

# Local Access Forum Annual Report 2022

## Introduction

*Welcome to our 2022 Annual Report! This was our first full year of face-to-face meetings since the COVID restrictions were lifted. It was great to both welcome new Members and work with familiar faces once again. I took over as Chair in March 2022, stepping into the very large shoes of John Thompson, who is much missed and whose work with the LAF leaves a lasting legacy.*

This year we have focused on a number of strategic topics, with the aim of better understanding the big issues facing the National Park as they relate to access. Sustainable transport has been a key theme at several of our recent meetings, and we have benefitted from input from DCC's sustainable travel team, PDNPA's transport planner, and local activists from Sustrans and Hope Valley Climate Action.

We learnt a huge amount from our session on engaging with young people, with thought-provoking presentations from PDNPA's Generation Green project, and a placement student from Lockerbrook Centre. This year we plan to focus on improving our engagement with diverse audiences, looking at improvements in our own work as well as advising others. We encourage anyone who would like to get involved with this work – by joining the LAF or by talking to us about the issues and challenges – to get in touch.

Improving access to the countryside, including access to water and extending the right to roam, remain hot topics. We have been pleased to see many new projects funded to make access improvements at individual farm level via the FIPL scheme. This year we will look at nature recovery and 'rewilding', and how they sit alongside better, responsible access for all. We will keep a watching brief on the development of new agricultural subsidy schemes, as they will be vital in supporting and rewarding farmers and landowners in the National Park to make access improvements in future.

Finally, we have welcomed the opportunity to strengthen our relationship with DCC's Rights of Way team, establishing a mechanism for them to consult with the LAF on planned repair work within the National Park. We hope this will mean that different user groups can make recommendations and share concerns on key routes, leading to better solutions.

The role of the LAF is to advise PDNPA, DCC and other statutory bodies on the improvement of public access for open-air recreation and enjoyment. All these bodies are operating with static or reducing budgets, in the face of increasing costs, and the twin challenges of changing climate and recreational use patterns. Our focus will be to advise on prioritisation, identify opportunities for collaboration and partnership, and advocate for better central funding.

Thanks as always to Mike, Gill and the team at PDNPA and DCC who support us to do our work, and help ensure our advice is heard by the people who can benefit from it. It's a genuine pleasure to work with you all.

## *Team Photo*

### **Purpose of the Forum**

The Peak District Local Access Forum (PDLAF) is a statutory body, appointed jointly by the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) and Derbyshire County Council (DCC). It covers the National Park and the countryside of north-west Derbyshire around Buxton, New Mills and Glossop.

The Forum advises on the improvement of public access for the purpose of open-air recreation and enjoyment and in so doing takes into account the needs of land management and conserving the natural beauty of the area.

### **Membership of the Forum**

Membership of the Forum is reviewed regularly to ensure a reasonable balance 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 at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/laf](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/laf).

### **Contact Details**

Details of the Forum are available at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/laf](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/laf).

All Forum meetings are open to the public and, by prior arrangement, members of the public may ask to speak at the meetings. Meetings are at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/lafmeetings](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/lafmeetings) and are available on audio webcast.

**Mike Rhodes**, Forum Secretary and Access and Rights of Way Manager, Peak District National Park Authority  
[mike.rhodes@peakdistrict.gov.uk](mailto:mike.rhodes@peakdistrict.gov.uk)

**Gill Millward**, Countryside Access Improvement Officer, Derbyshire County Council  
[gill.millward@derbyshire.gov.uk](mailto:gill.millward@derbyshire.gov.uk)

### **Meetings of the Forum in 2022**

Formal meetings of the Local Access Forum took place at Aldern House, Bakewell, on the following Thursdays:

17th March, 6th June, 15th September, 1st December

## **Issues discussed at the formal meetings included:**

### **Sustainable Travel**

In March, Richard Lovell, Senior Project Officer, Sustainable Travel, Derbyshire County Council attended the meeting to provide clarification on the role of the Team and the work they covered with regard to Travel Planning, Walking and Cycling, Low emission vehicle infrastructure and Low Carbon Mobility

In June, Tim Nicholson, Transport Policy Planner attended the Forum and gave a presentation to Members on the Sustainable Transport Initiatives in the National Park.

