

Notes from Peak District Local Access Forum Sub-Group Meeting with Derbyshire County Council Rights of Way – held over MS Teams on Thursday 18 May 2023

Present: PDLAF (Louise Hawson, Martin Bennett, Charlotte Gilbert, Nick Doran and Paul Richardson); PDNPA (Richard Pett) and DCC (Rob Greatorex, Steve Hollinworth and Gill Millward)

The aim of the meeting was to:-

- 1) Look at the programme of public rights of way repairs proposed for 2023/24
- 2) Provide feedback on the work completed in 2022/23
- 3) Look at how the LAF can help DCC improve its communication with users and stakeholders around repairs and maintenance of public rights of way
- 4) Provide LAF input on any issues, challenges or specific concerns, including revisiting relevant input from last year

1) 2023/24 Programme

(a) 2022/23 Funded Projects carried over into 2023/24 for completion

- Baslow Road, Bakewell – remedial works additional stone required in wheel ruts caused by heavy forestry vehicles.
- Bramley Lane off B6001 over towards Longstone Edge – remedial works topsoil and seeding central verge (similar to Back Lane, Darley Dale).
- Edensor BOAT 13 – Open texture/ large loose stones to be remedied.
- Castleton Hollowford Road up to Hollins Cross and Castleton FP21. Open texture/ loose stones in places. **The Sub-Group agreed that stone pitching (as on The Roych) would be preferable for the steeper sections as loose material has/will wash out and also emphasised the need for suitable drainage with an appropriate maintenance regime.** Filter drains have been installed which outfall into ditch further downhill.
- Castleton FP20 – proposing similar treatment to Castleton FP21.
- Edale BW19 (Pennine Way) – Funding from Pennine National Trails Partnership/ Natural England has been extended. Work is currently on-site for the lower-level path between Lee House and the ford. The high-level section is within SSSI/ National Trust land and stone pitching is planned for September 2023 to February 2024.
- Beeley BOAT 13 – on-site and expect to finish repairs before end of May.
- Hayfield BW72 up to Edale Cross. SSSI – September to February works.
- Charlesworth FP52 Torside reservoir – Work planned for Summer 2023.
- Eyam BOAT 25 Sir William Hill – verge damage caused by works, advised that this should be allowed to revegetate naturally.

(b) Phase 1 Projects – Funded in 2023/24

- Roadside fingerpost signs – 400 locations identified and being progressed.
- Hartington Upper Quarter FP144. Repair timber steps and regrade path beside Fernilee reservoir.
- Hope Woodlands FP24 – Parkin Clough – Yorkshire Bridge to Win Hill. Installation of around 50 to 60 timber steps and handrail.
- Hulland FP17. Install boardwalk across marshy area.
- Newton Grange FP1 runs into Dove Dale. There was a query about scope of work - possibility of installing steps. **ACTION: SH to share more information/ photographs and seek comments from Sub-Group on the work required.**
- Tintwistle BW26. Timber steps on south side of A628 Woodhead Road. **It was agreed that it would be better to regrade the route and remove existing steps. ND mentioned that the catch on the top gate is broken.** Damaged tarmac surface on approach to Crowden = farm access. Plan to fill-in potholes, install grips and make sure cut off drains are working correctly.
- Staveley FP21. Link to Chesterfield Canal.
- Hayfield BW47 (Phase 2) at Kinder reservoir. Surface muddy section of path with gritstone aggregate. **ND and PR both raised the need for adequate drainage to reduce likelihood of stone washing away.**
- Cobblesnook Lane and Cardlemere Lane, near Minninglow. Sustrans route. Stoning sections of route to A515. Filling ruts and potholes.
- Outseats FP7 – Hollin Bank, near car park and toilets. This is really muddy with plans to provide stone cobbles and surfacing. Increase size of main culvert and create a stone dished surface to direct water off path and into culvert. **ACTION: SH to provide more detailed information so LH can seek further thoughts from Stanage Forum.**

