

Peak District Local Access Forum

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 4 December 2014
at Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell.**

Members Present:

Bob Berzins
Jon Clennell
Henry Folkard
Clare Griffin
Caroline Hanson
Mike Johnson
Adge Last
Jon Stewart
Ally Turner

Edwina Edwards (Chair)

Ian Bunting
Richard Entwistle
Charlotte Gilbert
John Hall
Terry Howard
James Kellie
Chris Page
John Thompson
Sue Weatherley

Others Present:

Mike Rhodes, (PDNPA) (Secretary)
Mary Bagley, (PDNPA)
Jim Dixon, (PDNPA)
Carol Parsons, (PDNPA)

Karen Shelley-Jones, (PDNPA)
Richard Taylor, (DCC)
Peter White, (DCC)
Jason Spencer, (Minutes)

1. APOLOGIES, WELCOMES AND FAREWELLS

Apologies for absence were received from Damien Greenhalgh, Nicola Turner and Richard Peart. It was noted that Sue Smith and Gill Millward who usually attended as advisors to the Forum had also sent their apologies.

The Chair welcomed Chris Page and Ian Bunting to their first meeting as new Forum members.

The Chair welcomed Jim Dixon, Chief Executive of the National Park Authority, noting that this would be the last meeting of the Forum to be held before he left the Authority at the end of December after 11½ years. He acknowledged that his direct involvement with the Forum had been limited but confirmed that this reflected his confidence that the LAF was effective in meeting its statutory duties and well supported by officers from all the relevant partners. He also highlighted the significant contribution of the Forum in advising the Authority on issues relating to the management of green lanes and improving access to the countryside. He noted that over the past 11 years the Authority had seen a mix of positive opportunities and difficult challenges and acknowledged that although there may be more difficult decisions to be made in the future the Authority had a team of strong capable people who were ready to meet the challenges. The Chair thanked Jim for his support for the work of the Forum and wished him well for the future. Jim reminded all Forum Members that they were welcome to attend his leaving celebration on 18 December 2014 at Aldern House.

The Chair also reported that this was the last meeting to be attended by

James Kellie and Jon Clennell who would be leaving the Forum after being involved since 2005. Both were presented with cards, thanked for their significant contributions to the work of the Forum and reminded that they would be welcome to attend future meetings as observers.

Before continuing the meeting, the Chair advised that she had agreed to bring forward the item on the NPA Property Update to be considered before matters arising. Carol Parsons had also been invited to provide an update on the Recreation Strategy during matters arising.

2. MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING- 11 SEPTEMBER 2014

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2014 were approved as a correct record.

3. NPA PROPERTY UPDATE

Mary Bagley provided an update on progress made in introducing the new arrangements for managing the Authority's property portfolio. She confirmed that appointments had been made as follows:

- Warslow Estate – Chris Manby
- North Lees and Stanage – Rebekah Newman
- Trails – Emma Stone

Rebekah Newman was present at the meeting and confirmed that the first priorities were to review and update the Estate Management Plan with support from users and to look at issues relating to access, signage and interpretation. Henry Folkard reported that positive progress had already been made in working with user groups to establish priorities and confirmed that he would be reporting back to the Forum on progress as the new arrangements were implemented.

Emma Stone was also present at the meeting and confirmed that she would be working with the Trails Management Plan Steering Group to identify and progress investment in capital works and maintenance of the trails. It was noted that Charlotte Gilbert represented the Forum on the Steering Group.

ACTIONS

To note the update report.

4. MATTERS ARISING

P1 Sheffield Moors Partnership and National Trust High Peak Moors Project – Mike Rhodes confirmed that this would be discussed in more detail at the Access Sub-Group early in 2015. He reminded the Forum that if they wished, all Members were able to attend and speak at LAF Sub-Group meetings.

P3 Update on the Wider Peak District Cycle Strategy – Adge Last confirmed that a Working Group had been established for Mountain Bikers with the aim of developing a specific action plan alongside the emerging strategy.

The first meeting of the Group had taken place the previous evening and had made good progress.

P4 10th Anniversary of Open Access and the Access Fund- Terry Howard acknowledged that the celebrations had been very successful and asked that Sue Smith and others involved in organising the events be thanked for their contributions.

