

Peak District Local Access Forum

Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 14 June 2012 at Aldern House

Members Present:	Terry Howard
Edwina Edwards (Chair)	Mike Johnson
Bob Berzins	James Kellie
Jon Clennell	Adge Last
Richard Entwistle	Jon Stewart
Henry Folkard	John Thompson
Charlotte Gilbert	Ally Turner
Clare Griffin	Sue Weatherley
Caroline Hanson	Ben Young

Others Present:

Mike Rhodes (PDNPA) Secretary	Richard Pett (PDNPA)
Sharon Davison (Minutes)	Lesley Rechert (PDNPA)
Mick Hanson (Sheffield CC)	Sue Smith (PDNPA)
Gill Millward (DCC)	Richard Taylor (DCC)

1. Apologies and introductions

Chair welcomed Mike Johnson (returning after a short absence) and two new members Ben Young and Caroline Hanson. Ben and Caroline introduced themselves and gave brief background information.

The Chair reported that Henry Folkard recently received the George Band Award for an exceptional contribution to the BMC –for more than 15 years. Congratulations from all at today's meeting.

Apologies had been received from John Hall, Andrew McCloy and Richard Peart, Mike R said Andrew McCloy is the (temporary) PDNPA appointee to the forum and he understands he will be stepping aside shortly for someone more permanent in the role.

2. Minutes from the last Meeting

The Minutes of the meeting held on 22 March 2012 were agreed as a correct record.

3. Matters Arising from the minutes of the last meeting

P2 Tegg's Nose car park charges. A discussion took place about charging for the car park and criteria for education and charitable status. Commercial organisations are being charged and charities exempt - but lack of definition regarding educational/

charity status is confusing. This could have a profound impact on all outdoor education centres.

Henry said that this issue had been discussed at the Eastern Moors forum and a solution found.

Clare will talk to the ranger in the first instance. John T will talk to the Cheshire forum
ACTION: CGR and JNT

The Annual Report is now available – all to spread widely. **ACTION: ALL**

Green Lanes - meeting taking place this afternoon.

Huddle – Sue Smith said Richard and Clare would bring a report to next forum meeting as how we report back and how we put posts about the LAF on. Information has been requested from Fiona Groves.

ACTION: SAS

P6 Green Lanes Forum, Mike said comments made at the last meeting and some received since have been taken on board. The Green Lanes Forum will continue more or less as it was before – a separate body with this LAF represented by Chair and Vice Chair. John and Edwina will report back to LAF from the green lanes forum. Mike is happy to talk to individuals if clarification needed.

Water Recreation – Andrew will report at the next meeting. **ACTION: AMcC**
Mike reported that following concerns over the demise of the water recreation task group we said would strive to get one of water companies on the LAF to provide stronger emphasis towards water recreation and Ben Young has been appointed. Mike is meeting members of the British Canoe Union to ensure a dialogue is on-going and ensuring water access remains on the agenda.

P8 HF went to the Local Nature Partnership meeting with Andrew McCloy – not clear what it is about or what added value it will give to landowners. Henry doesn't see access related issues in it - Jane Chapman is taking forward for PDNPA and will remain in touch with Mike so we should pick up any LAF-related issues.

Chair thanked Henry for attending and representing this LAF.

Property – picked up by access sub group. John Thompson has sent an e-mail re the disposal of The Roaches and he felt it would be useful at some stage for us to have someone to come back to forum about property issues. Clare Griffin has received several comments on the future use of The Roaches – regarding not being as well used as it could be due to access issues; it was agreed to note the interest in The Roaches. John Thompson will seek information from Clare. **ACTION: JNT**
Chair felt we need to not miss opportunities to comment and feed back any concerns.

4. High Peak Moors Masterplan

Jon Stewart, National Trust, spoke about the Masterplan which is now known as the High Peak Moors Vision and Management Plan.

