

North York Moors National Park Authority

18 December 2017

On the Record

1. National Parks UK - NPA Members National Induction Course

The next Members National Induction Course is due to take place Tuesday 13 – Thursday 15 March 2018 and will be hosted by the Broads National Park. Any Members interested in attending should contact Vanessa Burgess, Committees Officer.

2. Health Assured

Health and Wellbeing is being offered to all staff and members. There is a comprehensive network of health articles and assistance available, with monthly featured articles. In the New Year we will be holding some 'know your numbers' consultations. These will involve a 15 minute chat with the Senior Occupation Therapist who will test glucose levels, BMI, cholesterol and blood pressure. This service is entirely confidential. Members wishing to sign up for a consultation should e-mail Vicky Taylor v.taylor@northyorkmoors.org.uk. To have a browse around the website click on [Health Assured Employee Assistance](#)

3. Corporate Wear

As part of the national partnership deal with outdoor gear manufacturer Columbia, there is a 'friends and family' discount available for National Park staff, members and volunteers. Whilst this will be repeated at regular intervals, there is a chance to try Columbia gear for yourself and your family, at a 30% discount, before the first batch of work clothing reaches parks later this year.

How it works:

- Every 8 weeks, Columbia will create a discount code that we share with staff, members and volunteers
- The code will give access to the Columbia Friends & Family website, with **30%** discount on all products for one week
- Columbia has pledged to donate an additional **10%** of all National Parks Friends & Family sales back to the National Parks

All the information (and the discount code) can be found by clicking on this link: <http://www.columbiasportswear.co.uk/national-parks-friends>

4. NPE Minutes

Minutes of the National Park England meeting which took place on 18 July 2017, can be found at **Appendix 1**.

5. Note for your Diary – 27 March 2018

Members are invited to join the Ranger team for a day out 'on the ground'. An opportunity for the team to share with members some of the outstanding work they have been doing in the Park over the past few months. Lunch and transport will be provided, program to follow nearer the time.

Contact Officer
Vanessa Burgess
Committees Officer
Tel No: 01439 772700

**NATIONAL PARKS ENGLAND
MEETING**

**Minutes of meeting held on 18 July 2017 between 11.00am – 3.00pm at National Parks England,
CAN Mezzanine Borough, London, SE1 4YR**

Items listed in order of discussion

Present		
<u>Directors</u>	<u>NPOs/ Chief Executives</u>	<u>NPAs</u>
Jacque Burgess Bill Hitchins Robin Milton Mike McKinley Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre Jim Bailey Jean Davidson Lesley Roberts Margaret Paren Carl Lis	Kevin Bishop Richard Leafe Alison Barnes Andy Wilson David Hickman (Officer) David Butterworth (DBt)	Broads NPA Dartmoor NPA Exmoor NPA Lake District NPA New Forest NPA North York Moors NPA Northumberland NPA Peak District NPA South Downs NPA Yorkshire Dales NPA
<u>Contributors</u>	<u>Organisation</u>	
Paul Hamblin Dave Burges (DBr) Amanda Brace	National Parks England National Parks England National Parks England	

Item		Agreed Actions
1.	Welcome and introductions Robin Milton was welcomed to the Board as the new Chair for Exmoor NPA. Jean Davidson was acting as Alternate Director for Glen Sanderson. And David Hickman was introduced to the meeting, attending on behalf of Sarah Fowler.	
2.	Apologies Apologies were received from Sarah Bryan (Exmoor NPA), John Packman (Broads), Trevor Beattie (South Downs), Meriel Harrison, Thea Gordon Rawlings. On behalf of the Board the Chair wished Thea a speedy recovery.	
3.	Declarations of interest Robin Milton, Jim Bailey, Oliver Crossthwaite-Eyre and Jean Davidson with respect to discussions on the Future of Farming paper as they are all practising farmers/land managers. In addition Robin Milton represents the NFU nationally at other meetings.	
4.	Approve minutes from meeting held on 05 April 2017 4.1 The minutes of the meeting had previously been circulated. PH reported that actions have been completed, or are covered elsewhere on the agenda. Exceptions to this were: (i) A note on National Citizen Service. AW and PH had had a successful meeting with National Citizen Service (NCS) who had expressed a continuing desire to work with NPAs. The idea of a joint communication to NPAs and NCS Providers was agreed, but NCS had yet to prepare a draft, and they	

