

Peak District Local Access Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 8 December 2016 at Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell.

Members Present:

John Thompson
Caitlin Bisknell
Richard Entwistle
Charlotte Gilbert
John Hall
Matt Hutson
Chris Page
John Walton

Edwina Edwards (Chair)

Bob Berzins
Ian Bunting
Henry Folkard
Clare Griffin
Terry Howard
Andrew Murley
Ally Turner
Sue Weatherley

Others Present:

Mike Rhodes, (PDNPA) (Secretary)
Gill Millward, (DCC)
Sue Smith, (PDNPA)
Jane Carver, (Accessible Derbyshire)
Gillian Scotford, (Accessible Derbyshire)

Tim Nicholson, (PDNPA)
Sarah Fowler, (PDNPA)
Simon Malcolm, (PDNPA)
Jason Spencer, (Minutes)
David Chapman, (PDNPA)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Adge Last, Jon Stewart and Richard Taylor. John Walton also sent his apologies but arrived later in the meeting.

Edwina Edwards reported that Mike Johnson had written to resign his membership of the Forum. Edwina acknowledged the significant contribution that Mike had made to the work of the Forum and it was agreed that he be sent a card to thank him and wish him well for the future. **ACTION: MJR**

2. MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING, 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 September 2016 had been circulated and approved unanimously.

3. MATTERS ARISING

P1 Mary Bagley – John Thompson confirmed that after the last meeting he had sent Mary the Forum's best wishes and reported that Mary was now making a good recovery and hoped to return to work next week, perhaps on a phased basis.

P2 Derwent Bridleway 5 (Cutthroat Bridge) – Mike Rhodes confirmed that a site visit had been arranged to include the Landowners and representatives of Derbyshire County Council, Natural England and the National Park Authority. After the meeting a specification would be drawn up and formal consultation would take place.

P7 Brexit Opportunities – It was confirmed that the issues were to be discussed

at the meeting of the Access Sub-Group on 26 January 2017. There was a brief discussion on whether there was sufficient detail available to facilitate an informed discussion. The general consensus was that it was better to have a discussion to try and influence outcomes rather than wait until decisions had been made.

4. ACCESSIBLE PEAK DISTRICT

David Chapman, Deputy Chair of the National Park Authority attended the meeting to introduce an update on accessibility in the Peak District and the recent Accessible Derbyshire awards ceremony where the Authority had been named as Organisation of the Year in recognition of its contribution to improving access for disabled people in the Peak District. Forum members congratulated the Authority. Gillian Scotford and Jane Carver from Accessible Derbyshire were also present to highlight their significant achievements as part of their "Big Push" campaign.

Sue Smith followed this up by introducing the first Accessible Peak District Annual Report which had been circulated. The report included an update on key projects and events grouped around finding out, getting out and joining in. The report acknowledged that the Authority aspired to make sure that issues around accessibility were integrated into everything it does. Sue was thanked for the thorough report of excellent work being done by the Authority.

Forum members welcomed the report suggesting that it was an invaluable resource to demonstrate best practice. In response to questions from Forum members about the links between the consultation on the PDNPA Local Plan and accessible facilities, Gillian and Jane confirmed from their experiences that Planning Officers at the National Park Authority were very supportive in progressing access improvements.

Gillian confirmed that she was working with the PDNPA to share good practice with other National Park Authorities and Sue Smith confirmed that so far she had received positive feedback from colleagues at other National Parks who already worked well together pooling knowledge and experience.

In response to questions about collaborative working with Water Companies, Ian Bunting confirmed that representatives of all water companies attended meetings of a conservation and access forum. He confirmed that he would ask the Severn Trent Water representative to suggest it as a possible topic for discussion, with Gillian and Jane being invited to attend. In response Edwina suggested that Forum members should think about some of the other bodies they are involved with and invite Accessible Derbyshire to attend to share their ideas and experiences.

It was recognised that the "Miles Without Stiles" initiative did not expressly include measures for autism or learning disabilities, however Jane confirmed that she had some thoughts about how these needs could easily be incorporated into projects.

This item ended with a presentation from Gillian and Jane highlighting achievements during their "Big Push" campaign. They stressed the need to increase the availability of suitable Changing Places (fully accessible toilets) recognising that, while there was still work to be done, there were more

Changing Places in the United Kingdom than the rest of the world put together. The other key campaign launched at the awards ceremony was called "Carefree Breaks" where local hotels/accommodation providers are encouraged to donate a break for carers. Gillian also provided an update on work with local airports to try and make them more accessible.

