



Report on the Peak District Local Access Forum Regional Conference

'Is there life for LAFs after CROW...?'

Losehill Hall, Castleton, Derbyshire on 20th
October 2006

***An event run by Local Access Forum members for Local Access
Forum members, encouraging and inspiring a shared vision.***

***'To bring together regional Local Access Forum members to
discuss themes of common interest and regional significance.***

***'To consider the future role and direction of LAFs from a strategic
point of view, as well as examining cross-boundary issues,
sharing ideas and examples of good practice.'***



Contents

1. Programme
2. Attendance
3. Chairman's introduction
4. Conference summary and resolutions
5. Feedback from LAF members
6. Keynote speech

Programme

9:30	Arrival, tea and coffee.	
10:00	Welcome and introduction.	Andrew McCloy (Chair, Peak District LAF)
10:15	<i>Presentation followed by discussion:</i> 'Balancing access with land management' <i>A discussion of practical access management techniques, including a case study of the 'Stanage Forum' approach to stakeholder involvement</i>	Henry Folkard (Peak District LAF)
11:15	Tea and coffee.	
11:45	<i>Presentation followed by discussion:</i> 'LAFs' role in promoting Access For All' <i>Can LAFs encourage and promote access to the countryside for the wider community?</i>	Terry Howard (Peak District LAF and Sheffield LAF)
12:45	Lunch	
1:45	<i>Presentation followed by discussion:</i> 'Accommodating vehicles in the countryside' <i>A review of the issues, laws and techniques for managing 'off-road' motor vehicle recreation</i>	David Giles (Derby and Derbyshire LAF)
2:45	Feedback from LAFs <i>Delegates to separate into their individual LAFs within the room in order to complete feedback form</i>	
3:00	Tea and coffee	
3:15	Summary based on feedback from LAFs	Yvonne Hosker (facilitator)
3:30	Keynote speech	Tom Moat (Natural England Area Manager)
3:45	Close	

2. Attendance

Delegates	Organisation
Andrew McCloy	Chair, Peak District LAF
Jon Clennell	Peak District LAF
Lorna Wilson	Peak District LAF
John Lees	Peak District LAF
Charlotte Bright	Peak District LAF
Henry Folkard	Peak District LAF
Terry Howard	Peak District LAF
Andrew Critchlow	Peak District LAF
Keith Pennyfather	Peak District LAF
Mike Rhodes	Peak District NPA
Gill Millward	Derbyshire CC
Andy Jones	Peak District NPA
Richard Taylor	Derbyshire CC
Claire O'Reilly	Derbyshire CC
Dan Boys	Moors for the Future Partnership
Eric Danforth	Chair, Barnsley LAF
Tony Hunt	Barnsley LAF
Sarah Ford	Barnsley MBC
Nigel Bennett	Chair, Stockport LAF
Edgar Ernstbrunner	Stockport LAF
David Brown	Stockport MBC
Ernest Nama	Stockport MBC
Roger Kite	Chair, Sheffield LAF
Cllr Dr Trevor Bagshaw	Sheffield LAF
Leonie Twigg	Sheffield LAF
Sue Stones	Sheffield LAF
Les Seaman	Sheffield LAF
Richie Haynes	Sheffield LAF
Steve Tivey	Sheffield City Council
Ian Watson	Chair, Greater Manchester Pennine Fringe LAF
Cllr Ann Metcalf	Greater Manchester Pennine Fringe LAF
Ron Weale	Greater Manchester Pennine Fringe LAF
David Chadwick	Greater Manchester Pennine Fringe LAF
David Brennan	Rochdale MBC
Eirwen Hopwood	Oldham MBC
John Gittins	Chair, Cheshire and Warrington LAF
Jill Bolton	Cheshire and Warrington LAF
Alan Bowring	Cheshire CC
David Boden	Chair, Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Wolverhampton Joint LAF
Brian Smith	Staffordshire, Stoke-on-Trent and Wolverhampton Joint LAF
Paul Pearce	Stoke-on-Trent MBC
Crispin Perceval-Hughes	Staffordshire CC
Mike Carr	Derby and Derbyshire LAF
Martin Pape	Derby and Derbyshire LAF
Terry Williams	Derby and Derbyshire LAF
Mike Benten	Derby and Derbyshire LAF
John Wiltshire	Derby and Derbyshire LAF
Boyd Potts	Derby and Derbyshire LAF
David Giles	Derby and Derbyshire LAF
David Nortcliffe	Chair, West Yorkshire Pennine LAF
Andrew Mackintosh	West Yorkshire Pennine LAF
Sue Leffman	Calderdale MBC
Chris Smith	Natural England
Jane Beech	Natural England
Tom Moat	Natural England
Yvonne Hosker	Facilitator

