



## NOTE OF WESTERN PARISH FORUM MEETING

Orton Market Hall

7:00-9:00pm, Monday 8 May 2017

Attendees:

### Parishes

Casterton	Enid Hastings & Jean Lobley
Crosby Garrett	Stuart Saunders; Denise Saunders & Carl Halam
Firbank	Gordon Chivers
Killington	Ian Dawson
Kirkby Stephen	Glenys Lumley & Alex Birtles
Mallerstang	Val Vamplew & John Prentice
Mansergh	Bert Metcalfe
Nateby	Sarah Middleton & Paul Thompson
Orton	Kyle Blue, David Potter, Margaret Longworth, Menna Lewis & Mark Mawson
Ravenstonedale	Chris Elphick
Tebay	Joanne Nugent

### YDNPA

Carl Lis OBE	Authority Chairman
Ian McPherson	Secretary of State Parish Member
David Butterworth	CEO
Gary Smith	Director of Conservation & Community
Kathryn Beardmore	Director of Park Services
Martyn Coy	Principal Planning (Enforcement) Officer
Nick Cotton	Cumbria County Council Member
Sam Parfitt	PA to CEO & Chairman (notetaker)

[Ian McPherson](#) (Chair of the Western Forum) welcomed everyone to the meeting. The concept of the forum is to assist with communication and engagement between the National Park Authority and Parishes, whereby Parish Councils/Meetings have an opportunity to let us know what they think and to allow a two-way discussion on issues of mutual interest.

He explained the Forums are split across 3 geographical areas within the National Park: North, South and West. Each Forum meets twice a year, with meetings chaired by one of the Authority's 4 parish-appointed Members.

A page has been created on the National Park website specifically for parish councils [yorkshiredales.org.uk/living-and-working/parish-councils-and-meetings](http://yorkshiredales.org.uk/living-and-working/parish-councils-and-meetings).

The page includes:

- notes of the Parish Forum meetings, copies of the presentations, and details of meetings.
- quarterly '[briefing note](#)' with latest news
- links to some of the most relevant parts of the website including information relating to any [planning applications](#), funding for projects and the [Management Plan](#).
- Details of the 4 Parish Appointed Members

Parish Councillors were encouraged to have a look at the website – and to let the Authority have feedback, and any suggestions for additional information that would be useful. Any comments can be fed back to [Ian McPherson](#).

The agenda for the meeting comprised the following topics:-

### **The National Park Management Plan (Gary Smith)**

Gary Smith explained why the Plan is important, and how Parishes can get involved in influencing what goes in it. Having an up-to-date National Park Management Plan is a statutory requirement. The Plan also needs to be updated because of the new areas of the National Park. The process for updating the Plan is about to start – with a first public consultation scheduled to start on 22 May. The consultation will run for 6 weeks, including drop-in sessions on 13 June at Orton and 20 June at Barbon. Parishes are encouraged to respond to the consultation. They can also pass on their views through this Parish Forum or via their Parish Member on the Authority.

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.

A few of the key issues that have already come up in preparation for the review of the Plan are:

- Building more affordable, local housing
- Brexit impact on upland farming
- Retaining traditional field barns and walls
- Improving condition of important habitats
- Getting access to services (inc. broadband)
- Helping to reduce downstream flooding
- Caring for a rapidly ageing population
- Stopping persecution of birds of prey

All the details of the consultation will be included in the ‘Dales’ residents’ newspaper, which will be sent to every household in the National Park in the week beginning 22 May.

### **The National Park’s approach to Enforcement** (Martyn Coy)

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 - and won’t be able to monitor everything. So, 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. The Authority has served 23 enforcement notices in the last 5 years. Examples where formal action has been taken are historic buildings; caravans in open landscape; untidy land and agricultural buildings. [Tim Davis](#) is the enforcement officer contact for the western parishes.

Parish Council Clerks receive email notification of planning applications in their area, although they do have the option to receive paper copies instead if they prefer. The electronic notification contains the application reference number and site address. A detailed description of the application, plans and all associated documents are available to download from the planning portal

on the Authority's website which is easy to use and publicly accessible. In some instances Parishes do request copies of plans to be sent out in the post where they have issues with being able to print large copies for consideration at council meetings.

