

# Peak District Local Access Forum

## Minutes of the Meeting held on Thursday 19 September 2019 at Aldern House, Board room.

### Members Present:

Bob Berzins  
Edwina Edwards  
Charlotte Gilbert  
Louise Hawson  
Geoff Nickolds  
Roly Smith  
Ally Turner

John Thompson (Chair)

Joe Dalton  
Richard Entwistle  
Alastair Harvey  
Andrew Murley  
Paul Richardson  
Jon Stewart  
Sue Weatherley

### Others Present:

Mike Rhodes, (PDNPA) (Secretary)  
Gill Milward, (DCC)  
Rich Pett, (PDNPA)

Sue Smith, (PDNPA)  
Richard Taylor, (DCC)  
Ruth Crowder, (Minutes)

## 1. APOLOGIES AND WELCOME

Apologies had been received from Jez Kenyon, Clare Griffin, and Cllr Jason Atkin.

It was noted that Adge Last and Dan Richmond - Watson were no longer members of the Forum and had been thanked for their services and commitment. Ian Huddlestone had been appointed as member representative from the National Park Authority and Ben Seal and Steve Martin had been appointed with other interviews planned.

The Chair welcomed Geoff Smith from Ladybower Fisheries to the meeting as an observer.

## 2. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING, 6 JUNE 2019

The minutes of the last meeting held on 6 June were approved as a correct record with thanks to Jason Spencer.

## 3. MATTERS ARISING

**Mend Our Mountains** – Molly Hunt, Moors for the Future, was present to give a verbal update to the meeting:

Great Ridge: not all funding had been acquired so only high priority actions were possible including flagstones, pitching, and aggregate path if funds available. Consultation would take place in October with works starting mid to late November.

Cut Gate and North America: all funding had been received so Cut Gate works would include flagstones, aggregate path and managing water. Works would commence at end of October/early November, consultation had taken place last Tuesday. North America works would include aggregate path and water management. Consultation was being held next Wednesday, anyone wishing to attend should contact Molly or Mike Rhodes.

**Annual LAF Report** – Roly Smith had drafted a press release for issue via the Peak District

NPA and County Council Communications departments but it was unclear if the press release had been issued or if there had been coverage.

**Agreed: Mike Rhodes will investigate. The Chair thanked Roly Smith for his work on promoting the LAF.**

**PDNPA Land Disposals** – The Chair stated that this issue would be referred to under his report for Item 9 on the agenda.

**Rights of Way Improvement Plan for Derbyshire Update** – Mike Rhodes reported that Derbyshire County Council had scheduled work for Minninglow Lane and Mike and Richard Pett had met with DCC to discuss the specifications. DCC were now costing the works and Mike will check on progress.

#### **4. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR**

John Thompson was proposed and seconded as Chair and Bob Berzins and Charlotte Gilbert were proposed and seconded as Co-Vice Chairs. John, Bob and Charlotte were thanked for all their hard work and good leadership over the past year. The appointments were agreed for a further 2 years.

**AGREED:**

- **To appoint John Thompson as Chair of the Forum for a period of 2 years ending in September 2021.**
- **To appoint Bob Berzins and Charlotte Gilbert as Co-Vice Chairs for a period of 2 years ending in September 2021.**

#### **5. PRESENTATION ON OUTDOOR SWIMMING**

The Forum received a presentation from Robert Aspey of the Outdoor Swimming Society. The Society had been set up in 2013 and aimed to share knowledge and help people maintain and increase the amount of inland water accessible for outdoor recreational swimming. A lack of amenity meant unsafe areas were being used. The Society also produced guides and information and a copy of their Inland Bathing Areas guide to setting up inland bathing areas in the UK had been circulated to Forum members before the meeting. The guide included case studies of unsupervised access areas and managed areas and also gave practical advice and legal information regarding setting up areas. Robert referred to Rutland Water Bathing Beach as a successful example of a managed area. The Chair thanked Robert for his presentation.

Robert Aspey then answered questions from Forum members and issues raised were discussed. It was noted that both Severn Trent Water and Yorkshire Water currently have no swim policies for their reservoirs. Reservoirs are operational areas and can be subject to sudden fluctuating water levels and hidden dangers. Robert referred to the all party parliamentary group on swimming and stated that all Water Authorities would have been contacted to give their views. The Chair thanked Robert for his presentation.