3. Chairman's introduction

Andrew McCloy, Chair, Peak District Local Access Forum

Welcome to LAF members and officers for this unique event. We believe it is first time that LAFs themselves have organised their own regional event. So why have we done it?

- A chance to meet neighbouring LAFs – we share common ground in more ways than one, plus some of us also share the same members!
- To talk about cross-boundary issues that appear on our respective agendas
- Compare approaches to some of the key issues
- Share good practice and network!

“Is there life for LAFs after CRoW”? Apologies for all the acronyms, but it's a serious question: what is the role for the 82 LAFs now that the Countryside and Rights of Way Act is behind us and access land has been rolled out? It's down to us to develop our role and take the wider view – access is a dynamic, exciting and challenging issue, and today we'll be looking at the sensitive balance between access and land management; the role LAFs play in promoting a genuine and effective right of access for all; and how LAFs face up to the often thorny issue of recreational vehicle use in the countryside, including the question of sustainability of routes.

LAFs have already come a long way. At a recent guidance workshop in Bristol to advise defra on amending its LAF Regulations, Jim Knight (Rural Affairs Minister) was quoted as saying he wanted to see “...all forums regarded by decision-makers as a valued source of independent, incisive, informed and influential advice on access and open-air recreation issues.” Bearing in mind that we weren't being paid to attend the workshop, one LAF chair snorted and said that if local authorities had to pay 20 expert consultants for this sort of advice they wouldn't be able to afford it! But it was a revealing workshop. For instance, there was debate among LAF members exactly WHO should be advised by LAFs and WHO should be obliged to consult LAFs – nominally the likes of the Countryside Agency, Forestry Commission, English Nature, English Heritage, district councils, etc.

The programme and content for today's event have been drawn up by LAF members and all the presentations will be from regional LAF members – and I hope as many LAF members as possible will contribute to the discussions.

However, I must also thank the Peak District National Park Authority and Derbyshire County Council for helping to organising this event, and the Countryside Agency (Natural England) for a contribution towards funding. Later we'll be hearing from Natural England's new Area Manager for the Peak District and Derbyshire on how the new agency is shaping up and where it might be going.

I hope it will be an interesting and stimulating day, and that members will take positive messages back to their LAFs. All the regional LAFs surrounding the Peak District are represented here today, and I hope we can all use it as a building block to developing a network of support and information – for everyone's benefit.

4 Conference summary and resolutions

(i) **Balancing access with land management: the Stanage Forum (Henry Folkard PDLAF)**



Stanage is a popular, three-mile-long gritstone edge and hinterland of open heather moorland, partly in the National Park and partly in private ownership, and designated open country under CROW. Sheffield centre is only six miles away and annually it receives some 250,000 visits a year from local people, climbers, walkers, families, fell runners, hang gliders, dog walkers, mountain bikers, trail riders, 4x4s and scenic flights.

There is essentially no public transport. The Estate can accommodate about 350 parked vehicles, though a busy day can see some 600 - the lungs of Sheffield, this is essentially an urban fringe park. But Stanage is also a working farm and an SSSI (currently deemed to be in favourable condition). And people live hereabouts: it is their home.

