



Annual General Meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum
Held on Tuesday 26 February 2013
Yoredale, Bainbridge

Present: Jon Beavan (JB), Andrew Colley (AC), David Gibson (DG), Neil Heseltine (NH), Kevin Lancaster (KL), Alex Law (AL), Jocelyn Manners-Armstrong (JMA), Ken Miller (KM), Stuart Monk (SM), Jerry Pearlman (JP), John Richardson (JR), Jonathan Smith (JS), Sara Spillett (SS), Heather Thomas-Smith (HTS), Alistair Thompson (AT), Nick Thwaite (NT), Pat Whelan (PWh), Phillip Woodyer (PW).

YDNPA Officers present: Alan Hulme (AH), Rachel Briggs (RB) – LAF Secretary, Julie Barker (JMB), Mark Allum (MA), Ann Williams (AW), Cathy Bradley (CB).

Natural England Officers present: Chris Pope (CP)

The meeting started at 1.15pm.

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

JMB began the meeting by explaining the process for the election of a Chair.

KM proposed PW. No further nominations were received.

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

2. Election of Vice Chair

PW asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

JR nominated DG. No further nominations were received.

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

3. Welcome

PW welcomed Nick Thwaite (NT), Kevin Lancaster (KL) and Jonathan Smith (JS) to the meeting, as new members of the YDAF. He also welcomed Chris Pope from Natural England.

Everyone round the table introduced themselves for the benefit of the new members.

4. Apologies

There were no apologies.

5. Approval of Minutes

Page 4: JP asked for the minutes to be changed to read 'JP asked for this point to be clarified as he felt that the fence could be removed after a set period of time for access purposes'.

Page 4: AL explained that the Forestry Commission checklist for applicants has an option for the applicant to keep 20% clear. This isn't compulsory.

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

6. Public Question Time

There were no public questions.

7. Future Forum Meetings

Dates of meetings

The next meeting of the YDAF will be on 18 June 2013

Future Agenda Items

Suggested future agenda items put forward by members include:

- Results from the Stepping Forward report.
- Definitive map for North Yorkshire – October meeting.

8. Review of nominated LAF members on groups linked to the Forum

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

Access on Foot Advisory Group

Members kept the current membership of NH, HTS and AT representing the YDAF on the Access on Foot Advisory Group.

Access for All Advisory Group

SS expressed an interest in the work of the Access for All Advisory Group and it was agreed that her input would be useful.

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

Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group

HTS asked to be removed from the membership of the Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group.

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

Air Sports Advisory Group

There was some discussion as to whether the Air Sports Advisory Group should continue since they have only met once. It was agreed to keep the group going to meet as and when an issue arises.

Members kept the current membership of SS and JB representing the YDAF on the Air Sports Advisory Group.

Water Sports Advisory Group

KM suggested this group meet again considering the recent floods and canoeing accidents. MA said that it was not the YDNPA's role to deal with accidents on rivers.

JB advised keeping the group as it is and meeting if and when an issue arises that can be dealt with by the group. All agreed that this was a sensible approach.

JMB suggested having someone come to a future YDAF meeting to give a presentation on water sports.

Members kept the current membership AC and PW representing the YDAF on the Water Sports Advisory Group.

Caves and Crag Access Advisory Group

JB suggested broadening the interest of the group to include more caving and mine exploration.

SS questioned whether or not the group needed to meet once a year and wondered if meeting when required would be sufficient. MA said that he would prefer to keep the current meeting arrangement.

Members kept the current membership of SS and JB representing the YDAF on the Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group.

Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

JR expressed an interest in joining the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group. However, it was explained that the membership is currently very balanced and until a vacancy arises, there was no scope for new members.

Members kept the current membership of PWh, JB, KM and DG to represent the YDAF on the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group, as well as their individual interests.

Dales Tourism Steering Group

JMB explained the remit and membership of the Dales Tourism Steering Group to members. JS expressed an interest in the group and agreed to attend on behalf of the YDAF.

JS to represent the YDAF on the Dales Tourism Steering Group.

9. Report back from the Yorkshire Dales Advisory Groups

Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group

SS presented the minutes of the Cave and Crag Access Advisory Group.

Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

JP asked about item 4 of the minutes which was a revision of the Green Lanes Management Framework. MA said this work had been carried out and that a link to the document would be circulated to members.

RB to circulate a link to the revised Green Lanes Management Framework document to members.

JP enquired about the North Yorkshire County Councils' (NYCC) policy on the management of unsurfaced unclassified roads (UUR). DG said that a feedback report had been produced and that it had been to the North Yorkshire LAF. RB said she would circulate the document to members.

RB to circulate the NYCC document on the management of UURs.

10. Dedication of National Nature Reserves

Chris Pope (CP), lead Adviser from Natural England (NE), gave a very informative presentation on the dedication of National Nature Reserves (NNR) by Natural England, and in particular the three within the Yorkshire Dales National Park:

Scoska Wood

CP said that the NE assessment showed that patterns of use were not expected to change with the dedication.

JB asked whether higher rights had been considered for caving. JP said that caving was not considered to be higher rights as it was access on foot. MA agreed with this and added that it would be the removal of a restriction. CP said that caving had not been considered but that all comments would be taken back to NE.

