

**YORKSHIRE DALES NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY
ACCESS COMMITTEE**

10th August 2006

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PARK MANAGEMENT

1. ACTIVITIES

- Attendance at the Sport England Launch of 'Active Living' the physical activity framework for Yorkshire and Humber.
- Attendance at the 'Transforming Outdoor Yorkshire' initiative meeting
- Attendance at the Interreg Conference Aviemore
- Attendance at the Access Management Group Meeting
- Attendance at the Area Tourism Partnership Meeting
- Attendance at the Cumbria 'access' meeting
- Attendance at the ANPA Access Officers workshop
- Induction sessions for the new chairman of the YDLAF
- Meeting with officers of Cumbria County Council re prow delegation agreement
- Meeting with officers of North Yorkshire County Council various highway/green lane issues.
- Attendance at the YDAF
- Attendance at The National Lottery and Countryside Recreation Seminar
- Attendance at Countryside Agency , Case Officers Meeting

2. ISSUES FOR MEMBERS TO NOTE

Dog Control Orders

Following the Defra consultation, and Access Committee Report Sept 2005, National Park Authorities, as access authorities, have not been made secondary Authorities for dog control orders at the present time. However, this matter is to be considered further by Defra. Members may be interested to note that local access forums have become statutory consultees for proposed Dog Control Orders which affect CROW access land. This means that forums can - if they wish - advise the decision-making body (district council or parish council) on the affect which a proposed Order could have on public access and enjoyment of the area.

CRoW Act Part I

Use of Exclusions and Restrictions

During the period 28th May to 31st Dec 2005 the NPA as Relevant Authority received 20 applications for restrictions or exclusions, 2 of which were withdrawn. The remaining 18 which have been determined. Since the 1st January 2006 and July 31st 2006 the Authority has received one application for a restriction of the public for land management and public safety purposes. The matter is currently being dealt with.

28 Day Discretionary Restrictions 1st Jan 06 to 31st July 06

During this period the NPA has received notification for 28 day discretionary restrictions on 28 parcels of land involving 118 notifications covering 27,520ha the majority of which were for the following dates: 15 May – 28 May, 30 May – 2 June, 5 June – 9 June, 12 June – 16 June for the purposes of protecting breeding birds.

Fire Severity Index (FSI)

The Fire Severity Index has twice reached extreme conditions (Level 5 FSI) in July. This has activated the withdrawal of 'open access' rights from the parcels of land pre-registered by the YDNPA with the OACC. Rangers have subsequently replaced the Fire Hazard Notices with appropriate notices informing the public that 'open access' land is not available although footpaths and bridleways remain open.

National Audit Office report

The National Audit Office, which scrutinises public spending on behalf of Parliament, has now published its report on the implementation of the CRoW Act (part 1). Anyone interested in the report can download it at:

http://www.nao.org.uk/publications/nao_reports/05-06/05061046.pdf

Whilst not referring to the Yorkshire Dales specifically, with comments being generic in nature, the report gives extensive coverage to much of the work the Authority has done to implement open access.

Local Access Forum

Work on new regulations to improve the operation and effectiveness of forums, together with revised guidance to forum members, is well underway. Countryside Agency are in the process of commissioning consultants to produce handbook for all LAF Members.

Tackling Traffic – Sustainable Leisure Transport in National Parks – a report from the Council for National Parks

The Council for National Parks (CNP) have recently produced the above report. The report describes much of the work being carried out within national parks to provide and promote sustainable travel. It highlights the difficulties that are faced in funding such schemes and makes a series of recommendations for National Park Authorities, Natural England, The Countryside Council for Wales and Government.

The key recommendations are that:

- Sustainable transport should remain a high priority in policy and implementation for all National Park Authorities.
- NPAs should seek to establish strategic sustainable travel partnerships to co-ordinate provision.

- National environmental bodies in England and Wales should take on the role of nationally championing sustainable recreational transport.
- A new ring fenced sustainable transport fund be made available to NPAs through the Department for Transport.

Following discussion at the Association of National Park Authorities meeting in Skipton between CNP and NPAs, and notwithstanding concerns expressed about how CNP might wish to question NPAs priority setting, CNP have now presented a funding bid to the DfT and the Welsh Assembly.

Should members wish to access the full report it is available on CNPs website, cnp.org.uk

Consultations

'Outdoors for all?' draft diversity action plan consultation – invitation to comment

Members will be aware of the public consultation on the best ways to encourage young people, people with disabilities, those from inner cities and black and ethnic minority communities, to visit and enjoy local green spaces and the English countryside.

The consultation is being run by the Countryside Agency on behalf of Defra. It seeks views on a draft action plan that aims, over a 10 year period, to increase the number of people from these groups who choose to make use of the outdoor recreational opportunities that exist in both rural and urban areas. The Document can be downloaded from www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/outdoorsdiversity

The Outreach and education manager will be putting together a response, on behalf of the Authority which will include Members comments.

Outdoor Recreation Strategy for Natural England.

Natural England are currently developing an Outdoor Recreation Strategy. The strategy will be wide ranging, covering Natural England work on:

- promotion and marketing,
- healthy lifestyles,
- monitoring use of outdoor space,
- planning and transport,
- tourism and leisure,
- managing the land to improve and extend access,
- providing for disabled groups, and
- other matters which are influenced by or impacted on by outdoor recreation.

The aim is to have a outdoor recreation strategy ready for the launch of Natural England in October. The strategy, is still at a fairly early stage in its development, but Natural England are keen to involve National Park Authorities in this process through the Association of English National Park Authorities. It is expected that a wide consultation on the strategy will take place in the autumn. The Authority will be commenting on this strategy through the Association of English National Park Authorities.

Review of the CRow Act Relevant Authority Guidance (RAG)

Countryside Agency are currently undertaking a review of part of the CRow relevant authority guidance. There will be a 'targeted' consultation process as part of the review, over the summer period. The consultation documents will also be available for comment by anyone through the Countryside Agency website.

JON AVISON
HEAD OF PARK MANAGEMENT