



Unapproved Minutes of Meeting of
Yorkshire Dales Access Forum
Held on Friday 7 December 2007
Gargrave Village Hall

Present: Geoff Wilson (GW) - Chair, Michael Bartholomew (MB), Peter Bradfield (PB), David Gibson (DG), Malcolm Petyt (MP), Paul Tibbatts (PT), Ken Miller (KM), Jon Beavan (JB) – arrived at 11.00am

YDNPA Officers present:

Rachel Briggs (RB) – Access Development Officer and LAF Secretary
Kathryn Beardmore (KB) – Access and Recreation Manager
Jon Avison (JA) – Head of Park Management
Natalie Thompson – Access Technician

The meeting started at 9.36am

1. Welcome

GW welcomed Chris Ellison, a member of the public, to the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from: Bill Foster (BF), Ben Heyes (BH), Pat Whelan (PWh), Adrian Pickles (AP), Judy Rogers (JR), Harold Brown (HB), Deborah Millward (DM), Richard Johnson (RJ), Phil Woodyer (PW)

3. Approval of Minutes

Page 5, item 9. KM asked for it to be noted that he had not nominated himself for the Access for All sub group of the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership, merely that he thought it was an important subject and that he would keep an eye on the work of the group.

GW added that he had attended a meeting to discuss the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership where it had been decided that there was now a requirement for a member from each of the three LAF's to sit on each of the three task groups Maintenance, Promotion and Improvement Task Groups. GW stated that he had not been in favour of this as it adds to the workload of members.

Page 6 item 10. PB noted that the action point for this item was not correct and that the sentence 'Each individual Advisory Group to set their own action plans in relation to these overarching objectives' needed to be separated from the action and placed in the main part of the item text.

Page 6, item 12. JA asked for the first sentence to be expanded to read 'HB and MP declared an interest in this item and took no part in the discussion.

Page 11, item 3 of the minutes of the Access on Foot Advisory group. There was some discussion as to whether the removal of the requirement for the chair of the advisory group to be a LAF member was a good idea. PB stated that, as an attendee of the meeting of the Access on Foot Advisory Group, he found it very useful to gain a wider perspective. It was agreed that the group feed into the YDAF in an advisory capacity and not as a sub group of the YDAF. KB added that sub groups would have to adhere to the LAF Regulations and thus be advertised correctly and open to the public, if they were sub-groups; instead they were seen as having close links to the LAF. The groups that had been formed are under the 'umbrella' of the YDAF because of the strong YDAF membership, but were set up by the YDNPA and were advisory groups to the YDNPA.

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a true record of the meeting.

4. Formal consultation with YDAF on proposed Traffic Regulation Orders:

MP declared an interest in this item as the independent chair of the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group (YDGLAG) and as a member of the Access Committee. He stated he would not take part in the debate.

JA clarified that officers of the YDNPA would not be adding to the debate and would only be part of the discussion to help with for matters of clarification.

GW clarified that the advice of the YDGLAG would be put forward to the Access Committee for consideration together with the consultation responses which would include the view of the YDAF. Some LAF members wanted this advice to be under section 94 of the CROW Act – giving advice to the appointing authority. It was pointed out that GW was seeking from Defra as to whether there was any difference between the LAF responding to a 'consultation', (as was the purpose of this meeting), and giving formal 'advice' under section 94.

DG began the discussion by reading out a statement on his view of the use of green lanes by recreational motor vehicles as a whole. The view put forward was that motor vehicular use intrinsically affects the peace and tranquillity of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. He concluded by saying that permanent TROs should be placed on all the routes to be discussed to safeguard the fragile environment. The Chair commented that he had hoped that discussion would be on a more objective and inclusive basis.

Each route was then discussed separately using the recommendation of the YDGLAG as a starting point for discussion.

Arncliffe Cote

MB thought that the YDGLAG's suggestion of an emergency TRO where necessary was wrong and that the peace and tranquillity argument was not reflected in their recommendation. He suggested a permanent TRO should be placed on the route.

GW drew members' attention to the report in front of them saying it contained facts and figures which had been used by the YDGLAG when reaching their recommendation.

DG added that he had recently walked the route and he felt the route was worse than the report stated.

