

Date: 15 December 2020

Report: **MEMBER FEEDBACK ON PARTNERSHIP REPRESENTATION AND MEMBER CHAMPIONS' REPORTS**

Purpose

1. To provide feedback from meetings attended by Members as representatives of the National Park Authority since the last Authority meeting and also on the work undertaken by Member Champions.

RECOMMENDATION

2. That Members consider and note the reports from the Authority's representatives and Member Champions.

Background

3. Members represent the Authority on a wide variety of Partnerships and, in order to keep Members and Officers updated on this representation, formal reports are brought to each full Authority meeting.
4. Member Champions are also engaged in a wide range of activities. Champions take turns in bringing annual reports to the Authority meetings.
5. These formal reports provide the opportunity to update members on the work of the various partnerships we are involved, a chance to question member representatives and Champions and a means by which we can continually assess the value of these partnerships and Champion roles.
6. The **Appendices** include:
 - 1) A list of Partnership Meetings attended in the last quarter;
 - 2) A note of the meeting of Member Champions held on 16 November 2020;
 - 3) The annual report of the Member Champions for Recreation Management and Corporate Management;
 - 4) Reports from the relevant Partnership meetings.

Clare Tamea
Committees Officer
8 December 2020

List of Partnership Meetings Oct – Dec 2020

Title	Member	Date	Attended	Report
Campaign for National Parks	Julie Martin	26/11/20	Yes	Report attached
Dales Woodland Forum	MC for Natural Environment	18/11/20	Yes	Report attached
Local Government North Yorkshire & York (LGNYY)	Chair	09/10/2020 04/12/20	Yes	See Chair's Report
Local Government York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Housing Board	Richard Good	14/12/20	Intending to attend	Verbal update will be provided to the meeting
National Park Management Plan Steering Group	Chair	24/11/20	Yes	See Chair's Report
National Parks England	Chair	01/10/20	Yes	See Chair's Report
York, North Yorkshire & East Riding Local Enterprise Infrastructure Programmes Board	Stuart Parsons	22/10/20 10/12/20		Verbal update will be provided to the meeting
Yorkshire Dales Biodiversity Forum	MC for Natural Environment	20/11/20	Yes	Report attached
Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum	MC for Recreation Management and N Heseltine	24/11/20	Yes	Report attached

Note of the VC Meeting of Member Champions Monday 16 November 2020

Present: Neil Heseltine [NH] (Chairman)
 Julie Hutton [JH] (Deputy Chairman & Corporate Management)
 Ian McPherson [IMc] (Natural Environment)
 Julie Martin [JM] (Cultural Heritage)
 Nick Cotton [NC] (Recreation Management)
 Jim Munday [JMu] (Development Management)
 Carl Lis [CL] (Sustainable Development)

Apologies: Kevin Frea (Promoting Understanding)

		Action
1.	<u>Welcome from Chairman</u> NH welcomed Carl Lis to the role MC for Sustainable Development, following his appointment at the September NPA; and congratulated Julie Martin on being re-appointed as MC for Cultural Heritage.	
2.	<u>Action points arising from notes of meeting on 17 August 2020</u> The Woodland Forum meeting is taking place next week where IMc will raise the suggestion that tree planting could be linked up with airline companies to help off-set carbon emissions and report back to MCs at the next meeting.	IMc
3.	<u>Updates from individual Champions</u>	
	<u>Natural Environment – Ian McPherson</u> Attended various vc team meetings, he has picked up on some staff morale issues with home working which he has fed back to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman. He'll be attending the Woodland Forum (18 November) and Biodiversity Forum (20 November). The Farming & Land Management Policy Group met on 3 November – its remit has been extended for a further 2 years with Kevin Frea appointed as an additional member. The Group received a full report from the Head of Land Management on local and national issues along with an update from the Senior Farm Conservation Officer on Payment by Results and Payment for Outcomes re Wensleydale Project. IMc has produced a blog for the YDNPA website on nature recovery and also an article in the Craven Herald on biodiversity and tourism.	
	<u>Cultural Heritage – Julie Martin</u> Along with the Chairman, she has met with the Head of Sustainable Development and Planning Policy Officer to discuss how the Barns Policy (L2) will develop in preparation for the new Local Plan. A public consultation on options for the Barns Policy will commence in the new year as part of the Local Plan process. The Landscape Character Assessment interactive map is now available on the Authority's website. She continues to attend Sustainable Development team vc meetings	

