

North York Moors National Park

c/o Local Access Forum Secretary,
North York Moors National Park
The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley, YORK
YO62 5BP

Public Minutes of the meeting held at The Old Vicarage, Helmsley on 9 March 2010.

Present: J Bateman, J Cavana, P Cody, Mrs C Cussons, G Dawson, P Hay, Mrs J King, Lady E Kirk, D Leyshon, Ms A Peacock, S Scoffin, Mrs N Taylor, G Winn Darley

Apologies: Mrs C Cook, Mrs M Mitchell

Officers in attendance: Richard Gunton (Director of Recreation and Park Management), Bernie McLinden (Head of Park Management), Karl Gerhardsen (Head of Recreation and Access), Fiona Farnell (Committees Officer)

COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED ARE IN THE MINUTE BOOK

01/10 Minutes

Resolved:

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 1 December 2009, having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to the omission of the declaration of interest by D Leyshon from minute 57/09.

02/10 Matters Arising

- a. Members category representation

Action – The Secretary to contact NYCC to confirm if Mr M Knaggs has stepped down from the forum.

03/10 Presentation on the Management Plan and Local Development Framework

The Policy Manager gave a powerpoint presentation, a copy of which can be found in the minute book.

A Member asked if the Authority had any plans to produce a Supplementary Planning Document on recreation and access. The Policy Manager explained that there were no immediate plans as the Authority did not really have high enough levels of development, although this may be looked into in greater detail for Helmsley.

The issue was raised that there was some confusion over the National Parks role to deliver Green Infrastructure. The Policy Manager explained that the Authority felt that they had been doing this for a long time but explained the work that Natural England was doing to expand on the policy in the Regional Spatial Strategy and how the Authority have been involved in that work.

The Authority has concentrated on identifying the river valleys which are 'multi functional' but the exercise felt somewhat artificial. The Tees Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies the whole of the National Park as Green Infrastructure and not just corridors, so the two approaches are different.

The Policy Manager explained how the wading birds survey was carried out by the Game Conservancy Trust, but noted that there were inconsistencies in the way the surveys had been undertaken therefore giving different results. However weather conditions also played a part in this. It was noted that indicators used in the State of the Park report were to be looked at as part of the review of the Management Plan.

The Policy Manager confirmed that sustainable means of transport and moving through the Park would be looked at as part of the Management Plan.

Several Members asked how the Authority would be engaging with under represented groups? In particular young people? The Policy Manager indicated that the Authority would be discussing with the education service how to build something into this year's events programme about the future of the National Park.

A Member asked whether there were any specific criteria or constraints against which the Landscape Character Assessment had to be carried out. The Policy Manager explained that the assessment needed to fit the Authority's circumstances but to be European Landscape Convention compliant the Authority had to consult on the Landscape Character Assessment and this would be done as part of the Management Plan consultation.

Resolved:

That the Policy Manager would take the forums comments forward into the Management Plan process.

04/10 Presentation on Moorsbus

The Assistant Director of Recreation and Park Management gave a powerpoint presentation, a copy of which can be found in the minute book.

Members commented as follows:

- Would bike racks be fitted to any buses?
- Will the net cost of £3.03 per year drop?
- A useful tool to get young people from Teesside and Middlebrough into the Park and younger people in general.

The Assistant Director answered the above as follows:

- The bus operator in Dalby Forest was reluctant to attach bike racks to the buses as he leases them. Bike racks had been trialled in the past with little success but may be looked into in the future.
- The net cost should drop over the next couple of years, but is relatively low at present.
- Some advertising had taken place to draw parents attention to the Moorsbus service and the mobile display unit had been to Middlesbrough in February.

05/10 **Number of Meetings a year and formation of Working Groups**

The Chair outlined the current meeting structure and asked for Members comments on the frequency of the meetings and the setting up of working groups to respond to consultation documents which were received between the meeting dates and require a response before the next meeting.

Resolved:

That Members agreed to the setting up of working groups as and when required and that the number of meetings should remain as at present.

06/10 **Maps to view Section 15 Land, Countryside Rights of Way Act 2000**

The Head of Recreation and Access showed on screen the representation of Section 15 land on the 'MAGIC' website and confirmed that Natural England was hoping to provide basic information to the public when a full environmental impact assessment has been completed.

Action - the Head of Recreation and Access to find out when the impact assessment would be carried out in this area.

07/10 **Report back from the National Park Authority**

Steve Scoffin updated Members on the following:

- Julie Lawrence (Director of Information, Education and Visitor Services) has taken a 6 month secondment to New Zealand.
- The National Park Authority Performance Assessment will be taking place later in the year.
- The Authority is having an area in Whitby's Tourist Information Centre.
- Updated Members on performance indicators including roadside signs leaving a metalled road.

Lady Kirk updated Members on issues in Cropton Forest including establishing some rights of way which the Authority's staff was assisting with.

In response to a question from a Member the Director informed the forum that the Authority was keeping a close eye on unauthorised vehicles using tracks.

Members also noted that performance indicators needed to be relevant and meaningful.

Action – The Director to draft a letter requesting meaningful performance indicators and targets and for this to be circulated with the next agenda.

08/10 **Easy Going Moors Report**

Considered:

The report of the Head of Park Management

A Member noted that circular walks were required and that the specification of the routes needed to be able to take disability buggies rather than a standard wheelchair, as working to standard wheelchair specifications meant that some buggies would possibly not be able to use the routes.

The Head of Park Management informed the forum that LEADER funding was available for community routes and that this was being pursued in partnership with local communities.

The Director asked if the forum had any examples of good information signage used for such walks. A Member noted that a lot of work had been carried out in Anglesey.

Resolved:
That the report be noted.

09/10 **National Countryside Access Forum**

A Member noted that this particular forum no longer existed and that a lot of work was being carried out to move forward the English Access Forum and the Regional Forums.

10/10 **Best of Both Worlds**

Resolved:
Members noted the website.

11/10 **Regional Green Exercise Group**

Resolved:
That the minutes be noted.

12/10 **DEFRA Access Newsletter**

Resolved:
That the newsletter be noted.

13/10 **Limestone Landscape Invite**

Resolved:
That the invitation be noted for information.

14/10 **Waterways for Everyone consultation**

The Chair explained that Mrs Cook had brought to the attention of the chair that horses had not been mentioned in the consultation document.

Resolved:
That the British Horse Society needed to make comments directly.

15/10 **Items for Regional Meetings**

Due to regional problems Mr Scoffin noted that it was not necessary to put forward items at this time.

16/10 **Items for future meetings**

- PLB – new media in accessing countryside
- Natural England and the England Access Forum
- Performance Indicators and a request for a representative from the group who set the targets to attend a future meeting on the signage target.

17/10 **Any Other Business**

- Steve Scoffin noted articles on areas within the National Park in the magazine 'Country Walking
- Members were asked to let Fiona know if they wish to continue to receive a hard copy of the publication 'Waymark' as the subscription was due.
- The annual site visit has been put back to the September meeting.
- Andy Wilson, Chief Executive of the National Park will attend the lunch at the September meeting to meet Members.

DRAFT