2007	06/12/07
Bob Berzins	n/a	✓	✓	✓
Jacque Bevan	n/a	n/a	X	✓
Charlotte Bright	✓	✓	X	✓
Jon Clennell	✓	✓	✓	✓
Andrew Critchlow	✓	X	X	
Felicity Edmeston	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓
Edwina Edwards	✓	✓	X	✓
Stuart Elliot	✓	✓	X	X
Richard Entwistle	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓
Sue Fisher	n/a	n/a	n/a	X
Henry Folkard	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sarah Harlen	X	resigned		
Terry Howard	✓	✓	✓	✓

Members Attendance at Meetings 2007

✓ = attendance X = apologies n/a = not applicable

Mike Innerdale	n/a	X	✓	✓
Andrew McCloy	✓	✓	✓	✓
James Kellie		✓	✓	X
Andrew Murley	n/a	n/a	n/a	✓
Richard Marshall	✓	X	✓	resigned
Barry Neville	✓		replaced by JB	
Geoff Nickolds	✓	✓	✓	✓
Richard Peart	X	✓	✓	X
Keith Pennyfather	✓	✓	✓	✓
Alison Salmen	✓	✓	resigned	
Roger Wilkinson	✓	✓	X	✓
Lorna Wilson	✓	X	✓	✓



Left - Climbers on Access Land at Bamford Edge, Below - Mountain Biker below the Roaches, Bottom - Walkers on Bamford Edge.



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