It was also noted that although the manufacturer of the Boma 7 all-terrain wheelchair had ceased trading, Equal Adventures had bought the designs and was intending to manufacture and re-launch the product.

In closing the presentation Gillian and Jane thanked the Forum for its ongoing support and it was agreed that a link to their video would be sent out with the minutes - <https://youtu.be/WEmjNmQqC0A>

Both Edwina and Sarah Fowler thanked Gillian and Jane for their presentation and for their amazing and inspiring work. This was warmly endorsed by all members.

5. PEAK DISTRICT NPA STRUCTURE REVIEW & FUNDING ISSUES

Sarah Fowler, Chief Executive of the National Park Authority and Simon Malcolm, Director of Commercial Development and Outreach attended the meeting to provide an update on the review of staff structures and approaches to funding issues. During the presentation Sarah looked back at some recent achievements such as securing funding of £2.4 million for the South West Peak Landscape Partnership, Moors for the Future European Union funding in the Dark Peak and connecting people with the National Park through farmer drop-in sessions, volunteering, junior rangers, accessible Derbyshire and Planning.

Sarah then went on to look forward to some of the work around natural capital and social capital and providing inspiring opportunities illustrating how this would be delivered through the shared accountability of the new Heads of Service roles. It was agreed that details of the new structure would be circulated. Sarah also highlighted funding issues and the ability to use the four year funding agreed by Defra as an opportunity to invest in areas such as; the national minimum wage, safeguarding, health and safety, rural estates, building capacity for bidding for funding, developing the special qualities, supporting the green lanes action plan, trails maintenance, improvements at visitor centres, car parks and toilets managed by the Authority. Sarah confirmed that progress in these areas would be reported to Authority Members in a quarterly report which could also be shared with the Forum.

Sarah also encouraged all Forum members to get involved with the review of the National Park Management Plan either independently, or through John as a representative on the National Park Management Plan Advisory Group.

Following the presentation which would be circulated with the minutes, Forum Members raised the following issues;

- Welcomed the investment in trails but asked whether meetings of the Trails Steering Group would be reintroduced.
- Work in the North of the Peak District – Sarah confirmed that as well as Moors for the Future, she and the Chair of the Authority were meeting with partners in areas such as Kirklees and Oldham to see what

- opportunities were available through working together.
- Noted that planning and conservation had been deliberately brought together in one directorate.
 - Convincing more farmers that the NPA was willing to work with them.
 - Confirmation that the Access Fund would be ring-fenced for that cause. Considering open access in the disposal of assets such as woodland.

Simon provided an update of the Authority's approach to marketing and fundraising including both restricted and unrestricted income.

Sarah and Simon were thanked for the update and their reassurances.

6. ACCESS UPDATE

Sue Smith provided an update on Access including the Annual Report on the Access Fund, highlighting sources of funding and some of the projects that had benefited from the fund.

Members were reassured that donations to the Access Fund were ring-fenced to that cause and pledged their further support, with Edwina making a donation at the meeting on that basis.

During the discussion concerns were raised about the impact of Countryside stewardship schemes ending. It was confirmed that Sue was currently identifying schemes that were coming to an end and looking at the options for how the access may be supported in other ways.

Sue agreed to check the scope for gift aid related to the Access Fund.

ACTION:SS

John Thompson also introduced a report providing details of discussions about how the Forum could support and encourage donations to the Access Fund. John was thanked for his report and it was agreed that the Access Sub-Group would look at this to see how it could be taken forward. **ACTION: LAF SUB_GROUP**

The Forum also received the notes of meetings of the Access Sub-Group held on 20 April 2016 and 28 July 2016.

7. PDNPA TRANSPORT DESIGN GUIDE

Tim Nicholson, Transport and Climate Change Policy Officer at the National Park Authority provided an update on the development of supplementary planning guidance in the form of a Transport Design Guide. He confirmed that a consultant had been appointed and a draft document produced. At this stage the Authority was carrying out informal consultation to get feedback from stakeholders on areas where the guide could be useful in developing new access and guiding works carried out under permitted development rights. Reference was made to the increasing number and size of traffic safety signs and their impact on the landscape.

It was agreed that Tim would be asked to provide an update at the March meeting of the Forum. **ACTION: MJR**

8. DERBYSHIRE CC ROWIP UPDATE

Gill Millward, Countryside Access Improvement Officer for Derbyshire County Council provided an update on progress being made towards delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan, including a summary of works on the White Peak Loop.

Gill confirmed that November's path condition survey to assess the ease of use of the network got underway on time with over a third of the forms having already been returned and entered on the spreadsheet of results. These would be analysed to identify the reasons why paths failed and if there were any trends emerging.

