

MDC, Longshaw Estate – Wednesday 4th September 2019 (2:00pm-4:00pm)

Present:

Bob Berzins (PLAF)
Danny Udall (EMP)
Dave Aspinall (SCC)
Gus Hunter (SCC)
Henry Folkard (BMC)
John Gilpin (SCC)
John Horscroft (RS)
Karis Hodgson (EMP)
Mark Anderson (PDNPA)
Nabil Abbas (SRWT)
Rachel Bennett (NT)
Rhodri Thomas (PDNPA)
Roy Mosley (SRWT)
Ted Talbot (NT)
Terry Howard (SR & SLAF)

Apologies:

Jenny Parker (NE)
Jon Dallow (SCC)
Nabil Abbas (SRWT)
Sue Fletcher (PDNPA)

Item 1. Beaver feasibility study

- Beaver feasibility study currently being prepared for a number of sites in the SMP area. Proposal between SCC & EMP for Burbage. Will undergo a natural flood management project to understand how Beaver impact on upland habitats. 6 potential funders for feasibility; SCC, NT, RSPB. Looking at site in Burbage and Redmires catchment.
- Fairthorn Clough, Burbage, Leash Fen, Blackbrook suggested sites.
- Options and implantation plan will follow the feasibility study.
- Getting the engagement element is also key to explore in the feasibility study.
- The group have agreed that they will support the feasibility study.
- e.g. Devon Wildlife Trust 'River Otter' beaver study.

Item 2. New EMP Community Site Ranger Karis Hodgson introduction and update

- Integration and educating our visitors. Working on a plan as to where future resources will be required.
- Linked to Glover report – ask national for 1000 rangers to welcome, inform and educate visitor to the countryside.
- TH – recruiting volunteers and training utilising the knowledge of the volunteer user group sectors.
- BB – Glover review due to publish full in Autumn. PLAF did comment on access and recreation.

Item 3. Matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting

- Action for Mike Rhodes and Sam Beaton to lead access routes in SMP. Is this still on the agenda? TT suggested to get this taken forward on the working group. Members need a copy of the email chain. Attached to the notes. **ACTION**
- All party parliamentary group of the BMC visit was cancelled.
- Redmires – details need to be finalised on the plantation cycle track. The seasonal use off the track may be limited if breeding nightjars.

Item 4. Partner updates

Dave Aspinall (Sheffield City Council)

- Bike track at Redmires consultation. This is being worked through.
- Beaver feasibility study
- Campervans more and more of a problem in our carparks
- Resurgence of raves in Plantation South Yorks. Police have formed 'Operation Combo Kilo'.

Nabil Abbas (Sheffield & Rotherham Wildlife Trust)

- Monthly volunteer work days at Blacka Moor.
- Bridge at bottom of strawberry lea pastures replaced
- On site works autumn and winter habitat works

Peak District National Park Authority

Access - Sue Smith/Mike Rhodes

- Access Land Gates – Sheffield CC have audited access points on CRoW land with replacement gates being identified for funding by the National Park's Access Fund.
- Signage & Condition Surveys - Junior Rangers have been involved in surveying promoted routes and will be trialling field-based apps for data recording later this year.
- Peak District Local Access Forum – Annual report available at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/lafreports.
- Newsletters – email Hello@peakdistrictfoundation.org.uk to sign up for updates from the Peak District National Park Foundation and sue.smith@peakdistrict.gov.uk to be added to the circulation list for the Access and Rights of Way newsletter.
- Explorer Bus – The Hope Valley Explorer bus has finished for the summer but will be returning next year. Feedback has been very positive.

North Lees/Stannage - Chris Bray/Mark Anderson/Emma Stone

- Farm tenancy process has been successful, and a tenancy offered to Nick Denniff who is many people will know.
- A first draft of the options appraisal for longer term management has been completed and is currently being refined with a view to preparing it for wider stakeholder consultation.
- North Lees Hall is currently vacant, prospect of a short-term lease to cover the period of the consultation on the results of the options appraisal.
- Busy summer for the campsite which is now drawing to a close.
- Successful Ring Ouzel season on Stannage with increased volunteer engagement and typical rates of breeding success.
- Reasonable year for Pied Fly Catchers using the estates nest boxes.

Eastern Moors – Sue Fletcher

- Draft Management Plan – final revised has been circulated and comments being assessed before feeding back.

Visitor Management – Sarah Wilks

- Visitor management – Countryside Code & suite of supporting signs – workshop held on the 11th July 2019 at the ABC, and further workshop to progress held 4th Sept.

PDNPA other – Sue Fletcher

Moorland issues following on from the Chatsworth Moorland Management Meeting.

- Moorland birds – 2018 survey completed and analysis being carried out before results will be available in September/October. Indications are good so far. Birds of prey Initiative building on improved relationships between keepers and raptor groups. There are still concerns from the moorland community re Upland Skies, Amanda Anderson has offered to be the MA contact.
- Sustainable & Resilient Moorland Management Group (SRMMG) – clarification of the impact of Natural England's position statement on burning is being provided. Concern over fuel load in terms of vegetation and the short to medium fire risk until re-wetting takes effect.
- FOG Sub Group has developed ideas for fire prevention and mitigation – support given for a piece of work on a strategic PD approach with a timescale for completion of January 2020.
- Rural, heritage and wildlife crime – Rural and Wildlife Crime Summit and training event planned for later in September.

Bids

- Ravine woodlands LIFE bid – NE considering a revised bid after missing the score by only a couple of points.
- PDNPA White Peak Pilot Ideas for a new Environmental Land Management Scheme has been accepted by Defra for part of their phase 1 testing. Contracts are being drafted for Test 1 in the White Peak, which if successful will be followed by Test 2 in the Dark and South West Peak.

