

# Peak District Local Access Forum

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 13 June 2013  
at the Moorland Discovery Centre, Longshaw**

## **Members Present:**

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

## **Others Present:**

Mike Rhodes (PDNPA) Secretary	Gill Millward (DCC)
Sharon Davison (Minutes)	Tim Nicholson (PDNPA)
Dave Cramp (PDNPA)	Richard Pett (PDNPA)
Steve Cresswell (DCC)	Lesley Rechert (PDNPA)
Sarah Ford (Barnsley MBC)	Sue Smith (PDNPA)
Adele Metcalfe (PDNPA)	Richard Taylor(DCC)

John Thompson spoke briefly about the recent memorial event for Sean Prendergast. Sean had supported CRoW and access for all with his unique blend of inspiration and enthusiasm. He had enabled tremendous achievements in the Peak and was a very sad loss.

## **1. Apologies; Introduction to the afternoon Site Visit**

Apologies had been received from Bob Berzins, Ally Turner, John Hall and James Kellie. Ben Young has resigned. Carol Parsons and Jane Chapman are unable to attend today. We have a new Natural England representative, Phil Robinson, who is also unable to be here today.

Mike gave details of the afternoon's visit to Burbage Valley – a summary of Sheffield Moors Partnership work; and a full update on the Eastern Moors partnership would be given.

## **2. Minutes from the last Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 21 March 2013 were amended - on page 5, paragraph 3, should be 'TH said'. With that change they were agreed as a correct record.

## **3. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the last meeting**

P1 High Peak Moors – Jon Stewart reported that the National Trust are analysing the responses and aim to publish the response to consultation and produce a revised vision in early Autumn. Comments from this LAF - and individuals – have been taken into consideration.

P4 resource issues – John Thompson will judge the best time to make a further approach to Jim Dixon.

#### **4. Governance arrangements for LAF sub group work**

Mike Rhodes had circulated a paper which sets out and clarifies governance arrangements for the Peak District Local Access Forum sub-groups, thanking Sue and colleagues in Legal Services for their help.

John T understood the background and asked for clarification about the advertising of meetings. Mike replied that notices on the website ([www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/lafmeetings](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/lafmeetings)) comply with this requirement. Sub-group agendas do not have to be advertised unless the LAF formally delegate authority to the sub-group in which case the meeting will be open to the public. All sub-group meetings are reported to the next full meeting of the LAF.

Charlotte proposed that the report be approved – this was seconded by Richard Entwistle and agreed unanimously.

#### **5. Volunteering**

##### **a) Volunteering in the National Park**

Adele Metcalfe (Community Village Officer and Community Policy Manager, PDNPA) gave a presentation on volunteering. 3-4 years ago the interest in volunteering increased; so in response to strategy a Volunteer Review was undertaken and subsequently a Volunteer Policy and an Action Plan were developed.

In 2012/13 the Authority benefited from more than 8,000 volunteer days in a variety of roles and areas - and this is increasing. The process was reviewed, some inconsistencies ironed out and best practice developed to give managers support and guidance. The overall strategy is to maintain the number of volunteer days but increase the quality of the volunteering experienced and widen target groups – eg diverse backgrounds or people who would find challenges in being able to volunteer. The cost of providing volunteer opportunities is acknowledged. A toolkit will be produced for volunteer managers and ultimately for all staff.

Adele explained that it can be a tricky area if work is arranged for a set number of days – this formed a contract and created obligations eg minimum wage. The advice is to make very clear there is no obligation to either provide or to attend – this presents difficulties for internships; write an agreement, not a contract, explicit that they will get something from it eg training/development. Only expenses incurred should be paid. There will be a clear pointer on the new PDNPA website on how to volunteer.

A discussion followed around whether volunteers could be seen as a replacement for staff enabling budgets to be reduced. Steve Cresswell agreed that using volunteers instead of staff was a valid concern; as a yardstick DCC assess if a volunteer carries out work will it bring benefits to them and/or a community. Examples of value to

someone as an individual would be to learn new skills and to meet people. Adding value to communities is important – it is not appropriate to just use free labour.