He gave a presentation about the Kinder area on Bleaklow. This is 10,000ha moorland with international designation; massively important for nature conservation. Much is still highly degraded because of historical pollution and recent wildfire damage. It is the most visited upland in the UK if not the world.

Agricultural and shooting tenancies and conservation plans coming to an end and the NT land should have the highest standard of land management—the plan is to involve people on future land management.

A document outlining re why National Trust owns land is on the NT website – there are many reasons but the four main reasons are carbon, wildlife, water and reconnecting people with the land. It includes 10 guiding principles for land management; including soils, water, partners/tenants. The vision will be the guide over 25 years, and public benefits include access. There have been a series of public meetings held to engage with local people, as well as talking to tenants.

Public consultations are still open (website), 950 comments received so far, mostly from the farming and gamekeeping background. There hasn't been as much input re access or nature conservation. There are new access opportunities (one concern raised by land managers is that it is not good to encourage more which illustrates that there is still tension).

External specialists have advised, academics, game conservancy, RSPB, Penny Anderson etc.

There is still work to do – the plan is to develop a draft plan by end July, discussions with tenants will follow with the plan published in September – this LAF will be consulted.

ACTION: JS

Terry commented that he appreciates everything being done by NT – consultation on both the Eastern Moors and Sheffield Moors Partnerships. However some consultations raise expectations which are not achievable by creating false horizons – eg SSSI, SAC dictates what happens. Re the Masterplan, the relationship with adjacent land owners and water authorities must be remembered – there is a marked difference in places moving from NT land and suddenly on private land and the management and owner may be very different.

Jon stated that they are working with adjacent land owners. There may be other opportunities for access rather than dealing in isolation. Re raising expectations – he accepted can happen but has to be explained that some things are not feasible, however there are always degrees of freedom within SSSIs etc.

Henry commented on the comment that the access lobby didn't show its face. A huge amount is owed following the access negotiations carried out by the NPA in 1951 which gave a heritage - maybe we take this for granted, likewise the CROW Act. Both rural and fringe urban communities are passionate about freedom and access and the agenda is still alive.

Caroline Hanson said she had attended the consultations; there was a large showing of farmers and gamekeepers as there is a concern that there is a move to reduce grouse shooting to uneconomic levels. Moors need to be kept properly.

Jon then moved on to the Kinder Catchment Project with United Utilities and Natural England – there has been consultation regarding the fence. This is a very exciting

project; with a water company investing in land management on land it doesn't own. Water quality, diversity and landscape benefits are the aims.

The project is £1.75m with UU funding half and NT and NE (via agri-environment agreements) the other half. The intention is to block 32km of gullies with 2000 dams, plant cotton grass, expand woodland, keep stock out.

The fence itself – so far (phase 1) 2000m fencing installed, reducing stock numbers to protect nurse crops, 5000m completed by August. Stopped for bird breeding and resuming phase 2 in July, hope to complete by autumn.

Chair thanked Jon for a really useful overview and said we would be interested to see the draft plan later this year

5. Consultation on possible TROs at Long Causeway and The Roych

A paper was tabled and summaries of Roych and Long Causeway circulated.

Consultations were sent out on these 2 routes on 24 May – and a copy of the letter has been forwarded to members.

Sue Smith summarised that 24 routes requiring improved management have been identified with action plans and background reports prepared for the first 16 of these routes. Consideration of legal proceedings on 7 of these routes is being made and Long Causeway and The Roych are 2 of those 7. The flow chart attached to the paper illustrates the process undertaken when considering potential TROs. The whole process can take 9-12 months which may be extended if there is a public inquiry or in the event of legal challenge.

It is a 2 stage consultation process – any responses will be reported to Audit Resource and Performance Committee on 20 July; with a site inspection the day before. The report to committee will contain evidence and grounds for making TROs and alternative management options too. If, following the meeting a formal decision is made to pursue a TRO option there is a 6 week public consultation period - and will come back to LAF for comment.

