



NOTE OF SOUTHERN PARISH FORUM MEETING

The Devonshire Institute (Grassington Town Hall)
7:00-9:00pm, Wednesday 19th April 2017

Attendees:

Parishes

Austwick	Kate Smith & Barbara Tibbatts
Beamsley	Mark Kerr
Buckden	Alan Jones
Calton	Alison Crisp & Pam Murray
Cracoe	Ralph Chester & Karen Holloway
Embsay with Eastby	Judith Benjamin
Grassington	Burke Smith; Bob Kendall & Rob Charlton
Hebden	George Coney & Peter Hodge
Hetton	Alan Horn
Kettwell with Startoton	Cecilia Harvey
Long Preston	Nick Tyrer
Threshfield	John Dean & Angus Dean

YDNPA

Carl Lis OBE	Authority Chairman
Chris Clark	Secretary of State Parish Member
Neil Heseltine	Secretary of State Parish Member
David Butterworth	CEO
Gary Smith	Director of Conservation & Community
Julie Payne	Committees Officer
Sam Parfitt	PA to CEO & Chairman (notetaker)

[Chris Clark](#) (Chair of the Southern Forum) welcomed everyone to the meeting and emphasised the concept of the forums is to improve communication and engagement between the NPA and Parishes. He also encouraged the Parishes to influence the other local authorities, ie district and county on issues.

The agenda for the meeting comprised the following topics:-

The National Park's approach to Enforcement (Gary Smith)

A powerpoint presentation gave an introduction to planning enforcement. The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance make clear that planning authorities must act proportionately. The fundamental questions are: what is the harm caused by the breach? how severe is the harm? And, can it be remedied? The Authority has generally taken a reactive approach to enforcement – relying on the public to report unauthorised development. Now the aim is to be more proactive, and try to tackle breaches of planning control as early as possible, making sure that conditions are complied with. The Authority deals with approx. 600 planning applications per year - 94% of which are approved – so it wont be possible to monitor everything. Parish Councils have a really important role to play in identifying the types of development the Authority should focus on; and helping monitor development – letting the Authority know if they think something is wrong.

Councillors felt it would be beneficial if the Authority could provide more information, including putting consultation responses on the website; notifying parishes of any changes to conditions after permission has been granted; and providing regular updates to any parish that has reported an issue.

Updating the National Park Management Plan (Gary Smith)

The process for updating the Plan is about to commence with the first public consultation scheduled to start around the middle of May. Gary Smith explained why the Plan is important, and how Parishes can get involved in influencing what goes in it. His powerpoint presentation explained the fundamentals of how the Plan is produced, and the timetable. Parishes are encouraged to respond to the consultation. They can also pass on their views through the Parish Forum or via the Parish Members of the Authority.

The current [Plan](#) contains 53 objectives, 45 of which have made significant progress (examples of which were shown in a [powerpoint presentation](#) prior to the start of the meeting).

The updated plan will be produced by a Steering Group made up of 14 bodies, representing landowners, businesses, local authorities and government agencies, as well as the National Park Authority. Lots of other organisations will also have an input including local residents, businesses, and visitors.

The aim is to have a realistic and widely-supported Plan so that some good things get done in the National Park over the next 5 years.

The Authority certainly doesn't have all the answers – local communities need to have an input.

Housing Bill (Gary Smith)

Government is consulting on its Housing White paper 'Fixing our Broken Housing Market' which sets out how the Government intends to boost housing supply. The consultation closes on 2 May 2017. The proposals would have implications for the National Park. Although our Local Plan is generally in accordance with the white paper proposals, the critical question is whether the new target of 55 dwellings per year (including conversions) can be met. It is anticipated that half of these would have local occupancy restrictions or be affordable housing to rent.

Future of Land Management (Neil Heseltine)

Neil gave a brief resume of why the future of farming post-Brexit has become a hot topic. He highlighted that farmers rely on subsidies. The National Park Authority fully recognises the potential implications for farm businesses if subsidies are reduced as a consequence of Brexit – in addition to the economic impacts, having fewer farm businesses would ultimately affect the landscape and character of the dales.

Neil has been involved at national level with National Parks England on a group looking at the Future of Farming in National Park. This group has developed a policy discussion paper, which is being submitted to Government for consideration. Its aim is to shape a new approach to sustainable land management, enabling all farmers within National Parks to be proactive environmental managers as well as producing high quality food – thus helping rural economies to become more sustainable.

'Ashtag' project (Gary Smith)

Ash dieback disease can't be stopped from spreading. Scientists are now concentrating on monitoring ash trees to try to identify disease resistant trees that might be used to 're-populate' woodlands in future. To achieve an even spread of recorded trees across the National Park, our aim is that each Parish 'tag' and monitor one ash tree. The responsibility once attaching a tag is to report on its progress annually onto a website database along with a photo. As the Ash is an iconic important species for the Dales National Park the hope is that the scheme will be widely supported by its residents.

Any Other Business

BT Telephone Boxes: Regarding the option of Parishes being able to 'adopt' the red phone boxes, one councillor raised the problem that Parish Meetings are not a legal entity, which therefore prohibits them taking out liability insurance. It was suggested a solution would be to enter into an arrangement with a neighbouring Parish Council who could adopt the box on their behalf.

Village of the Year 2017: Parishes were reminded of details of a Channel 4 programme, VILLAGE OF THE YEAR 2017 which had already been circulated to parishes on behalf of Reef TV, who are encouraging villages in the Yorkshire Dales to apply to take part a competition with a £10,000 prize.

Villages can apply at www.villageoftheyear.co.uk or by emailing voty@reeftv.com

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions to the meeting and encouraged them to complete and return the feedback forms.

SJP
2/5/17