		Action
	<p>which she finds informative and helpful. The Historic Environment Team has been able to undertake fieldwork although a lot of their work is inhibited due to Covid restrictions, in particular a community archeology project.</p> <p>There are a significant number of loose ends to tie up with the Langcliffe Quarry application following its approval last month.</p>	
	<p><u>Recreation Management – Nick Cotton</u></p> <p>NC is concerned with the regularity of flooding which causes damage to rights of way and how to capture the flow of water from uplands. NC had received a very informative update from the Head of Park Management which highlighted the highest rise in water levels ever recorded on the Wharfe and Ure resulting in a number of flood incidents/ damage across the Park. It was agreed to circulate the update to all members for their information.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that he is writing to Defra seeking them to consider re-opening the national Farming Recovery Fund in the hope that the National Park can apply again.</p> <p>NC is working with the Area Manger for Western Dales on rebuilding a section of footpath at Kirkby Lonsdale and also has a day scheduled with the CEO looking at cycle ways in the south west of the Park.</p> <p>The issue of noise from motorcycles continues to be work in progress.</p>	SJP
	<p><u>Development Management – Jim Munday</u></p> <p>JMu is chairing the member-led review of the Planning Committee which involves staff and members along with the Director of Planning from the North York Moors. The review includes ‘reference back’ system; site visits, delegation and public speaking . Findings of the review will be reported to the December NPA meeting.</p> <p>He had endorsed press releases for Gam Farm, Grassington; Langcliffe Quarry; Linton Camp and repairs to Ribbleshead Viaduct by Network Rail.</p> <p>He is keen to pursue case studies to promote the Dales as a place to live and work, in particular where young people have returned to their home environment from urban areas.</p>	
	<p><u>Sustainable Development – Carl Lis</u></p> <p>CL is getting to grips with the role following his appointment at the September NPA.</p> <p>A report will be going to December Authority on the Ambitions consultation over the summer along with a vision and objectives for the new Local Plan. A revised Local Plan timetable will be included with a number of targetted consultations. The next consultation will be on housing growth, which will cover ‘spatial strategy’ and begin a ‘call for sites’ in the new year. Following on from that there is likely to be consultation on barns, housing viability and local occupancy. Progress beyond that is dependent on the Government’s proposed review of the planning system. If that goes ahead it might mean that the Authority has to stop work on the Local Plan and quickly start work on a new style ‘zonal’ plan. Fortunately the work so far on ambitions, spatial strategy, housing targets and call for sites should contribute equally well towards a zonal style planning system, so shouldn’t be wasted.</p> <p>Contractors for NYCC are currently preparing an update of the strategic flood risk assessment for the National Park. This is a comprehensive</p>	

		Action
	<p>review of the risk from flooding across the Park which informs decisions about which areas have capacity for development and which do not. Another Local Plan contract likely to go out this year is a housing viability study which will inform the Authority how much affordable housing to expect on larger sites in the Park.</p> <p>Officers are supporting the Sedbergh Economic Group and have been involved with the North Yorkshire group working on a Covid 19 recovery plan .</p> <p>The Sustainable Development Fund (SDF) has a reduced budget this year of £160,000 following a review of the Authority's finances in light of the Covid.</p> <p>So far this year grants have been offered to 17 projects with a value of just over £91k. Four new applications, with a value of approximately £30.5k are still being considered with quite a few enquiries from small businesses throughout the Park. Funding for suitable projects is still available up to the end of March 2021.</p>	
	<p><u>Corporate Management – Julie Hutton</u></p> <p>JH has been assisting the CEO on post-Covid working in the National Park. The North York Moors CEO is leading on post-covid working on behalf of all English NPAs. Full consideration will be given to staffs' views and resource requirements going forward.</p> <p>She has commented on Leadership and Management Development and how to take forward.</p> <p>The Apprenticeship Scheme is being reviewed, comparing with other NPAs and considering all options going forward.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Communication issues</u></p> <p>JMu asked if there is an opportunity of having an annual report for people living in the Park, giving updates on achievements despite Covid (ie media release or blog). JH suggested this could tie in with post-Covid working.</p> <p>NC asked if officers can keep members up to date – he'd found the update from AH particularly useful.</p> <p>NH will pick up these two issues with CEO.</p>	NH
5.	<p><u>Agreed Dates of meetings for 2021</u></p> <p>Tuesday 23 February; Tuesday 18 May; Tuesday 17 August; and Tuesday 16 November.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Agreed Rota for MCs reporting back in 2021</u></p> <p>June: Development Management & Promoting Understanding MC September: Cultural Heritage & Sustainable Development December: Corporate Management, Recreation Management & Natural Environment</p>	