The key thing is that consultations are in accordance with regulation 4. The Authority's aim is for improved management and ask whether use of this route should be restricted, if so, the type of restriction, dimensions, duration and evidence. Members will consider responses and decide

Bon Berzins commented that in practical terms he felt it was quite likely these would be challenged – it is very important that Authority goes through meticulous steps to reduce future problems.

Mike added that it comes across sometimes as over complicated but we have to go by regulations. We are completely focussed on following the correct procedure which will minimise potential grounds of challenge.

Sue said that risk areas will be part of the committee report

Terry said this was discussed at Sheffield LAF – a motion was put to that LAF on the possibility of TROs. Sheffield LAF wanted to work closely with PDNPA as it is a shared

route. Motion was that Sheffield LAF is mindful to support recommendations of PDNPA with regard to a TRO on Long Causeway and not to raise objections.

Henry commented that as yet no TRO has been proposed – consultation on management options on the route only.

Terry said that Long Causeway is part of the Sheffield Country Walk – 54 mile promoted walk, this section is undoubtedly the worst section and most walkers avoid that section as so bad.

John stated that it goes to committee as a formal proposal. It is important for LAF to relate any comments now, appropriate to those 2 routes

Sue reminded the forum of the route summary report and updated and reviewed actions made at the special LAF meeting of full forum.

Henry felt the LAF welcomed Mike Hanson from Sheffield City Council. Coherence from the two authorities on cross border is imperative, Sheffield, Derbyshire and NPA need to work together.

Sue reiterated that she is asking this LAF for views - whether routes should be restricted in any way or alternative means of management, together with evidence.

John Thompson offered to co-ordinate response (vehicle sub group this afternoon) deadline this weekend.

ACTION: JNT, ALL

Caroline Hanson requested she attends this afternoon's meeting.

Terry asked that the meeting takes in account the considerations re Sheffield Country walk.

There was then a discussion re Long Causeway.

Jon Clennell proposed sub group have delegated responsibility to make response to the Authority for both routes - this was voted unanimously, except Jon Stewart who abstained – NT is concerned about The Roych as people (particularly trail bikes) move off the official route and onto NT land – with corresponding annoyance and disturbance. He asked if a one way scheme would be better and asked who pays for restoration of damage by vehicles?

Clare agrees a one way (downhill) route may work at he Roych and consideration be given to blocking of access to land if the route is churned up. The main problem with these routes is not their physical sustainability, but the conflicts between user groups, most of which occur at weekends, so she suggested weekend TROs on both routes while retaining vehicular access during the week.

Terry cannot attend this pm but must reiterate that Sheffield LAF came out unanimously in favour of a permanent TRO being enforced on Long Causeway .Richard Pett added that a one way system is well observed by 4x4 drivers, bikes less so. Moving on to adjacent land is not desirable.

Some discussion on safety took place and Sue confirmed that safety considerations are taken into account - but is not the prime reason for a TRO from the Authority's point of view.

Mike said all are welcome at this afternoon's meeting

6. Access update

Lesley Rechert, Access Officer, tabled copies of the Access sub group meeting notes from 10 May.

The main points were highlighted - list of improvements to access network – 18 different areas were listed and over the next few months will be looked at (in conjunction with Rangers) to see if changes to access can be made. This 'wish list' will be kept and reverted to in future meetings.

With regard to Rod Moor – there have been access issues in the past. A new roadside fence has been erected as part of a NE stewardship agreement. The NPA are in dialogue with the tenant - trying to re-establish access.

Some good work had been done re the snares at Bamford – low fencing has now been put up. Further information on signage in due course.

Copies of the Countryside Code have arrived –available today

Henry reported points of information on two access issues: The inquiry on Staden Quarry, is set for 10am Tuesday (19 June) in Buxton with one week allowed. The proposal has been turned down by HPBC twice – there is concern that concessionary access will be withdrawn and also worries from local residents.

