



Unapproved Minutes
Annual General Meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum
Held on Tuesday 20 January 2009
Yoredale, Bainbridge

Present: Michael Bartholomew (MB) – Chair, David Bartlett (DB), Jon Beavan (JB), Peter Bradfield (PB), Stephen Butcher (SB), Andrew Colley (AC), David Gibson (DG), Guy Keating (GK), Michael Kenyon (MK), Ken Miller (KM), Jerry Pearlman (JP), Malcolm Petyt (MP), Alistair Thompson (AT), Paul Tibbatts (PT), Pat Whelan (PWh), Phillip Woodyer (PW).

YDNPA Officers present: Alan Hulme (AH), Rachel Briggs (RB) – LAF Secretary, Kathryn Beardmore (KB), Jon Avison (JA), Paul Wilkinson (PW).

The meeting started at 1.15pm.

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

JA began the meeting by explaining the process of election of a Chair.

DG proposed MB. This was seconded by KM and MP. No further nominations were received. MB spoke to the meeting. There were no questions.

MB was elected as Chair of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum for a year.

MB then asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

KM nominated PW. This was seconded by JB. No further nominations were received. PW was not present at the meeting at that point to accept the position but accepted at a later point at the meeting.

PW was elected as Vice Chair of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum for a year.

2. Welcome

MB welcomed David Bartlett (DB), Michael Kenyon (MK), Jerry Pearlman (JP), Alistair Thompson (AT), Andrew Colley (AC) and Stephen Butcher (SB) to the meeting, as new members of the YDAF. He then asked for everyone round the table to introduce themselves.

3. Apologies

Apologies were received from Robert Mayo (RM).

4. Approval of Minutes

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

Matters Arising from the Minutes

MB asked AH if he had any further information on the cause of fires, on open access land, in the Yorkshire Dales. AH said that he didn't have further information.

MB had not yet received any correspondence from Doug Huzzard from NYCC with regards to the Unsurfaced/Unclassified Roads Group. DG said Doug Huzzard had been to the North Yorkshire LAF to inform them that the UCR network was to be surveyed by volunteers.

MB informed the YDAF that MB, PW and RB had attended a meeting of the Yorkshire and Humber Regional LAF. One of the main outcomes of that meeting was that Natural England would be sending a representative to each LAF for one meeting. JB asked if papers were still sent to a list of observers, including Natural England. RB said that this was still happening.

5. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

9. Mapping infrastructure on access land

Paul Wilkinson, Area ranger for Cumbria, gave a very informative presentation on the process the Rangers and Dales Volunteers are going through to map infrastructure on open access land. The presentation generated the following comments and questions:

MK asked if the information would be displayed on the Authority's website and whether comments could be made. PW said that that the detail would be on the website (www.yorkshiredales.org.uk) and that comments would be welcomed.

KM commended the work and said that it is a good way of providing as much information as possible so that people can make informed decisions as to where they can or can't go. KM went on to ask whether the information would be made available as a hard copy from the National Park Centres. AH said that there are computers in the National Park Centres where the information will be able to be viewed but these are not linked to printers so hard copies could not be printed out.

JB asked whether it would be possible to provide the information in a suitable format for downloadable mapping programmes such as Memory Map. AH wasn't sure if this was possible but said that he would check with the IT department.

AH to check if the infrastructure information can be provided in a downloadable format suitable for use with programmes such as memory map.

As a Dales Volunteer, AT stressed the amount of hard work that has gone in to the surveys. He thought that the information that has been gathered is a very valuable resource for promoting guided walks and promoted routes.

PWh asked if the Dales Volunteers can be officially thanked for all their hard work in the surveying. JA said that this was possible via the Annual Volunteer Meeting.

RB to ensure the Dales Volunteers are thanked, officially, for their survey work.

6. Future Forum Meetings

Dates of meetings

Dates for meetings during 2009 are:

19 May - Yoredale, Bainbridge - 6.00pm.

22 September – Venue TBC – 1.15pm

Future Agenda Items

MB asked members for suggestions for items for future meetings.