Annual Report of Member Champion for Recreation

December 2020 Authority Meeting

Overview

Will we ever experience another year like 2020? The Covid 19 pandemic has completely dominated all aspects of our lives since March 2020. To put things into context, the last time the Olympics were cancelled was during the Second World War.

The year has swung from one extreme to another - in the strictest period of the first lockdown we were actively *discouraging* people from visiting the Park if they didn't live here. As restrictions eased we found ourselves managing a tsunami of visitors, with many young people visiting the Dales for the first time (good) but many leaving litter and not knowing how to respect the countryside (bad). We can only hope that as the vaccination programme is rolled out we will have a less bizarre 2021 and can start planning ahead beyond the series of stop-start lockdowns.

Despite the lockdowns, our team of Rangers have continued their excellent work on the Rights of Way system. Four of the main projects undertaken this year are:

- Repairing the High Lot route on Ingleborough from Chapel-le-Dale, replacing 170m of stone pitching with a new 1.5m wide path using 160 tonnes of gritstone blocks sourced nearby
- Building a new footbridge at Cringley Bottom in Swaledale on the Coast-to-Coast walk, replacing a bridge swept away in the floods of summer 2019
- A replacement crosswall stone shelter and a new toposcope (orientation table) on the top of Ingleborough
- Repair of a 115-metre section of the Pennine Way near to Hardraw using reclaimed stone flags sourced from Lancashire and West Yorkshire

As Member Champion for Recreation I have continued with my summer and winter obsessions - during this summer there has been sterling progress on control of Himalayan Balsam in the River Lune catchment, helped on half a dozen occasions by the wonderful Young Rangers and the fantastically hard-working Apprentice Rangers; in the winter it's litter, clearing the verges along dozens of miles of roads from Kirkby Lonsdale through to Sedbergh, Cautley, Garsdale and Dentdale.

I even thought I might achieve a first this year - getting a fine for picking up litter! In April I mentioned to our Media Team that I was often out litter picking for my daily exercise and Andrew Fagg suggested I took some photos. So I went to Ribbleshead and filled several bags with litter, taking photos with the Ribbleshead Viaduct in the background. I returned to my car to find a leaflet under my windscreen saying my journey was unnecessary and warning me not to do it again. I imagine it would have made a great headline 'Councillor fined for picking up litter unnecessarily during lockdown'.

Other work:

- Continuing liaison with Steve Hastie to strengthen the bank alongside the Riverside Path in Kirkby Lonsdale
- Two bike research trips with David Butterworth to look at traffic-free cycle paths to study best practice and use this knowledge to deliver family-friendly routes in the Park
- Working with local MP and Police Commissioner to discuss how to deal with problem of motorbikes (excess speed and excess noise)

Nick Cotton, December 2020

Annual Report of Member Champion for Corporate Management

December 2020 Authority Meeting

Key areas of activity have been:

COVID

Provided a note for circulation to the staff on behalf of the Chairman thanking the staff and recognising their hard work and achievements during a very difficult time.

Post COVID

Working with the CEO on proposals for the future operations of the Authority – post COVID. The paper was initiated by the CEO of the North York Moors National Park Authority.

Leadership and Management Development

Supported Vikki Thomas and Richard Burnett with the proposals for the Leadership and Management development of the management team. Reflected the Post COVID proposals so that the two proposals compliment each other, in preparation for Section Heads and SMT.

Supported CEO with the appraisal process of senior team.

Recruitment of the Communications Manager

Interviewed the applicants alongside officers of the Authority and successfully appointed Mark Sadler to the role.

Communications

Supported Richard Burnett with the review of the Communications Strategy.

Apprentices Review

Worked with a small team of officers, Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust and Cllr Good on the initial review of apprentices, to see how we could steer this programme positively forward into the future, building on all the good work that has gone on so far. Looking at performance and cost issues, value for money and meeting the aspirations of the apprentices.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group

Continued to support the Working Group taking forward new actions to raise the profile of this area of work.

