

# Peak District Local Access Forum

Minutes of the meeting held on Saturday 27 September 2008 at Losehill Hall, Castleton

Members Present:

Bob Berzins	Terry Howard
Charlotte Bright	Mike Innerdale
Jon Clennell	James Kellie
Felicity Edmeston	Andrew McCloy (Chair)
Sue Fisher	Andrew Murley
Henry Folkard	

Others Present:

Mike Rhodes (PDNPA) Secretary	Gill Millward (DCC)
Wayne Bexton (DCC)	Max Norris (Inst of Outdoor Learning)
Sharon Davison (Minutes)	Richard Pett (PDNPA)
David Marsden (DCC)	

## 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Jacque Bevan, Andrew Critchlow, Edwina Edwards, Richard Entwistle and Geoff Nickolds.

## 2. Minutes from the last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting on 19 June 2008 were agreed as correct.

## 3. Matters Arising

Terry Howard spoke about item 3 in the previous Matters Arising regarding reasonable access. The adjacent access authority has clarified what it considers reasonable and unreasonable and he is concerned that landowners may exploit the differences between neighbouring authorities. The area in question is covered by Sheffield's RoWIP but lies within the PDNPA boundary. Terry would like this Forum to ask the National Park Authority to look into this matter and try to find a way forward.

The Chair said this matter had been raised previously and Mike Rhodes had responded on the National Park position. There may be different approaches by other LAFs - inevitably issues with shared use and cross boundary differences will arise. This topic has always been high on our agenda and the Chair is happy for the Forum to look at general principles, but its role is to provide strategic advice to authorities. It may be unrealistic to harmonise with all adjacent authorities but constructive dialogue is certainly possible.

Several members felt consistency was essential across boundaries.

Mike Rhodes reminded the Forum that there have been substantial discussions about this site and the NPA view is clear.

Bob Berzins suggested a site visit. The Chair asked Terry how he wants to take this forward and Terry asked that the NPA is made aware of this discussion (by way of the Minutes) as a start. When the new Access Officer is appointed it would be useful to have a site meeting to make them aware. The Chair said that Mike, as the new officer's line manager, should be approached first on such matters and Mike said that he has planned more liaison with the LAF for the new post. Sue Fisher felt more working group liaison with access officers to look at specific topics would be welcomed.

Henry Folkard felt that a wider review of the way the CRoW Act has worked in this area may be useful – there will be a mapping review before too long and by looking at the issues that have arisen, along with what has worked and what hasn't, the Forum could try and influence the process now. Mapping methodology and inconsistencies in mapping at the very least should be looked at and representations made.

The Chair mentioned that the Forum is seen as a critical friend of constituent authorities which he felt was quite correct.

#### Membership update

Mike reported that 4 members were up for renewal - Geoff Nickolds has agreed to continue, 3 others have stepped down (Stuart Elliott, Lorna Wilson and Keith Pennyfather). Their contributions will be missed and the Chair has written and thanked them for their involvement, hard work and commitment. Efforts are being made to recruit new people to the Forum – a balance needs to be maintained and Mike is aware that the farming community and landowners are now under-represented and can be difficult to attract.

Charlotte Bright, James Kellie and Jon Clennell are the next up for renewal. Jon cannot continue as he is moving away from the area. He was thanked warmly for his contributions and would be welcome to carry on if he was able.

Henry spoke about item 4 – the 'Winchester judgement'. He asked if there had been any developments in terms of a challenge and its impact on cases which the County Council is dealing with. Gill Millward was not aware of any challenge but will check with DCC's legal department and report back at the next meeting. **ACTION: GM**

Henry also asked if there was any news from the Yorkshire Dales NPA in terms of Traffic Regulation Orders.

Mike said that Yorkshire Dales NPA has issued full permanent TROs on 8 out of 24 routes and intend to make TROs on all in time. Those 8 have been challenged by LARA – the case is sub judice so the basis of the challenge is unknown. He is keeping a close eye on the case and is in contact with the YDNPA as to outcome of challenge. Details will be made available to PDLAF when appropriate.

#### **4. Introduction to Derbyshire's Accessibility Partnerships and consultation on Draft Accessibility Strategy for High Peak and Derbyshire Dales**

David Marsden, Transport Partnership Officer for Derbyshire County Council gave a presentation and explained that the Derbyshire Dales and High Peak Accessibility Partnership is a brand new partnership. He provided background information on how the partnership came about and details of the funding partners.

