

# Peak District Local Access Forum

## Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 4 February 2026 at Aldern House, Baslow Road, Bakewell.

### Members Present:

Martin Bennett  
Martin Beer  
Austin Knott  
Jez Kenyon  
Paul Richardson  
Ian Ord

Nick Doran (Chair)

Charlotte Gilbert  
Cllr Susan Hobson  
Ben Seal  
Geoff Nickolds  
John Towe  
Nick Blayney

### Others Present:

Sue Smith, (PDNPA) (Secretary)  
Dave Savage, Local Access Forum

Gill Millward, (DCC)

## 1/26 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Ian Ord, Craig Best, Alastair Harvey, Louise Hawson and Clare Griffiths.

Hayden Bridgeman, recently appointed to the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) as Engagement Ranger Team Leader – Operations and Partnerships, was welcomed to the meeting.

## 2/26 MINUTES OF MEETING ON 15 OCTOBER 2025 (NICK DORAN) (00:01:25)

The minutes of the meeting held on 15 October 2025 were agreed as a correct record.

### Matters Arising

The actions from the minutes will be picked up in the agenda items.

Sue Smith had circulated the latest restructure update for the PDNPA. The Authority is still waiting to hear confirmation of the DEFRA settlement. Nick Doran is co-ordinating a letter to DEFRA on funding for National Parks.

**Action: LAF members to send comments to Nick Doran to incorporate into the National Park funding letter to DEFRA and MPs.**

A meeting with representatives from DEFRA took place in February. A draft letter had been tabled about the All Party Parliamentary Group's (APPG) Outdoor Recreation and Access to Nature report. The draft letter sets out the PDLAF's support for the report recommendations and also welcomes APPG officers to attend a future Forum meeting.

**Action: LAF members to send comments to Nick Doran and Sue Smith on the draft letter re the APPG report recommendations.**

### **3/26 MEMBERSHIP (SUE SMITH) (00:06:35)**

New member Nick Blayney was welcomed to the Forum. Nick is a keen walker and mountain biker and is trying to reinstate the Sheffield LAF. Nick has a wider interest in access which led to putting himself forward for the PDLAF.

Hayden Bridgeman introduced herself to the PDLAF.

The LAF had previously decided to have a rolling chair who will cover a couple of meetings. Nick Doran will also Chair the June 2026 meeting, and asked members to think about putting themselves forward for the October 2026 and February 2027 meetings.

**Action: LAF members to consider taking on the role of Chair for the meetings in October 2026 and February 2027.**

### **4/26 SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL (ALAN SIMPSON) (00:10:15)**

Nick Doran introduced Alan Simpson, the Sustainable Travel Ambassador for the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA), who talked to the Forum about his role.

The East Midlands is the region with the highest growth in traffic, with too few buses in the north of the region and too many cars in the south. Planned growth in the area with new housing will bring more cars to the area.

The Mayor's budget is mainly designated for capital spending, which could be used in various ways, including purchasing land for park and ride schemes. Integrated transport and access solutions are needed, with ideas being sought as part of the current consultation on the Mayor's Transport Plan for the East Midlands. Alan asked for input from the PDLAF.

LAF members asked about the plan for using automated self-drive vehicles, as used in other countries, and considered the difficulties of scheduled bus and train services adequately serving rural areas.

There was concern expressed that there was no mention of the need for journeys for leisure activities in the Mayor's Transport Plan consultation and no reference to horse riders. It was felt that the consultation was urban focussed. It didn't mention the Rights of Way network and how to improve it. Accessing open spaces locally is a challenge in rural as well as urban areas.

The consultation provides an opportunity to think strategically on transport across borders with constituent authorities in a National Park, not only with the East Midlands region but into South Yorkshire, Greater Manchester and Staffordshire. The East Midlands provides important connectivity because of the link to other regions. Cross ticketing across areas and schemes would simplify people's access to public transport.

Provision of cycling routes is some way behind the rest of Europe and there is a need for safe routes operating in conjunction with public transport corridors. The mayor's transport plan consultation is an opportunity for communities to put ideas forward for what could work in their area. In order for schemes to work locally they need connectivity to the wider network.

