

WESTERN PARISH FORUM MEETING NOTE

Held at Barbon Village Hall, Barbon on Wednesday 17 April 2019 from 7pm-9pm

Parish Attendees:

Casterton	Ken Humphries
Sedbergh	Kevin Lancaster & Janey Hassam
Ireby with Leck	Carol Howard
Firbank	Gordon Chivers
Killington	Ian Dawson
Orton	Kyle Blue
Orton }	
Tebay}	Margaret Longworth

Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC) – Amanda McCleery

YDNPA Representatives:

Ian McPherson	Parish Member (Secretary of State appointee - Parish)
Carl Lis OBE	Chairman
David Butterworth	Chief Executive
Gary Smith	Director of Conservation & Community
Julie Payne	Committees Officer
Sam Parfitt	PA to CEO & Chairman

David Evans Scheme Manager for Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership (Friends of the Lake District)/Dark Skies Project Officer

Ian McPherson (Chair of the Western Parish Forum) introduced the Authority's staff in attendance and welcomed everyone to the meeting. He emphasized the forum provides a vital form of 2-way communication and would like to hear what the Parishes have to say.

1. Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership

David Evans gave a presentation on the Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership Scheme which aims to unlock and reveal the hidden heritage of the Westmorland Dales, enabling more people to connect with, enjoy and benefit from this inspirational landscape. The area is a distinctly limestone landscape with a mix of fantastic cultural heritage, a lot of which has been overlooked.

The objectives are to:

- Reveal the area's hidden heritage
- Conserve what makes the area special
- Engage people in enjoying and benefitting from their heritage
- Sustain the benefits of the scheme in the long-term

A total of 21 projects will be delivered by a partnership of organisations over a four year period (March 2019 to April 2023) with funding of £3.5 million; comprising National Lottery Heritage Fund (£2.273m), partners (£982k) and volunteer time (£200k). Friends of the Lake District are the lead partner with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority as the accountable body to HLF.

A small Partnership Team will be based at Tebay, including a team of apprentices.

Some Key Outputs:

- 340 sites added to Historic Environmental Record

- 370 volunteers contributing > 1500 volunteer days
- 20 community groups, 2,000 people engaged

Parishes will be engaged in the scheme and act as a conduit to the wider community.

Anyone wishing to receive newsletter updates can complete the sign up form [at this link](#)

The key contact for the scheme is David Evans David-evans@fld.org.uk

2. Dark Skies Reserve update

David Evans explained the National Park Management Plan has an objective to *maintain the National Park as a place where a true sense of tranquillity, remoteness and solitude can be found, and, by 2021, obtain Dark Skies Reserve status to enhance and promote enjoyment of its night sky.*

In order to warrant Dark Skies Reserve status, we need to prove the skies are sufficiently dark. 8 key lead volunteers have been taking readings. Over 300 meter readings have been undertaken so far; with 50 showing the required level.

A consultant has been employed to undertake a 'lighting audit', assessing the current level of external lighting on e.g. buildings across the National Park. From this information, a 'Light Management Plan' will be produced. Parish Councils will receive more information on this in the Autumn.

There is still a lot of work to do in order to obtain International Dark Sky Reserve status and it is hoped to submit a bid this time next year.

3. Attracting Younger People

David Butterworth gave a presentation detailing an initiative being led by the 4 District Councils and YDNPA to try to deal with some of the significant issues facing all northern rural communities.

The National Park Management Plan contains an ambition that the Park should be:

Home to strong, self-reliant and balanced communities with good access to the services they need..

As part of achieving that ambition, there are specific objectives by 2024 to:

- Create at least 400 new dwellings in a range of tenures, sizes, types and prices
- Increase the number and quality of jobs, so as to increase gross value added (GVA) by 10%
- Deliver at least one significant economic development project in each of Craven, Eden, Richmondshire and South Lakeland.
- Connect Grassington, Hawes, Reeth, Sedbergh, and their surrounding 'service villages', to fibre-to-the-premises broadband, and secure at least the Universal Service Obligation (10 mbps) for the rest of the National Park
- Provide basic mobile phone coverage across the National Park, and ensure 4G (or better) services are available on all networks in Grassington, Hawes, Reeth, Sedbergh and their surrounding service villages
- Seek to retain access to local services — like primary schools and GP surgeries — that are essential to the long-term viability of local communities.

- Undertake a 5-year programme of measures to promote the National Park as a place to live for younger, working age households.

4. **Local Plan**

Gary Smith gave a short presentation on the process to develop a single Local Plan for the whole of the National Park.

The timeframe for which is as follows:

- A socio-economic study to establish the current situation on issues like housing, economic development and population trends (May-Oct);
- 'Issues and options' consultation (early 2020);
- Full draft plan consultation (early 2021);
- 'Publication' version (end 2021);
- Examination by a Planning Inspector (end 2022);
- Adoption (2023)

5. **Lune 'Slow the Flow' project**

Gary Smith gave a short presentation on the work the Authority and the Lune Rivers Trust are doing to reduce flooding in Sedbergh and Tebay

A number of schemes are underway including the Lune' 'Slow the Flow' project, which is being funded by the Cumbria Floods Partnership.

6. **Habitat Surveys**

Gary Smith gave a short presentation providing an update on the NPA's rolling programme of surveys of the extent and condition of nationally-important habitats in the Park. The programme is currently focused on the new area of the National Park. The NPA needs agreement from landowners to access their land to do the surveys. Surveying the northern (i.e. Eden) area is due to take this year, and we are in the process of contacting landowners to get their permission to do so.

Last year, 1,400 hectares of habitat was surveyed (30% of the possible total), of which only 10% was found to be in good condition.

The data is really important. It is used to help farmers entering into agri-environment grant schemes and to support bids for funding to bodies like the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

All presentations from this meeting are available [here](#)

Questions

Ireby with Leck asked when the Boundary Sign from Leck to Cowan Bridge would be installed and if there is an option to include an area name. The Parish also asked for clarification as to who has responsibility for maintenance of the rights of way network in the Lancashire part of the National Park. The CEO explained the YDNPA is still awaiting legal agreement from Lancashire County Council to transfer the responsibility/cost of maintenance to the National Park Authority. Until the NPA receives delegated authority from Lancashire we are not legally permitted to take on responsibility.

Action: The CEO will follow these issues up and update Carol Howard by email ✓

The meeting concluded at 8:55pm.