So how did the Stanage Forum come about and what is it? As part of the management plan, the National Park's Land Agent for North Lees, Matthew Croney, organised a meeting that attracted 70 people who elected a Steering Group of recreational users, conservationists, local residents, a local Councillor, farmers and Authority staff. The Forum took an holistic view of the Estate and its approach was through education, common consent and enabling - voluntary arrangements provided a better solution than statutory authority. The Forum produced a management plan, containing 150 recommendations, which was endorsed by the Park Management Committee.

Car Parking

Actual usage was surveyed to collect hard data. The Steering Group was clear that the 350 parking spaces already available on the Estate should not be varied too much, since Stanage is about enjoying open spaces not creating urban clutter. Pressure was acute on one site but underused at another (partly because of the pay and display machine); while some of the most vulnerable ecological sites were being damaged by random parking. The solution had to be pragmatic, effectively self policing, visually acceptable, affordable and accord with the steer given initially by the Forum.

One approach to random parking was policing and enforcement (yellow lines, signs, patrolling wardens, etc), but the Steering Group rejected this as contrary to the ethos of a

welcoming National Park, a man-made intrusion, and pointless without a draconian enforcement regime. The answer was to encourage parking in the under-used car park by a variety of means – not least, making it known that whilst it was desirable to contribute towards Authority costs by using the machine, no penalty was likely to be imposed at that site if anyone failed to do so. Elsewhere, sustainable lay-by parking was enhanced by resurfacing and bunding (part funded by the BMC); and on busy days some roadside parking was tolerated at specific points. By doing this, desire lines were kept away from sensitive ecological sites - before this solution there were 39 informal tracks through the ecologically sensitive wet sitch, and now there are none.

Ring Ouzel

The Ring Ouzel is a migratory species of thrush which breeds in moorland fringe areas of upland England and Scotland, and its catastrophic decline has resulted in red data listing. Stanage marks the southern limit of its breeding range and is a significant stronghold.

The approach at Stanage was, first of all, to remedy a total lack of scientific data by a series of surveys. Key issues for the Stanage Forum were land management and people management, and understanding what measures would be effective and why (rather than a simple knee-jerk reaction introducing various bans). Consensus and education were at the heart of a solution. The debate polarised as a dialogue between ornithologists and climbers, with the latter pointing out that climbing had taken place at Stanage for over 100 years without apparent adverse consequence. The Forum was generally content with a policy of following the least restrictive option, and began with an anticipation of where the birds were likely to nest (since actual territories might not vary greatly from year to year). In 2006, 23 nests were located by registered ornithologists in the greater Stanage area – but restrictions were applied to only four, and these for no more than a month. A number of nests were actually reported by climbers, and one climber approached the Estate Warden and told him to clear off from an area because there was a ring ouzel there!

The success of the approach, collecting empirical evidence and encouraging dialogue, shows that if the Forum had not gone through its difficult process we might have been left with ornithologists at loggerheads with recreationalists, whilst what was the major (as opposed to the perceived threat) to species survival remained unaddressed.

The Stanage Forum's objective was to inform the production of a management plan, which it has done. Make a factual and pragmatic analysis of the issues and understand the inter-relationships between the disparate pressures – and be prepared to be surprised. You will likely discover that what you thought was a problem has become an integral part of a balanced, cost effective solution.

LAF discussion:

We should use the Stanage example to help us work together, achieve consensus and listen to each other's views. Re conservation issues, often we do not have enough data about a site and we need this to monitor effects of access/recreation; more scientific and methodical approach needed. Problem is lack of funding for the research to find out how access impacts on conservation. Although English Nature/NE have a monitoring programme for SSSIs etc, there is a lack of a consistent approach across the countryside in general. May be tackled by local biodiversity groups?

Also, re input from volunteers – we need to recognise this and the wealth of knowledge from forums. We need to be creative; cannot use lack of money as an excuse. But we also need to capitalise on the wealth of knowledge that forum members can provide, often better than expensive consultants.

In terms of outstanding issues, sometimes LAFs feel remote from what is happening - not directly involved - may be too much of a local issue? There was mention of low profile of LAFs, and that they could use this type of issue to raise profile.