JB suggested an item on technology and access and said he was prepared to do a presentation on this topic.

JB to give a presentation at a future meeting on technology and access.

MB said that if members had any other items, to pass them to himself or RB.

7. Presentation on Farming in the Yorkshire Dales

PWh gave a short presentation on farming in the Yorkshire Dales and the potential conflicts with access opportunities.

MB thanked PWh and asked if there were any concerns generated from the presentation that could be brought to the YDAF.

PB said that he agreed with much of what PWh had said. He said that the foot and mouth outbreak in 2001 proved that more walls are damaged by walkers than stock. He also has a concern about gates and when they should be left open.

PT said that he has a problem with walkers deviating from the public right of way (PROW) to access another point on his land.

DB thought that gates were a huge issue that needed to be solved. He suggested a colour code for those that could be left open. MK said that gates are often left open because they don't fasten properly.

JB said that he has sympathy for farmers. However, he suggested that some landowners are their own worst enemy and are aggressive to visitors which doesn't help relations. He thought that landowners should be encouraged to educate users if problems arose.

8. Consultation on the review of national trails and routes

AH gave a presentation to the YDAF on the review of National Trails and the consultation response from the YDNPA. The deadline for a response is 8 February 2009. The YDAF were given two choices: to accept and endorse the response from the YDNPA or to submit their own response.

JB thought that in this instance, the YDNPA had got their response wrong. He felt that there had been some confusion between national trails and long distance routes. He gave the example of the Yorkshire Dales three peaks route which is not a national trail but which is identified by the public as a recognised long distance route and thus should be managed accordingly. MP agreed that some of these 'other named routes', such as the coast to coast, are of national importance and a good resource. However, he wouldn't want to see the entire PROW budget being put into these routes.

MB sought clarification from JA and AH about the Authority's position on the important point that JB had raised. The position is this: the Authority certainly does not neglect routes that are not official long-distance trails, but it sees no purpose in adding another tier of management to the numerous informal routes. They can be managed successfully within the existing protocols. AH added that working groups have been set up for trails such as the Dales Way.

JP reminded members that National Trails were designated under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949. They were selected to provide outstanding opportunities for people to enjoy extensive journeys in the finest countryside. By having another level of routes, this could diminish the importance of the national trails.

PT thought that the response from the YDNPA was fine but wondered if the scheme to have another level of 'other named routes' could be supported, provided that additional funding were forthcoming. WF responded by saying that he thought the way Natural England currently manages national trails is distorted. In his opinion, too much money has been spent on the Pennine Bridleway and he questioned whether it is wise to spend vast amounts of money on a small number of trails.

DG said that his concern was that the more 'other named routes' there are, the more these will be prioritised and then other routes will be lost.

JB, after listening to the debate, agreed with much of what had been said but added that he thought the YDNPA should consider the management of those 'other named routes' that are of national importance and champion them.

The response drafted by the YDNPA was discussed. AH asked for members to note that some minor amendments had been made by the Access Committee to the report enclosed. The following comments were made:

Page 11, section C.

MK thought that customers would find it useful to have an indication as to how long certain sections of national trails or 'other named routes' might take.

JB said that it would be useful to have somewhere where comments could be left after a route had been completed. This could take the format of an internet forum.

MB thanked members for their comments and asked how they would like to take them forward. JP suggested a letter be written to Natural England saying that the YDAF endorse the response from the YDNPA, perhaps with a footnote with any comments. JB asked that it be stressed that the YDAF are dissatisfied that they were not consulted.

MB to write a response to Natural England with help from PW and RB

10. Report back from Advisory Groups

Access for All Advisory Group

PW presented the minutes from the Access for All Advisory Group and RB showed some Photographs from the Disabled Rambler visit in July 2008.

AT asked if it was possible to hire 'Trampers' within the National Park. PW said that there places in the Forest of Bowland where they can be hired.

Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group

KM presented the minutes from the Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group. He told members of the YDAF that at the last meeting, there had been a presentation by a mountain biker which had been very well received.

Water Sports Advisory Group

JP asked if the memo of understanding, as discussed by the members of the Water Sports Advisory Group, could be circulated round the YDAF.

RB to send the memo of understanding, as discussed by members of the Water Sports Advisory Group, to members of the YDAF.

Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group

JB presented the minutes from the Caves and Crag Access Advisory Group.

Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

MP presented the minutes from the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group. MP told members of the YDAF that the group would continue to meet on a six monthly basis.

11. Review of nominated LAF members of groups linked to the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum

MB went through each of the groups listed in the report and the YDAF reviewed the representative for each group in turn.

Access on Foot Advisory Group

DB and MK both expressed an interest in attending the Access on Foot Advisory Group. MB agreed to stand down as representative of the YDAF on the group in order to create a space. It was agreed that PB should remain on the group as a landowner. AH was happy to have three members of the YDAF on the group.

PB, DB and MK to represent the YDAF on the Access on Foot Advisory Group.

Access for All Advisory Group

AC expressed an interest in the work of the Access for All Advisory Group. KM decided to step down from this group due to his involvement in some of the other groups.

PW, MB, AC and PWh to represent the YDAF on the Access for All Advisory Group.

Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group

AT and MK both expressed an interest in attending the Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group. KM, as the chair of the group, said that their input would be valued and that he had no concerns with there being four members of the YDAF on the group. RB agreed with this.

AT, MK, KM and PWh to represent the YDAF on the Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group.

Air Sports Advisory Group

Members were satisfied with JB and PT representing the YDAF on the Air Sports Advisory Group.

Water Sports Advisory Group

AC expressed an interest in the work of the Water Sports Advisory Group.

AC and PW to represent the YDAF on the Water Sports Advisory Group.

Caves and Crag Access Advisory Group

MK expressed an interest in the work of the Caves and Crag Access Advisory Group.

MK and JB to represent the YDAF on the Caves and Crag Access Advisory Group.

Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

PWh, JP, DG and KM all expressed an interest in attending the meetings of the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group, with JB and MB both keen to remain working on the group. Considering the balance of the group, it was agreed that the membership should be MB, JB, PWh and KM with JP and DG as reserves if a space should become free.

PWh, JB, MB and KM to represent the YDAF on the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group, as well as their individual interests.

Active Craven

JB told members that he had only attended one meeting with this group and that he thought it had very little relevance to the YDAF.

It was agreed that there is no need for representation from the YDAF on the Active Craven Group.

North Yorkshire Unclassified/Unsurfaced Liaison Group

Members were satisfied with MP representing the YDAF on the North Yorkshire Unclassified/Unsurfaced Liaison Group.

Cumbria Countryside Partnership Board

As the Chair of the YDAF, it was noted that MB should continue to represent the YDAF on the Cumbria Countryside Partnership Board.

Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership – Promotions Task Group

Members were satisfied with PB representing the YDAF on the CCA Promotions Task Group

Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership – Maintenance Task Group

Members were satisfied with DG representing the YDAF on the CCA Maintenance Task Group instead of MB.

Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership – Improvement Task Group

Members were satisfied with RM representing the YDAF on the CCA Improvement Task Group.

12. Secretary's Report

RB presented a report of items for Members' consideration and information. These were:

- Access Committee Dates and Venues.
 - JA noted that at the last Access Committee meeting the members had discussed training for the following year. YDAF members would be welcomed to training events and RB will send details.
- Yorkshire Dales Access Forum membership.
- CROW Act restrictions and exclusions.
- Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership.
- Proposed joint event for the three North Yorkshire Local Access Forums.

- MB asked members for any items to be included in the agenda for the joint North Yorkshire Local Access Forum meeting. The following items were suggested:
 - Access to water.
 - Access for All.
 - Recreational motor vehicles.
 - Cross boundary routes.

13. Update on Members Activities

Members had nothing to add to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 4.35pm