

# Peak District Local Access Forum

## Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 6 December 2018 at Aldern House, Board Room.

### Members Present:

Councillor Jason Atkin  
Joe Dalton  
Richard Entwistle  
Clare Griffin  
Louise Hawson  
Adge Last  
Geoff Nickolds  
Dan Richmond-Watson  
Jon Stewart  
Sue Weatherley

John Thompson (Chair)

Bob Berzins  
Edwina Edwards  
Charlotte Gilbert  
Alastair Harvey  
Jez Kenyon  
Andrew Murley  
Paul Richardson  
Roly Smith  
Ally Turner

### Others Present:

Mike Rhodes, (PDNPA) (Secretary)  
Gill Millward, (DCC)  
Rich Pett, (PDNPA)

Sue Smith, (PDNPA)  
Karen Harrison (Minutes)

## 1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

There were no apologies received.

The Chair welcomed Andrew McCloy, Chair of the Peak District National Park Authority to the Local Access Forum, together with Sarah Wilks, Head of Outreach Development and Harry King, an under graduate student from Cambridge University, who were sitting in to observe the meeting.

He also welcomed Alastair Harvey, a Recreation Advisor from Yorkshire Water to his first meeting as a new member to the Forum, then invited Alastair to say a few words by way of introduction.

## 2. MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING, 20/09/2018

The minutes of the meeting held on the 20 September 2018 were approved as a correct record.

## 3. MATTERS ARISING

### MEND OUR MOUNTAINS FUND RAISING CAMPAIGN

Mike Rhodes updated the Forum on the Mend our Mountains Campaign and reported that although more money was still coming in for the Cut Gate and the Great Ridge Campaign, more support was still needed. The campaign was likely to run until the end of the financial year. The funds raised so far from just the crowd funding element currently stands at £13,000 for the Great Ridge and £4,500 for Cut Gate. The grand total received so far for the Great Ridge was £83,000 of its £165,000 target. A bid has been submitted to the Tarmac Community Landfill Fund for £63,000, which should take the amount to the target set and

the result of the bid should be known in January.

The Cut Gate Bridleway repair project in the Peak District National Park had recently been awarded a grant of 30,000 Euros from the European Outdoor Conservation Association (EOCA). The Cut Gate Bridleway had proved its popularity with walkers, mountain bikers and horse riders by gaining the most public votes (57%) in the 'Eco-tourism, Forest and Mountain' category of EOCA's international online competition.

£7,500 has been donated from the British Horse Society and fund raising efforts through Peak Horsepower, plus ongoing support from mountain bikers and other user groups through raffles and sponsored bike rides. This brings the amount raised to 75% of the total required.

#### **PEAK DISTRICT CHARITY**

Mike Rhodes provided an update from Sarah Slowther on the progress made in the setting up of the Peak District National Park Charity - 7 trustees had now been appointed, 3 were nominated by the National Park Authority and 4 were recruited in an open process. The constitution has been submitted to the Charity Commission and it is hoped to receive a charity number in the New Year. The registered name will be the Peak District National Park Foundation. There was a first meeting of the 7 trustees and key members of the Authority on Thursday 5 December. A public launch will be dependant on the Charity Commission registration timescales and the trustees are planning an official launch when there is a website and plan in place.

#### **SHEFFIELD MOORS PARTNERSHIP**

Bob Berzins updated the Forum on the situation with regard to events being held on protected landscapes. Natural England is making it clear to landowners that they now need to complete a form which makes them responsible for any damage that is caused by events.

#### **PDNPA TRAILS**

Charlotte Gilbert informed the Forum that a Trails Steering Group will be meeting on the 18 December and she will report back to the Local Access Forum meeting in March 2019.

#### **DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE LAF**

Mike Rhodes reported a change of date to the June 2019 meeting due to venue issues. The confirmed dates for the Local Access Forum in 2019 are now:-

Thursday 14 March  
Thursday 6 June (Longshaw)  
Thursday 19 September  
Thursday 5 December

#### **4. ROLE OF THE LAF AND SUB GROUPS**

Charlotte Gilbert went through her report from a recent meeting that had taken place with Bob Berzins and John Thompson on the role of the LAF and the Sub-Groups.

Charlotte reported that she would like to encourage LAF Members to join the Sub-Groups that were already in place. There was a feeling that it wasn't necessary to form any additional Sub-Groups at this time.

John Thompson informed Members that Terry Howard, former Peak District LAF Member and Sheffield LAF Member had been co-opted to the Access Sub-Group and Alastair Harvey had been appointed to the LAF giving a water company perspective. John

Thompson will be attending the Derby and Derbyshire LAF meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> December with Ian Else and Gill Millward.