New ways of working: LAFs need members who talk to local people to find out what the issues are and feed these back to the LAF. It's also a role of LAFs to encourage public/community transport. And links with other groups that exist like Stanage Forum - can learn lessons be learned from the way these forums work, representing diverse interests, finding out scientific facts?

(ii) LAFS' role in promoting access for All (Terry Howard, PDLAF/Sheffield LAF)



In promoting 'access for all', we do mean *all* people irrespective of ability or background. Everybody should have the opportunity to have a positive outdoor experience or adventure - whether in an urban or rural environment. So what are the benefits of such an 'outdoor experience'?

Health - fresh air and exercise. How much better we feel after an activity.

Social - being out with friends, making new friends, sharing experiences.

The physical and personal challenge - how much better we feel after achieving or succeeding in an activity, particularly in a competing society which seems to mainly recognise physical prowess - climbing a hill, completing a walk, reaching an horizon.

Creative/spiritual - a time to 'escape' the pressures of life, to relax, to think and to reflect.

To be inspired - poetry, writing, drawing, photography.

Educational - to read from the 'great book of nature'. To explore social, cultural and industrial heritage.

But also have fun!

In helping to provide this positive experience it needs to be done in such a way which doesn't patronise anyone ("we know what you need") or that doesn't spoil the integrity of the experience by excessive or imposing engineered facilities which detract from what people seek.

In helping to widen opportunities for all, LAFs have a vital role to play either via the ROWIPs or building on the access to open country opportunities the CROW act gave us. I

don't see this as a 'task' or a 'job' but an exciting opportunity to help all people pursue the benefits of a positive outdoor experience and adventure. In pursuing our own ROWIP agendas we should aim for consistency across all boundaries we represent.

As LAF members, do we sit back and wait for Local Transport Plans to pay for ROWIPs implementation, or expect government to give ring fenced money, or even expect our local authorities to pay the millions required for each of our ROWIPs? Or do we become more proactive in trying to secure funding from them?

We all know really that it is going to be the local authorities which will be mainly responsible for financing our ROWIPs. This will be on top of the traditional rights of way funding (or under funding and under rated as the case may be). Here we have a job to do, to explain and show differently, possibly by lateral thinking and perhaps being more imaginative in how we approach our local authority. Look how much money is spent on sport, education, inclusiveness, better neighbourhoods, environment, health, etc.

Are these not what we are about anyway? If only we had a share of these budgets look what could be provided; and let's not forget the economic benefits from visits and tourism. We need to lobby for more financial and political will to bring about 'access for all'.

I like to think that nature offers us the opportunities and challenges, but only people create the barriers.

LAF discussion:

A lot of places can be made very accessible with a bit of imagination and investment. We must look at access for everyone, irrespective of background, age, ability etc. The role of LAFs in promoting 'access for all' should focus on consistency across boundaries; proactive on funding; explain benefits of access; lobby for access.

For instance, LAFs should engage Health Authorities whenever they can and get the debate going. Sure, money is needed to make things happen but it also requires the efforts and enthusiasm of volunteers. Urban authorities do not always appreciate/tackle rural issues - not a high profile for them. Health, education, well-being is such a positive experience! But there are pressures on Local Authorities to meet targets, eg BVPI178 ease of use. Work to get the network open can detract from the education side/traditional countryside service approach.

Role of LAFs: involvement in Open Access and involvement in ROWIPs – make sure the latter contains all the right elements, including access to funding. Lobby for money to be ring fenced. Monitoring ROWIPs and cross cutting issues; make sure access for all is included. There was also reference to the Diversity Review and where this might take us, assisting under represented groups. LAFs need to be aware of these initiatives and take a steer from Central Government and availability of funding. CA publication 'By all reasonable means' was put up as recommended reading for LAFs.

Local examples were cited: Trumper Project (powerful mobility vehicles) in Lancashire. In Rochdale, Pennine Prospects funding addresses challenges for young people with disabilities and a 'Signpost' project to encourage people to walk and venture further. Level of intervention/improvement needs to be appropriate to location. Lancashire Countryside Service is looking at social inclusion and offering up some good practice.