GW asked members to consider that there has been no maintenance of this route and that this needs to be taken account. A discussion then followed about what sort of maintenance could be expected on a route of thin vegetation/soil over limestone pavement. JA said that if the soil were eroded it was unlikely anything would be done. KB explained the importance of the Authority balancing its highway authority duties – a route could always be engineered, and its duties under the Environment Act to conserve the natural beauty. The principles that would guide maintenance in upland areas were outlined in the Integrated Access Strategy and maintenance plan.

GW also stated that the recommendation should be inclusive and not marginalise people from the National Park. DG agreed with this but remained his opinion that the use of Arncliffe Cote by vehicles was having a detrimental effect, and he maintained his view that a full, permanent TRO was necessary.

The majority of the members present agreed that for Arncliffe Cote, a permanent all year round TRO be made to exclude all motor vehicles except for access

Ling Gill/Cam High Road

These two routes were considered together.

GW noted that Chris Ellison (member of the public) had emailed the YDAF prior to the meeting with a matter of inaccuracy of the report for Cam High Road. This was that he had personally been involved in an accident with motorbikes and this had lead on to an incident where his mountain bike had been damaged.

The majority of the members present agreed that Ling Gill and Cam High Road should be subject to a permanent all year round TRO.

Gorbeck Road/Stockdale Lane

These two routes were considered together.

KM began the discussion by saying that at a recent meeting of the Access for All Advisory Group, when discussing routes for rough terrain wheelchairs (e.g. Trampers); these routes had to be dismissed due to the chance of meeting recreational vehicles, as there was no room to pass. GW stressed that MPV users sought arrangements whereby all demands on joint user routes could be accommodated.

MB informed members that the two routes form part of the Pennine Bridleway National Trail and have had money spent on their improvement. GW added that the Countryside Agency (Natural England) had said that the designation of national trails would not compromise the use of the route for other users.

The majority of the members present agreed that for Gorbeck Road and Stockdale Lane a permanent all year round TRO be made to exclude all motor vehicles except for access

Harber Scar Lane

MB began by saying that his previous arguments stood for Harber Scar Lane and that a full time, permanent TRO was necessary as the route was used far more than just Sundays. GW added that the Cumbria Group TRF had changed their pattern of use, they now organised group runs on weekdays. There was a changing culture amongst recreational motor vehicular users, and they were trying to create a situation whereby all potential users could be accommodated.

DG said that as the route was part of the Ribble Way and the Pennine Way, it received more pedestrian traffic than normal and therefore a permanent TRO should be made.

JB stated that he saw this as unfair to those who have a legal right to use the route.

The majority of the members present agreed that for Harber Scar Lane a permanent all year round TRO be made to exclude all motor vehicles except for access

Foxup Road

The members present agreed that Foxup Road should be subject to a permanent all year round TRO.

The High Way

KM began by saying that there is a sign on one end of the High Way, placed on the fence by a recreational vehicle user group (Trail Riders Association of Craven), advising them to use the route from the opposite direction. However, he thought this was not working as he had encountered recreational motor vehicle users going up the route. KM recommended a permanent TRO and was thus in agreement with the recommendation of the YDGLAG. GW asked for fair comment and suggested that two incidents of contravention against

voluntary restraint did not mean that most other riders were not conforming to the restraint.

It was noted that the Cotter End of the Highway was in need of repair, and that this was not part of the Pennine Bridleway route. It was also noted that at the Hell Gill end of the route the line on the Definitive Map did not correspond to the used line. KB clarified that she was aware of this discrepancy, and that the authority was consulting upon a possible TRO along the definitive line, and hoped issues around this regarding signing would be clarified during the consultation process.

The majority of members present agreed that the High Way should be subject to a permanent all year round TRO.

5. Any Other Business

MB asked that the YDAF consider their representatives on the YDGLAG and how they saw their role. It was noted that in setting up of the YDGLAG the Authority had sought YDAF views on representation first, and then filled in the other members of the YDGLAG to create a balanced group. The Chair ruled that this was not competent AOB and that if any members wished it should be a subject for discussion at a subsequent YDAF meeting.

DG asked how the YDAF will deal with further routes that they are consulted on. KB explained that the sensitivity assessment outlining all of the routes being considered by the YDGLAG was now on the authority's website. The group was currently assessing routes 16-20 out of 28 'sensitive' routes.

http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/index/looking_after/access_to_the_countryside/green_lane_management/management_framework.htm.

Officers were asked to look at possible further consultations with the YDAF and if these could fit with YDAF meeting dates where reasonable.

The meeting closed at 11.20am