In response to the update on the Derbyshire Cycling Plan, the Forum asked to be involved in the Key Cycle Network consultation to be carried out during 2017.

It was suggested that the Derby and Derbyshire Local Access Forum event on "Lost Ways" to be held in March/April 2017 could be promoted as a joint event with the Peak District LAF.

Forum Members also raised the following issues:

- Bamford Clough – It was confirmed that there were still plans to carry out some improvements but there were issues around the steepness of the route and safe working practices.
- Severn Trent Water was willing to share best practice on voluntary group involvement including a self-managed group working at Linacre Woods.
- White Peak Loop – It was suggested that an alternative link route could be pursued across from Harpur Hill through King Sterndale for people wishing to avoid going into Buxton.
- Suggestions that there could be greater collaboration with officers from other Authorities with regard to improving the accessibility of the local rights of way network.

Agreed to note the report.

9. GREEN LANES UPDATE

Sue Smith provided an update on progress with managing recreational motor vehicles in the National Park

It was noted that the Forum had responded to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultation to prohibit mechanically propelled vehicles at all times on the Washgate route with exceptions for named motorcycle trials.

It was also noted that on 4 November the Authority had resolved to make a TRO which would permanently prohibit mechanically propelled vehicles at Derby Lane, Monyash.

It was confirmed that the Forum had responded to consultations on proposed surfacing and drainage works at Hurstclough Lane and Chapel Gate.

The Forum received feedback on the one off forum for motor vehicle stakeholders held in November and noted that there would be a further meeting in February 2017. It was noted that approximately 22 people had attended.

The Forum received the notes of meetings of the Green Lanes Sub-Group held on 28 April 2016 and 20 October 2016. It was noted that the next meeting of the Sub-Group would be held on 9 February 2017.

10. MEMBERS' FEEDBACK

PEAK HORSEPOWER AGM

It was noted that at a recent meeting in Charlesworth where the Pennine Bridleway National Trail had been discussed there had been concerns that Derbyshire County Council was not represented. Concerns had also been raised that due to the way in which the project had been funded there were issues about scheduling works in advance.

Gill Millward apologised that DCC was not able to provide a representative at the meeting and confirmed that the issues surrounding the availability/timing of adequate funding needed to be addressed as part of the longer term planning for the completion of the remaining sections of the route around Glossop.

It was agreed that John Thompson would write to Natural England on behalf of the Forum highlighting concerns about funding the construction and maintenance of the long distance bridleway. **ACTION: JNT**

STATE OF NATURE REPORT

Henry Folkard brought attention to a State of Nature in the Peak District report produced by Penny Anderson on behalf of the Local Nature Partnership setting out details of the key habitats and species of the Peak District. <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/learning-about/news/current-news/state-of-nature-in-the-peak-district-report-live-online-now>

While the report was welcomed, particularly the improvements on moorland, there were still issues regarding the burning of peat and the protection of birds of prey.

It was agreed that John Thompson would raise these issues with the National Park Management Plan Advisory Group so that they were considered as part of the on-going review. **ACTION: JNT**

It was agreed that a copy of the presentation given by Penny Anderson at the launch of the report would be circulated to the Forum with the minutes of the meeting. **ACTION: MJR**

REGIONAL CHAIRS MEETING

Chris Page provided feedback from the regional meeting for Chairs of Local Access Forums held in Nottingham during October. Highlights included discussions on accessibility and the work of Accessible Derbyshire and advice from the Leicester LAF on how to contribute to consultation on major development sites. Chris agreed to forward the advice to Mike and Gill.

ACTION: CP

Chris also reported on proposals from the Rutland LAF to encourage joint working with other LAFs particularly on permissive paths and historical rights of way, as LAFs were progressing issues individually and a coordinated approach may be more effective.

NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

John Thompson provided feedback on the National Park Management Plan review workshop facilitated by Pete Spriggs. He confirmed that following the workshop the intention was to compile an aspirations report to be circulated in Spring 2017. A copy of this report would be brought to the Forum for discussion.

ACTION: JNT/JG

11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

12. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETINGS

It was proposed that during 2017 meetings of the Forum be held on the following dates:

Thursday 9 March

Thursday 15 June (please note change from date originally proposed of 22 June)

Thursday 21 September

Thursday 7 December

Meetings to start at 10am and to be held in the Boardroom at Aldern House, Bakewell with the exception of the September meeting which will take place at the Moorland Discovery Centre, Longshaw.

Meeting ended - 1.00 pm