(c) 2022/23 Unfunded Projects carried into 2023/24

- Hope BW32 Phase 1. Includes Hope Woodlands BW5. Upper Ashop to Hope Cross. Waterbars and stone picking on steep gradient. Filling ruts. It was noted that ruts are really deep and difficult to ride on horseback or mountain bike. There is wide, heavy agricultural machinery taken up here.
- Hope BW32 Phase 2. Brinks Road to Hope Cross. Stoning rutted sections.
- Castleton BW40 – Dirtlow Rake. Large loose stones and deep waterfilled depressions. On-site crushing of stones to form a smoother surface and filling depressions. This is a very popular route with lots of use by 4x4s, trail bikes and mountain bikes. **Also need to build in weather resistance.**
- Peak Forest BW55. Stoning rutted sections with plans to dust edges to encourage grass growth as vehicles are preventing natural regeneration of verges, but concerns that this wasn't successful on Eyam BOAT 25. Reports of off-road night driving taking place up here with convoys travelling quite fast. Both issues prompted a conversation about the need to protect verges to encourage biodiversity, but also for people to report any illegal use to the

Police and insist on an incident number to ensure that it is followed up.

ACTION: It was agreed that this would be mentioned at the main LAF meeting and for GM/RG to check if there is still a Green Lanes Policy/ Strategy in place at DCC. GM will also find out more about the latest project to look at improving roadside verges for biodiversity. RG

suggested that work on this route may be carried out in two phases with the initial phase to concentrate on making the route safe, less challenging for vehicle users and to have discussions with the Police to help reduce antisocial behaviour and then look at improving the verges as part of a second phase.

- Youlgrave BW10, Coalpit Lane. Difficult solution as well as mapping issues. Steep incline with exposed tree roots. CG suggested that removing the bigger stones would help. **ACTION: It was agreed that it would be useful to arrange a site visit with LAF members and DCC/PDNPA – solution may call for some compromise between the needs of different user groups.**
- Macclesfield Old Road, Buxton over to Goyt Valley. Lots of large loose stone. Stone picking and filling deep ruts in verge where landowners have placed telegraph poles to try and prevent vehicles going off the main track onto SSSI. Reinstate water bars. **ACTION: It would be useful for DCC to discuss with PDNPA officers who have been involved with issues on this route.**
- Hayfield BW 47 (Phase 1). Repairs to stone pitching. Water bars on steep gradient.
- Clough Lane Birchover BOAT 23 and South Darley BOAT 46. Stoning rutted sections. It was noted that this is a popular route for motor vehicle users with easy access from the A6. It is also used by Duke of Edinburgh groups making their way to the campsite at Birchover – **need to be careful that surface improvements don't encourage vehicles to travel faster.**

(d) Phase 2 Projects which may not be funded in 2023/24

NB: It was agreed that these will be discussed further when funding is confirmed.

- Roadside fingerpost signs – 200 additional locations.
- Chinley FP44. Sandy Lane. Culvert stream that runs diagonally across path.
- New Mills BW144. Chinley Churn. Drainage works on deep muddy section.
- Tissington FP22. Dovedale. Boardwalk repairs. SSSI and National Trust.
- Monyash BOAT 29. Filling deep depressions and rutted sections.
- Chapel-en-le-Frith BOAT 144. Rushup Edge. Localised stone pitching.

(e) Emergency/Block projects

- Dethick FP27 & FP29 New steps and edging – on-site.
- Charlesworth FP65 Timber steps repairs.
- South Darley FP37, Wensley - timber step repairs.
- Highlow FP2 beside River Derwent, Goose Nest Woods, Riverbank repairs.

