

North York Moors National Park Authority

19 December 2016

Reports from Members on Outside Bodies

1. **Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To consider reports from Members attending meetings on outside bodies as representatives on the Authority.

2. **Background**

- 2.1 It has been agreed that Members attending meetings of bodies where they are representing the Authority should present a report, either verbal or written, on the issues discussed.

3. **Campaign for National Parks**

- 3.1 David Jeffels report can be found at **Appendix 1**

4. **Welcome to Yorkshire AGM**

- 4.1 Guy Coulson attended the AGM on 14 September 2016, his report can be found at **Appendix 2**

5. **NYM Disability Advisory Group**

- 5.1 Sarah Oswald's report from this meeting can be found at **Appendix 3**

6. **Local Government North Yorkshire, York & East Riding Housing Board**

- 6.1 Alison Fisher's report can be found at **Appendix 4**

7. **Financial and Staffing Implications**

- 7.1 There are no financial or staffing implications.

8. **Legal Implications**

- 8.1 There are no legal implications.

9. **Recommendation**

- 9.1 That the report be noted.

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CAMPAIGN FOR NATIONAL PARKS - Council Meeting 10 November 2016

A number of good, interesting issues were discussed during the meeting which also included the AGM.

I will highlight some of them later in this report, but I thought Members of NYMNPA would be interested in the current report and presentation on Upland Farming in English National Parks which has been produced by a CNP working party which includes myself and representatives of the NPs in Cumbria, Northumberland, Yorkshire Dales, Peak District, Exmoor and Devon.

The working party (WP) has had five meetings and focussed on several major issues affecting the future of upland farming - and indeed livestock farms in the lowland areas of NPs. Our work began earlier in the year before the EU referendum vote on June 23 and it is expected that the final report which will hopefully land on the desk of the SoS for Defra and Defra Ministers will be amended in the light of Brexit.

It was emphasised during the presentation to CNP Council that the sustainability of the upland areas was crucial if village schools, shops, and pubs etc. are to survive. It is expected that HLS payments will come to an end but a one year extension could be granted. Lord Gardiner, a strong supporter of NPs, is being lobbied but the general feeling is that there will be no money from the Treasury after 2018.

The WP report pointed out that it is unlikely that a CAP style system will be the preferred option after 2019 because of competition for public spending on health and education. If the area based basic payment is phased out, a sufficient period of transition will be essential. Phasing out the payment will enable funds to be switched to more efficient farm enterprise projects.

It is encouraging that on-going support for hill farmers has come from politicians and industry. It is a firm belief that hill farmers deliver an exceptional range of highly valued public goods. There is likely to be on-going support for environmental schemes and the WP believes that a strong case can be made for NPs to be responsible for deciding and administering such payments in their particular Parks.

Other issues considered by the WP have been CLIMATE CHANGE and its effect on extended autumn grazing, earlier turn out of stock in the spring, and earlier nesting by birds. The effect of BOVINE TB on many farms is of great concern. The average age of a hill farmer is 58 and it appears there are difficulties being experienced by would-be new entrants to farming.

Over half the land in the uplands is tenanted and the Tenants Farmers Association is lobbying for longer FARM BUSINESS TENANCIES. RE-WILDING has also been considered by the WP, including its impact on the natural environment.

TOURISM has featured strongly in the WPs debates, bearing in mind that NPs are seeing an increase in the number of visitors, now nudging 90 million and the Campaign for National Parks is supporting a policy to increase the number to 100 million.

The WP has been told that the National Trust is buying out tenants and is very concerned about this because it is likely to have a major adverse effect on upland farming. CNP Trustee Board is expected to consider the WPs preliminary report at its meeting in January. It is felt the report will make the case for NPAs to deliver future funding schemes as they are the best placed to have a landscape overview of the needs of upland NPs.

Other Issues Raised at CNP Council

CNP has commissioned research on major development research, with the CPRE and National Trust. (The decision by NYMNPA to allow the Potash Mine is still a very sensitive issue with CNP). The research is being carried out by Sheffield Hallam University and one of its aims is to focus on developments in and on the boundaries of NPs.

The Bus Services Bill - CNP wants NPs to be listed as a relevant local authority and consulted on proposed new franchising or partnership powers in the running of rural bus services.

80th Celebrations: CNP has just celebrated its 80th anniversary.

At the AGM, Janette Ward, the vice chairman, was promoted to Chairman on the retirement of Anne Robinson.

If any member of NYMNPA has any queries on my report please let me know and I will endeavour to provide any answers needed.

