

Sustainable Countryside Access in Derbyshire in relation to the use of Public Transport

Notes from meeting between Members of the Peak District and Derby & Derbyshire Local Access Forums and Officers from Integrated Transport in the County Council

Thursday 4 March 2010 at Shand House, Darley Dale

Attendance:

Peak District LAF: Henry Folkard, Terry Howard, Sue Wetherley, Charlotte Gilbert, John Thompson and Geoff Nickolds

DADLAF: John Disney

Derbyshire County Council: Steve Cannon, Transport and Accessibility Manager, Anthony Crompton, Senior Project Officer - Local Bus Network, Claire O'Reilly, Countryside Access Improvement Officer

Purpose and content of meeting:

The meeting was held to discuss

- issues relating to the availability and use of public transport within the countryside
- how the two Local Access Forums can work more closely with the Public Transport unit to provide information and advice

There was a useful exchange of views on the subject, which concentrated mostly, but not exclusively, on the Peak District area and covered issues connected to:

- information provision and the promotion of existing services/ recreational opportunities
- suggestions for opportunities to improve links between public transport services and cycling, walking or climbing activities and integrating this recreational use to other access to local services
- suggestions for specific service improvements

It was agreed that there was scope to provide a constructive two-way flow of information between the LAFs and the Public Transport unit. The Public Transport team recognised the considerable amount of local knowledge and expertise that exists amongst Forum members

Actions arising from the meeting:

The following actions were agreed:

- The County Council is happy to receive specific comments and suggestions for improvements from LAF members provided that

they realise that the County Council may not be in a position to follow up the suggestions due to the limitations on the way that public transport is organised (85% of the bus services in the county are run privately on a commercial basis). Each LAF to decide if they want to do this

- Officers from the Public Transport Unit will make suggestions to the LAFs on which bus services/ routes could tie in best with the promotion of recreational use of the countryside
- The County Council will need to look at how public transport provision ties in with major new initiatives within the county, such as the Cycling Project being promoted by the Peak District National Park Authority to provide a link initially between Buxton and Bakewell and in the longer term down to Matlock and to provide a loop onto the High Peak Trail
- John Thompson will provide feedback to officers within the National Park Authority to further investigate links to the Cycling Project and the new Recreation Strategy
- Steve Cannon to investigate making a connection with the Buxton Walking Festival on 24 April which will also see the launch of the Peak District's new Recreation Strategy
- Where members have complaints about specific services they were encouraged to report these, giving as much detail as possible, for the Public Transport Unit to follow up with bus or train operators

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