- Bakewell BW11 (Intake Lane). Remedial works to improve descent from Shutts Lane. British Horse Society has offered funding for two gates needing attention which RG confirmed was in hand.
- Offerton FP6, near stepping stones- timber step repair.
- Outseats FP42, Higgar Lane - concrete step repair rebuilding.
- Shatton Lane, Tarmac patching to existing tarmac surface.
- Brough and Shatton BOAT 16 Robin Hood's Cross – filling deep waterfilled depression.
- Little Longstone FP12 Monsal Head to Netherdale Farm. Problem with steep uneven steps (polished limestone). Probably one of busiest paths in Derbyshire which is used to access the Monsal Trail from the car park, often by first time visitors. Could be quite a significant project along with Ashford-in-the-Water FP17 below. Also definitive map issues here and possibly has bridleway status. PDNPA involvement in the past. **ACTION: It was agreed to arrange a site visit with LAF members, DCC and PDNPA officers.**
- Ashford-in-the-Water FP17 weir path to Monsal Head – step repairs.
- £96k countywide surface vegetation clearance contract has recently been issued for schedule of paths to be cut back in May with some receiving a second cut in August.

In response to a request from SH for suggestions about any other routes that needed to be looked at this year, the following were mentioned:-

- **Bakewell BW18** (Across golf course up to Ballcross Farm) - ND reported that the section through the woods is very worn and rutted. Whilst it may be a good downhill mountain bike track, it is difficult for horse riders to use. This would be a really useful repair as it would help with access to a circular route around Chatsworth etc.
- **Brailsford FP17** at Commonsides – MB reported that this is impassable due to a marshy area which needs about 200m of boardwalk but is a good link in the network which avoids the A52. **RG agreed to have another look at this.**

2) 2022/23 Work completed

(a) Capital projects

- Hucklow BOAT 18, School Lane – kerbing and filled potholes near school.
- Foolow BOAT 20, filled in deep potholes.
- Stoney Middleton BW 17 – stoning up.
- Riley Lane – stoning up.
- Great Longstone BOAT 52 – deep potholes.
- Taddington BOAT 70 stoning.
- Hope FP33 stoning.

- Ballidon BOAT 11.
- Bonsall BOAT 64 and 71.
- Calver FP13.
- Green Lane Middleton.
- Hartington TQ BW42 - **MB said this was a huge improvement, a little bit of run off is starting to appear which needs to be monitored.**

(b) Minor works

- 1049 Roadside fingerpost sign locations
- 276 rights of way waymarked
- Bonsall FP56
- Ashford-in-the-Water FP17
- Hayfield BW71
- Hayfield FP37
- Charlesworth FP10
- Bakewell FP35
- Matlock FP12
- New Mills FP96
- Hope Woodlands BW8
- New Mills FP103
- Youlgrave BW6

3) Communication with Users and Stakeholders

There was some discussion about how all this information could be made more readily available, using language that is easy to understand so there is greater transparency and people can find out what work is planned on paths in their area. A continuous dialogue with the LAF would also help with this, where there is a good pool of knowledge and appreciation of the needs of different user groups, as well as the landowner's perspective. **ACTION: SH offered to share his technical drawings and location plans with the Sub-Group. RG agreed to look at what information could be put on the County Council's website and the possibility of publishing a quarterly or half yearly forward programme of works.**

4) Issues, Challenges or Specific Concerns

RG clarified that the majority of these schemes are issued to in-house teams from Property Services and Highway Construction Services, with some problems arising from the lack of a pre-start meeting before work got underway on site. This is now being addressed by having a more manageable number of schemes and ensuring that these meetings do take place in future so the work can be properly explained and discussed to help avoid anything going wrong.

MB and PR both emphasised the importance of providing adequate drainage which is effectively maintained going forward as part of any surfacing improvements, particularly in the face of climate change and the increased frequency of intense rainfall events which will only exacerbate the situation. Any opportunities to encourage landowners to plant trees to help with flood mitigation ought to be encouraged. RG confirmed that DCC is starting to phase work and provide more robust solutions, but there are some very challenging sites eg paths through hollow ways where there often isn't anywhere to take the water and sometimes the only option is to go back and repair them after a really heavy storm.

Final thoughts – everyone agreed that this had been a very productive meeting and thanked DCC Rights of Way Officers for attending. It would be useful to have this meeting at least once a year to look back at projects which have been completed and to provide input/ comments on those which were being planned. There was also a reminder to let DCC know about any other paths where repairs are needed so these can be included in future programmes of work.