

*Peak District*  
**Local Access Forum**



*Annual Report 2008*

## Contact details

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Full details of the Forum, its reports, minutes from meetings and information on members, is published on the website:

<http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/access>



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## Chairman's Introduction

When we talk about access and recreation much is made of the millions of visitors who flock to the Peak District every year, making our National Park the most popular in Britain. But less attention is given to the 38,000 people who live within its boundaries and their own particular access and recreation needs. As a local resident and someone who believes that the Peak District National Park benefits from strong and healthy local communities, it's important to remember that the demand for better access and greater recreational opportunities is still there after the weekend and holiday crowds have disappeared. So consider this: Safe Routes to School; village trails; children's play facilities; improved access to local services to tackle rural isolation; roadside cycle lanes; encouraging better public transport for village communities; easy access paths; trim trails and orienteering courses in local parks; and so on. We must remind ourselves that local access can mean many things and work on different levels, even in a nationally designated landscape, and one statutory duty of the National Park Authority is to foster the social well-being of its local communities.



*Andrew McCloy*

Looking back over the last 12 months, I would like to thank all the Members for their commitment and contributions, and in particular pay tribute to Stuart Elliott and Keith Pennyfather who have stepped down after many years of dedicated service. I would also like to thank the officers from both the Peak District National Park Authority and Derbyshire County Council for their ongoing support.

Finally, I am very pleased to report that I have been chosen to represent the East Midlands Local Access Forums on the England Access Forum. This new national body brings together Local Access Forum chairs and senior Natural England staff and provides a valuable means of communication between Local Access Forums and national policy-makers. Let's hope it proves mutually beneficial and Local Access Forums receive full support to promote meaningful local access.

*Andrew McCloy*  
*Chair, Peak District Local Access Forum*

## Purpose of the Forum

The Peak District Local Access Forum is a statutory body, appointed jointly by the Peak District National Park Authority and Derbyshire County Council. It covers the National Park area and the countryside of north-west Derbyshire around Buxton, New Mills and Glossop (refer back cover for geographical coverage).

This appointment is a requirement of Section 94 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which states that the purpose of the Forum is;

“To advise the appointing authorities on the improvement of public access for the purpose of open-air recreation and enjoyment of the area.”

In carrying out its function, the Forum will have due regard to the needs of land management and of conserving the natural beauty of the area.

Details of the duties and responsibilities of the Forum are laid out in the following:

- The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000
- Local Access Forums (England) Regulations 2007
- Guidance on Local Access Forums in England issued by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

All Forum meetings are open to the public and by prior arrangement members of the public may ask questions. Meetings are advertised on the National Park Authority's website.

## Membership of the Forum

Membership of the Forum is reviewed regularly and appointments are made on three-year terms. Recruitment is made on the basis of 'expressions of interest' made to the Authorities in response to adverts in the local press and direct mailing. Interviews of applicants are then held, to ensure that prospective members fulfil the requirements of the position.

There were no new members appointed in 2008. In March, Mike Innerdale took on role of the vice-chair role from Andrew Critchlow. During 2008 Keith Pennyfather, Lorna Wilson and Stuart Elliot came to the end of their appointments. The Authorities are currently recruiting for new members.

The appointing Authorities are required to ensure a reasonable balance is made between the number of members from land owning, recreation, and local interests. Details of the current membership are included at the end of this report and on the National Park Authority's website.

<http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/access>

## Meetings and Major Issues for the Forum in 2008

During 2008, the Local Access Forum (LAF) met on the following dates:

**Saturday 17 March, Moorland Discovery Centre, Longshaw**

**Thursday 19 June, Losehill Hall, Castleton**

**Saturday 27 September, Losehill Hall, Castleton**

**Thursday 4 December, Losehill Hall, Castleton**

The following major issues were discussed:

### **1) Recreational Motor Vehicles in the Countryside**

The use of motorised vehicles in the countryside has continued to be a priority area of work for the Forum throughout 2008. The subject was discussed at each of the four meetings in 2008 and has been backed up by the involvement of the Forum sub-group.

