



# North York Moors

## Local Access Forum

North York Moors National Park Authority, The Old Vicarage, Bondgate,  
Helmsley, York, YO62 5BP

Public Minutes of the meeting held at The Old Vicarage, Helmsley on Tuesday 11 June 2013 at 10am.

**Present:** Mr S Borman, Mrs C Cook, Mrs C Cussons, Mr G Dawson, Mr P Hay, Mrs J King, Lady E Kirk, Mrs M Mitchell, Ms A Peacock, Mr G Winn Darley,

**Apologies:** S Blakemore (Access Officer)

**Officers in Attendance:** Richard Gunton (Director of Park Services), Karl Gerhardsen (Head of Recreation and Access), Vanessa Burgess (Committees Officer), Julie McLinden (Administration Assistant)

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**Copies of All Documents Considered are in the Minute Book**

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### 01/13 Minutes

Members made comments or asked questions as follows:

- Item 39/12 Bullet Point 2  
Very good aspiration but in practice how successful is this likely to be?  
High levels of map reading in the population are not apparent so unlikely to happen in practice. Parish Champions in Parish Councils already help to encourage taking ownership of PROW (Public Rights of Way) and help to monitor and report problems.
- Engaging parish partnerships is good practice. Community Access project at Rosedale is a good example. Some Parishes have a Footpaths Officer and have taken a real interest in Rights of Way which works well.
- Good examples should be encouraged. Parishes such as Gillamoor and Fadmoor are smaller places having meetings rather than Councils and have less people to call upon.
- Item 46/12 e)  
Have new members been identified? Steve Scoffin has left the Authority. A new NPA member will be nominated at the NPA AGM on 24 June 2013. A number of names have been put forward.

**Resolved:**

That the public minutes of the meeting held on 11 June 2013 having been printed and circulated, be taken as read and be confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

## 2/13 **Matters Arising**

- **Weather Forecast on the National Park Website**

Members made comments or asked questions as follows:

- The present information on the NYMNPA website is basic. The Metrological Office is looking at more detailed information and how to give better value for money. There is still a demand from the public for more detailed weather information.
- Other National Park websites have good information from the Met Office; notably the Peak District, Lake District and the Yorkshire Dales. This is expensive but should the cost be looked at again?
- Present practice is to provide a link from the website to more detailed information on other sites e.g. Metrological Office data.

## 3/13 **Emergency Evacuation Procedure**

- The Chairman informed Members of the Emergency Evacuation Procedure.

## 4/13 **LARA – Good practice in Traffic Management on Unsealed Public Roads. Part 1: A selective approach to Traffic Management (Page 7)**

A verbal presentation was given by Leo Crone of the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF). The main points of which are as follows:

- TRF (Trail Riders Fellowship) is an organisation representing mainly motorcyclists using the UCR (Unclassified County Road) network. The group researches the legality of all routes often taking Queens Council advice on legal matters concerning the UCR and BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic) network and involves members in the preservation of these ancient routes for all users.
- UCRs do not appear on the definitive map but are included on the councils list of streets (roads maintained at public expense for motor traffic) and as such carry the right of vehicular passage.
- The routes used by TRF are the remains of the road network inherited by local councils in the early 1930s. These routes have not been tarmacked.
- Currently the group is in discussion with the Yorkshire Dales National Park on assisting in the repair and preservation of a UCR which is in need of maintenance and repair.
- The group also co-operates with land owners to help repair damaged lanes or gates in need of repair or replacement. The cost of this is met by TRF. The group would like the NYMNPA to consider a similar offer of help with any UCR they consider to be out of repair but capable of continuing to carry some type of vehicular traffic on a sustainable basis.
- Presently, nearly the entire UCR network is not way marked and so almost a hidden resource. NYCC are not in favour of way marking due to the likely hood of an increase in maintenance costs.

- The NYMNPA policy of bringing about a sustainable solution to the problem of damage to UCR by vehicles is understood by TRF. However it is believed that a small group of bikes leaves behind a light footprint compared with a tractor and trailer, group of 4x4's or the industrial machinery used in woodland.
- Whilst setting out the reasons for closures on UCRs, the NERC Act clearly states exemptions. As an organisation, the group act within the remit of the law.
- TRF liaise with local police to advise riders where to ride legally. They meet at Yarm once a month and lead out riders to legal lanes and identify where to ride and to use appropriate behaviour.

Members made comments and asked the following questions:

- As this is a recreational facility, should the NYMNPA take on more responsibility for UCRs? Presently no funding in place to maintain these ways. More funding would need to be identified in order for the NYMNPA to maintain them.
- Network is complex and has had little maintenance for last 60-70 years. Way marking is unclear for UCRs appearing as red dots on Landranger maps and green dots on Explorer maps.
- An offer to go on to the LAF has been received from John Richardson, LARA.

## 5/13 **Update on NPA Business**

The Head of Recreation and Access updated the meeting as follows:

- **York Potash**  
Due for Members decision end of July. Deadline has been put back twice as more information has been gathered. Taken a lot of staff time. Public papers are on the website from 19 July. Officer recommendation is the starting point.
- The application is for the largest Potash mine in the world. More factual statements have been released to the media so that the public can make an informed decision. Objections have been received from Natural England, Environment Agency and Ministry of Defence.
- Members asking for more briefings before a decision is made. The decision will be announced at a meeting at Sneaton Castle, Whitby.
- The site of Dove's Nest Farm has no ROW on it. The mine would impact on Wainwright's Coast to Coast walk as it would be seen from the route and increase traffic on a short section of road. This walk is of great national significance being the second most popular walk in the world.
- Pipeline decision is with the Planning Inspectorate from 18 months to 2 years. It would run underneath and alongside the A171 from near Guisborough to Whitby and under the Esk Valley to Sneaton.
- The pipeline would impact on a lot of ROWs. This could be accommodated by keeping one closed during works whilst keeping another open. Looking at ways of minimising impact on ROW.