**ACTION: That the report be received.**

## **5. DERBYSHIRE CC ROWIP UPDATE**

Gill Millward circulated her report and invited comments and questions on the content. In discussing the report the following issues were highlighted:-

- The November path condition survey has just been completed and the results will be collated and combined with May's survey to determine the overall performance for the year. There has been a steady decline in the overall pass rate from 74.3% in 2013/14 to 61.2% in 2017/18.
- The results from the second consultation on the proposal to make a Traffic Regulation Order on Jacobs Ladder were being analysed.
- A hearing is planned for the 5<sup>th</sup> February to consider an opposed Definitive Map Modification Order on Back Lane, Darley Dale.
- 30 people attended the joint Peak District/DADLAF Sub Group training workshop in November, which was concerned with issues surrounding "unrecorded ways" and the 2026 cut-off date and how to use the British Horse Society (BHS) Dobbin 2026 database.
- The BHS has secured a substantial grant from Sport England to expand and accelerate its 2026 campaign work and has recently appointed a Project Manager to work on this. Charlotte Gilbert has made an approach to the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme for candidates to do the research work and for the LAF to offer support.
- A second workshop of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan took place on the 24 October.
- The eighteenth Derbyshire Woodland Festival took place at Elvaston Castle Country Park in September attracting more than 10,000 visitors.
- The Peak District National Park Authority held its Miles without Stiles celebration event at the end of November. There are already 20 routes being promoted on the website with a further 20 planned for this time next year.

Bob Berzins asked why there was a decline in the overall pass rate for the path condition surveys. Gill reported that this was sometimes difficult to pin down - the paths are picked at random and the survey is based on the length rather than the number of paths which pass or fail. If a long path fails on one aspect of the assessment eg fingerpost missing from the roadside, then the whole path fails which then had a significant impact on the results.

Sue Weatherley asked Gill about the progress of Bamford Clough? Gill said she would check and report back.

Clare Griffin thanked Gill for her helpful report and asked whether it was possible to have feedback from other authorities as well. Mike Rhodes did invite all local authorities to come to the LAF meeting, but he had had no response so will chase them up.

Geoff Nickolds expressed disquiet that the numbers were heading in the wrong direction and also the lack of information from other local authorities. Geoff also asked what progress was being made on the White Peak Loop – Bakewell to Rowsley? Gill reported that work on this section would recommence when the necessary staffing resource was in place.

**AGREED: To note the progress report for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.**

**ACTION:**

- Gill Millward would find out what progress was being made regarding Bamford Clough for the next LAF meeting.
- Mike Rhodes to contact the local authorities again and invite them to attend a future meeting of the LAF.

**6. ACCESS UPDATE**

**MILES WITHOUT STILES**

Sue Smith reported that in November, the Peak District initiative “Miles without Stiles” was named “Large Scale Project of the Year” by Accessible Derbyshire at a recent award ceremony held at Chatsworth which built on the previous award of Organisation of the Year. The “Miles without Stiles” project creates and promotes easy to use routes to help people with limited mobility to enjoy the countryside.

National Parks have an important role to play in promoting accessibility and improving health and wellbeing, and to show people what is possible and inspire them. The National Park Authority does this through supporting accessible activities, on accessible routes from accessible places through working with accessibility groups, such as LAFs, Highway Authorities, Landowners, and all who help to care for this special place.

Two years ago Yorkshire Water provided sponsorship for this work and the Peak District hosted a meeting of the National Park Access Officers to take this work forward.

Sue thanked everyone for their work and encouragement on this project, especially Gillian and Jane from Accessible Derbyshire for their drive and passion, Richard Ross for mapping, Si Humphreys for his design, David Higley and Steve Sherratt for their technical input, and to Mike Rhodes and Richard Pett for their support.

The first 20 routes have been dedicated to Tom Scotford and Sean Prendergast who inspired this work. The logo on the website shows a Big A for “Access and Accessibility” and is in 3 colours representing access for all, some or many.

The 2018 routes are available on the website with a handbook published at the end of the year. The Chair referred to the celebration event held at Langsett the previous week and welcomed the award to the Peak District NPA and efforts by all involved including Yorkshire Water.

**AGREED: That the LAF receives and welcomes the report.**

**ACCESSIBILITY ANNUAL REPORT**

Sue informed LAF members that an annual report on accessibility was provided at the end of each year. A series of photographs was then shown to highlight some of the work that had been undertaken in 2018.

- A number of Miles without Stiles routes which included Highway Authority routes and funded works
- Accessibility Events at Parsley Hay
- National Parks Week – Peak Cavern Accessibility Tours, Wheeley Boat Trips at Ladybower Fishery
- Celebratory Event at Langsett
- Award Ceremony at Chatsworth
- Improving access on our accessible routes with the help of volunteers and funded by donations to the Access Fund

**AGREED: That the report be received.**

## **ACCESS FUND ANNUAL REPORT**

Sue Smith tabled her summary report and provided an update on what the Access Fund had achieved during 2018.