Water cum Jolly – 90 years of access and now part withdrawn last week. BMC has reached agreement with Derbyshire Wildlife Trust but local fisherman who own the concessionary path alongside the river have taken the view that the path may not be used by climbers. It is distressing to go backwards on access – we need to safeguard what achievements made so far as well as establish new access.

Mike confirmed that the concessionary footpath along Water cum Jolly is not in question, access off the path to the crag via DWT owned land is not allowed.

John welcomed the open discussion about access points at meetings and the opportunity to look at in more detail – he thanked Lesley for the notes.

Bob recognised this is a wish list and may be difficult to implement all of it, we should be realistic but important that issues are raised. Jon Stewart said please talk to NT re any issues.

7. Cycling strategy

John Thompson gave a presentation – a report has been circulated and he thanked those who had already input into it.

The report summarised much information from several strategies, projects and action plans. This is a position statement – not a strategy document

In the last year 50,000 cyclists (each way) have used the Monsal Trail. Cycle hire is very popular with the 3 centres in PDNPA averaging 30,000 hires each year – weather dependant with fewer hires following the opening of the Hassop Hire centre.

A Cycling Strategy is needed – Derbyshire County Council Cabinet considered this week and the Government is pursuing action on cycling. The PDNPA Recreation Strategy targets cycling. A few questions on recommendations were tabled today – please complete and John will collate.

ACTION: JNT

Councillor Spencer (Derbyshire CC) is taking forward proposals for 'White Peak Loop' It is laudable they are taking forward and Jim Dixon had responded positively to the recommendations. Re the route beyond Matlock and Buxton – he welcomed LAF to give guidance on where to extend the network. It might be useful to have presentations in September from Sustrans.

Caroline said the track from Whinstone Lee Tor to Cut Throat bridge is 30' wide in places (she felt it is a disaster area) and asked if there is any research into erosion into moorland.

Mike said this is a maintenance issue on a bridleway and they are trying to identify resources to deal with it. There is a wider issue re engagement with mountain bike users. Ride the Peak never really kicked off. Ride Sheffield is an active and enthusiastic group and a good means to engage with riders from that side of the Park. We endeavour to try to ensure they understand the impact when they come to the National Park. Mountain Biking has taken off in such a big way – new cyclists are not always aware of responsibilities. There are issues of user conflict, a strategic approach allows us to disseminate info to users to ensure they understand responsibilities.

Adge asked about a code of practice for mountain biking similar to that in use in Canada.

Charlotte mentioned the Trails Management Plan meeting on 18 June - Clare, Terry, Caroline, Charlotte and Ally to meet with John to review the plan and then share information with Edwina.

Chair thanked John for a huge amount of work.

8. Review of Derbyshire CC Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Gill Millward had circulated a paper– this is a case of 'refreshing' the Plan until formal review in 2017. Main work is a revised statement of action, other supporting chapters summarise background and policy framework. Since March the joint sub group with Derby and Derbyshire LAF has met, paper tabled today with summary of comment. All comments have been incorporated into the revised statement of actions. It needs to be aspirational.

Feedback from other County Council officers is supportive, needs to be put into context of a reducing budget. A stronger emphasis on health and well being will be reflected. Prioritisation of actions will be looked at, 5 aims prioritised but there is still scope to bring actions higher up the list – any comments welcomed. **ACTION: ALL**

Richard Taylor said previous finances had been capitalised on, those days have gone and now we are struggling to find capital; it makes this document more important as a guide on how to prioritise in future. As a statutory function we continue but with reduced resources.

Henry spoke of the new NIA which does have access as key component within it. Within that 2 areas of access are bridleways and cross boundary issues as priorities, it should help deliver priorities by ROWIPs in a cash strapped society. £98k across the Dark Peak earmarked for access improvements but need to work coherently. The NIA is important as a landscape scale initiative which has brought £771k to the Dark Peak

but designation will help in allocation of other funds. There is a clear link to LAF via Henry as BMC representative. There is an aspiration to involve private landowners.