DAVID JEFFELS
NYMNPA rep on Council for National Parks
22 November 2016

Welcome to Yorkshire AGM

The Welcome to Yorkshire AGM took place on 14 September 2016 where the highlights of the year and forthcoming events were announced by Sir Gary Verity, Chief Executive:

- Tour de Yorkshire 2016 - very successful, attracted people from all over the world. Dates for 2017 are 28-30 April <http://letour.yorkshire.com/> Host towns announced as Bradford, Bridlington, Fox Valley - Sheffield, Harrogate, Scarborough and Tadcaster. Full route to be announced on 2 December.
- Welcome to Yorkshire has been successful in its bid to host the UCI 2019 World Road Cycling Championships. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/yorkshire-to-host-2019-uci-road-world-cycling-championships>
- A Civic welcome was held for Olympians returning from Rio on 28th September. An open top bus parade was followed by a Civic Reception. I was fortunate enough to attend this event and it was a real privilege to be able to chat with Yorkshire athletes such as Hannah Cockroft and the Brownlea brothers. Over 30,000 people lined the streets of Leeds.
- Most local business and accommodation providers have reported a good season this year and are expecting to have a busy period over the next 12 months due to more people choosing to holiday at home and overseas visitors increasing due to the current economic climate.

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Guy Coulson – Welcome to Yorkshire Rep

Disability Access Group 30 September 2016

The group were updated on a number of items:

- New project manager for TEL who will attend the next meeting
- Peter Scott of Moorswork sent apologies – Ian Nichols to write to him to ask for a report when he can't attend, to make clear that DAG are interested in progress and how NYM money is being spent

Local Plan

Paul Fellows provided a presentation on the Local Plan context and the consultations being undertaken. The background data raised several points of discussion:

- What is happening in relation to the changing population?
- What is being developed for the aging population – facilities, housing, care
- Can there be requirements of accessibility provision, which would be beneficial to wheelchair user, elderly, families etc. within new build housing, should be more than just meeting building regulations – e.g. affordable homes to have downstairs fully wheelchair accessible and wet room bathroom
- Importance of educating and encouraging developer awareness around access and good design so people know what accessible means – not just standards
- What role there is for disabled people in advising on planning applications
- What understanding of disability do officers and members have?
- Are size of dwellings considered in relation to elderly population

Paul was going to explore the potential for a policy relating to accessibility; DAG members were keen to review this

Group offered to provide input to members / officers' disability awareness training

DAG members were encouraged to respond to the First Steps consultation and to spread the word about it.

Paul to return in Summer 2017 to DAG meeting to provide an update

Toilet closure in Scarborough

The group were given an update on this issue – SBC working to minimize closures, restrict to only those with low level use and where there are others elsewhere

SBC also looking at redesign of toilet buildings to enable income generation through other facilities on site

DAG members were keen to have more details reported back

Discussion of Sutton Bank Visitor Centre proposals

People felt we needed to be wary of begin too commercial and losing the point of why people go there - the views; access is already well developed but there are opportunities to do more

Comments and suggestions:

- creating more room in café
- consider layout to enable space for wheelchairs / those with buggies / sticks to manoeuvre; the courtyard was seen as an ideal space to cover over and improve access, especially for those who are permanently in wheelchair and so can't transfer

- Toilets being outside doesn't matter from a practical perspective as it can actually make it less challenging / embarrassing to access them. Bus groups may not want to go through the cafe to access toilets, especially if groups who have visible or non-visible disabilities
- Consider where menus are displayed and how so people can access them without having to get right up to counter; some of the group noted that it is hard to know what is on offer
- Look at developing reputation / accreditation for information provision re dietary needs
- Doors that exist currently were noted as being very heavy - designs need to consider this
- The ageing population of the park (which comes with access needs) was seen as a key target market - some people just want a place to go out to for lunch - the catering offer is important

Seating - on plantation and on trails (was noted that some are going in already)

Building on the Try a Trail leaflet which Ian has worked with Malcolm on make copies visible in centre - show the film, put out copies to pick up, poster to advertise. Promote the opportunities. This led into discussion of the issues with the current SB scooter and not crossing the road! There was support for the provision of different kit (appropriate to the trails) for hire / to try. Suggestion that working with manufacturers there could be a try before you buy type of service, a chance for people to experience in a safe environment and to then be more confident to go further. Karl had some examples of kit and Ian Lawson was keen to advise on what was best for SB trails and what was too extreme! Ian thought more routes could be developed as well.

It was felt that it was really important SB bikes realign their stock and offer also to reflect the audience (not hardcore bikers as per Dalby) and to maximise accessibility.

The importance of consulting with DAG / people with disabilities before architects' progress with designs was strongly emphasized. This needs to be a key next step arising from the study before any other design progresses. This applies to any car parking, landscaping, signage etc. as well.

Trails and paths

There was a suggestion that the National Park Authority and DAG don't work as well together as they could in respect of path design and substrates. The importance of consultation in advance was stressed by members.

