

Peak District Local Access Forum
Access Sub Group
8 May 2013 10am-12 noon
Garden room, Aldern House, Bakewell

Attendees: John Thompson (Chair), Terry Howard, Sue Weatherley, Henry Folkard, Bob Berzins, James Kellie, Edwina Edwards, Mike Johnson, Charlotte Gilbert (part meeting), Mike Rhodes (PDNPA), Lesley Rechert (PDNPA), Gill Millward (DCC)

Apologies: none

John started the meeting by welcoming everyone and paid tribute to Sean Prendergast, who sadly passed away recently.

1. **Notes of last meeting** – accepted as accurate – most matters arising to be dealt with in main items. The terms of reference were looked at regarding membership of the Access Sub Group. It was felt that the members attending represented a balance of different interests. The meeting was well attended.

2. Updates from John Thompson

Following the previous meeting John Thompson had drafted a response to the National Trust Moorland Management Plan. Jon Stewart had acknowledged the response, and confirmed that there is lots of work going on and he will respond. Henry mentioned a session with the BMC and Sophie Milner, and she confirmed the response had been huge. A report back is expected late summer, early autumn. The issue of fencing to allow clough revegetation was mentioned. Mike Rhodes is meeting with the Moors for the Future Clough Woodlands Project officer to discuss access issues.

Terry and Henry reported that the Eastern moors partnership is going well, there is some cross over with the Sheffield Moors master plan. There are some new concession bridleway routes and some funding has been obtained from the Paths for Communities funds. Nick Sellwood from the Sheffield Moors Partnership will be attending the next LAF meeting to lead a site visit in the afternoon.

Government response on Forestry – LAF had expressed concern regarding privatisation of woodlands. The messages received from the response were very encouraging; confirming that the public forests would remain in public hands and that there was an aim to improve public access.

Terry reported that private woodlands did not necessarily share this. Wentworth Estates had not extended the concessionary access to their woodlands after the clearance of the site.

Edwina, updated on the Health and Wellbeing Boards recently created, and confirmed that there was a lot of talk of the benefits of the environment.

3. Derbyshire County Council Open Access

Gill Millward outlined 11 DCC Open Access sites in this LAF's area where there may be possibility to look at improving access. The DAD LAF had looked at some sites in its area and had come up with suggestions. Gill was happy to have input and suggestions on these sites. There is no deadline for carrying out this work, but Gill would like to achieve something over the next 12 months. Gill had not been contacted regarding any of the sites except the Combs Moss area. It was agreed that Gill would circulate her initial ideas for the Combs Moss/Black Edge/Watford Moor areas to the sub group for further comment and would pick up on a couple of smaller sites in the meantime e.g. Cuning Dale and Kinder Bank.

4. Natural England National Nature Reserves Dedications

Christine Pope from Natural England will be attending the December LAF meeting to outline the process for the dedication of Derbyshire Dales National Nature Reserve. This is part of a larger programme of dedications. The group felt that it would be good to have a general statement from Natural England of access to SSSIs.

Mapping Review

Defra have announced that the initial mapping review will commence within 15 years of the maps being published (2019) and subsequently 20 years thereafter. The Sub Group were disappointed in this and would like to offer advice to ministers – bring this item to the June LAF.

HLS/Access Issues

Lesley outlined that the issue of HLS schemes funding fencing that restricted public access had been discussed with Natural England at the Open Access Seminar, and this had been noted and minuted. The issue had also been discussed by the Rights of Way Review Committee in Parliament chaired by Lord Lytton (the National Parks have a representative on this committee). The committee reviews matters relating to public rights of way and access land in England and Wales.

The Sub Group would like to write to Natural England to highlight this issue as an area of concern – take this issue to the LAF in June.

5. Access Wish List

Lesley highlighted the successful installation of an Access Point on Dove Bank. The group expressed their thanks to Lynn Burrow for completing this. John T to thank Lynn on behalf of LAF. **Action: John**

Potential concession route at Linen Dale at Housley and access points along Milldale being discussed with new tenant.

Henry highlighted the danger of pedestrians on the road at Hazlebadge – Ranger has asked this in the past, but Lesley to speak to the Ranger again. **Action Lesley**

Henry also mentioned that people would like to climb in Dirlow Rake.

6. Other Access Work

New website

Lesley briefly demonstrated the new website, and explained that the pages had been updated and made more user friendly.

Dog restriction

A new dog restriction had been received for Thurlstone, Langsett and Harden Moors. The group felt that putting all dog restrictions on the PDNPA website would not give a positive access message, but that some reference to dog restrictions would be useful, by referring people to the Natural England website.

Action: Lesley

Bamford Edge

Lesley reported that she had been in touch with the game keeper. He does not want to install signage on the fence line. The group accepted this position.

Mapping Issues

A couple of areas have been identified as open access on the OS maps which are not CROW access land. The OS feel they are mapped correctly. They appear to be National Trust land. Lesley is contacting the National Trust to advise them.

Footpath Surveys (BVPI)

The survey over 2012/13 gave a figure of 90.9% of footpaths as being easy to use. 192 routes were surveyed, a distance of 121.80km.

7. PDNPA Property update

Unfortunately the update was not available for the meeting. Mike will request an update for the June meeting. **Action: Mike**

8. Any other Business

There were concerns about proposed changes to the Common Agricultural Policy – this needs to be monitored. Not all negative – this may present some opportunities for access.

The Queen's speech may also contain a proposal to make trespass a criminal act.

Date of next meeting - Wednesday 6 November 10.15am