Outstanding issues: Let's not think of just physical disabilities. There is in fact a whole range and complexity of disabilities,(we often focus on provision for wheelchairs) we must consider stiles, gates and surfaces for all users and how signposting/information plays its

part. ROWIPs fall in this trap - Defra guidance needs to be interpreted much more widely than mobility and visual impairments. ROWIPs need to encompass everything. Re young people - promote education/understanding/responsible use and life long enjoyment. Again, schools are driven by National Curriculum and there are barriers to overcome.

LAFs can raise political profile. Lobby MPs - take issues on board and draw attention to imbalances/effect of policies - try and influence. LAFs must be proactive - set the agenda, make it what forum members want to discuss. There were complaints that no formal mechanism or direct link existed for LAFs to feed into National Countryside Access Forum. Is this something which needs to be addressed? NCAF appears reluctant to consider any other issues apart from their own initiatives/agenda.

(iii) Accommodating vehicles in the countryside (David Giles, Derby & Derbyshire LAF)



This is a brief introduction to the topic of sustainable rights of way and a generic protocol for maintenance and management. The proposals are the subject of discussion between representatives of the Derbyshire Highway Authority and the Derbyshire Motor Vehicle Users.

Boundaries: It's about legal access on legal vehicular rights of way; it's about finding a reasonable, balanced and proportionate response to the perceived problems associated with the maintenance and management of BOATS which is inclusive, and therefore able to gain buy-in from all parties (which is the key to an affordable scheme). It is not about Codes of Conduct, although they will be mentioned later. We do not have to start from a blank sheet of paper since guidance is already available:

- *Defra's statutory guidance to Local Access Forums* - MPV are specifically mentioned in relation to BOATS, 3.1.2.
- *Defra's statutory guidance covering Rights of way Improvement Plans* includes Motorised Users (2.2.14) and also see specific paragraph entitled 'Minimising conflicts between different classes of user'.
- *Defra: 'Making the Best of Byways' (Dec 2005)* is a practical guide for local authorities managing and maintaining byways which carry motor vehicles. From the beginning it extols an objective problem solving approach to any problems so that they might take ownership of the problems – see under 'Achieving Consensus' (2.1.2)
- *Countryside Council & Sports Council for Wales – Access Forum publication:*

- *'A Model Approach to Resolving Conflict in the Countryside'*

There are three key principles: Seek a voluntary solution in preference to a statutory one; seek to accommodate and manage rather than remove; and agree measurable targets which the solution should achieve. And the benefits in the long term? It will save time and money; create ownership of the solutions and processes; and provide greater flexibility and a wider range of possible solutions than formal procedures.

Suggested actions: establish the core cause of any perceived conflict; distinguish fact from opinion; establish a framework where issues and solutions can be discussed; seek solutions which users support rather than statutory impositions; and seek to accommodate and manage rather than remove. Some helpful hints: seek consensus – consider using an independent facilitator; be open – do not fear sharing power; ensure representatives are accountable to their interest group; and do not seek to impose pre-conceived ideas.

Proposed Protocol for Rights of Way Maintenance and Management

This attempts to incorporate best practice by describing a methodology which is equally applicable to all legitimate users of a right of way, based upon measurable data and an agreed standard of fitness for purpose. The latter is based on typical loadings that a given Right of Way should be capable of carrying so that it can be described as being 'in working order'. As such, it provides an objective starting point for maintenance and perhaps even more importantly of objective, inclusive management. As natural weathering, vegetation and all use causes deterioration to every route, it is necessary to apply maintenance to keep them in a suitable state of repair. There are three broad bands of work required: minimal (basically hand tools), light (as above with in-fill material) and significant (necessitating powered machinery).

