

### **3. CELEBRATION OF THE 60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIONAL PARKS AND ACCESS TO THE COUNTRYSIDE ACT 1949 (A945261/JF)**

#### **1 Purpose of the report**

1.1 To update members about planned activities to celebrate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the legislation which founded National Parks in the UK at a local and national level.

#### **2 Recommendations**

2.1 To note the programme of 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities taking place in the Peak District National Park and to delegate to the chief executive the final decision on how to allocate the £25,000 DEFRA grant.

2.2 To approve the extension of the existing Communications Officer post from half-time (18.5 hours) to full-time (37 hours) for 12 months from 1 April 2009 with the current post-holder offered these extra hours to deliver the authority's planned activities using funding from the DEFRA grant for the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations.

#### **3 How does this contribute to our policies and legal obligations?**

3.1 The activities will contribute to National Park Management Plan outcomes 7 and 8 and authority key corporate actions K2, D1, F1 and H3.

#### **4 Background**

4.1 2009 sees the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act. The legislation, which received royal assent on 16 December 1949, led to the creation of National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), National Nature Reserves and National Trails.

4.2 In November 2008 members of the Association of National Park Authorities (ANPA) All Parks Communicator and Tourism Officers' Group decided to work together to mark this important occasion, working with colleagues from Natural England, AONBs and National Trails.

4.3 A programme of activities is proposed that would be co-ordinated across the country to obtain a higher level of media coverage, while still allowing the flexibility to reflect local circumstances.

4.4 The overall aim of the activities are to:

- Improve understanding of national parks and their purposes
- Show that national parks are as relevant today as they were when they were created
- Create a website-based education 'legacy' that would last after the celebrations ended

4.5 At the ANPA meeting on 29 January 2009 the chairs of all UK national park authorities gave their support to the initiative.

4.6 The Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has given each UK national park authority £25,000 to cover the cost of the celebrations.

## 5 Proposals

5.1 The programme of activities is intended to gradually build during the year with the main focus on the actual anniversary date of 16 December 2009.

5.2 Planned activities include:

1. A 60 walks for 60 years project – a website featuring one family friendly walk selected from each national park, most AONBs and National Trails.
2. Creation of a 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary website (see [www.diamondsinthelandscape.org.uk](http://www.diamondsinthelandscape.org.uk)) and a section on the Peak District National Park Authority website (see [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/anniversary](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/anniversary)) which will include historical and current information about national park authorities, their purposes and work.
3. All letters, emails and publications produced during 2009 to feature a new logo celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.
4. A video section to be created on the ANPA national website to include video clips from each national park highlighting different issues.
5. A media campaign to celebrate the inspiration that national parks have given poets, writers, musicians and crafts people – both current and historical.
6. A series of walks and events to mark National Family Week (Monday 25 to Sunday 31 May)
7. Three family picnics and short walks on Sunday 26 July to link in with a national event to celebration access to the countryside
8. A series of family friendly walks and events to mark National Parks' Week (Monday 27 July to Sunday 2 August 2009), which will have the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary theme.
9. Introduce a downloadable passport that visitors can have stamped at visitor centres in each national park. The aim is to encourage visitors to go to as many national parks as possible.
10. Lighting of one or two beacons in the Peak District National Park on 16 December 2009 to form part of a nationwide beacon lighting event in national parks and AONBs.

5.3 In addition DEFRA has said that each national park will receive a ministerial visit during 2009 to mark the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. At the time of writing the details of this programme had still to be announced. A verbal update will be given to members at the meeting if possible.

5.4 It is proposed that the existing communications officer's post is extended from part-time to full-time for a 12-month period to deliver the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary activities outlined above.

5.5 The chief executive will be considering proposals for spending the remaining money when more is known about potential ministerial visits.

## 6 Are there any corporate implications members should be concerned about?

6.1 **Financial:** The costs of the celebrations will be entirely met from DEFRA's £25,000 grant. The extension of the Communications Officer post will cost £14,256 including on-going costs. This would be funded through £9,056 of the DEFRA grant and £5,200 from Moors for the Future.

- 6.2      **Risk Management:** A risk assessment will be done for all public events.
- 6.3      **Sustainability:** All celebration events will aim to promote sustainability issues.
- 6.4      **Communications:** All anniversary activities will be publicised in local, regional and national media and on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary and PDNPA websites. A feature is also planned for the July edition of the Parklife residents' newsletter.

**Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date**

John Fern, Head of Communications, 19 March 2009  
Background Papers - None