Henry spoke about the early 1970s Manpower Services Commission Job Creation Programme. A lot of time was spent talking to Union leaders. Local authorities must accept the responsibility of standards for the work and also the on-going liability for the maintenance of tasks performed by volunteers –eg trees growing (adequate provision for on-going care must be built in). There is a cost to authorities in facilitating volunteers as well as the cost to volunteers themselves.

Adele gave some examples of work carried out by volunteer 'experts'; wildlife surveys, the Built Environment Quinquennial survey use volunteers; students and expertise in community.

Charlotte said Peak Horsepower would like to volunteer as an organisation on self funded projects; to carry out work themselves - but didn't know how to go about as an organisation. Adele suggested approaching a landowner direct to make an offer – there may be an opportunity to apply for grants.

Dave Cramp suggested Peak Horsepower could carry out further work with Peak Park Conservation Volunteers – use PPCV as a resource for tools, first aid, tools; insurance. He suggested liaison with the RoW team.

The John Muir Award was discussed, and the Peak Award which was introduced for primary school children.

Adge brought up the subject of young people engaging with the countryside, in particular schoolchildren attending an outdoor centre and paying – the centre could then make a donation. This process could be made easier

Clare Griffin also spoke about an orienteering competition – the fee for land use goes towards the cost of maintaining National Trust rangers

The Chair thanked Adele for attending today.

## **b) DCC Draft Volunteer Policy**

Steve Cresswell had circulated a draft volunteering policy paper which has been consulted and commented on by Derbyshire County Council's HR team, volunteers, PDNPA, and the Groundwork Trust.

Countryside Service work with individuals that volunteer direct with the Countryside Service; also community based groups (eg for path maintenance). The two ways of working are very different – the policy relates to individuals rather than groups. It is a policy document – subsequent procedures will be based on this eg recruitment, expenses. It sets out key principles and objectives for the involvement of volunteers and provides a framework for best practice, and will be reviewed and updated (eg to comply with changes in law). Steve is seeking views as individuals and forum member on the document prior to being submitted to Cabinet in July

A Volunteer-friendly document will be produced too for potential and existing volunteers. He will also be looking at producing Best Practice Guidance for working with community based groups.

All members of the forum endorsed the policy.

Steve then outlined what practical works have been undertaken - in terms of supporting groups with materials and training, building their capacity to work without direct supervision. Groups of volunteers have been set up eg Friends of Aston Brickyards; Friends of Ripley Greenway, Ramblers groups in Erewash and Amber Valley, various footpath groups. In response to a question he confirmed that if approached by a group in the National Park he would talk to PDNPA staff to manage jointly.

The Chair thanked Steve for attending.

## 6. Pedal Peak District Phase II bid

Tim Nicholson, (Transport Policy Officer, PDNPA) gave a presentation. He thanked the forum for their letter of support – this was one of a phenomenal 46 letters in total. He explained how the bid relates to NP strategies (Management Plan; signature 2 (Destination Pedal Peak District) and fits in with visitor experience, public transport, cycling links; recreation strategy.

A draft Cycle Strategy is to be produced in September 2013 – this forum will be consulted.

The bid criteria were developed at the Cycle Summit in February; it was a long complicated process, involving neighbouring authorities and stakeholders. The bid was submitted on 30 April following 6 weeks' intensive work. Guidance was that we would be advised the result between May and June – there is no information yet. £12m is available with 3-4 large bids sought. All English NPs were allowed to bid - 9 bids were submitted - Tim will provide links. **ACTION: TN/MR**

The bid value was £5m – the upper limit. Match funding had to be found – initial advice was 30%, ultimately £2.5m has been promised which illustrates the level of commitment. It is a partnership bid, DCC being the lead partner, with Staffordshire CC, Barnsley MBC, Sheffield City Council all partners. It is a £7.5m package with an additional £1m benefit identified from complementary schemes.