Pragmatic approach based on data and objective definitions

Category of Maintenance	Time of Year	Description of maintenance required	Estimate of Materials & Machinery req'd	Estimate of Man Hours required	Summation comment recommendation
Sustainable	At any time	for all normal	legitimate traffic		
Sustainable with MINIMAL maintenance	Summer May – Oct inclusive				
Sustainable with MINIMAL maintenance	Winter Nov – April inclusive				
Sustainable with LIGHT Maintenance	Summer May – Oct inclusive				
Sustainable with LIGHT Maintenance	Winter Nov – April inclusive				
Sustainable with SIGNIFICANT Maintenance	Summer May – Oct inclusive				
Sustainable with SIGNIFICANT Maintenance	Winter Nov – April inclusive				
Unsustainable	At any time	Subject to Stat Regulation	Out of Repair order		

LAF discussion:

There needs to be consensus and we must address the needs of all types of users, contributing constructively. Conflict resolution is all-important and we should look to

different approaches in order to accommodate and manage. Measurable targets should be achieved and data should be collected which can be measured objectively. We must engage and create ownership of solutions/processes. Uncertainty over the status of routes is source of conflict and something which may prevent moving forward.

DCC's Code of Conduct is promoted through the off-road motor industry – a different type of media. En route signage needs to be clear so people know who has a right to be there. Issues associated with mountain bikes - can get to some of these groups through websites. One way of starting to resolve conflict is to establish/determine legal status of routes (mention was made of Lost Ways - Cheshire is a pilot authority). In the end, it comes back to resolving the status of routes.

What role can LAFs play here? Involvement of DADLAF and PDLAFs to assess impact – this is helping to find a way forward. It is bringing together expertise and a broad range of interests.

RESOLUTIONS

The Conference concluded by agreeing two key resolutions that LAF members wanted to take back to their appointing authorities and circulate to defra and Natural England.

1. Local Access Forums need effective regional and national representation in order that they can relay information and advice to the key decision makers.
2. Local authorities must receive adequate funding and support so that they can properly implement major access and recreation programmes, such as Rights of Way Improvement Plans.

5 Feedback from Local Access Forums members



What's been new for you about what you've heard today?

Lack of national LAF structure"

"Development of consensus thinking"

"Participation of minority groups"

"Innovative audio trail"

"National Access Forum – representation?!"

"David Giles's approach to maintenance and management of multi-user routes. Not yet convinced of its validity but consensus approach is to be applauded."

"Learned the geographical coverage of other LAFs"

"LAF involvement in management of access land"

What's the best idea/example of good practice you've heard today?

"The Stanage Forum – good practice in teasing out ideas to build consensus and using scientific evidence to support decision making"

"Cross linking the 'Lost Ways' project to Access for All"

"Ring fencing monetary support"

"Terry Howard's personal and ongoing commitment – an all too rare commodity! How do we cultivate these qualities?"

"Peak Park LAF leaflet"

"Should consult and use expertise of local users"

"Cross boundary liaison"

"Stanage Forum – effective coordination of different interests"

"Promoting the actual work of LAFs – publicise itself more"

"Today's conference – THIS is good practice which should be repeated!"

"LAFs have to be proactive – set their own agenda – but work in partnership with officials."

"Broaden expertise by involvement of non-Forum members"

What will you do as a result of what you've heard today?

"Get LAF to be more proactive in determining its business"

"Investigate, report on and act – eg look at the Countryside Agency's publication 'By All Reasonable Means'" [referred to today]

"Push for an umbrella organisation to represent LAFs at regional and national level"

- “Develop own LAF leaflet to raise profile”
- “Ensure that the LAF is sure of what exactly its role is”
- “Push to repeat today’s event regionally”
- “Request more officer assistance for chairman”
- “Be prepared to interact with local parishes – speaking at meetings, etc”
- “Engage more with neighbouring LAFs, particularly those with whom we can expect to have most in common”
- “Arrange training”
- “Try to address the issue of under-funding across the whole field of access work”
- “Look at ways of addressing problem of no formal mechanism of feeding local LAF issues back to national body (NCAF)”
- “Lobby for funding”
- “Work harder to get ‘access’ seen as a constituent element of land management and not as something separate”
- “Give feedback from LAF to Government – regional and national”
- “Establish closer links with adjacent LAFs”
- “Look at identifying own logo, house style and letterheads”
- “Aspire to be access champions”