DG asked about the access to the access land and whether there was provision along the proposed dedicated area (south west boundary) to allow users access to the existing Open Access land.

AH also stated that the Authority had raised this point during consultations on the proposed designation of Scoska Wood as Open Access land.

AC asked if there would be sufficient on site signage. CP said that it would depend on each individual site manager and the remaining budget.

Ling Gill

CP said that the NE assessment showed that patterns of use were not expected to change with the dedication.

JB informed CP of a popular caving trip which comes out in Ling Gill and which may increase in popularity with the dedication. SS agreed with this.

Ingleborough Reserve

CP said that the dedication was only on a small area of the Ingleborough reserve not already in open access and that the NE assessment showed that patterns of use were not expected to change with the dedication.

JB said that the area is very popular for caving and pot holing and thought that this activity would increase. He also asked if NE could look at the current permit requirement for caving on the reserve (from NE).

DG asked if the dedications were subject to any bylaws. CP said that there are no bylaws.

AC asked AH if the YDNPA had any concerns with the increased usage of any of these areas. AH had been consulted and agreed there wouldn't be any issues apart from a slight increase in use at the Ingleborough reserve.

AC asked about the effect on ground nesting birds. CP said this would be considered in the management of the reserve by the reserve manager.

PW thanked CP for her presentation.

11. Yorkshire Dales Management Plan

Ann Williams (AW), PA to the Director of Conservation and Community, gave a well informed presentation on the Yorkshire Dales Management Plan, which was well received.

KM had a question with regards to the objective 'Maintaining 90% of public rights of way so they are easy to use'. AW explained that this objective had since changed to incorporate national trails and regional routes. AH said that the objective was based on an 'ease of use' survey and that he could present the methodology to the next meeting of the YDAF. Member agreed this was a good idea.

AH to give a presentation on the 'ease of use' survey at next meeting of the YDAF

AW was thanked for her presentation.

12. Review of Open Access information

Cathy Bradley (CB), Access Technician, presented the paper to members and asked for comments.

AT asked if there had been any consideration to changing the negative access symbol. CB explained that there wasn't enough money in the budget to change the symbol. AH added that they are only used where they are really necessary.

JB said he agreed with the proposals set out in the paper. However, he felt that the text on the boards which were scheduled for removal was still relevant and wondered if the text could be printed out on A3 and given to local tourist information centres/cafes e.g. the Ingleton Community Centre. DG supported this idea and added that he would wish to see the boards replaced if the budget is ever increased.

CB was thanked for her report.

13. Cumbria Countryside Access Strategy

RB presented the draft document 'Strategic Framework for Management and Improvement of Countryside Access and Recreation in Cumbria and the Lake District' to members and asked for comments.

HTS felt that 'getting there' was missing from the document i.e. transport as well as car parking.

RB thanked members for their comments.

14. Secretary's report

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

- Authority Meeting Dates and Venues.
- Yorkshire Dales Access Forum membership.
 - RB welcomed the two new members as well as SM, KM and NH who had been reappointed for a further three years. Unfortunately, Michael Stephenson was not successful in his application to continue on the YDAF. He has been thanked for his input on behalf of the YDAF and the YDNPA.
- Meeting of the Yorkshire and Humberside Regional LAF.
 - RB asked for two members to attend the meeting in Leeds on 2 March. DG and JR agreed to represent the YDAF.
- National Conference for LAFs.
- Proposed extensions to the Lake District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks.
 - RB said that an invite had arrived for a representative of the YDAF to attend a seminar on the boundary review. She added that officers from the YDNPA would be attending. JB thought that it was only necessary for a member of the YDAF to attend if LAF members were attending from Cumbria and the Lake District. PW added that he could attend if necessary.

RB to find out if LAF members from Cumbria and the Lake District were planning on attending the boundary review seminar.

- North Yorkshire County Council's policy on Unsurfaced, Unclassified Roads.
- North Yorkshire Wildfire Report.
- Tour de France.
- Cycling funding.
 - MA informed members that the £12m funding, from the Department for Transport, available to National Parks for cycle improvements was only for three projects and that 30% of match funding was required. He added that the deadline was the end of April and that he would keep members informed.
- Cam Woodland
 - AH gave a presentation to members on the Cam Woodland planning application and how members came to the decision to approve the application.
JB thought there would, potentially, be a large amount of recreational conflict and asked whether there would be a register of complaints and what the YDNPA will do if any conflict can't be resolved. AH said that complaints will be managed by the YDNPA complaints procedure and that the Authority would have to look at how recreation is managed if the impact is too big. JB expressed concern that comments from the YDAF were not listed within the planning report that went to Planning Committee. As a statutory body to advise the YDNPA on access issues, members felt that they should have been consulted directly and that their comments should have been noted. RB explained that LAFs are not statutory consultees on planning applications and so the YDAF were therefore not listed in the official comments list within the report. However, member's comments were noted. JP felt this was not

adequate and asked that PW call a meeting with the Chief Executive of the YDNPA to look at how they can be consulted on various matter in the future.

RB to arrange a meeting between PW and David Butterworth to discuss how the YDAF are consulted.

15. Update on members activities

DG asked members to respond to consultations when they are sent round between meetings. A simple email to say that members agree/disagree with the proposal would be enough.

JR is now on Huddle.

The meeting closed at 4.40pm