**AGREED: To note the presentation and Inland Bathing Area guide, to share information amongst the Forum and to report back any feedback on happenings and new initiatives arising from approaches by the Outdoor Swimming Society in the area.**

#### **6. MOUNTAIN BIKING IN THE UPPER DERWENT - PRESENTATION**

Dan Taberner, Operations Manager for the Visitor Services Team, Severn Trent Water, and Adam Marsden, Site Supervisor for the Upper Derwent Valley, Severn Trent Water, gave a presentation on mountain biking in the Upper Derwent. This included an overview of what they had been doing with regard to mountain biking, their aspirations, work with Peak District

MTB (a mountain biking advocacy group) and a request for feedback from the Forum to help with their engagement with other organisations and groups. A 16 mile circular mountain biking route had been set up at Upper Derwent and Severn Trent were now working with user groups, including Peak District MTB, to review it. The review included looking at increasing bridleways with more connections and for different skill levels and maintenance of routes. Paul Richardson welcomed the liaison with mountain bike interests.

Dan and Adam were thanked for their informative presentation and the Forum then asked questions and discussed issues arising. It was noted that other users needed to be considered including horse riders and disabled riders. Peak District MTB had been working with disabled riders and Peak Horse Power representatives expressed an interest in working with Severn Trent. Severn Trent were also advised to contact Derbyshire County Council regarding plans for bridleways and work with other landowners and partners in the area - including the National Trust and Forestry Commission.

**AGREED: To note and welcome the approach regarding mountain biking.**

## **7. EXPLORER BUS SERVICE**

David Marsden, PDNPA Transport Policy Officer, gave a presentation on the Hope Valley Explorer bus service which had been piloted during the school summer holidays this year. David explained the background to the pilot, including consultation and market testing which had identified features such as audio local history. A sample of the audio commentary was played for the Forum. The pilot had been run with Stagecoach as transport provider and marketed via social media and leaflets, a copies of the leaflet had been provided for Forum members. The service timetable connected with local rail services and there had been over 2,500 passengers during the pilot. The service was being run with a reducing subsidy over 3 years. Stakeholders were welcome to help with support, dual marketing, branding and financial support etc.. The pilot had been reviewed and earlier marketing would be put in place for next year.

The Forum welcomed the service and thanked David for his presentation. In response to queries from the Forum it was noted that the bus and bus stops were accessible, the few stops that weren't accessible were being considered for improvements. It was hoped the service would be extended to run for longer and eventually, with help from other stakeholders, to have more services across the National Park and link with Rangers Walks.

**AGREED: To note the presentation, welcome the service and encourage future improvements.**

## **8. DERBYSHIRE CC REPORT - RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR DERBYSHIRE**

Gill Milward had circulated her report which updated the Forum on the progress towards the delivery of Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

The Chair thanked Gill and welcomed her report. Richard Taylor, Head of Countryside Service, Derbyshire County Council, was invited to update the Forum on the current DCC Countryside Service Review. Richard gave details of the background to the review including workshops and work with consultants; the findings had been considered at a Countryside Service meeting yesterday. It was noted that the Rights of Way service would be moving to Highways and Gill Millward would move to Regeneration and still have responsibility for Access and the LAF. Greenways and Access would be rebranded as Key Cycle Network and moved to the Regeneration Team. These moves were planned by December, 2019.

The remaining elements of the Countryside Service, including destination sites, were being

considered as a potential public service mutual to be in place by April 2020; this would enable access to funding that DCC were not eligible for. It was noted that this may be Richard's last attendance at a LAF meeting.

The Chair thanked Richard for all his positive work through Countryside Service over the last 30 years. It was noted that the LAF had been involved in consultation on the review and that a further update may be given at the next meeting.

**AGREED:**

- 1. To note and welcome the progress report for delivering Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement plan.**
- 2. To note the progress of the Derbyshire CC Countryside Service Review.**

**9. ACCESS UPDATES INCLUDING REVIEWS OF DIRECTIONS**

Sue Smith introduced the report which provided an update on issues related to access in the Peak District and the reviews of long-term Directions on Access Land which the LAF had commented upon.

**PDNPA Land Disposals** – the Forum's comments had been submitted to a discussion workshop that had taken place on 12 September and Sue Smith and Mike Rhodes had attended. The outcomes from the workshop were still awaited. Sue referred to the Chair's separate report.

**AGREED:** To note the report.

**10. PDNPA PROPERTY DISPOSALS**

The Chair, John Thompson, had circulated a report on the PDNPA Property Disposals, which included the responses from the LAF to Adrian Barraclough's invitation for them to comment on 'What had gone well in the process' and 'What can be improved'. The report also included 4 remaining issues for the LAF. John thanked Charlotte Gilbert for her help in bringing the information together.

