

Peak District Local Access Forum

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 9 March 2017
at Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell.**

Members Present:

Bob Berzins
Richard Entwistle
Henry Folkard
Charlotte Gilbert
Clare Griffin
John Hall
Caroline Hanson
Terry Howard

Edwina Edwards (Chair)
Andrew Murley
Paul Richardson
John Thompson (Vice Chair)
Ally Turner
John Walton (PDNPA Member Appointee)
Sue Weatherley

Others Present:

Mike Rhodes, (PDNPA) (Secretary)
Gill Millward, (DCC)
Sue Smith, (PDNPA)

Di Mallinson (PDNPA - minutes)
Sarah Wilks (PDNPA)
Emma Stone (PDNPA)
Richard Taylor (DCC)

1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies for absence were received from Adge Last, Jon Stewart, Ian Bunting, Caitlin Bisknell (DCC Appointee) and Matt Hutson.

Edwina announced that Laura D’Cruz had resigned from the LAF and welcomed new member Paul Richardson, a local resident and businessman with a keen interest in access issues.

Edwina also welcomed Emma Stone and Sarah Wilks, who had been appointed as new Heads of Service under the Authority’s organisational restructuring. Emma is now Head of Visitor Experience Development and Sarah is Head of Outreach Development. Mike Rhodes explained that both officers would report to Simon Malcolm, Director of Commercial Development and Outreach and that Emma would manage the Access and Rights of Way Team.

2. MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING, 8 DECEMBER 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 8 December 2016 were approved as a correct record subject to one amendment on page 4 with regard to Item 6 - Access Update:

The meeting on 20 October 2016 was of the LAF’s Green Lanes Sub Group and not the Access Sub Group.

3. MATTERS ARISING

P1 (1) – Mike confirmed that a card had been sent to Mike Johnson, thanking him for his contribution to the work of the Forum and wishing him well for the future.

P5 (7) – Tim Nicholson would report to the 15 June LAF meeting on the development of the Transport Design Guide.

P6 (10) – Members' Feedback

Peak Horsepower AGM

John Thompson confirmed that he had written to Natural England as agreed. Gill Millward was also seeking additional funds for completion of the Pennine Bridleway around Glossop.

State of Nature Report

John would attend the next meeting of the National Park Management Plan Advisory Group. A copy of Penny Anderson's presentation for the launch of the report had been circulated to Forum members.

Regional Chairs' Meeting

Chris Page had forwarded feedback to Mike and Gill as requested. John would attend the next meeting on Tuesday 14 March and report back to LAF members.

Lost Ways

Gill advised the meeting that any unrecorded routes which relied solely on historic evidence would be lost if left unclaimed by 2026. Many LAFs are concerned about this and consider that urgent action is therefore needed to raise awareness of the risk and help facilitate the necessary research. The Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum agreed that LAFs could work together to achieve this through an event or workshop. The Lost Ways Sub Group had met at the end of January to consider a plan of action and had invited members of Leicestershire LAF's Unrecorded Ways Sub Committee to take part in discussions at the next meeting of DADLAF on Friday 17 March.

Terry Howard, Chair of Sheffield Ramblers, expressed concern that despite a Deregulation Act intended to make it easier to submit claims, the necessary guidance was still not available. He suggested that potential claims should be notified direct to the relevant local authority rather than undergo the current lengthy procedure. Gill added that clarity about what constituted a good quality application together with careful prioritisation of claims would improve the process. However, people also needed to be aware that the County Council would not be given any extra resources to process these claims and they would have to wait their turn in the queue. Terry thanked Gill for her work on the Lost Ways Initiative.

4. DRAFT LAF ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Mike tabled the draft report and asked members to contact him within the week with any comments. He thanked Sue and Gill for their input. Edwina also thanked John.

5. MOUNTAIN BIKING INITIATIVES

Mike welcomed Chris Maloney of the Peak District Mountain Biking Group and Si Barnes of Ride Sheffield who gave a presentation about their work with the mountain biking community. They focused on encouraging responsible behaviour and developing an understanding of the Peak District's special qualities and vulnerabilities in the context of increasing use of its trails by mountain bikers.