Hard copies of actions are available. Gill will be reporting to Cabinet – papers out on 27 June. Please send responses to Gill by 22 June. **ACTION: ALL**
Gill will e-mail a copy of the report to members. Public consultation will take place over the summer. The September LAF will be a further opportunity to feedback.

Response to consultations was discussed

National Trails consultation: it was agreed that members would send initial comments to Mike and if sufficient number merits a special meeting this will be arranged. Mike will summarise and recirculate comments. **ACTION: ALL, MR**

Lost Ways project consultation: until 6 August to respond, changes to process of recording, diverting and extinguishing public rights of way.

Mike to send weblinks

ACTION: MR

9. Work Programme for the year ahead

Mike said that the work programme for the items the LAF might be discussing in the year ahead has been circulated. Please look at this and see if your fields of interest are represented. If not, tell MR and come forward with agenda items. Now is the opportunity to influence the programme. **ACTION: ALL**

10. Members' Reports

John Thompson had attended a meeting re The Roaches on 6 June. Agreement is a 125 year lease with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust which is likely to be completed in May 2013. A property management plan will be devised and will involve the public and interest groups - and this LAF - when consulting. Climbing covered by Henry, orienteering Clare and horse riding opportunities by Ally. Other inputs to be made to John. **ACTION: ALL**

Charlotte told the forum that the Kinder Loop long distance ride was completed, despite extremely bad weather.

Day 1 Hayfield to Rushup Hall - Pennine Bridleway – they rode up the Roych which was passable. Surface should meet expectations

Day 2 Chapel Gate – rideable but would have been very different if vehicles were there. Horses had to get up on the side of route

Day 3 Derwent to Longdendale – was a fabulous ride across the moors, although a challenging route – the paving at top rather narrow and very boggy off the path.

Day 4 Longdendale to Chapel en le Frith – ‘motorway riding’ - not quite as much fun but still enjoyable.

The route is very urban in parts – great contrast and access for different environments. £5k has been funded from BHS towards maps and leaflets and some from NPA. Route is now on the Peak Horsepower website - with GPS info. More b+bs need to get on board with horse facilities – it is very much a work in progress but is moving forward Designs for Kinder Loop waymarks have been drafted - illustrations were circulated and members asked to tick their preferred design.

Henry reminded the forum that consultations on the Sheffield Moors Partnership and stakeholder forum on Eastern Moors are on-going.

Terry reported that the Annual Report for Sheffield LAF is available. The Kinder 80th festival – a week long celebration of Kinder, not just the Trespass and looks to the future. 250 people from access groups, landowners etc all invited to the launch date. Despite appalling weather on the re-enactment date it was well attended. Positive, NT and PDNPA benefitted from good publicity.

Sue Weatherley had attended the National Conference in Newcastle. Presentations are available on Huddle. It was a mixed bag, she had met a number of people from other LAFs, particularly other National Park LAFs and it was well worth going to national events for the networking opportunity.

Chair thanked all for contributions

11. Any Other Business

Adge had been approached about improving access for wheelchair users at Burbage. Gates at either end of Burbage Valley are accessible but tracks not suitable for wheelchairs – in particular the middle section of the track is very rocky. Trail work would enable end to end access to be transformed. Chair said a report would be brought back to the LAF in the future. **ACTION: MR**

Millers Dale – abseil bridge – an additional one almost happened 15 years ago (fork to Pennine Bridleway), an artificial structure would take pressure off the natural environment.

There is a Government scheme currently being trialled (amounting to £600,000) for 16 year olds to take part in a 3 week programme in summer involving a one week adventure residential course. For more information, speak to Adge. **ACTION: AL**

12. Dates of next Meetings

To be held on 27 September and 6 December.

The meeting closed at 12.55pm

Vehicle sub group are meeting at 1.45pm