**Action: PDLAF to consider submitting feedback to the Mayor's EMCCA transport**

plan consultation.

## **5/26 ACTIVE TRAVEL (SUE SMITH/TIM NICHOLSON) (00:59:00)**

England and Active Travel England (ATE) on how National Parks are unlocking access to health and nature through work on active travel.

Tim Nicholson, Transport Policy Planner for the PDNPA, updated LAF Members on the [Active Travel Plan: Peak District National Park](#). The Authority had one year to deliver a Plan, and with the short timescale he focus was on the strategic network. The LAF and its active travel sub group were thanked for their help in developing this.

Tim's presentation provided details of the surveys undertaken and the amount of money that visitors spent as part of their day out and the joint economic business case with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority. Tim also referred to the recent Local Plan Review consultation which had raised the possibility of safeguarding potential new routes for walking, wheeling, cycling and horse riding.

LAF members welcomed the work and further noted that creating cycling, walking and wheeling routes should be factored in when building road and rail infrastructure.

## **6/26 DERBYSHIRE CC ROWIP UPDATE (GILL MILLWARD) (01:10:00)**

Rob Greatorox will attend the PDLAF meeting in June to provide an update on the work programme, including repairs to routes which Forum members are particularly interested in.

Derbyshire County Council has advised that it will maintain the current system of dealing with DMMO applications in chronological order of receipt.

Charlotte and Martin are on the Joint LAF Sub-Group with the Derby and Derbyshire LAF which has met to discuss the County Council's response to the LAF's advice on the prioritisation of these applications. Given that there are now 2.5 full time members of staff working exclusively on DMMO applications, it was agreed to monitor progress over the coming months and to invite an officer from Legal and Democratic Services to provide an update at a future LAF meeting.

It was mentioned that when route status is determined/upgraded, further work may be needed to make those routes safe and usable for all users, An example was given of a bridleway connecting Wormhill to Taddington, via Blackwell.

LAF Members considered that pressure should still be made via MPs to pass the legislation needed to repeal the cut-off date for recording historic rights of way in England, after the UK Government announced its intention to do so back in December 2024.

Derbyshire has over 450km of traffic free routes for people to use and is now seeing significant amounts of money coming through from EMCCA to improve the network. DCC has achieved a Level 2 Active Travel Capability Rating, up from Level 1, after a recent assessment by Active Travel England (ATE).

In response to a question raised by LAF members, Gill reported that work is progressing on the White Peak Loop connections into Buxton using ATE funding to draw up detailed designs .

**Action: Gill Millward to circulate to LAF Members details of the White Peak Loop into**

## **Buxton.**

In connection with the Chapelgate route, LAF members raised the user group involvement via the PDLAF and for ensuring that views were taken on board in order to avoid recurring problems.

**Action: Gill Millward agreed to ensure that LAF input will be fully considered by DCC in future.**

In connection with the aim to improve the promotion, understanding and use of the network, the Cycle Derbyshire leaflet continues to be updated to promote traffic free routes across the county, and is being distributed to cycle hire centres, accommodation providers, libraries and information points.

Greater community involvement is taking place through the use of volunteers and their preventative maintenance on trails, rights of way and countryside sites. The Service Level Agreement with Groundwork Five Counties delivered 270 volunteer days between April and December 2025, estimated to be worth in the region of £53,865.

*10:30am 5 minute break*

## **7/26 PATH AND TRAILS APPEAL (ROISIN JOYCE) (01:35:00)**

Roisin Joyce, Peak District National Park Foundation Director, gave a presentation on the Paths and Trails Appeal. The Foundation is a charity set up in 2019 to raise funds to protect and improve the National Park. The Foundation can access sources of funding that a Local Authority can't and can be more donor focussed.

The Paths and Trails Appeal, launched in Autumn 2024, has raised funds from individual and community group donations, as well as corporate contributions. Of the £12,335 raised so far, £4k has gone into access and accessibility work and £4k to repairs and maintenance of the trails.