This was in the context of the push for an English model of responsible off-road access initiated by the British Cycling campaign. Chris and Si gave many examples of their work to build good relationships and gather evidence of what mountain bikers want, also using the Cycling UK survey ('Rides of Way') as an evidence base. Examples given included:

- Promotion of all-weather routes
- Use of social media to get the message out to mountain bikers
- Working with National Park Rangers to maintain routes
- Working with Natural England and landowners
- Dig days and maintenance days on the Eastern Moors
- Discussions with biking magazines
- Minimising conflict between user groups
- Establishing a good relationship with landowners, eg Severn Trent Water

As an example, the Cut Gate Path (leaflet tabled), running from Ladybower around Langsett Reservoir was identified for an awareness-raising campaign. The mid-section of this rocky route was widening as users tried to avoid the bog, leading to further deterioration of the path. Si and Chris were seeking the views of different user groups in order to formulate a way forward.

Terry Howard was impressed with what had been achieved but suggested that Si and Chris give their presentation at walking group meetings too, a suggestion readily accepted by them both.

Henry Folkard welcomed the improved dialogue with mountain biking groups, who were taking the impact of weather conditions into account whilst still going out to enjoy their activity. He felt that behaviour was the main issue to be addressed and thanked Si and Chris for their work.

Andrew Murley told the meeting of his alarming encounter with mountain bikers and asked what mountain biking groups were doing to encourage respect for other users, including wheelchair users like himself. Chris and Si were putting out strong messages to bikers but acknowledged that they were unable to reach everyone. They would report back to their groups with Andrew's comments and continue to ask biker magazines to promote responsible behaviour.

Caroline Hanson enquired about the Strava website, a global community of athletes able to record, analyse and compare their sports performance with each other. Si confirmed that "Ride Sheffield" is trying to build a relationship with Strava who are struggling because the website encourages people to use routes and then have insufficient staff to police the activity. Si said that Strava was being used by some as a route guide.

John found the presentation encouraging and thanked Chris and Si for their good work. He felt that any new opportunities needed to be sustainable and well managed.

Ally Turner also thanked the guest speakers and highlighted the existing good dialogue they had with Peak Horsepower. She observed that most users enjoy access opportunities in more than one way, for example a horse rider can also be a keen walker.

Bob Berzins congratulated Chris and Si on their work within the context of an

increasing demand for off road biking opportunities. He was aware that ongoing discussions at national level could lead to changes in the legislation governing these activities. Bob noted that Sarah Fowler had spoken to the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee in Parliament on behalf of National Park Authorities about their efforts to generate income in the national parks. Si said that purpose built trails have been well received but that the Peak District presents a challenge in terms of increased access for mountain bikers.

New member Paul Richardson drew attention to the growth of honeypot locations and stressed the need to relieve pressure on the trails. He hoped that user groups would work on how to do this.

Henry referred to the Rights of Way Improvement Plan which aimed to review the status of certain ways, and wondered if concessionary bridleway status could be granted on some routes. He said the prime concern had to be sustainability, for example the use of a route could be suspended to allow time for the ground to recover.

Sue Weatherley asked for more information re the Cut Gate Path, which she saw as an opportunity to set an example of good practice. Chris and Mike agreed that the short term aim was to make people aware of the condition of the path and create an awareness of the impact of weather and user activity upon it. Mike described the Cut Gate report as a case study to raise issues which could be applied more widely.

6. NATIONAL TRAILS

Heather Procter, Pennine National Trails Partnership Manager, gave a presentation on the development of the Pennine Way and the Pennine Bridleway.

The Secretary of State had approved completion of the Bridleway's 137 mile (approx. 220km) northern extension to Byrness but there was no funding from Natural England to either create or maintain it. A 4.9km section remained to be finished at Glossop and would be completed before work started on the northern extension.

Heather reported that the Partnership was looking at the creation of a National Association or Alliance to secure funding and improve promotion of the two trails.