6 Keynote speech: Natural England and Local Access Forums

Dr Tom Moat, Area Manager, Natural England Area Manager (Peak to Trent Team, East Midlands Region)



It's great to be here today – I've learned lots about access issues. Until now, I've had a somewhat limited awareness, with English Nature's role as relevant advisory body on nature conservation, but your enthusiasm and energy today have been a great introduction for me to Local Access Forums, and I'm sure some of your enthusiasm has rubbed off! So what I want to do now, is to give you an introduction to the 'new kid on the access block', Natural England; to what we're about, what we're inheriting from the Countryside Agency and English Nature, and what's different...

What is Natural England?

- Formed 1 Oct 2006 as an independent, influential advocate for natural environment
- Brought together English Nature, Countryside Agency – Landscape, Access and Recreation and the Rural Development Service
- Role to conserve and enhance the value and beauty of England's natural environment and to promote access, recreation and public well-being for the benefit of today's and future generations
- Employs staff nationally, regionally and locally with a small head office in Sheffield
- Employs 2,500 people with a budget of £500m

What Natural England will do?

For the first time, unite in a single organisation:

- responsibility for protecting and enhancing biodiversity & landscapes
- Promoting access and recreation – both in the countryside and in towns & cities
- Wide ranging responsibilities and key regulator
- Delivery organisation – incentives to farmers and landowners for environmentally friendly land management
- Independent watchdog on how policies affect the natural environment

Natural England's Strategic Outcomes

Our activities and resources are focused in four areas:

1. England's natural environment will be conserved and enhanced
2. More people enjoying, understanding and acting to improve, its natural environment
3. The use and management of the natural environment is more sustainable
4. Decisions which collectively secure the future of the natural environment

Undertaking Statutory Open Access Restrictions and Nature Conservation Duties within Natural England

- NE has statutory duties as Relevant Authority, a Relevant Advisory Body to other Relevant Authorities, Relevant Consenting Authority and Competent and Regulatory Authority obligations.
- Specifically, NE replaces EN as the Relevant Advisory Body (RAB) to other Relevant Authorities (NPs and FC)
- NE maintains RAB role on nature conservation interest sites outside the NP or on non FC owned land
- In Peak District National Park, PDNPA remains the Relevant Authority for CROW Act

Some Guiding Principles

- Clear audit trail at national, regional and local level; decisions made within the regions
- Regional Director responsible for consistent decisions at a local level
- Area Teams provide expertise and advice (with specialist national advice)
- National team provides mechanisms to ensure national consistency

Natural England in your LAF area: campaigns

- Will work with partners to champion the big issues for the natural environment – four ‘campaigns’
- A common theme of connecting people and the natural environment.
- Each theme addresses one of the crucial challenges under the 4 Strategic Outcomes.
- Launched over the next two months; call for partners to work with us.

Themes to the Campaigns

- a healthy natural environment: marine campaign
- enjoyment of the natural environment: *champion preventative health solutions in the natural environment*
- sustainable use & management: *promote public understanding of and support for the benefits and services of good land management*
- a secure environmental future: *raise awareness of the impacts of climate change on England’s wildlife and landscapes*

Health and the Natural Environment

- People using the natural environment keep active longer
- Communities strengthened by the presence of greenspace
- Regular access to the natural environment important for children’s development
- Natural space has a restorative effect

Key messages:

- Natural England will champion preventative health solutions in the natural environment
- Objective to provide accessible greenspace to every home in England
- Work with partners to improve the availability of greenspace

Sustainable Land Management

- England has a unique and valued natural environment
- Properly managed natural environment provides wildlife, landscapes and food as well as other environmental services vital to people’s well-being
- Good land management provides other benefits
- Farmers and land managers have major role to play in improving England for wildlife. Appropriate management essential to maintain the landscape and wildlife
- Benefits not always recognised by the public

Key message:

NE wants to engage with the general public to ensure the benefits of good land management are recognised, delivered and enjoyed.