While discussing open access to land owned or controlled by Local Authorities, Terry confirmed that Sheffield City Council had agreed to identify its woodland as open access land on Ordnance Survey maps and the National Park Authority had already designated its woodland as open access. He expressed concern that Derbyshire County Council did not intend to take this approach as the woodlands were viewed as financial assets, the future value of which may be affected by any designation.

Richard Taylor from the County Council responded highlighting that the Council was looking at the disposal of assets such as woodland to offset a significant reduction in funding for the Countryside Service with the aim of minimising the impact on core services. He confirmed that 140 sites had been identified across the County. Henry Folkard asked whether land could be designated as open access before disposal. Richard confirmed that this would be looked at as expressions of interest were received but advised that this may not be possible as the Council had a duty to maximise its income from capital receipts.

P4 Derbyshire Rights of Way Improvement Plan (RoWIP) update – It was noted that Gill Millward would circulate her update after the meeting.

P5 Easy Access Initiative – Mike Johnson referred to a report on BBC Look North which included a group called Accessible Derbyshire. Jon Stewart confirmed that the group had made contact with the National Trust and they had helped with the launch event at the Longshaw Estate. Mary Bagley provided an update on the 'Miles Without Stiles' initiative and would ask the project manager to make contact with Mike. **ACTION: MB**

P2 National Park Authority Recreation Strategy – Carol Parsons, Recreation Strategy Officer, circulated and presented an update on progress made in reviewing and implementing the strategy. Carol highlighted the development of a short animation targeted at young people aged between 14 and 18 years with the aim of encouraging responsible behaviour in the Countryside. It was confirmed that the film had been developed in partnership with young people representing the target audience. The Forum viewed the animation and was invited to comment.

It was noted that while the film could be used in different ways by different groups, it was intended that groups would use it in preparation for visits to the Peak District. It was acknowledged that in many cases individuals were just as responsible for harming the landscape when visiting, but it was hoped that by making the film widely available through social media individuals may also become aware of the messages. Forum Members were asked to forward to Carol the contact details of groups and individuals who may be able to use the film and supporting material. **ACTION: ALL**
It was noted that although the film was already available on the internet it

would be formally launched with a big screen showing on 20 January 2015 at the Quad Cinema in Derby.

5. GREEN LANES UPDATE AND REPORT FROM SUB-GROUP

As Chair of the Sub-Group, John Thompson introduced the update in the absence of Sue Smith. In introducing the report he highlighted the proposal to amend the terms of reference of the Sub-Group to clarify its role in responding to consultations on repairs to green lanes and confirmed that meetings considering proposals would be open meetings which allowed members of the public to attend and observe the discussion.

Sue Smith was thanked for preparing and circulating the Green Lanes Newsletter.

ACTIONS

1. To note the update report.

2. To adopt the amended terms of reference of the Green Lanes sub-group as set out in Appendix 1.

6. REPORT ON LONG CAUSEWAY AND CHAPEL GATE WORKS

Richard Taylor from Derbyshire County Council provided an update on repair works at Long Causeway progressed following the receipt of a section 56 notice.

Peter White then provided an update on works at Chapel Gate, starting with an apology for not supplying the Forum with adequate information on the proposals before commencing work on site. He confirmed that the Council had revised its procedures to avoid this in the future. He highlighted the proposed improvements and materials to be used and invited feedback from Forum members. It was noted that the deadline could be adjusted to accommodate the timescales for the Forum preparing a formal response.

It was agreed that the Sub-Group would arrange to meet before 16 January 2015 and that a copy of the plans would be circulated as a pdf document.

It was noted that since discussions took place at the previous meeting about being made aware of works and closures, Mary Bagley, Mike Rhodes and Sue Smith had met with Derbyshire County Council. It had been agreed that a Memorandum of Agreement would be developed and adopted to clarify how the National Park Authority and the County Council would work in partnership on issues relating to the management of green lanes.

7. ACCESS UPDATE

An update report had been circulated with the agenda. It was noted that following the launch of the Access Fund during the event organised to recognise 10 years of open access, work was due to commence on access improvements at Stanage.

The Forum noted that the latest editions of the Access and Green Lanes newsletters had been circulated. The newsletters received positive feedback and Forum members were encouraged to provide content for future editions. It was also noted that at future meetings, the Access Sub-Group would be looking at issues relating to fences on open access land.

The Forum also received an update on Natural England funding and confirmation that there was no indication of timescales for the mapping review.