Heather has also been working with Gill to draw up a strategic funding/ delivery plan for the Glossop section and would be presenting a case to Natural England.

Clare commented on complaints about way markers, stressing that users of the trails needed to be competent in the use of Ordnance Survey maps. She mentioned the Harvey's linear maps for use on the Bridleway and Heather confirmed the existence of one for the southern section, although there was none for the whole route as yet. Heather agreed the need to manage user expectations re way markers and to raise awareness of the challenging weather conditions they might experience.

Bob liked the use of social media which had been set up on Twitter and Facebook for the Pennine Way but this was not yet available for the Bridleway.

Henry stressed the need for continuity of funding including the costs of employing staff to maintain the trails. Gill noted that any funding would have to be matched.

Charlotte asked if the SPEED Community Group had been involved and Heather confirmed that she had met with both them and Peak Horsepower.

Edwina encouraged the use of national trails by local people, for example via the Health and Wellbeing programmes of local Health Authorities and Sports Councils.

A date for completion of the Glossop section of the Bridleway could not be given as there was currently no funding in place for its construction or a dedicated project officer to take on this work. Edwina felt that the LAF could support the trails development and thanked Heather for her presentation.

7. DERBYSHIRE CYCLING PLAN – KEY CYCLE NETWORK CONSULTATION

Gill presented this item, saying that the aim of the Plan which complements the Wider Peak District Cycle Strategy was to make Derbyshire the most connected and integrated cycling county, getting more people cycling more often by 2030. This would be achieved in part by providing a network of high quality connected routes both on and off road for all forms of cycling journeys, including commuting and leisure, accommodating horse riders wherever possible.

Derbyshire County Council (DCC) was taking the lead on this aspect of the Plan and had Cabinet approval to develop a conceptual Key Cycle Network (KCN) for the county along with an associated Cycle Infrastructure Delivery Plan. The KCN represents the “trunk roads” for cycling in Derbyshire, linking communities as well as encouraging leisure use. This will help shape future investment priorities by providing a focus for getting schemes ready to bid for funding from the Local Transport Plan and other external sources. Gill stressed that this does not preclude other routes being funded or developed eg more local links to communities or those identified in our existing Greenway Strategies.

Gill would circulate a larger map of the provisional KCN network to LAF members for consideration about any gaps, missing routes or cross boundary links and collate all comments received by the end of March to report back to DCC officers leading on this work. **ACTION: GM**

Henry raised the issue of connectivity with public transport routes and Gill confirmed that this would be considered alongside the location of other key destinations eg employment areas to help create a network for cycling commuters.

Clare asked if the cycle ways would be marked. Gill said yes there would be a need for signage at certain locations and this would be taken into account as part of a route’s implementation.

Edwina suggested that groups such as those represented by Chris and Si should have the chance to comment and Gill agreed to send the proposals to them, although there was no broad public consultation at the moment. This would follow later in the year. **ACTION: GM**

In response to John's question about strategies, Gill confirmed that the Derbyshire Cycling Plan was linked to the Wider Peak District Cycle Strategy and officers would continue to work together towards its progression.

Richard Taylor confirmed that a key cycle network including super-cycle ways for commuters is high on the government agenda, aligned with the Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

8. FRIENDS OF THE PEAK DISTRICT – BOUNDARY WALK

Julie Gough gave a presentation on behalf of Friends of the Peak District about the Peak District Boundary Walk, which covers 190 miles of the national park boundary.

The Walk and an accompanying book will be launched on Saturday 17 June at the start/finish point in Buxton and Julie invited LAF members to join in the first footing. The walk has 20 stages, each of which is 9-10 miles in length.

Julie explained that funding for the project is low and much of the maintenance work is done by volunteers. She confirmed that the book also covers the history of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England which pre-dates the Mass Trespass and that a website is under construction.

9. ACCESS UPDATE

Sue Smith tabled and ran through her report, noting that the National Park Authority meeting on 17 March would consider the development of a charity vehicle for fundraising and also the effect of Brexit on farming in the national park.