- Section 106 agreements could be used to counter any direct negative impact on landscape. For e.g. provision of a cycle way to be built from Whitby to Scarborough with an accompanying education and interpretation facility. Need to maximise positive potential.
- **Conservation Department**  
Department has undergone a re-structure. New Director David Renwick has joined the Authority from East Riding but worked in Scarborough before that.
- New focus on Ecological connectivity and restoration of ancient woodland with conifers.
- **New Grants**  
The Authority wants to encourage new thinking which benefits the Environment as well as the local economy and the local community. Three new grants are now available: Environmental Innovation Fund, Local Distinctiveness and Tourism Grant, and a Community Grant.

For more information and to download the simple application form please visit [www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/grants](http://www.northyorkmoors.org.uk/grants) or contact Rachel Smith.

- The Cleveland Way has been allocated promotion money from Natural England to produce a glossy, free guide for tourist information. It is hoped it will attract other user groups and gives an enticing look at the Cleveland Way.

## 6/13 **Huddle**

Huddle is a virtual forum set up by Defra and Natural England to facilitate communication – the sharing of advice, information and best practice amongst LAFs.

Amanda Peacock, Huddle Champion updated the meeting as follows:

- Natural England wish to develop a more strategic relationship with the LAFs through the use of Huddle, including sharing ideas on themed Huddle pages and by releasing new LAF newsletters.
- A position paper on boosting economic growth through recreation and tourism via new Environmental Land Management Schemes in England has been circulated by Ken Taylor (NW LAF). The paper will be circulated and views collated for discussion and potential action at or before the next LAF meeting.
- Discussion threads on Huddle include the use of mobility scooters on PROW and whether the Highways Act should be extended to enable the public to issue notice to clear obstructions on Unclassified, Unsurfaced roads. Further information on these issues can be obtained by contacting Amanda Peacock.
- Different threads on Huddle may appeal to the interests of different LAF members and ideally all LAF members should be able to access Huddle. It needs more interaction. Currently used by those with detailed knowledge of PROW.
- Discussions also include the impact of public sector funding cuts on LAFs and the benefits to LAFs of using social media (such as Twitter).
- The papers from the Sheffield LAF conference (February 2013) are also available on Huddle for information.

## 7/13 **NPA Framework for Managing UURs**

- A PowerPoint presentation was given by the Head of Access and Recreation containing photos of 8 of the 9 UURs being monitored, a copy of which appears in the minute book.

Members made comments or asked questions as follows:

- Questionnaires were sent out asking local people for e.g. Do they have knowledge of route? Do they use it? Assessments of the route reports and recommendations will be put together for the future.
- The questionnaire should have space to include any damage by landowner activity. Any information from surveys about heavy vehicles such as forestry or farming vehicles should be highlighted and contained in individual route reports.
- An advisory group will be assembled consisting of a balance of motor vehicle users and those with wider recreational interests looking at the pros and cons. 4-5 members will sit on the group chaired by a National Park Authority member who sits on the forum to be selected by the NPA on 24 June. A briefing note was distributed including an invitation to LAF. Members to go on it and the group will meet in Autumn 2013.
- NYCC seem to have money to dedicate to individual UCRs: For e.g. Deadman's Hill, Nidderdale. In the past money has been spent at Monket Bank. Traffic Regulation Orders in North Yorkshire are made by the Area Highway Offices but there is currently no way to access this information from the County Council's website. Possibly routes affecting special qualities of the National Park. A lot could be achieved with help of volunteers.
- Framework Document section 8.2, Process, fifth and final bullet point needs clarification of highways identified Eg Fangdale Beck, Bilsdale. They may have dual status which carries rights not subject to the Act. Policy needs to be re-examined.
- Traffic Regulation order has been in place at Fangdale Beck for last 20 years. One of ten UCRs with permanent TROs on it. Footpath crossing UCR culminates in 3ft dead end between two roads. Queens Council has indicated this is not what law intended to do. No TROs have been put in place by the National Park Authority. They are difficult and used as a last resort.
- Is there a lack of technical knowledge to improve a route without impacting on the special qualities of the National Park? A good example of an improved bridleway at Roseberry Common where fine aggregate and fertilised topsoil looks like a stone road at first but will green over. It is appropriate to locality and will blend in well. SSSI and sites with ancient monuments demand the use of traditional road building techniques.
- Increasing numbers of complaints are coming in from disabled riders who cannot access routes in the Park where we have installed horse-friendly vehicle barriers.

## 8/13 **Department for Transport Cycling Bid**

A PowerPoint presentation was given by the Director of Park Services, a copy of which appears in the minute book.

- A bid was prepared very quickly There is no specific date for the result but we should be notified by end of June. Northumberland and Exmoor did not bid. South Downs, Dartmoor and the Peak District National Parks are our main competitor. Hopefully two or three bids will be funded.
- Took out rolling stock in the bid. North Yorkshire Moors Railway is a privately operating company and could take out seats for cycle capacity. Sustrans – recommend tarmac end to end for new cycle routes.
- On the Whitby to Scarborough former railway tarmac proposed in areas where cinder could not be used because of drainage issues.  
Two main priorities are boosting tourism for enjoyment in the National Park and habitat connection within the National Park. The scheme will have to go through a detailed planning process before implementation.

#### 9/13 **Items for Future Meetings**

- The Huddle Champion will let the group know if any items are important to be raised at the next LAF meeting.

#### 10/3 **Other Business**

- Date of next meeting 3 December 2013 at 10.00am.