ACTIONS

- 1. To note the update report.**
- 2. To ask the Access Sub-Group to look at suggestions on how to increase contributions to the access fund.**

8. DCC RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN (ROWIP) UPDATE

It was noted that as Gill Millward had been unable to attend the meeting an update would be circulated in due course. **ACTION: GM**

9. SW PEAK LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

It was noted that the South West Peak Landscape Partnership had received an earmarked grant of £2.5m from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the Landscape at a Crossroads project. The Forum welcomed the news and offered their congratulations to Karen Shelley-Jones on a successful bid. It was noted that the Forum had supported the bid and would have a role in progressing the elements of the bid relating to access.

10. REVIEW OF RESTRICTIONS - HOLLINS HILL & TOP FIELD, CROWDEN

The Forum received a report relating to a review of existing access restrictions at Hollins Hill and Top Field, Crowden and considered whether to comment on the arrangements. It was noted that shooting still took place at Crowden where at an appeal it had been agreed that restrictions could be placed on access even if the site was not in the ownership or control of the applicant.

ACTIONS

- 1. To note the update report.**
- 2. To respond to the consultation on restrictions at Hollins Hill by continuing the existing restriction to exclude dogs while cattle are calving or have calves at foot, subject to the review date being extended for a further 6 years and the concession path to the land being available at all times.**
- 3. To refrain from responding to consultation on restrictions at Top Field, Crowden as the restrictions had been agreed following an appeal against a previous decision.**

11. FEEDBACK FROM MEMBERS

Jon Clennell

As this was his last meeting as a member of the Forum, Jon Clennell thanked the Forum for his leaving card and the comments inside. He reported that he had become involved in access issues following a move to the Peak District in 1997, particularly after his appointment as Clerk to Abney Parish Meeting. He first attended meetings of the Forum during 2005 and was then appointed as a member in December of that year. He confirmed that he regarded it as an honour to be a member of the Team and highlighted some of the issues the Forum had considered which demonstrated the issues and conflicting demands which were unique to the National Park. He concluded by thanking the Chair, Members and Officers for their support and wished everyone a happy Christmas and all the best for the future.

On behalf of the Forum, the Chair thanked Jon for his contributions and encouraged him to stay in touch.

Abseiling Update

Adge Last reported on a project to provide managed abseiling facilities in Horseshoe Quarry.

Stanage Forum

Henry Folkard thanked the National Park Authority for arranging and hosting a successful meeting of the Stanage Forum in November. He also reported that the Forum now had dedicated pages on the Authority's website with details about the Forum and published the agenda and minutes for meetings. The website can be accessed using the following link:

<http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/projects-and-partnerships/stanage>

Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area (NIA)

Henry Folkard confirmed that NIA funded replanting work in the Burbage Valley had commenced with the felling of some of the existing trees being completed prior to replanting.

Hurst Reservoir, Glossop

Henry Folkard reported that work had commenced to decommission Hurst Reservoir and restore the landscape. It was noted that the Ramblers were actively progressing access issues relating to the restoration.

SPEED (Safe Pedestrians, Equines, the Environment and Drivers)

Charlotte Gilbert provided an update on the work of SPEED set up to keep horse riders and road traffic safe by opening up new bridleways and improving existing routes. SPEED was also campaigning to address issues relating to concessionary bridleways which were not covered by NFU insurance. The update and work being done by SPEED were welcomed.

Access and Healthy lifestyles

Clare Griffin suggested that it would be useful if Carol Parsons could attend a future meeting to provide an update on access and healthy living initiatives.

ACTION: CP

Funding Sources

It was noted that Jon Stewart would report back to a future meeting on issues relating to sources of funding for landowners and organisations to improve access.

ACTION: JS

Sheffield Moors Partnership

Jon Stewart confirmed that he would circulate a copy of a leaflet on the Bridleway developed by the Partnership once it had been published.

ACTION: JS

12. DATES OF MEETINGS 2015

It was agreed that meetings of the Local Access Forum would take place during 2015 as follows:

Thursday 19 March 2015 – Aldern House, Bakewell, 10.30am

Thursday 11 June 2015 – Aldern House, Bakewell, 10.30am

Thursday 17 September 2015 – Moorland Discovery Centre, Longshaw, 10.30am

Thursday 3 December 2015 – Aldern House, Bakewell, 10.30am

Meeting ended at 12.55 pm