

Peak District Local Access Forum

**Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 15 October 2025
at Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell.**

Members Present:

Clare Griffin (Chair)

Martin Bennett
Martin Beer
Richard Entwistle
Cllr Susan Hobson
Ian Ord
Ben Seal

Charlotte Gilbert
Nick Doran
Louise Hawson
Geoff Nickolds
Dave Savage
John Towe

27/25 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Clare Griffin, Chair for today's meeting, welcomed Clara Thomas, Engagement Ranger and People of the Peak Project Support Officer, and on the Youth Impact Collective Group, and Jess Kid, Trainee Farm Adviser.

Apologies were received from Craig Best, Gill Millward, Alastair Harvey, Paul Richardson and Austin Knott.

The LAF now has a central email address PDLAF@peakdistrict.gov.uk

28/25 MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING ON 11 JUNE 2025 (3:56)

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2025 were approved as a correct record.

Phil Mulligan provided a budget update. The Authority is awaiting news from DEFRA on their 3-year settlement, and is planning for the worst-case scenario of a cut to the core grant. A consultation is underway on staff cuts, which are in addition to cuts made earlier in the year. Extra capital funding made available to English National Parks doesn't replace the revenue funding required for overall running of the organisation. Extending car park charges and planning advice fees are being considered to gain extra income. There is a similar picture for all English National Parks. Partner organisations support National Park aims and LAF members considered that LAFs are well placed to provide letters of support for the National Park.

Action: PDLAF to draft letter to DEFRA Ministers regarding National Park funding, with consideration given to involving all National Park Local Access Forums.

Matters Arising from 11 June 2025:

25/22 Tourism Charter

The Authority has recently adopted a Tourism Charter. A workshop will take place to consider how to enact the charter and take it forward. Partners will look at ways to influence visitor behaviour and for funding of infrastructure.

25/25 Any Other Business

The Turncliffe Common consultation response from the PDLAF has been submitted.

29/25 MEMBERSHIP (18:31)

Sue Smith reported a Member resignation from Charlotte Leech, who will stay involved but won't sit on the Forum. It is hoped that there will be a replacement with land manager representation to keep a balanced membership.

The PDLAF will continue to have a moving Chair role, with each Chair retaining the role for 2 consecutive meetings. Nick Doran will be Chair for the meetings in February and June 2026. At the February meeting the LAF will be asked to select a Chair for the 2 consecutive meetings beyond June 2026.

There is potential involvement of the Youth Impact Collective with consideration of a one-year membership role to the LAF. Clara Thomas, People of the Peak Project, and Anna Stuart, Communities Project Officer, spoke to the Forum about the Youth Impact Collective (YIC), which is still a relatively new group of 18 to 30 year olds formed to improve young people's ability to live, work, and access the National Park. Various representative roles have been set up on the YIC Group, including a Chair, a Welcome Lead and Nature Leads. The group are keen to have their say about the PDNP and have a youth perspective recognised in decision making.

Action: PDLAF members are invited to talk to the Youth Impact Collective Group at their monthly meetings.

30/25 OUTDOOR RECREATION & ACCESS TO NATURE (25:51)

PDLAF Member, Ben Seal from Paddle UK, gave a presentation on the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for Outdoor Recreation and Access to Nature. The APPG held an Inquiry on expanding access to blue and green spaces, including expert witness sessions across a broad range of user and interest groups, and have produced the Outdoors For All Recommendations Report. Lots of outdoor recreation groups were involved, including Paddle UK. A Summary of Consensus has been drawn up with 40 recommendations split into 9 sections. The Inquiry is the start of a process to consult on Access to Nature. The PDLAF needs to consider what good access is by looking at the report findings and being prepared to respond to a future Access to Nature consultation. New APPGs are imminent for National Parks and Outdoor Education.

Forum members discussed access issues and the findings of the report on public awareness and education. It is a small percentage of the population that cause problems in the countryside. How to educate in the right way is key. The Countryside Code could be better communicated through social media, promoted through retailers and businesses and broken down into specific activity codes for wild camping, fire risk and dogs.

The PDLAF didn't respond to the consultation due to difficulties in achieving consensus within the timeframe, but Ben indicated that responses subsequently directed to the APPG on Access to Nature were welcomed.

Action: The link to the Outdoors For All report be circulated. PDLAF members to

contribute to a response to the APPG consultation recommendations.

31/25 NATIONAL PARK BEHAVIOURAL DATA & INSIGHTS (1:14:37)

Sarah Rowley, PDNPA Senior Strategy and Performance Officer, gave a presentation on the data collection around visitation in the National Park. Data has been pulled together from various sources, including an online survey, Strava and mobile hotspots. The data collected gives an idea of trends of the number of visitors to areas of the National Park. Visitor pressure has an impact on the landscape, and brings both positive and negative benefits. Full data results will be communicated in early 2026.

A quick capture app, where information is gathered in real time, has been developed and was piloted by PDNPA Rangers over the summer. Data gathered can inform where more recreation management is needed and can be used in funding bids. The app is going to be rolled out to volunteers and others.

Forum members discussed the changing pattern of visitors since Covid 19. Numbers have gone back to pre-Covid levels, although people are now more likely to come all year round and some areas are busier. The data collection shows the Hope Valley is a particular hotspot for visitation.

