



Peak District Local Access Forum (LAF)  
C/o Peak District National Park Authority  
Aldern House  
Baslow Road  
Bakewell  
Derbyshire DE45 1AE

Adrian Barraclough  
Director of Commercial Development and Engagement  
Peak District National Park Authority  
Aldern House  
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22nd April, 2019  
sent by email

Dear Adrian

**Property Disposals by the National Park Authority - Safeguarding and Enhancing Public Access**

I am writing following a meeting of the Local Access Forum's (LAF's) Access Sub Group on Thursday 18th April which Bob Berzins chaired and kindly briefed me about after we had exchanged information beforehand. The topic I am writing about is property disposals by the Authority to whom we are a statutory advisor on the improvement of public access for the purpose of open-air recreation and enjoyment.

I had received emails expressing concern about the planned High Rake disposal from the Hucklow Parish Council and Henry Folkard (who was a longstanding LAF member living locally), about the lack of dedication for access with tenders apparently being sought. Sue Smith kindly updated members and I was asked to write urgently on their behalf to request information and assurances at this site and in other disposals, especially where there is existing use and demand for access throughout sites. In addition to High Rake, Green Lane Pits (a site restored many years ago by the NPA near the very popular High Peak Trail), was identified and I guess there will be others. At High Rake, there has been freely available de facto access to the site for many years. Without open access there would not formally be access to the extensive archaeological legacy so carefully restored by Peak District Mines Historical Society which we believe continues to draw regular visits by interested members of the public. We have been advised by Henry Folkard that High Rake was gifted to the National Park for the enjoyment of the general public so he suggests it should surely be dedicated for open access under the CROW Act ahead of disposal. We welcomed previous dedication for access by the Authority of many of its woodlands in 2005 to safeguard valued opportunities. It was fitting the NPA used powers it had lobbied for as a leading advocate of the access legislation.

We would like to see such opportunities being realised by the authority ahead of future property disposals please. Access needs to be protected without ambiguity - dedication provides that clarity so that the amount of public access can continue or be enhanced. Dedication of open access is clearly best before tenders are accepted. That is so much easier and less time consuming than having to seek future agreement to dedication by new owners after sales arising for seeking tenders.

Can dedication be completed or required for High Rake and Green Lane Pits at this stage, and can we be advised in advance of planned future disposals so the LAF can comment and advise please?

Given Parish concerns in the case of High Rake, can I also ask if Parish Councils are, or will in future be, advised of proposed disposals given community use and interest?

Would it be possible to forward a list of future disposals being considered? We can then act quickly to let the NPA have our thoughts. The NPA website indicates that "We protect, manage, promote and improve access in the National Park by working closely with the National Park Rangers, Highway Authorities, landowners, communities and recreational user groups." The NPA does a great job in this respect, particularly through the Access and Recreation Service. We know and appreciate that officers views on the means and the timings for achieving this have been fed through by Sue Smith to the officers managing the disposal process.

The purpose of the letter is to support their work and ask pertinent questions about the best way forward now and in future. I have not involved Mike Rhodes or Sue in this letter, but am copying them, Emma and Chris in after liaison with Bob. I think this will be a good topic for update please at our June 13th LAF if you agree.

I look forward to your response to these points and views on the suggestions..

Yours sincerely

John  
John Thompson  
Peak District Local Access Forum

Copies To Officers within the Peak District NPA - Emma Stone, Chris Manby, Bill Robinson, Mike Rhodes and Sue Smith, and Gill Millward, Derbyshire County Council

Copies to LAF colleagues at 18th April Sub Group - Bob Berzins and Charlotte Gilbert as Vice Chairs, Sue Weatherley and Terry Howard.