There are 5 main elements:

White Peak loop – 18km, links to Matlock and Buxton stations

Little Don Link – 19km, links to Sheffield and Barnsley, Trans Pennine trail

Staffordshire Moorlands Link – 23km links to Stoke and Staffordshire Moorlands

Little John Link – 9km, Castleton - Hathersage, links to Sheffield and Manchester

National Park Cycle Funds – cycle hubs to cater for cycling facilities (and promotion).

Tim outlined some benefits (eg 3.5m people in reach of cycle networks in the NP), and the next steps if successful.

Terry asked if the routes outlined were available for horse riders and walkers – he feels clarity and information/education is needed for cyclists. Tim confirmed that the bid emphasised walkers' benefits – some elements were for cyclists and walkers only eg trail adjacent to steam railway - with an alternative offered for horse riders.

In response to questions about the possibility of a reduced amount of funds and much higher potential maintenance costs Tim said that there is a 'plan B' in place. With regard to the life of surfacing, it is difficult to say – all schemes are being delivered by other bodies who will cover their share of the maintenance eg DCC, Barnsley Sheffield. There is a declaration of acceptance of risk in the bid – the Section 151 Officers from each partner have signed up - with DCC as accountable body to accept the risk.

It is envisaged that white peak loop will reduce usage of the Monsal Trail and spread the load.

Charlotte gave congratulations and asked that horse riders are given consideration. Chair felt bid was very positive and there is real will within DfT. She thanked Tim for attending today.

## **7. Update on National Park Asset Review**

Jane Chapman could not attend today so Mike Rhodes gave a brief update. The Authority has appointed a consultant (Atkins Ltd) to advise on the commercialisation of trails and will produce a report in September. Work on disposals is currently at a standstill. Henry asked if the invitation to tender went wider than trails – eg North Lees? It was of huge importance to a number of people. The National Trust had given a good example of both how to consult with the public and being transparent. Mike will try and arrange for someone from property team to attend the next meeting.

**ACTION: MR**

It has been previously reported but The Roaches Estate was transferred to Staffordshire Wildlife Trust in May.

## **8. Green Lanes Update**

In relation to Chapel Gate, there is a temporary closure on the lower part of the route until June 2014. Over the last couple of months, drainage works and resurfacing have been carried out by DCC on this section of the route. Phase 3 (covering surfacing and fencing on the upper section) is proposed with an estimated cost of £35k.

Further updates will be considered at a Green Lanes sub group meeting on Monday 17 June – details have been circulated to members - all members welcome to attend - please let Sue know if attending.

**ACTION: ALL**

Sue Smith reported that following the ARP Committee in May, the NP is consulting on a TRO on the Chapel Gate route. A link to the consultation has been circulated. This LAF is notified and needs to decide on a response – which could be that:

- the previous response (Appendix 1 of the paper) is still relevant
- that do not wish to make a further response
- that wish to submit a fresh representation based on the discussions at this meeting of the full Forum.

John will co-ordinate the response and felt it would be useful to know whether we are holding the approach of the original letter, or wish to follow a different action plan.

**ACTION: JNT**

A suggestion was made that as the condition had changed substantially the response should be revised. A discussion took place as to whether the TRO should be seasonal or permanent, whether to wait to see the outcome of repairs, the condition and potential deterioration, and conservation and sustainability. It was acknowledged that local people had concerns too, about sustainability and conservation in a National Park. It is a complex issue and user groups most affected by closure have accepted the need for management. It was made clear that horse riders, cyclists and walkers are user groups too. Everyone is reasonable but bringing together different points of view is difficult. Some members felt that £35/£50k is a sticking plaster and would be frustrated if we have to reinvent the wheel. It was felt risky by many to relax the protection.

Mike R clarified – this LAF was asked for views at the first stage – and wrote a letter (22 February). Today the LAF decides whether to carry forward that consultation response or whether to make changes. John T read out that response and the collective views.

Edwina summarised that everything said today has been stated, she felt there is sufficient clarity within the previously provided response. All agreed to go with what has been previously agreed. draft letter to be circulated to LAF members and despatched to Officers by 24 June.