	<p>would be chased for this.</p> <p>(ii) Sending ideas for C'side Stewardship uptake to Defra – data on uptake and the drop off in new agreements, along with examples of environmental damage is being researched by DBg, supported by the England Agriculture and Rural Development Working Group, but this remains work in progress.</p> <p>(iii) Broadband actions – the Board had agreed a series of actions on broadband prior to the calling of a General Election. Some of these have been a casualty of post election work. However, NPE had written to Home Office Minister Nick Hurd MP and DCMS Secretary of State Karen Bradley MP. A meeting planned between Sarah Fowler and Karen Bradley MP had been cancelled due to the election. NPE's Chair would be discussing broadband with Lord Gardiner later that day, and Nick Hurd has replied positively to our meeting request.</p> <p>4.2 The Chair invited Directors to share intelligence on meetings that had been held with Ministers. JBu had spoken to the new Secretary of State Michael Gove at the Royal Norfolk Show (end of June). He was keen to understand agri-environment issues, was "asking the right questions", and expressed a desire to return to the area. ABa was due to meet DCMS Minister John Glen MP (Salisbury) at the New Forest Show the following week.</p> <p>4.3 JD asked if officers were looking at commercial forestry. PH replied that the Tree and Woodland Officers Group were looking at this as part of putting greater detail on the principle of the 'right tree in the right place'. This would also be covered under item 14.</p> <p>4.4 JB asked for a small amendment to be made under item 9 Future of Farming, where the minutes referred to "use of the term 'rural environment' recognised the value of farmers... to be replaced with use of the term 'rural management'. This was agreed.</p> <p>4.5 There being no further comments the minutes were duly approved.</p>	TGR
5.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p>5.1 AB shared news with the Board on NPE's <i>Discover England Bid</i> – Sarah Fowler had met Visit Britain in the previous week to discuss the details of the Bid. Provisional approval for £1m funding has been given and details are being worked through with an announcement expected soon. SF was thanked for her leadership on this work. It was noted that the New Forest is not included in this partnership.</p>	
6.	<p>Urgent business</p> <p>6.1 The Secretary had not been notified of any.</p>	
7.	<p>Chair's Report</p> <p>7.1 Since the last Board Meeting the General Election had been held, and the Chair noted that the results had raised particular challenges for the new Government, and all who engage with it. Letters have been written to incoming Ministers in all relevant departments.</p> <p>7.2 More information was expected on SoS member appointments when the Chair, Lead Officer and Executive Director were due to meet Lord Gardiner after this meeting.</p> <p>7.3 MP and PH were attending the AONB national conference in Winchester the next day.</p> <p>7.4 Steve Brine MP (a local MP in the South Downs) is now Public Health Minister at Dept. of Health and a meeting is being arranged for September.</p> <p>7.5 There was a discussion on CNP's Governance Review and a paper from CNP with a</p>	

	<p>specific proposal was circulated. This set out continuing to actively encourage NPA participation at CNP Council meetings, but removing the voting rights of NPA representatives. This was discussed and unanimously agreed. MP to report back that decision to CNP.</p>	<p>PH / MP</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Lead Policy NPO Report and Business Plan update</p> <p>8.1 AW introduced the item. The impact of Brexit on Defra's workload and resources should be borne in mind. Brexit is considered to be about 80% of what Defra does. They will have two Bills before Parliament (on agriculture, and on fisheries). In addition, following the last Budget departments like Defra have been tasked with modelling cuts of 3 and 6%.</p> <p>8.2 AW now sits (as lead NPO) on Defra's Environment Committee. He has raised issues of broadband in that forum, and highlighted how the lack of take up of countryside Stewardship agreements posed a risk in National Parks. AW has also sat on the Defra Planning Task and Finish Group. Overall there is quite a lot of churn within Defra. The independent and arms-length body status of NPAs means they have avoided some of these changes.</p> <p>8.3 PH then went through progress in delivering the NPE Business Plan, some of which was also covered in the item on the 8 Point Plan.</p> <p>8.4 The Board noted that Lord Gardiner would be visiting a number of National Parks during National Parks Week. [Post meeting note: these were Northumberland, New Forest, Dartmoor, Exmoor]. NPE had been working with the Minister's Private Office and NPA Communication teams on this – and 2017 would see the best engagement from a Minister for many years.</p>	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Engaging with the new Government and Parliament</p> <p>9.1 PH introduced the item, which looked at the new Government, their policy priorities, and the new Parliament.</p> <p>9.2 The Board congratulated the staff on a helpful paper. The Board then went through each section of the paper.</p> <p>9.3 The Government - The Board noted the political drivers affecting the Government, as set out in the paper and agreed this represented a fair assessment of the situation. It was highlighted that Brexit continued to be a divisive issue for both the Government and Labour and that NPE's focus should continue to be on highlighting how popular National Parks are.</p> <p>9.4 Manifesto commitments – The list in Annex I was noted. NPE should focus on the areas of opportunity (the first list). MP summarised the three big issues as: (i) broadband, (ii) health and (iii) ecosystem services.</p> <p>9.5 Ministerial portfolios – PH noted that Michael Gove had spoken at a Green Alliance Summer reception the previous week. He came over as intelligent, drawing on natural beauty and literature as reference points. PH had encouraged the SoS to use National Parks, and the SoS had referred to NPAs as "reservoirs of experience". A roundtable involving NPAs and the SoS might be possible. Directors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expressed concern that climate change may not be given sufficient priority. An approach based on landscapes and aesthetics might get more traction. • Stressed it would be important to engage with other Ministers (George Eustice and Therese Coffey) as well – particularly on farming, and on forestry. • NPAs had links to a number of Ministers in the Treasury. <p>9.6 It was felt important that NPAs were able to convey a coherent message to Ministers,</p>	