The Fund was set up in September 2014 and reports are provided annually with updates to the Local Access Forum and via the Access Sub-Group.

During the last 12 months, there has been support and donations generated from organisations, in particular the South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire area of the Ramblers Association and the Derby Nomad Ramblers, Peak Walking Adventures, Individuals and monies raised from the sale of the Clarion Ramblers Handbook.

There has been a number of access improvements during 2018, and these have included:

- Bridge at Coombs Dale
- Bench at Coombs Dale – Miles without Stiles Route
- Volunteer working parties at Conksbury and Curbar Gap – Miles without Stiles Route
- New improved gate at Conksbury – Miles without Stiles Route
- Mapping for Miles with Stiles Routes, this relates to a donation from Yorkshire Water
- Design work for Miles without Stiles Handbook
- Improvements to surfacing at Castleton

There are a number of projects still outstanding, arising from competing priorities, which may yet be included in this year's annual report.

The Chair thanked Sue for her report which was noted. Roly Smith reported that the Clarion Ramblers Handbook was a gem of outdoor literature, full of quotes and was a highly recommended booklet to read, although it was understood that there were very few copies left now.

## **LONG TERM RESTRICTION OF ACCESS - SILENCE MINE**

Sue circulated a report at the meeting. The purpose of the report was to update the Local Access Forum on the situation regarding the open access exclusion at Silence and Old Grove Mines.

It was noted that more evidence of further subsidence had resulted in a road closure in addition to the closure of the public rights of way in the area. It was clear that the situation was developing and it was therefore considered, in the interests of public safety, that a corresponding closure of the Access Land in that area was put into effect.

**AGREED: To note the report and support the proposal to restrict all public access to the Access Land as well as the public rights of way in that area.**

## **7. NATIONAL PARKS REVIEW - LAF SUBMISSION**

John Thompson reported that he had had an opportunity to meet with Julian Glover at Edale on the 19<sup>th</sup> October when Julian visited the Peak District. John did invite Julian to attend a Local Access Forum meeting, but it has proved difficult to fit it in. A draft report (circulated) is also being brought before Members at the National Park Authority Meeting on Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December.

A draft response to the "Call for Evidence" had been circulated to LAF members and a call for formal responses was then made as the deadline was the 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018. John

then invited comments and questions on the content.

In discussing the report the following issues were highlighted:-

- Opportunity for funding from mineral operators within the Peak District
- Countryside code and litter
- Improved network of recreation route links into the National Park
- Good access and rights of way help mitigate first purpose
- Wildfire management
- Canoeing on rivers/water access – that the wording in the paragraph be adjusted to read “Water recreation opportunities could be realised more fully working in partnership with water companies and other landowners. Due to the complexity of navigation and access rights to rivers in our area we are not currently promoting general access for canoeing. However, if appropriate legislation is brought forward we will welcome the opportunity to comment on proposals and to engage with and support any consultation process”.
- More harmony between visitors and residents.
- Resources for Ranger Service/Access Management
- Raise the profile of physical access eg Miles without Stiles.
- More online information and on the ground.

#### **AGREED:**

**1. That the Peak District Local Access Forum’s draft response to the Review of National Parks is edited/amended where necessary by the Chair and Vice Chairs, before it is forwarded to Julian Glover and the Panel, with editing by Roly Smith and additional points referred to by colleagues. The online response to be submitted by Mike Rhodes.**

**2. That the response is also sent to the Chair, Deputy Chair and CEO of the Peak District National Park Authority, appropriate officers and Secretaries of adjoining Local Access Forums for consideration.**

**3. That the National Park Authority’s Draft response to its meeting on the 7<sup>th</sup> December was considered and noted, with no changes needed to the LAF Draft.**

**4. That all LAF members consider responding personally to the Review and encouraging the interests they work closely with to do that as well.**

## **8. NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN DELIVERY - REPORTS**

John Thompson reported that he had attended a meeting of the National Park Management Plan Advisory Group on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October (minutes circulated to LAF members) and that there was an Events Workshop on the 16<sup>th</sup> January which both Bob Berzins and John would be attending as representatives of the LAF.

John asked if LAF members had any views on this Workshop to let Bob know, not just focusing on issues caused by events but also looking at the positive side as well eg getting people out doing recreational activities.

Bob reported that he attended a pre-meeting two months ago and that there was some feeling that there were problems and that some areas are more affected than others, but if any member had any examples/case studies that could be used for the workshop then to let him know.

Places on the workshop were limited, but there needs to be adequate representation. Jon Stewart reported that he was attending from the National Trust and that there was possibly someone from the National Office that would be attending as well. Alastair Harvey reported

that he was already attending from Yorkshire Water and Paul Richardson and Clare Griffin would like to attend if spaces permitted.