Accessibility is concerned with how easily people can access key services ie healthcare, education/training, employment, food shopping and leisure facilities. People face barriers particularly if they are disabled or live in rural areas and are without a car.

He then outlined the objectives of the partnership. David's role is to develop a strategy and action plan; deliver the solutions identified in the action plan; act on projects and initiatives guided by the partnership management group.

In addition they will influence and manage delivery of capital schemes, eg there is £3million earmarked for the Buxton, New Mills and Glossop area over the next 3 years.

David is currently undertaking consultation for the draft strategy and action plan – he will circulate an options and appraisals questionnaire to Forum members in the next few weeks with a 3-4 week response time. **ACTION: ALL**

There was general discussion around sustainable transport links – joining up longer routes with areas in between, capacity for bikes on trains, barriers to use, education for multi users. It was suggested David should talk to key businesses and landowners for joined up thinking and planning. Public transport providers need to be on board and influenced. Co-ordination is needed with all authorities, voluntary groups etc, for example bikers currently have to drive into the National Park to cycle. It was agreed that reliable public transport is essential to respond to needs of local people.

The Chair thanked David for attending.

## **5. Motor Vehicle Strategy**

Richard Pett updated the Forum. A report (circulated to LAF members) had been taken to PDNPA Services Committee on 12 September 2008.

Regarding sustainability action plans, the LAF sub group had visited 8 'higher priority' routes and will make recommendations for the management of each route by the end of October 2008. Then following liaison with DCC, the information will be used to help determine both short and long term actions for inclusion in management plans.

Signs agreed for Long Causeway have been circulated to Forum members and agreed by all the user groups – these will be used as a template for other areas. A meeting has been arranged with the Police who will be monitoring use.

The Chair thanked sub group members for their hard work.

Henry reported that on Long Causeway a structural engineer from DCC Highways had carried out an assessment and another reclamation engineer will be surveying too.

Bob suggested that as a future agenda item, the Forum should consider climate change as part of strategy documents. Chair thanked Bob and will consider this. **ACTION: MR**

Mike Innerdale asked if landowners will be consulted when management plans are produced. Richard Pett said the Area Ranger should be feeding information from the ground into the plan. Landowners will be directly involved in the next stage of the process, as will Parish Councils. Mike Rhodes asked Mike Innerdale to write to NPA with concerns on any specific piece of land. **ACTION: MI**

Copies of a progress report to DCC's Improvement and Scrutiny Committee on 9 July 2008 were available at the meeting. Wayne Bexton also told the Forum that DCC is currently reviewing its policy for the management of motorised vehicle use in the countryside which dates from April 2003. A consultation document should be available to bring to the next LAF meeting in December.

## **6. PDNPA Recreation Management Scrutiny Panel Report**

Geoff Nickolds could not attend today, but a report to the Audit and Performance Committee on 18 July 2008 has been circulated to Forum members. A recommendation has also been made to the Services Committee and now awaiting a decision from the NPA management team.

Mike Innerdale stated that he felt the scrutiny review had been carried out very well, landowner comments have not been damped down, it reflects discussions that took place and was a good critical appraisal.

## **7. The Right to Apply for public path orders**

A letter from Defra, dated 1 August 2008, had been circulated to LAF members for information. Gill gave a brief summary and referred to this Forum's response to the original public consultation back in May 2007.

## **8. Completion of Greenway Strategy for West Derbyshire and the High Peak**

Wayne Bexton updated the Forum – the final draft of this Greenway Strategy was available at the meeting. The Strategy has identified approximately 200km of proposed Greenway routes across the Districts of Derbyshire Dales and the High Peak. The potential for funding is now increased as the whole of Derbyshire is now covered by 3 strategies in total.

Copies of the Strategy will be available on the DCC website – if anyone particularly wants a hard copy get in touch with Wayne. The Chair thanked Wayne for attending.

## **9. Rights of Way Improvement Plan Updates**

### **Derbyshire**

Gill provided an update on progress being made towards delivering Derbyshire's RoWIP in 2008/09 under each of the five aims.

In particular, the digital public rights of way information for the High Peak area is now available on the County Council's website. Funding is being secured to continue to develop the Glossop section of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail. Natural England has produced two circular mountain bike routes off the Trail, near Tintwistle and Chinley, which can be downloaded from the Pennine Bridleway website. A report highlighting the main achievements for the first year of RoWIP delivery in 2007/08 is being compiled for wider circulation.