**ACTION:JNT**

Sue reported that committee dates have not been identified to make a decision on the TRO proposals Long Causeway and The Roych but the approved green lanes plan identified sometime this summer/autumn .A consultation date has not yet been proposed for Cherpit and Leys Lane and at brushfield discussions with residents will be taking place shortly.

Tread Lightly are planning to work on Houndkirk in August – with Sheffield CC.

Richard Peart said that off roading is a new and burgeoning use – mountain biking is similar in being new. It is an issue to maintain tracks, with increasingly popular activities using old Rights of Way legislation. The Government does not give a consistent approach. This is being raised with the Minister by the Chair of the National Park.

Henry had seen a photo of Mininglow which suggested very significant deterioration- Sue Weatherley added it was too difficult to ride a bike on the surface because of deep ruts. Richard Pett said there had been bad damage over winter and DCC have proposed repairs –the Area Ranger and landowner agree repairs are needed – he will report back next meeting

**ACTION: R Pett**

## **9. Access sub-group report**

Lesley Rechert reported that the sub-group meeting in May was well attended and notes of the meeting are available on the website: [Local Access Forum meetings: Peak District National Park Authority](#) Gill Millward attended the meeting with maps of access sites within the county (but outside NP). It had been useful and the group had passed suggestions to her. Natural England are in the process of dedicating **National Nature Reserves** – Derbyshire Dales NNR is scheduled for dedication in September 2014. Christine Pope (NE Officer) will attend the December meeting to give an update on this subject.

The CRoW Act provided for a mapping review of local access land which was due in 2014. This has now moved to complete in 2019. NE will be gearing up for the work from 2016.

Access 'wish list' brought ideas of improvements to network – these are still on-going. A new access point on Dove Bank now achieved which was welcome.

**LAF Annual Report** - hard copies are available and have been distributed to MPs, National Park Members, Highways Authorities, LAFs, RoW Officers. All are asked to take and distribute – if more are needed let Lesley know.

**ACTION: ALL**

The next access sub group meeting is on 6 November - all members are welcome and an agenda will be sent nearer the time.

Funding of HLS schemes and access issues – Jane Chapman will attend the next meeting.

Action: MJR

Terry Howard suggested that the LAF might offer advice to the relevant Minister/Ministry to bring forward the revised date of the review of the mapping of access land instead of the 2019 deadline.

He also suggested that the LAF might offer advice to Natural England that where an HLS scheme is proposed, that Local Access Forums should be consulted and involved in making public access provisions to such schemes.

Lastly to offer retrospective advice that where an HLS scheme has been made without the involvement of the Local Access Forum and improvements to public access not considered, to revisit the scheme with the involvement of the Local Access Forum to see if public access improvements can be made.

Jon Stewart said he was not sure of funding priorities in HLS but it might be worth exploring. Existing 10 year agreements could be looked again with regard to capital works, in context of RoWIP where HLS could potentially help.

The Chair thanked Lesley for her work on the sub group.

## **10. Derbyshire CC Rights of Way Improvement Plan update**

A new 5 year Action Plan has been produced following comments from this group and individuals. It is going to Cabinet on 18 June. Gill has circulated a report on this year's programme – there are 5 aims - to:

- ensure that the Public Rights of Way network is open and available for use
- provide an up to date and widely available Definitive Map and Statement
- provide a more connected, safe and accessible network suitable for all users
- improve the promotion, understanding and use of the network
- encourage greater community involvement in managing local rights of way

With regard to the 18% cut to the Rights of Way budget there is less road signage and maintenance but there are quite significant funds for capital works – bridleway and restricted byway improvements – the detail is in the report.

Continued funding helps to provide new and improved routes for many groups and keeping digital mapping up to date is very important. DCC are working with both LAFs for access land and working in partnership to deliver access improvements. The health agenda is very high profile - and will be a future agenda item. The Volunteer Policy has already been discussed.