Annual Governance Statement

Reviewed the Annual Governance statement alongside the Chairman in time for the Audit & review Committee.

Audit and Review

Supported Gary Smith by providing comments on performance management reporting.

My role as Member Champion has helped me support the Chairman and CEO in meetings with NYMNPA and Friends of the Dales.

Julie Hutton, November 2020

Report on Meetings of Campaign for National Parks, online, 26 November 2020**i) Annual General Meeting**

Chair Janette Ward, in her review of the year, outlined actions taken during 2019-20 towards fulfilling CNP's strategic goals. There has been a focus this year on climate change, nature recovery, and broadening access to and engagement in National Parks. Since the publication of the Glover Landscapes Review in September 2019, CNP has participated in the Defra Stakeholder Reference Group and has built a coalition of ten campaigning organisations developing an influential joint response to the review. The aim is to revitalise the collective vision for National Parks and help the Landscapes Review retain momentum.

Other key actions taken to deliver on CNP's strategic objectives during the year have included work with partners on key issues in the Environment and Agriculture Bills in England (successfully making the case for landscape to be considered as a public good in the Agriculture Bill); input to the way in which change in landscape quality will be measured as part of the 25 Year Environment Plan; research to explore the climate action being undertaken by National Park Authorities; campaigns in response to proposed major developments affecting the National Parks (including A66 and A27 road schemes); response to national policy consultations such as that on the Welsh National Development Framework and proposed changes to permitted development rights for telecommunications infrastructure; continued campaigning on car-free travel to National Parks; and work to improve and extend the supporter base for the National Parks.

Internally the organisation, like others, has had to develop and adapt to new ways of working under COVID. Since the end of the financial year, a new interim CEO, Anita Konrad, has been appointed. The ongoing focus for the coming year is expected to be on the government response to the Glover Landscapes Review, proposed planning reforms as outlined in the new Planning White Paper, implementation of the England Tree Strategy, and government plans for green recovery. Financially, CNP has seen a decline in its reserves this year, due mainly to a decline in legacy income (which more recently has reversed).

Lord Judd, a vice-president of CNP, noted that the challenge to CNP has never been greater. The National Parks have big role to play in maintaining health and positivity during COVID. At the present time we cannot take anything for granted due to the pressures on public expenditure, so CNP must fight hard to maintain the important national role of the Parks.

ii) Council Meeting

The new CEO, Anita Konrad, thanked CNP Council members and observers for responding to her prior survey on future directions for CNP. She had had 22 responses, highlighting issues of green recovery, planning reforms, adjusting to cuts, diversity and inclusion, and Brexit impacts. She recognised the need for the Parks to have a strong and unified voice. She felt she had received a mandate for CNP to be more outspoken nationally and had been encouraged to work more effectively with the National Park societies and authorities.

Small break-out groups then discussed the question: What should we be doing differently in future? Among the points raised were:

- The National Parks (and CNP) are ‘living beyond their means’ and must generate income in new and different ways; this issue must be addressed.
- Funding models should be diversified to improve resilience.
- We need to redefine the value of National Parks for humans and connect better to Treasury objectives.
- Messages about National Parks need to be put across in the right way if they are to be effective in the new political context.
- In terms of funding, CNP should seek to underline the role of the National Parks in the green industrial revolution, and in creating new jobs.
- Government needs to be held to account, delivering on key commitments made e.g. in relation to nature recovery, ELMS and environmental governance.
- CNP may need to focus on a few core issues; in this context, new National Parks and AONBs may be a distraction and should not be pursued at the expense of existing areas.
- There is concern that COVID is making some CNP aspirations, such as improved public transport to and within National Parks, more difficult.
- The MOSAIC project should be brought back, given the benefits it offers in terms of access and diversity.
- COVID and Zoom provide an opportunity to get more people more involved in National Parks.

Concluding, CNP’s Chair Janette Ward urged members and observers, including representatives of National Park Societies and National Park Authorities, to talk to CNP regularly about issues of concern, so that its policy and campaigning efforts can be appropriately informed and focused.