### **Cheshire**

Mike Rhodes said he had received an e-mail from Jane Krause stating that Cheshire's existing County and District Councils will be replaced by two new unitary councils from 1 April 2009. Cheshire East Council will be our neighbour. She will respond when more information is known.

### **Sheffield**

Terry Howard told the meeting that the annual report will be published soon. Interim information will be circulated by MR to members of this Forum. **ACTION: MR**  
Terry also reported on a site visit to the Bradfield ribbon area and George Lodge Moor to look at link routes. Work will be ongoing later in south Sheffield (Beighton) for new

link routes, upgrading and improvements. Things are moving very fast which is encouraging.

## **10. Feedback from Members**

### **Chair**

#### **England Access Forum**

The Chair had attended the England Access Forum which was a very positive meeting. Natural England has agreed on a provisional regional support structure – each NE Region will have a LAF co-ordinator. Ideas, advice and information will be communicated from local to regional to national level and should work both ways. Two delegates from the East Midlands will attend. There is one permanent representative – Andrew McCloy - and one other place to revolve around the other LAF Chairs. Meeting venues will also move around the country.

Some specific issues were brought up eg the Ministry of Defence in Cumbria wanting to carry out live fire training exercises on designated access land - which meant closure for up to 4 days. In fact it didn't go ahead due to the presence of livestock but will be a possible on-going topic. This is one example of potential national issues which the England Access Forum is well placed to examine. A working Group will meet between EAF Meetings to co-ordinate the overall response from LAF Chairs. The Chair felt the working relationship is now better established.

Natural England explained its proposed regional set up – the Peak District contact will be Kate Maltby (Nottingham Office) who will be the LAF Officer for the East Midlands. It is hoped she will attend one of the Peak District LAF meetings soon.

#### **Other items**

Terry reported that common land by High Ridge Road, between Stannington and Moscar has been illegally fenced off and may also be a trespass onto the highway. Either stiles will be placed or the fence will be removed to open up common land which will also give access to what was previously an island of access land.

It looks like Blackamoor as a whole will be dedicated under section 16 very shortly. All Sheffield City Council owned woodlands are to be dedicated under section 16. Ordnance Survey will be notified of all SCC owned woodland to be marked on OS Maps as open access land – this is major step forward. Dedication hasn't been forgotten. People are being invited to suggest routes through these woodlands. Walkers are Welcome idea – going to start promoting Sheffield as the walking capital of the UK. The Chair has written in the RA's Walk magazine about the scheme in Hebden Bridge – he felt it is an excellent idea. Terry asked all to take note – this is a major political tool to get authorities to spend money on RoWIPs and access.

Shooters Nab - Henry thanked Roy Malkin for arranging a meeting which culminated in an agreement for access for climbing on the crag on 4 days this year - with a review in January.

On 8 October, Henry - on behalf of the BMC - will be attending a celebration event of British Mountaineering in Downing Street to meet the Prime Minister. He will try and raise the profile of LAFs and the National Park in general.

## **11. Any other business**

Mike Rhodes tabled a paper from Judy Merryfield on the PDNP Recreation Strategy. The online recreation survey will be 'live' until 3 October. The annual National Park Parishes day was held on 13 September and looked at recreation aspects. Currently Judy's team is looking at other organisations' strategies.

The draft strategy and action plan will be produced during November to February and be circulated to stakeholders by mid April. It is hoped that a sub group of this LAF will be closely involved in helping to decide on priority actions once survey information is complete.

The Forum has received an invite to the Natural England Yorkshire and Humberside regional LAF meeting in Wakefield on 22 October – anyone interested please let Mike know. MR will circulate details to members. **ACTION: MR**

Sue Fisher brought up the subject of substantial deterioration of paths and trails in the New Mills/ Hayfield area due to bad weather. Gill said Sue should send her a list – it may be possible to make use of previous flood monies or they could go onto list for capital works. **ACTION: SF**

Henry mentioned that he was aware of several mine shaft collapses due to bad weather.

## **11. Dates of Next Meetings**

Thursday 4 December - possible site visit to Buxworth Basin to look at Greenway issues

Suggested dates for 2009:

Saturday 14 March

Thursday 18 June

Saturday 26 Sept

Thursday 3 December

The meeting finished at 1pm