Matthew Scott-Campbell/Chris Fry (Moors for the Future Partnership)

- My colleague Chris Fry who has been attending for MFFP at recent SMP meetings has asked for me to remind members of SMP to look at the UMG wildfire risk assessment, and strongly advocates that for every site that partners are working on consideration should be given to addressing the range of issues raised in this broad document. This is important ahead of spring 2020 when spring wildfire risk again could be a key concern. MFFP would welcome the opportunity to link up with partners in this regard in working for a joined-up approach.

From the capital works perspective from MFFP my colleague Steve Maynard provides the following brief update (below) ahead of another busy and exciting winter of restoration and conservation works:

The Moors for the Future Partnership as a whole are gearing up to deliver this autumn/winter:

- Over 7,000 dumpy bags of brash and 150,000 m² geotextiles with associated lime, seed and fertiliser to re-vegetate over 50 ha of bare peat;
- Nearly 12,000 gully blocks will be installed using a variety of techniques across a range of sites to improve hydrology along some 60 km grips and gullies;
- Diversification of 1,400 ha sward by means of cutting and planting vascular plug plants and/or sphagnum inoculation.

Highlights:

- Large-scale restoration of the fire sites will be ongoing on Stalybridge, Arnfield, Castleshaw and Readycon Dean;
- Pilot landscape-scale trial of bunding (low peat dams) techniques to inform future hydrological restoration works
- GIS survey of all grips and gullies within the SAC to produce a prioritised map to inform the Partnership's Building Blocks project and provide a blue-print for future hydrological restoration works at a landscape scale

Jenny Parker (Natural England)

- Natural England Senior Leadership Team under our new Chief exec Marion Spain and Chair Tony Juniper have agreed an updated Vision, Mission and Goals for the Organisation:

Thriving Nature for People and Planet.

Building Partnerships for Nature's Recovery.

- Resilient Landscapes and Seas
- Greener Farming and Fisheries
- Sustainable development
- Connecting People with Nature

Of local (Peak District/SMP) interest there's been some progress with the NE Upland work programme (bringing an end to burning on deep peat).

- The Moorland Association have challenged the NE Position Statement regarding the requirement to cease burning on deep peat. We're awaiting the outcome of this appeal (due shortly) but remain confident that the Position Statement (which provides clarity on the requirement to cease burning on deep peat in all but very exceptional cases linked to restoration) will stand and the evidence is clear around damaging effects of burning on deep peat.

- It is anticipated that Legislation around burning on deep peat will be laid by Christmas. It was hoped that this would be in place by the end of October, but the prorogation of Parliament has prevented this. It is worth noting that whatever happens there won't be Legislation in place to prevent burning on Blanket bog during at least part of the current 'burning season' (Autumn/Winter 2019/20). Some Estates in the Peak District have historical consent to burn and may (disappointingly) decide to burn on blanket bog (despite having signed voluntary commitments not to). Unfortunately, until the Legislation kicks in there is little we can do to prevent this. If anyone burns on SSSI blanket bog and it can be shown that they do not have underlying consent to do so, we will deal with this through our current Regulatory processes.

Ted Talbot & Rachel Bennett (National Trust, Longshaw)

- Work to repair wall at Longshaw pond to prevent it leaking.
- Car park pay and display machine battery thefts.
- Ops Pitchford has finished. Been another successful year of rave prevention.
- Monitoring report due out soon.
- Ranger team working on boundaries, access points and paths.
- Tree safety surveys underway.
- New substation building completed. Next phase of the project is external access to the office. Internal office works to begin soon and will complete after Christmas.
- NT system Active Outdoor Provider Scheme maps being work up.

Danny Udall (Eastern Moors, NT & RSPB)

- RSPB restructure due to be completed by next Monday 9th September 2019. May mean new people in post.
- Becky Speight appointed as new RSPB chief executive.
- Monitoring concluding, report to follow.
- Kim Leyland commissioned to remap the changing landscape on EMP.
- Focusing on access points and bringing up to spec.
- Project to resurface public right of way on Ramsley.
- Fence on Millstone Edge issue has come up again – as a sheep got trapped on Millstone Edge.
- Partnership with Police at NT on Ops Pitchford. Shillito Wood may warrant barriers and closing in evenings.

- NT system Active Outdoor Provider Scheme maps currently being work up – will encompass maps for wet, dry and bird breeding seasons.
- Insurance claim going off in Burbage.

Terry Howard (Sheffield Ramblers & Sheffield Local Access Forum)

- Terry's concerns about rights of way and Lost Ways attached with these minutes for partners to look at and consider.

Item 5. Wild Peak

- Rewilding Britain is a new charity responding to the collapse in wildlife and biodiversity.
- TT to share the powerpoint presentation of Wild Peak.
- Homework! Look up beavers and Rewilding Britain in your own time.

Item 6. SMP Celebration on Wednesday 16th October 2019

- Send names of invitees to TT to do the invite.
- Normal meeting to precede celebration, to be held at Flat 7 due to MDC being booked out until 3pm.
- Meet at the MDC with invited guests for 3:30pm for the celebration afternoon tea.
- Chance to showcase the work of partners via. tabletop displays.
- Then walk to visit the SMP tree in Burbage.
- Potential to plant a tree.

A.O.B.

- SCC management plan endorsement – DU, TT, DA.
- Hash House Harriers – has anyone seen this running on marked trail?
- JH - Outdoor City 100 – rethink – brought up lack of emphasis on how to behave in the countryside.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 16th October 2019 (normal meeting 2:00pm-3:00pm, at Flat 7) followed by CELEBRATION AFTERNOON TEA, 3:30pm-5:00pm at the MDC, Longshaw Estate.

Meeting ends