In December, Simon Geller, Sustrans Volunteer Co-Ordinator Sheffield, was invited to the meeting to give a presentation regarding cycling access into the Peak District.

Simon reported that there were three main issues currently concerning Sustrans:

- 1) The lack of a safe route between Hathersage and Grindleford.
- 2) The National Cycle Network (NCN) route from London to Keswick gets stuck around Sheffield. There are currently no Sustrans signed cycle routes through the Hope Valley, which is one of the busiest areas for bikes.
- 3) Access through Chatsworth

Gill Millward reported that the County Council had an approved prioritisation list for developing the strategic Key Cycle Network (KCN) for Derbyshire, which included routes such as the White Peak Loop, Pennine Bridleway National Trail and the Derwent Valley Cycle Way.

### **Packhorse Trails**

Charlotte Gilbert presented information on the history and current status of the Pack Horse Routes and highlighted the importance of maintaining the surfaces of the routes with appropriate materials

### **Engaging with Young People**

A presentation was given by Luisa Knust who was volunteering at the Lockerbrook Farm Outdoor Centre as part of her time with the European Solidarity Corps which has volunteers between the ages of 18 & 30 and aims to create a more inclusive society.

### **Generation Green**

Sarah Wilks (Head of Engagement, PDNPA) introduced a presentation regarding the Generation Green project which had been running across all English National Parks with the PDNPA taking a leading role. The focus of the project had been on encouraging school visits, working with teachers and youth leaders to build their confidence in the outdoors, and encouraging others to look at how to engage young people and hear younger voices in decision making.

### **Access to Water**

Ben Seal, Head of Access & Environment at British Canoeing gave a presentation to the LAF on Access to Water.

### **Access Update**

During 2021, the Forum was updated on progress with Derbyshire County Council's proposed works on the Pennine Way at Edale and the Forum's wish list for access works under the Farming in Protected Landscapes scheme.

### **Green Lanes**

In March, Members of the Forum received the Authority's annual action plans on Green Lanes.

### **Derbyshire's Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

[Gill to add text].

### **Accessible Peak District**

The Accessible Peak District Annual Report was circulated to all Members and is available to view at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/accessforall](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/accessforall).

### **Anniversary Gates**

Sue also reported that so far 36 Anniversary Gates have been installed, funded by donations to the Access Fund.

### **Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) and ELMS**

Overall, 72 projects had been supported in the first year of the FiPL funding, and that a number of those projects supported access, in particular the projects at Thors Cave and Castleton.

### **Other key matters discussed:**

- Landscapes Review - discussion on Government response and response from LAF to consultation
- Issues on Staffordshire Rights of Way

### **Formal Consultations**

The Forum has responded to the following consultations:

- Consultation on long term direction at Silence Mine
- Changes to NPA car park charges byelaws
- NPA Engagement Service restructure and Business Review

### **External Liaison**

The LAF has been represented by its members at:

- Several site meetings to discuss DCC's maintenance schedule particularly with regard to green lanes
- Meeting with Barry Lewis, Chair of DCC

*PHOTO*

### **Forward Plan 2022/23**

1. **Following our meeting in June 2022, we agreed six LAF Workstreams for 2022-23. Three were about the topics we discuss, and three were about the way we run our meetings and engage people in our discussions. We will report our progress on these at our meeting in June 2023. Ensure we are contributing effectively to statutory and other consultations**

- Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Long-Term Directions to exclude or restrict access to access land for six months or more

- Byelaws in respect of Access Land
- DCC ongoing consultation on planned repair work
- Local Plan & Local Development Framework
- National Park Management Plan
- Trails Management Plan
- Property Disposals of Access Land or land that could be dedicated for open access
- Other PDNPA and DCC consultations relevant to access land or PROW network

2. **Address strategic access topics - especially those where we can most influence policy decisions**

- Sustainable Transport
- Engaging with Young People & underrepresented groups
- Biodiversity & nature recovery
- Access for all
- Promoting responsible behaviour
- Access to Water
- Future of National Parks & Glover Report
- Inclusion of access provision in new agriculture policy and subsidies framework
- Bridleway resurfacing and extending the bridleway network to benefit all legitimate users.