Following consultation with the Forum, the National Park Authority's Recreational Motor Vehicle Strategy was approved in March 2008. The Authority has also put in place a policy and procedure for making Traffic Regulation Orders under new powers granted by the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. The Forum is also to be involved in Derbyshire County Council's review of its policy for managing motorised vehicle use in the countryside.

The routes used by recreational motorised vehicles in the Derbyshire part of the National Park have been assessed for their sustainability and prioritised with the assistance of the Forum sub-group. In September, the National Park Authority approved 23 priority routes and the Forum sub-group is working with the Authority and Derbyshire County Council to develop management plans for these. The intention is to extend this approach to other areas of the National Park.

An information leaflet has been produced and circulated to user groups, Parish Councils, the Police and the general public. The Authority's website has also been developed to provide further information and guidance on matters such as sensitive routes and legal issues. <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/vehicles>



*LAF vehicle sub-group site visits*

## 2) Open Access Issues

Access to open country under CROW continues to be a high profile issue discussed at Forum meetings. Improvements have been sought on access points and the availability of information regarding closures. General strategic lobbying has taken place to ensure access remains a priority for Natural England. The Forum has also sought to raise the political profile of CROW access issues in the current climate of financial constraint within the National Park Authority.

## 3) Rights of Way Improvement Plans

The Forum has been given regular updates of progress with Rights of Way Improvement Plans (RoWIPs). All authorities' RoWIPs have now been published with the exception of Kirklees, which is at a draft stage. A highlights report was provided by Derbyshire and annual work programmes will be circulated to the Local Access Forum for comment.

The LAF has provided comments and advice to Derbyshire County Council on the delivery of its RoWIP, including the format and detail of annual work programmes and end of year monitoring reports.

## 4) PDNPA Recreation Strategy

The Local Access Forum has been involved with updating the National Park Authority's Recreation Strategy. The Chair of the LAF has been part of the project team managing the strategy process. A workshop, held in May, was attended by a number of Forum members and a Forum sub group has helped decide on priorities for the Action Plan. During 2008, the focus has been on data gathering to provide the evidence base and to develop contacts. Results from an online recreation survey have been analysed and physical resources have been mapped. A draft Strategy and Action Plan will be produced in Spring 2009 with a public consultation held during late April/May. The new Strategy will be launched in September 2009.



## **5) PDNPA Recreation Management Scrutiny Panel Report**

Forum members have contributed to the National Park Authority's Recreation Management Scrutiny Panel Report, which was presented to Committee in July 2008. The Scrutiny panel, which was chaired by Forum Member Geoff Nickolds, looked into the management of rights of way and access in the National Park and identified possible areas for improvement.

## **6) Derbyshire's Greenway Strategy**

During the year, the Forum was consulted on Derbyshire County Council's West Derbyshire and High Peak Greenway Strategy, which has now been published. This identifies approximately 200 km of proposed Greenways or multi user routes across the Districts of Derbyshire Dales and the High Peak. It will help to increase the potential for funding and is the third strategy to be produced, completing coverage for the whole of the county.

## **7) England Access Forum**

This was set up in 2008 comprising 16 representatives from Local Access Forums and senior staff from Natural England. It will provide support and training and a mechanism for conveying news and facilitating consultation. The Peak District LAF Chair is the permanent representative at these quarterly meetings.

## **8) Formal Consultations**

The Forum has also responded to the following consultations:

Natural England's Draft Access Layer of Higher Level Stewardship Targeting Map for the East Midlands

Natural England's Draft Access Policy

Natural England's Review of National Trails

Derbyshire County Council's Draft Accessibility Strategy for High Peak and Derbyshire Dales

## **9) Training and Liaison**

In 2008, a regional meeting of LAF Chairs provided a good networking opportunity, focusing on the future role and direction of LAFs along with ideas for making them more effective. Forum Members also participated in training events provided by Natural England in Manchester and Derby. The Members Handbook was published during 2008.