Henry said the RoWIP states DCC will ensure existing and future public Rights of Way networks are open and available for use. Terry reported that he has been inundated with reports from walkers who regard several footpaths to be unusable with no visible improvement. He will tell Gill which ones.

**ACTION: TH**

John T asked about the Pennine bridleway maintenance on The Roych – Gill said there was a 75% grant for maintenance – it was acknowledged that more funds would be welcomed.

The Chair acknowledged that there is a lot of delivery in the plan in difficult times and thanked Gill for her report.

## **11. Feedback from Members**

Terry Howard spoke about **Lost Ways** – he feels it will rely totally on volunteers to carry out research and put cases to local authorities. Could this LAF, Derbyshire LAF and maybe Barnsley get involved? Sheffield LAF are setting up a group to do this research.

Gill responded – information is in the Local Record Office. Applications have to be with local authorities before the deadline. Perhaps a small area could be a pilot. She is aware that DADLAF did some work in the Ashover area.

Henry felt that there was inertia at the top.

The Chair and Gill will look at with regard to what needs to be done. Volunteers could really get their teeth into this subject. **ACTION: CHAIR, GM**

### **Huddle update**

Clare Griffin will send an e-mail summary and give a formal update next time. Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) has published information on TROs - she will include. **ACTION: CGr**

Natural England are developing more focussed relationships with LAFs –conference outputs have been published (links sent previously). Reports to Defra will be shared amongst all LAFs and a newsletter sent.

### **Regional Chair's Meeting**

Richard Entwistle attended this meeting. Natural England decided that in future the (rolling) chair would be provided by the venue provider. Meetings will be held twice a year; spring and autumn. An interesting discussion about the impact of HS2 had taken place. RoW managers and planners are talking to LAFs about the effects on Rights of Way. Motorised access came up too – 2 or 3 chairs mentioned having problems with illegal inappropriate use and asked about this LAF; user groups and operation Blackbrook.

Huddle –functions are increasing and NE are planning a 'Whiteboard' with static information.

There is a requirement to submit a summary of each LAFs Annual Report via Huddle. Chair thanked Richard for attending.

### **CAP reform policy statement paper**

Henry Folkard had circulated a paper – he explained it is a dense and complicated subject. The planned changes to reform CAP (eg HLS) may be fundamental in the way they affect use. There are many new relationships – Local Nature Partnerships – Nature Improvement Areas all within a complex political scene - it raises question for LAFs in general regarding what our relationship should be with new structures and organisation. There is an opportunity for RoWIPs and LAFs in determining priorities. LAFs collectively - through the national forum - should be taking a view on things likely to affect us and LAFs individually and collectively may need to raise voices to influence. MR will talk to Jane Chapman. **ACTION: MR**

## 12. Any Other Business

Charlotte reported that the **formal launch of The Kinder Loop** took place on 3 June at Rushup Hall café (accessible on foot, horse or bike). It is a multi user route with maps, guides, places to say etc available on Peak Horsepower website. The route is already being used and Charlotte thanked all for their support. The route was opened by Cosima Towneley, daughter of Mary Towneley. Clare Griffin offered a link to Peak Horsepower on Huddle.

Chair thanked Charlotte for her drive and enthusiasm.

Jon Clennell and Adge Last alerted all that there would be an influx of young people from early July to mid August; taking part in the **National Citizen Scheme** (for 16 year old school leavers) which involves a 1 week residential including activities eg climbing walking and camping. This forum will review in September and feed back to maybe encourage a more flexible approach re timings. **ACTION: ALL**

John Thompson spoke about the **Recreation Strategy** – Judy Gould has retired. John will make enquiries about who is the recreation strategy guardian from hereon.

**ACTION: JNT**

Adge reported that the **Peak Adventure Sport Alliance** had met recently with Carol Parsons – the organisation lobbies for recognition for adventure sports, these groups can be difficult to communicate with.

## 13. Dates of next Meeting

To be held on Thursday 19 September at Aldern House, Bakewell

The meeting closed at 12.55pm. A site visit took place in the afternoon.