It was agreed to log the 4 remaining issues for action and it was noted that Adrian Barraclough had asked Bill Robinson to respond to the Chair. The Chair welcomed the work done by Sue Smith and Mike Rhodes to highlight and safeguard access and recreation interests.

**AGREED** to invite feedback on the following 4 issues:

- 1. Minor Properties being retained - e.g. High Rake - will Access and Rights of Way designations be pursued as good practice by the Authority as with a number of woodlands under the CROW Act 2000 provisions in the past?**
- 2. How were suggestions re 'What worked well and What could be done Better' received by Officers?**
- 3. Status of the Monsal Trail where LAF strongly advocates Public Bridleway status working with Derbyshire County Council as it will give greater security than Local Plan policies against possible future development like a railway.**

4. **Can an Officer be able to do a presentation to the December LAF on a review of the Disposals Project, future procedures (including LAF and Community involvement), and sites where tenders may be invited in future?**

## **11. GREEN LANES UPDATE**

Sue Smith introduced her report which gave an update on progress with looking after green lanes in the National Park; this included Wetton Hills TRO and the TRO Survey.

**AGREED:** To note the report.

## **12. NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN AND ADVISORY GROUP**

### **Countryside Code Workshop 11th July and Follow Up (Roly Smith)**

Roly Smith had attended this workshop on 11 July, which had over 40 delegates, including Junior Rangers. The main points considered were the effectiveness of the current countryside code, effectiveness of current leaflets, how the Peak District code linked with the National Code and who was responsible for promotion. A pre-survey had also identified 3 issues: litter, BBQs and dogs (including waste). The workshop felt that a snappy title was needed together with a media personality/champion. As the key target audience was vast landowners, farmers and stakeholders needed to be involved and all social media used. A follow up meeting was held on 4 September which had considered risk assessment, clarity of key messages, working with focus groups and design of a suite of tools. It was noted that professional resources were needed and sources of funding and sponsorship needed to be identified.

**AGREED:** To note the report and welcome the actions.

### **Climate Change Workshop in Buxton on 15th October (Geoff Nickolds)**

It was noted that Geoff Nickolds would be attending this conference on 15 October in Buxton. The objectives of the event were:

1. Reflect on and reinforce the need to work towards Net Zero Carbon by 2050;
2. Better understand the current emissions sources produced by the Peak District National Park;
3. Hear expert insights around the topics of land management and sustainable transport;
4. Identify the actions we can take under these topics to offer the greatest contribution towards our national emission reduction targets;
5. Hear from local leaders on their commitments to move from words to action.

The Chair stated that newly appointed LAF member, Steve Martin, would also be attending the conference.

**Events Workshop** – Bob Berzins reported that a new website had been drafted that would capture more events happening in the Peak District. It would be free to register, have publicity and events would be run in accordance with best practice. Sarah Wilks stated that it was hoped the new website would be live in October.

## **13. MEETING WITH STAFFORDSHIRE AND WOLVERHAMPTON LAF REPRESENTATIVES ON 16TH AUGUST**

Charlotte Gilbert had attended a meeting of the Staffordshire and Wolverhampton LAF on 16 August as part of trying to forge links with surrounding LAFs. This was the first meeting of

another LAF attended and it had been found to be successful. Charlotte welcomed John Mills, Chair of Staffordshire and Wolverhampton LAF and Austin Knott (member), who were present at this meeting today as observers. Mr Mills thanked Charlotte for her meeting notes, and John and Ally for attending the liaison meeting with S&W LAF meeting and stated that he had found the Peak District LAF meeting very interesting. It was noted that Ally Turner would attend the next S&W LAF meeting.

## **15. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Honeypot Areas/Parking** – On August Bank Holiday Monday Bob Berzins had ridden from Grindleford to Padley by bike and found approx. 100 cars illegally parked in dangerous places. He had spoken with National Trust rangers but it was an ongoing problem. Bob suggested that the LAF, National Trust and Derbyshire CC could look at this issue.

**Minninglow** – It was noted that DCC would start work here on Monday 23 September to fill in ruts, soil and seed. The works was expected to last 12 weeks and Mike Rhodes would visit the site during the following week.

**Dates for Future LAF Meetings** – it was requested that the dates of LAF meetings for 2020 be made available as soon as possible. Mike Rhodes will arrange and pass details on to LAF Members.

## **16. DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on 5 December 2018 at Aldern House, Bakewell.

Meeting ended - 12.45 pm followed by lunch and afternoon site visits to Bamford Recreation Ground and Ladybower Fishery.

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