Nateby PC were concerned about the length of time being taken to consider a planning application which they had opposed. The application had initially been submitted to Eden District Council and then passed over to the National Park post 1<sup>st</sup> August. **Action:** Gary Smith to look into the matter and update Nateby PC.

Casterton PC asked if there were any opportunities for planning training for Councils. Ian McPherson advised it may be worth contacting Cumbria Association of Local Councils as they run training courses and may be able to offer bespoke one off training sessions. **Action:** Casterton to check and report back to Ian.

### **'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 one tree in each Parish is 'tagged' and monitored. 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 schools in the area are also welcome to get involved with 'Ashtag' monitoring.

### **Any Other Business/Questions:**

**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 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](http://www.villageoftheyear.co.uk) or by emailing [voty@reeftv.com](mailto:voty@reeftv.com)

**Local Plan:** How long before the new area is included within the existing National Park Local Plan?

Gary Smith explained that a new Local Plan covering the whole of the 'former' National Park was adopted in December 2016. The new areas of the National Park remain covered by the Local Plans that were already in place at the time. It will be for members of the National Park Authority to consider whether and when to move to having a single Local Plan for the Park. Until that time we are legally bound to use the existing Plans of the respective areas. That means that there are some small variations in the policies for the different parts of the Park – but is also a chance to assess which of the different policies work best.

It was reiterated that the National Park Authority is the statutory planning authority for all planning applications within the National Park boundary. There is a national [planning portal](#) which is a central government website that offers guidance on what requires planning permission and what constitutes permitted development. Anyone who is unsure about whether they need planning permission is encouraged to contact the National Park's [planning service](#).

**Parking:** Tebay PC feel there is a serious issue with parts of the village becoming blocked with on-street parking by visitors, causing problems for residents wishing to park outside their homes. In the short-term the Council was advised to gather evidence about where people park, the scale of the problem, and what they would like to see happen. The Authority's Area Manager (West) - Steve Hastie, who is based at Orton - and Dales Volunteers could provide help with parking surveys. This information would help when discussing options/solutions available. The Council was also encouraged to contact their local County Councillor as parking on the roadside is a highways matter under the jurisdiction of Cumbria County Council.

**Management of Green Lanes/Off Road Vehicles:** Mallerstang PC enquired about the Authority's approach to managing 'green lanes', and had specific concerns about a byway open to all traffic in their parish. Kathryn Beardmore explained that the Authority's approach to the management of green lanes depends on a careful case-by-case assessment of the evidence and the impacts of use on the 'special qualities' of the National Park. The Authority will be assessing all the green lanes in the new area that have public rights for use by motor vehicles. The website provides more info about our approach to date:

<http://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/looking-after/achievingourvision/the-experience/green-lanes-management>

**Highway signs:** Mansergh asked if the National Park could do anything about the clutter of road signs, particularly temporary diversion signs as a result of road closures following 'Storm Desmond'. Nick Cotton will follow this up with the relevant County Councillor as the Authority has no jurisdiction over highway signage.

**Who do we contact to check if a Tree is protected?:** The Authority's [Trees and Woodland team](#) (details via the Authority's website) are the initial contact.

**Local Parish Magazines:** Orton PC encouraged the Authority to use local parish magazines as a way of advertising events etc. Gary Smith confirmed that the Authority would look make sure that the magazines covering parishes in the new area of the National Park were on the list of contacts held by the Authority for its media distribution list.

**Advice for Farmers and Landowners:** Parish Councils were encouraged to promote the fortnightly 'surgeries' offering advice and assistance for farmers and landowners at our offices in Orton. No booking is necessary.

**Maintenance of Public Rights of Way:** Kathryn Beardmore reminded everyone that as of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 the Authority has taken over the maintenance of Public Rights of Way from Cumbria County Council that lie within the new area. Any issues can be raised with Steve Hastie, the Area Manager (West) based at Orton.

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

The next meeting will take place in the autumn (date and venue to be confirmed). Please advise of any particular items you wish to be added to the agenda for discussion at that meeting.

The meeting concluded at 9pm