The Chair of the LAF is on the steering team for the National Park Authority's Recreation Strategy, the National Park Authority's Management Plan Monitoring Group and the Peak District Interpretation Partnership.





*Volunteers helping to maintain the Pennine Way*



*National Park maintenance team replacing footbridge at Highlow*

## The Year Ahead

Some of the likely priorities for the work of the Forum in 2009 are outlined below.

- 60th Anniversary of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act
- 5th anniversary of the introduction of Access Land and the review of exclusions
- Preparation for the decadal review of Access Land mapping
- Development of the National Park Authority's Recreation Strategy
- Climate change
- Ongoing work on managing recreational motor vehicles in the countryside including reviewing Derbyshire's policy document
- Measures for inclusive access including Derbyshire's Accessibility Strategy for High Peak and Derbyshire Dales
- Issues relating to specific recreation-types such as mountain bikers, horse riders and water-based activities
- Delivery of Rights of Way Improvement Plans
- Developing projects such as Greenways, Monsal Trail
- Ongoing liaison with neighbouring Local Access Forums
- Further training in conjunction with Natural England
- Continue to raise the profile of the Local Access Forum among a wider audience
- Encourage more representation from officers of the National Park Authority and the constituent authorities and from the general public at meetings
- Support the work of the English Access Forum

## Dates of Meetings 2009

Saturday 14 March, Losehill Hall, Castleton

Thursday 18 June, Aldern House, Bakewell

Saturday 26 September, Losehill Hall, Castleton

Thursday 3 December, Aldern House, Bakewell



## Financial Statement

Members' Travel	£554.96
Room hire, refreshments & lunches	£1401.67
Annual Report	£226.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2182.63</b>

*Derbyshire County Council contributed £1500 towards administration costs.  
Net expenditure is met from within the National Park Authority's access budget.*

## Member Details and Attendance

Member	Background and Interests	Appointment expiry date	17/3/08	19/6/08	27/9/08	4/12/08
Andrew McCloy (Chair)	Freelance outdoors writer; walker; local community	Aug 2009	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mike Innerdale (Vice-chair)	Recreation and conservation management; National Trust	June 2010	✓	✗	✓	✗
Bob Berzins	Fell running; conservation	June 2010	✓	✓	✓	✓
Jacque Bevan	National Park Authority appointee	n/a	✓	✓	✗	✓
Charlotte Bright	Land manager; horse rider	Dec 2011	✗	✓	✓	✗
Jon Clennell	Outdoor pursuits; local community	Dec 2011	✓	✓	✓	✓
Andrew Critchlow	Hill Farmer	Aug 2009	✓	✓	✗	✗
Felicity Edmeston	Horse riding; local community; conservation	Dec 2010	✗	✗	✓	✗
Edwina Edwards	Community transport; Girl Guiding UK	Sep 2009	✓	✓	✗	✓
Stuart Elliot	Farmer; holiday accommodation	Aug 2008	✓	✗	-	-
Richard Entwistle	Motor vehicle users	Dec 2010	✓	✓	✗	✓
Sue Fisher	Fell running; mountain biking	Dec 2010	✓	✓	✓	✗
Henry Folkard	Climber; conservation	Aug 2009	✓	✓	✓	✓
Terry Howard	Walker; access campaigner	Aug 2009	✓	✓	✓	✓
James Kellie	Landowner; holiday accommodation	Dec 2011	✗	✓	✓	✓
Andrew Murley	Conservation; social inclusion	Dec 2010	✓	✓	✓	✗
Geoff Nickolds	Recreation and conservation management	Aug 2011	✓	✓	✗	✗
Richard Peart	Outdoor education	Aug 2009	✗	✓	✗	✗
Keith Pennyfather	Walker; transport	Aug 2008	✓	✓	-	-
Roger Wilkinson	Derbyshire County Council appointee	n/a	✗	✗	✗	✓
Lorna Wilson	Local community; Women's Institute	Aug 2008	✓	✗	-	-

# Geographical Coverage of the Peak District Local Access Forum



[www.peakdistrict.gov.uk](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk)

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