32/25 NATIONAL PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE (1:46:33)

Sarah Rowley gave an update on the National Park Management Plan 2023-2028 (NPMP). The Wider Stakeholder Forum is made up of over 70 organisations. The NPMP has 4 main aims, 10 objectives and 50 actions, with 112 Critical Success Factors below that. These are delivered by all the partners, including PDNPA. The Delivery Group meets 3 to 4 times a year. The NPMP is in Year 3. The Partnership Group sits above the Delivery Group. Partners have an active duty to further National Park purposes.

Action: PDLAF to nominate a member representative for the National Park Management Plan Delivery Group.

Previously this has been the role of the PDLAF Chair, but with a rolling Chair this will now fall to the PDLAF Vice Chairs Martin Bennett and Charlotte Gilbert

33/25 MORRIDGE HILL COUNTRY SITE ACCESS PLAN (1:53:31)

Anna Stuart from the Morridge Hill Country Landscape Recovery Project, gave a presentation on the Morridge Hill Site Access Plan. Morridge Hill covers a large area with the main landowners being PDNPA, Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, the Ministry of Defence and 21 farmers and land managers. The project is currently in a 2-year development phase with delivery phase proposals to be submitted by May 2026. The project is funded by DEFRA in conjunction with Natural England and the Environment Agency. Help is sought from the LAF regarding proposed route improvements, additional routes, consultations, and volunteer surveys.

LAF members discussed that the area was good for outdoor recreation and a popular climbing area, but there was little detail on which groups aren't accessing the area. The nature of the landscape means the area won't be fully accessible to all users. The focus is therefore on what was possible and linking routes to public transport. Anna was looking to the LAF and its representative organisations for ideas on access improvements with a deadline of January 2026. There was a British Mountaineering Council offer of some funding and volunteer time.

Action: PDLAF members to consider input on improving access at Morridge Hill

Country.

34/25 DCC RIGHTS OF WAY IMPROVEMENT PLAN UPDATE (2:14:01)

Gill Millward was not present to give a progress update to the Peak District LAF. Sue Smith presented the update on Gill's behalf.

- Details on the Station to Station walks had been circulated to members.
- Two consultation responses had been attached to the RoWIP update report for the Forum to note - one on Definitive Map Modification Orders (DMMO) and one on the Hope Valley Active Travel Masterplans.
- A meeting is being considered in January 2026 with Derbyshire County Council to discuss proposed schemes over the coming year.

35/25 ACCESS UPDATE (2:16:27)

Sue Smith gave an Access Update.

- Projects are underway for Year 4 of the DEFRA Access for All Programme of funding.
- The PDLAF have previously been advised on the Peak District Foundation's Path and Trails Appeal. The Access Fund continues to receive income through Miles without Stiles handbook sales.
- The Ease of Use survey has been carried out using a field-based app with an 85.64% pass rate.
- The PDLAF has provided a stakeholder response to the review of the Countryside Code.

Action: The PDLAF to invite the Peak District Foundation to a future meeting to give an update on the Path and Trails Appeal.

36/25 ACTIVE TRAVEL UPDATE (2:21:01)

Tim Nicholson, PDNPA Transport Policy Planner, updated members on the Active Travel programme.

- A sub group of the PDLAF had been formed.
- A draft active travel plan was approved at the May 2025 Authority Meeting.
- An economic business case and feasibility study has been developed with the aim to secure funding.

Tim further updated members on the Local Plan consultation, due to start in November 2025. Of particular interest to the PDLAF:

- The National Park currently safeguards land on the Monsal Trail and Trans Pennine Trail for future rail development. From the 2024 Local Plan stakeholder consultation feedback, it is proposed that safeguarding will be dropped for both trails in order to secure their recreational use.
- There will be a further proposal to safeguard land between Bakewell and Rowsley, and between Buxton and the Goyt Valley, for potential trail use.
- The Recreation Hub policy is out for consultation.

Action: Local Plan consultation details to be circulated to PDLAF members.

37/25 ANNUAL REPORT (2:27:13)

Sue Smith tabled the latest PDLAF Annual Report and will look to summarise which interest groups members represent in future reports.

38/25 MEMBERS REPORTS (2:29:31)

Charlotte Gilbert, representing the British Horse Society (BHS), along with the Regional Bridleways and Access Officer from Rugby, had met with Helen Carrington, the PDNPAs Trails Manager. Recent changes to charging in PDNPA car parks had led to confusion about the tariffs applying to horse boxes. The issue is now resolved with some changes to signage being implemented. It was recognised by the BHS that charges needed to be increased in light of the reduction in the National Park's core funding.

39/25 AOB & DATE OF NEXT MEETING (2:31:47)

Anna Jennings gave a brief overview to LAF members about Nature Prescriptions. Working with RSPB, the PDNPA had pioneered this initiative under the Green Prescribing agenda. It includes a programme of walks and activities where health care professionals can support people to connect with nature and green spaces. A new leaflet has been launched, working with further agencies to widen the reach of the programme. The purpose of speaking to the LAF was to raise awareness and seek collaboration with other groups on health and wellbeing work.

The date of the next 2 meetings, chaired by Nick Doran, are 4 February and 3 June 2026. The Chair for the 7 October 2026 meeting is to be determined. Suggestions from Members on themes for future meetings are sought.

The meeting finished at 12:42 pm.

Meeting ended - 12.42 pm