

North York Moors National Park Authority

21 March 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. Tourism Advisory Board

- 3.1 Ena Dent commented that one of the main concerns highlighted at the most recent meeting of the Tourism Advisory Board was the Media reporting of the area in exceptional climate circumstance, resulting in a very negative message to the visitor and low morale of the industry.

4. Disability Advisory Group

- 4.1 The group met on 29 January 2016. It was another useful meeting which included wide ranging discussions on a number of subject areas:
- Danny and Anne Boyes were thanked for their report on the easy access path at Sutton Bank and the work that they highlighted had been completed. It was also noted that the easy access path at Chimney Bank had also been resurfaced in January by the southern apprentice team;
 - Ian Lawson informed the group about the work that he had been doing with Malcolm Hodgson on trialling potential wheelchair accessible routes using the Cleveland Way. Ian said that it would be important to provide information about what 'class' of wheelchair routes were suitable for;
 - Aileen Gatland made a number of comments about the paperwork which potential members of the Local Access Forum were required to complete. It was agreed that David Brewster should become DAG's new representative on LAF;
 - Following the groups advice about the needs of a range of disabled customers, it was noted that both tea rooms have been provided with 3 sets of flexible cutlery;
 - Peter Scott of Moorswork updated the group on the programme of work planned for February and March. He confirmed that an application to turn Moorswork into a charity is being completed for submission.

5. Welcome To Yorkshire

- 5.1 North York Moors National Park is to feature strongly in a number of publications being published by W2Y which it is anticipated will play a key part in encouraging more tourists to the area. W2Y staff have attended tourism exhibitions in London and Manchester, as well as Holland and Belgium. Interestingly, there was significant interest in people from the London area wanting to come to the NMNP. Undoubtedly television coverage of activities in the Park is playing a big part in attracting potential visitors.

- 5.2 W2Y has launched a new website which has, I'm told, stunning images of the National Park. In addition the Park features strongly in W2Y's latest "Y" Magazine which has a very wide circulation.
- 5.3 A new cycling guide has been produced and its 2016 attractions guide has had to be enlarged by four pages to accommodate the demand from advertisers, many of whom are in the National Park. A new coastal guide has been produced, promoting the coastal area in the National Park. The Tour de Yorkshire is again expected to offer enormous opportunities to promote the county and of course the National Park with much of the route coming into this area. W2Y has held road shows in towns and villages where the TdY is visiting, including Hutton-le-Hole and Kirkbymoorside. Some 150,000 brochures are being put onto North Sea Ferry ships, and vouchers are being included to help indicate where tourists are coming from. An entertainments brochure is also being produced (40,000 copies).
- 5.4 Given some good summer weather there is no reason why the considerable efforts being put into promoting the National Park by W2Y staff and our own team at Helmsley headed by Catriona McLees and Richard Gunton, should not result in a new influx of tourists, bringing money into the park and aiding its economy in 2016.

If anyone wants more information please let me know.
David Jeffels, 27 February 2016

6. **Campaign for National Parks**

- 6.1 While the Council of CNP, on which I represent NYMNPA, is not due to meet until mid-May, I am reporting on the working party of which I am a member, which was set up by CNP to look at current problems and possible ways of tackling them for upland farmers in National Parks.
- 6.2 The working group comprises of representatives from the Yorkshire Dales, Exmoor, Peak District, Northumberland and North York Moors NPs.
- 6.3 The aim is to produce a report and recommendations which will go before the CNP Council, hopefully at its next meeting and from there, to Defra and any other relevant Government Department.
- 6.4 Among the issues currently under consideration are a more flexible approach to agricultural environment schemes, delegated powers and budgets, attracting money from Defra for specific projects, a power of competence and exemption from inheritance tax under certain circumstances. In addition, it was felt that grants should be made available for boundary work and a strong recommendation was that a new grant scheme should be created to be run by National Parks, together with improved funding and advice to upland farmers.
- 6.5 Agricultural environment should be less prescriptive and that there should be support to increase modulation. More local agricultural environment schemes which can be created in the uplands should be considered.
- 6.6 The issue of Seriously Disadvantaged Areas (SDAs) is also being considered by the working group. It is also felt there should be better funding for farm enterprises and business assess.

- 6.7 Hopefully when the final report is completed and goes to the CNP council, it could become an item on the North York Moors National Park Authority's agenda for a meeting later this year.
David Jeffels, 1 March 2016

7. **York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Housing Board**

- 7.1 As this Housing Board meeting clashed with the December NPA meeting I was unable to attend. Clair Shields attended and the following is a synopsis of her notes:

- 7.2 The meeting was entirely taken up by discussion of Housing Targets and Affordable Housing. The July 2015 budget and related government housing statements have completely revised the climate within which housing providers such as Housing Associations and Private Developers are now operating. This is impacting on a variety of housing elements including:-

- the definition of affordable – this is being reviewed and is now out to consultation
- the revised cap on Registered Providers rental levels (1% per annum for 5 years) is rendering many new schemes not viable and so these will not proceed
- there is no (government) grant offer towards building houses for rent, only to purchase, which will be challenging given that the majority of need (as identified by local needs assessments) in the Park is for affordable rent.
- restrictions by mortgage providers mean that Shared Ownership is less financially feasible for many despite an income minimum of £20k requirement as many in rural areas will not be able to meet this threshold to secure a mortgage

- 7.3 The net result of this new climate is that Private Developers will increasingly be needed to provide Affordable Housing whilst the Registered Providers review how they will be able to operate in this new market. Given the pressure to build houses to buy not rent, Starter Homes and Shared Ownership Homes appear to be the only way forward. The challenge will be to be able to build these at an affordable cost.

- 7.4 A further series of impacts was considered including:-

- How might developing proposals to permit small-scale open market homes on the edge of settlements affect the market? It is suspected that landowners will not release land for Affordable Homes when they can get Open Market values for their land. The position of Exception Sites could become fragile.
- That said, large private developers are normally only interested in developing sites of 50+ units. Is there a growing role for small builders? How might we harness this opportunity?
- In such cases, the requirement by Local Authorities for a mix of housing types is now slowing down the speed of development
- This suggests that it will be useful to have the Affordable Housing contributions known at planning application stage so that the sums involved are known up-front thereby avoiding delays in starts and helping meet new targets
- a new concept “portable discount” alongside the right to buy whereby Housing Associations can offer a discount to a tenant to buy shared ownership on a new build somewhere else
- the Homes and Communities Agency will restructure its programmes following a reduction in its staffing numbers and overall budget
- the HCA will focus on home ownership be it Shared, Starter, Affordable Rent as a means to Buy, land purchase for Starter Homes or Help to Buy

The overall basis under which housing providers, be they private, local authority, housing association or other has shifted considerably in recent months leaving the Housing Board in urgent need of a review of its day to day activities. The housing market and new approaches to delivery is under review by the York, North Yorkshire and East Riding Housing Forum (the officers group) and perhaps this is why the February Housing Board meeting was cancelled and a date for the next meeting is yet to be announced.

Alison Fisher with help from Clair Shields, March 2016

8. Financial and Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no financial or staffing implications.

9. Legal Implications

9.1 There are no legal implications.

10. Recommendation

10.1 That the report be noted.

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