Possibility of having consolidated aggregate on the bridleway at Sutton Bank was raised which would allow the circuit to be useable even in muddy periods. Improvements to route through the woods have been made with National Rail engineers c=voluntary work.

Issues around pathway at Grosmont were raised. There is an aspiration to achieve level access from Grosmont to Esk Valley being explored with NYMR, has in principle agreed but requires at least £50k to achieve a new crossing of the active railway to appropriate safety standards. Karl was encouraged to pursue this and identify funding options.

LAF membership

Next meeting is in December, but a sub group was meeting in October to look at recognizing and recording white roads on OS map

Membership of LAF are signed up for 3 years, process of applications and reapplications being completed to reach full membership

Any other business

The self-closing gates report has been further delayed to October.

Access washed away in Rosedale, from Blakey top carpark to the track – been resurfaced with Highways gravel which is very deep and fine – can't cycle on it and will be issue for wheelchairs also – may need compacting?

Sarah Oswald
DAG Rep

YORK, NORTH YORKSHIRE AND EAST RIDING HOUSING BOARD
MEETING, 26 September 2016
also
RURAL HOUSING ENABLERS CONFERENCE
“BUILDING ON SHIFTING SANDS”
29 September 2016

The quarterly meeting of the member authorities of the **Housing Board** was based around two presentations from separate housing practitioners.

Firstly from Social Regeneration Consultants we were informed about their work in the North East on Community Led Housing. These are projects of small scale (20/25 units) housing provision, set up by local people to provide genuinely affordable rental and for sale properties on a not-for-profit basis. Although a very small % of national housing provision, this type of initiative (and there are several models) is significant for rural and coastal areas especially those villages with a high % of second homes – National Parks are obvious beneficiaries of this approach. The last Osborne budget (March 2016) offered £60m *per annum* to support this spectrum of work which includes the Right to Buy provision not being extended to such community initiatives; the annual 1% rent increase provision will also not apply. This is all good news albeit that North Yorkshire and the East Riding currently has a very weak track record of community initiatives - currently two schemes only in Richmondshire and Selby. It should be noted that the wider context of recent government announcements is to focus on the provision of home ownership; this in turn curtails the provision of affordable for rent provision. Community Led Housing is seen as one way of responding to this gap alongside other providers such as Rural Housing Enablers and Neighbourhood Planning activity.

Secondly from Daniel Gath Homes, a small housing developer who spoke about the decline in the number of SME house builders as the volume builders rose in prominence. Like the grocery business which has witnessed the rise of the big supermarkets and the decline of independent/corner shops, housing provision by SME developers averages 9% of all sites where fewer than 50 houses are provided whereas 91% of all houses on sites of over 50 units are built by volume builders. He set out a number of concerns about the frustrations felt by SME developers - Local Plans tend to identify only large sites; SMEs cannot get bank funding; District Valuer viability assessments rely on costings for sites of 50+ units so small sites are less competitive; the transfer values given to social housing providers are based on less than the cost of actually building the unit, a cost which a SME developer cannot absorb. He went on to argue that the Planning System also frustrated SME developers by being slow, complex, contradictory and over regulated. That said he argued that small local developers tended to remain local, took on a greater % of apprentices than volume developers and offered units more in keeping with the local market than the one-design-suits-all volume developer approach.

Other issues discussed included:-

- provision of gypsy, Roma, traveller sites
- Refugee Resettlement – Harrogate BC reported back on its recent involvement
- the monitoring report for the Housing Strategy 2015/16
- an update from the Homes and Community Agency – their 2016/2021 Shared Ownership and Affordable Homes Programme is £4.7billion; 95% of this will be spent on a range of low cost home ownership schemes by housing associations and developers; funding for affordable rent will be largely restricted to supported housing schemes

The next meeting of the Housing Board will be 12 December 2016.

I also attended the annual **Practitioners Conference of the Rural Housing Enablers** together with several NYMNPA staff, Clive Pearson and David Hugill. Presentations were by a variety of speakers. Two keynote speakers were:-

Lord Richard Best, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Housing and Care for Older People. Lord Best has been largely engaged in social housing provision and was heavily involved with the recently approved Housing and Planning Act. He spoke about the detailing of the Act and the amendments secured.

Kevin Hollinrake MP spoke about current housing policy and the new challenges post approval of the Act

Other speakers touched on the new challenges to the provision of affordable housing followed by a site visit to a newly completed mixed For Sale and For Rent housing scheme at Hutton Rudby. In the afternoon, four workshops took a closer look at -

- Community Led Housing
- Increasing Rural Supply
- Shared Ownership
- the Hutton Rudby scheme by Broadacres Housing.

Alison Fisher
November 2016