3. **Take a proactive approach to Access and Rights of Way improvement**

- Support DCC to engage better with LAF and with user groups on Definitive Map issues and ROW repairs
- Bridleway resurfacing and extending bridleway network esp for MTBs
- Green Lanes strategy and maintenance
- Access for All: Miles Without Stiles
- Extending the network through Creation Orders and new permissive paths: linking existing RoWs that end on dangerous roads; improved signage and waymarking; support to landowners to maintain; extending ROWs where there are gaps in the network
- Infrastructure for active travel e.g. furniture on the HPT; proposal for Spine cycle route
- Open Access Land: access points and signage; Anniversary Gates; opportunities to dedicate new areas
- Continue to lobby for the completion of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail in the Glossop area

**How we work:**

4. **Ensure meetings run smoothly, and members are informed & can contribute to discussions**

- Make sure meetings are on topics that members want to talk about. Get feedback from members on agenda and format, identify opportunities to improve
- Give as much notice as we can of what will be discussed, including time to read papers.
- Focus on quarterly meetings and form subgroups ad hoc to go deeper into issues or consultations that we can't do justice to in the meetings.

- Look at how we engage between meetings & consider different ways that people could contribute to discussions and consultations using email, online meetings, site visits etc.

#### 5. Increase membership & get input from more diverse range of voices

- Continue to explore ways to engage with underrepresented groups and interest groups, including: young people; black and minority ethnic groups; people with disabilities; heritage interests; transport groups; biodiversity interests
- Look at different options for the way people could be involved: joining full or sub group meetings as experts, 'job share', providing written feedback or input
- Consider different formats and timings for meetings.

#### 6. Build our links with other LAFs, access organisations and statutory bodies

- Surrounding LAFs: DADLAF, Sheffield LAF and other National Park LAFs
- Natural England

*PHOTO*

#### Scheduled Meetings in 2023:

Wednesday 15 March, Aldern House, Bakewell  
 Wednesday 14 June, Aldern House, Bakewell  
 Wednesday 13 September, Aldern House, Bakewell  
 Wednesday 6 December, Aldern House, Bakewell

#### Financial Statement 2022

Administrative support		£350
Members' travel and expenses		£140
Meeting refreshments		£272
Annual report production		£285
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>£1,047</b>

The Peak District National Park Authority administers and provides secretariat for the Forum with officer input and financial support from Derbyshire County Council

## Member Details and Attendance 2022

Member	Background and Interests	17/03/22	16/06/22	15/09/22	01/12/22
Louise Hawson (Chair)	Climbing, running	✓	✓	✓	X
Charlotte Gilbert (co-vice-chair)	Land manager, horse rider	✓	X	✓	✓
Martin Bennett (co-vice Chair)	Ramblers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Craig Best	Land manager (National Trust)	✓	✓	✓	✓
Joe Dalton	Farmer, landowner	X	X	X	X
Nick Doran	Equestrian, outdoor activities				✓
Richard Entwistle	Motor vehicle users	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clare Griffin	Trail-bike rider, fell runner	X	✓	X	✓
Alastair Harvey	Landowner	X	✓	X	✓
Cllr Susan Hobson	Derbyshire County Council appointee	X	X	X	✓
Jo Holliday	Outdoor centre Manager	✓	X	✓	✓
Cllr Ian Huddleston	PDNPA appointee	X	X		
Jez Kenyon	Ramblers	✓	X	✓	X
Austin Knott	Hill walking, the BMC		✓	✓	✓
Charlotte Leech	Land agent	✓	✓	✓	X
Cllr Andrew McCloy	PDNPA appointee			✓	✓
Geoff Nickolds	Recreation and land management	X	✓	X	✓
Paul Richardson	Mountain-biking	✓	✓	X	✓
Dave Savage	Derbyshire Wildlife Trust				✓
Ben Seal	Access to Water	✓	✓	X	✓
John Towe	Volunteer Ranger, Access for All	✓	✓	✓	✓