Sue thanked Forum members for their support of the Access Fund.

Henry urged the better use of existing funds rather than establishing a new Giving fund, in order to maintain coherence of the strategy. Edwina noted that it would be undesirable to have the Access Fund integrated into the proposed charity vehicle. John and Edwina had been in touch with Sarah Fowler, resulting in the likelihood that Simon Malcolm would speak to Forum members at the next LAF meeting.

Sue tabled a second report re the National Park Management Plan (NPMP) Update, noting that a consultation document would go to the Authority meeting on 26 May for approval. A NPMP officer would be reporting to the next LAF meeting in June.

Members were pleased to see the inclusion of Brexit in the update reports, which were noted.

10. DERBYSHIRE'S RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE

Gill presented her report, noting that there was a slight downward trend in pass rates for the condition of surveyed paths.

Terry asked how the County Council was responding to the Ramblers' Big Path Watch. Richard Taylor confirmed that Peter White had received details of this

and that the comments had been put on file.

Terry also asked whether DCC notified Ordnance Survey (OS) of Definitive Map Modification Orders as he had found old paths on new maps. Gill agreed to follow this up if Terry could provide any specific examples, as OS is normally notified about any new modification orders. **ACTION: TH/GM**

Gill confirmed that the draft policy for Working With Community Groups would be taken to Cabinet for approval later in the summer.

Members raised concerns about several routes including Bamford Clough and Chapel Gate. Edwina encouraged discussion on these issues over lunch with Richard Taylor, who pointed out that despite the commendable efforts of his team, the impact of insufficient staffing was beginning to show.

11. GREEN LANES UPDATE

Sue tabled her report and mentioned that details of the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for Derby Lane were now on the National Park Authority's website. Exemption for cavers to use part of the route was already being applied and Sue welcomed Derbyshire Caving Association's offer to assist with this.

Proposals for a TRO at Washgate had been approved at the Audit, Resources and Performance Committee (ARP) on 3 March, which includes a specific exemption for two motor cycle trials.

Recreational Motorised Vehicle Action Plans for 2017/18 would be reported to ARP on 19 May. Priority Route Action Plans were being identified in Kirklees and Sheffield. Sue thanked the Green Lanes Sub Group for their professional and comprehensive support in contributing to the reports on all the priority routes, including those who are no longer members of the Forum - being James Kellie, Richard Peart and Mike Johnson.

Sue confirmed that resources had been allocated by the Authority for the continuation of this work.

Sue will be attending the national Motor Vehicle Stakeholder Working Group at its next meeting in April 2017. Sue assured LAF members that the Access and Rights of Way Team had regular contact with vehicle user groups.

Terry urged the Team to ensure that LAF members from different authority areas talked to each other for example where more than one authority had an interest in a particular Byway Open to All Traffic. Sue confirmed that the Highways Authorities were consulted in these matters.

The committee debate on the Washgate TRO was available on the Authority's website as an audio webcast should members wish to listen.

Charlotte raised three points:

- Washgate – the river bed could be damaged by motorbike trials
- Moscar – could officers check the badly damaged banking– **ACTION: MJR**
- Voluntary restraint measures at Minninglow did not appear to be working

Sue reported that the LAF sub-group had visited Moscar Cross Road and officers

- 12.** had provided photographs of a later visit. Richard Pett was discussing the Minninglow situation with Richard Entwistle.

MEMBERS' FEEDBACK

Terry drew members' attention to the forthcoming Spirit of Kinder Day on Saturday 22 April at 2pm in the Village Hall, Edale and a new book about the history of the access movement entitled The Clarion Call.

Henry stated there was a new booklet out about the Stanage Pole.

- 13.** John thanked officers including Sarah Fowler, Mike Rhodes, Sue Smith, Richard Pett, Gill Millward and Richard Taylor for their support of the LAF and hoped that both Emma Stone and Sarah Wilks would address the meeting soon.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business to consider and the meeting finished at 1.15pm.

The next meeting is on **Thursday 15 June 2017 at 10am** in the Board Room, Aldern House.