	<p>MPs and others who are visiting National Parks. It was agreed that the collective messages in the paper would be updated to take into account NPE's work on Brexit, and circulated.</p> <p>9.7 It was also agreed that NPAs would feedback meetings and correspondence to PH to support national advocacy.</p> <p>9.8 Legislative programme – It was agreed that the Repeal Bill would be a Level 1 form of engagement (ie. the most intensive). However the Agriculture Bill will also be significant. It was hard to assess in advance of its publication. It was agreed that it would also be a Level 1 Bill but that it could be down-graded depending upon the assessment of the Bill once it has been published. PH noted that engagement on two Bills at level 1 would (if they happened simultaneously) require significant shifting of priorities elsewhere in the Business Plan to accommodate.</p> <p>9.9 The opposition – there was a discussion on opening a channel to the Opposition and other Parties. It was agreed that NPE's Chair would write to Sue Hayman to open up a channel of communication, whilst being careful over the relationship, and recognising the merits of NPE speaking with all parties covering England.</p> <p>9.10 All Party Parliamentary Group on National Parks – MH had swiftly acted to ensure the APPG is re-registered. It now comprises 53 members as opposed to 60 previously. A range of MPs involved, some in ministerial positions, some with small majorities, some new. Lord Gardiner will be invited to attend the first meeting in the Autumn, followed by meetings on health, then planning and development.</p>	<p>MP/AW/PH</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>DBg/ KB</p> <p>MP / PH</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>Development of proposals from English NPAs for post-Brexit Environmental Policies and Initiatives</p> <p>10.1 AW introduced the paper. We have a new Secretary of State and an opportunity to influence but may need to do this more rapidly than planned given circumstances.</p> <p>10.2 The paper could set out what making the environment better looked like in National Parks, include proposals for legislation, policy and initiatives. The Board discussed the ten points set out in the paper and the following points were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's important to cover 2nd purpose as well as first in the paper. • National Parks in the UK are unique cultural landscapes not seen elsewhere. So sharing their importance to people should be reflected in the paper. • NPAs should have a strategic leadership role in which we bring expertise together (examples would be South Downs on Chalk, Broads on wetlands, Exmoor and Peak on moorland restoration – building wider partnerships on a landscape scale). • It would be important to remind politicians of public involvement with and love for National Parks. The paper should focus on our purposes, offer to be helpful and supported by facts that invite politicians to approach NPE for ideas, rather than bending their ear. • It would be helpful to bring something back to the Board that set out what "better" meant in a National Park context. <p>10.3 The Board agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To the 10 points outlined in the paper as a basis for developing policy on environmental issues and initiatives for input to the debate around post Brexit arrangements. • For NPOs/CEOs and NPE staff to gather input from NPE working groups and other bodies and return to Directors with draft proposals in September for a suite of policies and initiatives to put to government, with a view to Directors agreeing these in December. <p>10.4 RM added that it would be important that NPE is able to remain fleet of foot given the</p>	<p>AW/ PH</p>