Sarah Wilks agreed to check on what responses had been received so far to see if spaces were available before opening it up to other LAF members.

Louise Hawson asked what the definition of an event was. Sarah Wilks replied that it was any event with over 50 people and that was bringing large groups together.

There was a register of events, to save more than one event taking place in a small area on the same day, but this workshop was an opportunity to pull things together.

**AGREED: That the report be noted**

**ACTION: Sarah Wilks to check on responses to see if any spaces are available for other LAF members to attend the workshop and advise Mike Rhodes.**

Cllr Jason Atkin left the meeting at 11.25am

## **9. OVERVIEW OF RIGHTS OF WAY**

Bob Berzins reported that following on from the last meeting, there was concern on the general state of the rights of way network and the steady decline of some routes within the Peak District National Park. A good network of rights of way was fundamental in enabling people to get out.

Four presentations then followed from Jez Kenyon on the physical/information barriers people faced; Paul Richardson on mountain biking; Sue Weatherley on the path condition surveys and Charlotte Gilbert on horse riding.

Bob suggested and it was agreed that there was a need to look at ways forward about what is required and not to be restricted initially by budgets. It would be useful to have a small sub-group to work on the issues and to address the concerns raised by LAF members on the decline of the rights of way network and the lack of bridleway routes.

The Chair thanked Bob for co-ordinating this and Jez, Paul, Sue and Charlotte for their presentations to members which were very helpful and raised important issues, a couple of outcomes being:-

**AGREED:**

- **A report would be presented to the March meeting by officers on performance results from the recent Peak District surveys, and**
- **Agreement to cover issues as appropriate in the Joint (DADLAF and Peak District LAF) RoWIP Sub Group with Sue, Charlotte, Jez, Paul, Bob and Mike from the Peak District LAF, which Gill will arrange in the New Year.**

## **10. MEMBERS FEEDBACK**

**Roly Smith** provided an update on the forthcoming **Spirit of Kinder Day** event which is to be held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2019 in The Winnats Pass, near Castleton and will be along the lines of the famous access rallies held in the 1930's.

This year's event will be celebrating a couple of other important things:

- a) National Trust's "People's Landscape" campaign for 2019
- b) 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949.

Speakers invited for the event are:-

- Maxine Peake – actress and activist

- Hilary O’Grady – Director General, National Trust
- Ruth George – MP for High Peak
- Sue Hayman – MP, Shadow Environment Minister
- Andrew McCloy – Chair of Peak District National Park Authority

**John Thompson** circulated a note of the **East Midlands Regional LAF’s chairs meeting** at Nottingham on 9<sup>th</sup> October, together with a Natural England report from Andrew McIntosh. The report covered quite a few issues and had also been emailed to LAF members. John asked that the report be noted and if LAF members had any questions to direct them to him.

**Geoff Nickolds**, as part of his role on the **Committee of the East Midlands Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF)**, reported on two events which were happening; one being the “Thanks to You” week which was on the 1–9 December, where there were lots of attractions taking place. If people take along their lottery tickets they can get free entrance or a cup of coffee etc. It was a way of trying to make more of a connection between people buying tickets and actually what the good causes are. There is more information on the HLF website, along with an interactive map which shows where the activities are taking place.

Geoff also brought along a few copies of the HLF East Midlands Newsletter, so if anyone would like a copy, please contact him. Geoff reported that there were big changes happening within the HLF. There was a review taking place and a new strategic framework will be launched in April 2019, as well as significant changes within the organisation itself partly to cope with the sale of lottery tickets going down.

**Ally Turner** reported that following a meeting that she, Mike Rhodes and John Thompson attended two years ago regarding the **South West Peak Landscape Partnership and a funding bid**, Ally had received an update from Karen Shelley-Jones, the South West Peak Scheme Manager. “We are in the planning and development stage of enhancing Access for All on two routes within the Goyt Valley which will be started this Autumn/Winter and will form part of the Miles without Stiles routes. Our partners Staffordshire Wildlife Trust are making improvements to the ridge path on the Roaches and paths in Back Forest. We are currently in discussion with the PDNPA Rights of Way team, PDNPA Rangers and Staffordshire County Council to help with the process of investigating path issues in the Staffordshire Moorlands area in particular. This is with a view to prioritising repairs etc. and to assist in the delivery of those repairs in a climate of resource constraints both at the PDNPA and Staffordshire County Council. Over the next couple of months, we will be trialling a new system which will involve our countryside apprentices in this process bringing some extra resource in terms of staff time”

## **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

There were no other items of business, but John wished Edwina all the very best for her work in India over the next few months. Edwina said she was looking forward to it and gave her apologies for the March meeting of the LAF.

## **12. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting of the Forum would take place on the 14 March 2019 at Aldern House, Bakewell.

Meeting ended - 1.00 pm