The Foundation has gone out to existing supporters, and linked in to community events. It plans to go out to Visitor Centres and Cycle Hire centres shortly, and will introduce a campaign in a few months to seek further support from visitor accommodation providers and outdoor event organisers, as well as Legacy giving.

A major donation of up to £100k over the next 12 months had been received, which could be a multi year commitment, for footpath repair in the Dark Peak.

Other funded projects include People of the Peak, an accessible garden, a litter picking programme, and working in partnership with a climbing/ mountaineering clothing and equipment manufacturer and the British Mountaineering Council on maintenance work at Stanage Plantation.

The LAF welcomed the update and considered that there was an opportunity for more direct contact with the Foundation to help contribute to how donations are spent.

**Action: Roisin Joyce to provide details of the proposed works at Lantern Pike.**

**Action: Forum members to pass on any ideas on funded work to Nick Doran, as current Chair, or Sue Smith to raise at a future meeting with the Foundation and PDLAF.**

It was noted that any funded projects on the Rights of Way network in Derbyshire should be

run past the County Council.

In response to a question raised about placing a levy on accommodation, Roisin responded that this would not be part of the Foundations's remit.

## **8/26 ACCESS UPDATE (SUE SMITH) (01:52:50)**

DEFRA Access for All programme in Year 4 (2025/26) was funding capital works with a focus on access to nature. On completion of this year's spend, a report would be provided to PDLAF.

**Action: Sue Smith to report to the June LAF meeting on 2025/26 Access for All delivery.**

The Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL) scheme had been extended for a further 3 years to March 2029. Updates on FiPL access projects had been circulated to LAF members.

**Action: FiPL officer to be invited to a future LAF meeting to update the Forum on all areas of work covered.**

The PDLAF had provided a response to the PDNPA's Local Plan consultation, which was noted and agreed.

The Forum also noted details of the proposed amendments to the byelaws in relation to verge parking at North Lees.

**Action: LAF Members to consider any feedback on verge parking at North Lees.**

Members advised that permissive footpath/ bridleway information had not been updated on the PDNPA website since 2022. It was hoped that landowners will continue with the permissive schemes.

## **9/26 DOVE STONES WOODLAND (KATE HANLEY) (02:05:10)**

Kate Hanley from the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) at Dove Stone gave a presentation on the management of the 4,000 hectare site, with a focus on native woodland and native scrub creation. The site is well placed to deliver learning, access opportunities and connection to nature, being in close proximity to Oldham, Manchester, Rochdale, Huddersfield and Bradford. The RSPB has been at Dove Stone since 2010, when the peat was in poor condition. A lot of recovery work has taken place since then, helped by the input of volunteers. Progress has been made across the site with nature restoration work, but the upland peatland areas are still in a poor state.

Kate was available after the meeting to answer any questions from Forum members, and would be happy to host a site visit to Dove Stone if members were interested to find out more about the work being carried out there.

**Action: Sue to consider arrangements for a future site visit by the Forum or its**

members

**10/26 MEMBERS REPORTS (ALL) (02:22:50)**

None

**11/26 AOB AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING (02:23:00)**

Tom Lewis, PDNPA Area Ranger based at Brunts Barn, spoke to the Forum about the current recruitment of a Wildfire Engagement Officer role that will cover the Eastern side of the National Park. This was being funded by the British Mountaineering Council and the Moors for the Future Partnership. This is a seasonal, educational role and will showcase how effective this role can be in managing incidences of wildfires, using data sets to inform when and where these are likely to occur, to best use this resource. Similar roles in other areas of the National Park have had a positive impact on litter and wildfire risk, by engaging with the public.

Sue Smith advised that 2026 is the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Peak District Local Access Forum, alongside the National Park's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Pin badges to mark the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary had been issued and were available for Forum Members.

Date of Next Meeting is Wednesday 3 June 2026.

Meeting finished at 12:29pm

Meeting ended - Time Not Specified

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