	fast paced political environment we are operating in.	
11.	<p>Brexit, the Repeal Bill and other Legislation</p> <p>11.1 DBg introduced the paper and gave a short presentation on NPE's initial views on the European Union (Withdrawal) Bill. He underlined the Government's proposals to seek wide ranging powers to manage the transfer of EU legislation to the UK Statute Book, the expectation of limited opportunities for Parliamentary scrutiny and the high levels of uncertainty generally surrounding the Brexit negotiations and associated legislation.</p> <p>11.2 The Board endorsed the recommendations in the paper that NPE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the content of the Repeal Bill and the Agriculture Bill as they are published, identify key issues of importance to the National Parks and determine how we pursue those; • as appropriate, make representations in Parliament (or if appropriate support those of others) to address those key issues during the progress of the Bills; • maintain appropriate links with other organisations doing the same; and • make best use of Ministerial and officials' visits to National Parks to highlight the case for our future of farming paper, and an effective UK-based system of environmental protection and regulation post-Brexit. <p>11.3 DBg assured the Board that NPE will keep Directors apprised of significant developments that may fall outside the Board meeting cycle, and may seek advice from the Chair and Lead Officer accordingly. He also requested that Board members feed-back any helpful intelligence that they may glean in the course their other activities.</p>	<p>DBg/PH</p> <p>DBg</p> <p>DBg / PH</p> <p>ALL</p> <p>ALL</p>
12.	<p>SOS Appointments Process</p> <p>12.1 Margaret Reed and Jane Four-acre of Defra joined the meeting for this item.</p> <p>12.2 MP invited Directors to share their experiences of the quality of the candidates, the process itself, and the interviews.</p> <p>12.3 The overall view was that the process was much better ("100% better"). The process was smooth, thorough and the sift stricter - than previously. Defra officials were congratulated on that. Other points made were:</p> <p><u>Quality of candidates</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the candidates was improved. • The use of 'Linked In' had been particularly helpful (Defra noting it had attracted 33,000 hits). • Local networks had been good for finding candidates, keeping a 'warm list', as had speaking to possible candidates in advance. • The more severe sift had been found to be useful. <p><u>The Process</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The process was far improved on previous occasions and Defra running it was consistent with it being a Ministerial appointment. • The Independent Members had had national park experience and that had been reassuring. • It had been a shame that the election had meant Defra were not in a position to announce successful candidates before some NPAs held their AGMs. • Chairs had felt supported/ looked after through the process. • There was a feeling that huddle had not been easy to use as the mechanism for confidential communication. 	

	<p><u>The Interviews</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nobel House was a quite intimidating venue for interviews and significant travel involved to York for some candidates. • Local venues would be preferable in future as this reduces travel (for candidates), is less intimidating and provides a connection with the National Park and the place they will be spending their time. • Sir William Worsley was thought to be an excellent independent panel member. • A joint interview was necessary on one occasion that was felt not to work so well. • It was important to thank those who had applied but were unsuccessful. They should be nurtured since they are potential supporters for NPs in future. • Some Chairs felt it would be helpful if they could indicate a preferred choice, or for the panel to rank candidates, though KF indicated this was not possible within OCPA rules. <p>12.4 MR asked for views on specific vs non-specific criteria. A range of views were expressed. Some felt by not having specific criteria they had felt freer and the risk of being too prescriptive was that people might be put off from applying. Others felt it was important that the NPA was able to specify specific needs that they needed on their Authority.</p> <p>12.5 MP suggested the criteria should be kept as wide as possible; that NPAs would find it helpful to be able to have more specific criteria, but as a desirable rather than essential criteria. MR advised that Defra will ask each time if specific criteria are needed by a NPA.</p> <p>12.6 The Board would welcome an announcement of results soon. KF advised that it was with the SoS and she hoped for news soon.</p> <p>12.7 Separately, MR agreed to look at improving the SoS member appraisal process over the summer. NPE was asked to coordinate ideas about the appraisal forms and share with MR. She confirmed that no appraisals were needed for non SoS appointees unless the NPA wants to do this for its own purposes.</p>	DB/ ABr
13.	<p>8 point Plan Update</p> <p>13.1 PH introduced the paper that gave a progress report on delivering the 8 Point Plan. It was noted that the 8 Point Plan Progress Report would shortly be going to the printers, Lord Gardiner will write a forward, but this will be a NPE publication (ie. no DEFRA logo).</p> <p>13.2 Good progress had been made across a number of areas of the 8 Point Plan – in particular with the Discover England Fund, on the Apprenticeship Standard, on the World Heritage Site announcement in the Lake District, and in progressing working on health and well-being. ABa, TB and DB were thanked for their updates.</p> <p>13.3 The Board discussed plans to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the 1949 Act which is included in the 8 Point Plan. A range of views were expressed including asking whether it is a sufficient priority for all 15 NPAs, looking at celebrating it on another anniversary, to the risks of not being involved and the celebration being used by others; and the ability to get good profile with little publicity if you have a good strapline.</p> <p>13.4 It was agreed that the UK Communicators group would be asked to look at this. NPE would <u>not</u> apply to Heritage Lottery Funding for the anniversary celebrations.</p>	JP
14.	<p>DEFRA/Forestry Commission Engagement</p> <p>14.1 ABa explained that a meeting with DEFRA was due to take place on 5th July, but was postponed by DEFRA (it has subsequently been rescheduled to 30th August). In the interim PH had met Marie Southgate and raised briefly our collective concerns over forestry. He had highlighted that in many areas there are important synergies. However,</p>	ABa/MH/ TG

	(b) Tuesday 24 th October	NPE Board sharing session (S. Downs)	
	(c) Thursday 7th Dec	NPE Board meeting	