Julie Martin
30 November 2020

Report on a Meeting of the Dales Woodland Forum held on the 18th November 2020

The meeting, chaired by Mark Corner, was well attended by representatives from a number of different organisations including the Forestry Commission, the Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust, the Woodland Trust, the Country Landowners and Business Association, Geoff Garrett and other officers of the Authority's Land Management Section as well as myself.

The main item on the Agenda was consideration of the proposed new Dales Woodland Strategy 2020 to 2030 prepared by Geoff Garrett after considerable consultation with partners and other stakeholders with the intention of replacing the existing Strategy once approved by the full Authority.

The following ambitions were included in the Strategy as a basis for discussion:

- Create 6000ha of woodland habitat
- Ensure that 75% of existing woodland is in positive management
- Plant 6000 individual/small groups of field trees.

The most fundamental decision that was made in the meeting was the proposal to step back, for now, from giving a specific target for the amount of new woodland creation aimed for in the next 10 years. The proposal for consistent year on year targets was a concern especially amongst the landowners who will be instrumental in helping to deliver the target. It is clear that we need to set our ambitions high but not at the expense of other important qualities within the National Park, one of which is a viable economy. The need to blend the boundaries of habitats and indeed to blend the boundary between farming and forestry is an important point if we are to progress with trees and woodlands, in all their types, supporting the National Park Management Plan. The Strategy is now open to further feedback before a final draft is submitted to the Authority for further amendment if need be before final approval.

Other matters raised at the meeting included an update on Ash Dieback in the Park and the meeting ended with a presentation by Laura Mealin on Re-cover the Authority's interactive on-line habitat map.

Ian McPherson
Member Champion for the Natural Environment

Report on Biodiversity Forum meeting held on 20th November 2020

The meeting, chaired by Peter Welsh (formerly of the National Trust), was well attended via Lifesize with over twenty organisations represented including Natural England (NE), Wharfedale Naturalists Society, Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Lancashire Wildlife Trust, Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust as well as officers from the Land Management Section of the Authority and myself.

The meeting began by every attendee providing an update of matters within their own particular remit since the last meeting and was followed by Tony Sergeant giving more details of the already well publicised outbreak of Crayfish plague in the River Ure. The situation is serious and ongoing and will continue to be monitored by NE who will keep the Authority fully informed.

We then moved on to the main substantive items on the agenda relating to:

1. The 2020 Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Status Report. This is the culmination of the *Nature in the Dales: 2020 Vision* Local BAP (LBAP) project for the National Park which has been running since 2010. The current Status Report is the third and final review of the project and will be presented to the full Authority meeting in March of next year.
2. Local Nature Recovery Strategies. These exist at national, regional and local levels and are a significant part of biodiversity policies at governmental, regional and local authority levels including National Parks. As far as our own Authority is concerned the areas covered include schemes in Raydale, Littondale and Kingsdale not to mention the very large Tees / Swale project which has already received considerable funding and which will meet our commitment in the YDNP Management Plan to create a landscape scale nature recovery area by 2021.
3. The High Nature Value farming and Nature Recovery conference planned for the first part of next year which will proceed on a virtual basis – and a meeting of the Biodiversity Forum sub-group will meet shortly to continue with its planning.

The meeting ended with an update on the Nature in the Dales addition to the Authority's website and a presentation by Laura Mealin on Re-cover the Authority's interactive on-line habitat map.

Ian McPherson
Member Champion for the Natural Environment

Report on a meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum held on 24 November 2020

An online meeting of the Local Access Forum was held on 24th November 2020, chaired by John Beavan. A selection of the topics discussed:

- A desire to provide a Changing Places Room in the National Park – this is a place that provides the right equipment and space to enable people with profound and multiple disabilities to safely and comfortably use a toilet and get changed without having to use the floor of a public toilet. There is no such facility at present in the National Park.
- Support for the OS map waymarking of Lady Anne’s Way, a 100-mile long distance path from Skipton Caste to Brougham Castle near Penrith, through the Yorkshire Dales and the Upper Eden Valley.
- A presentation on the benefits of using the location app called ‘what3words’ - every 3 metre square throughout the world (including oceans, forests, moors) has been given a unique combination of three words, making this a great tool for sharing precise locations (for example, the cairn on the top of Ingleborough is [///tracking.forgotten.buzz](https://www.what3words.com/track/forgotten.buzz)).
- Concern about a National Farmers’ Union proposal to allow the diversion of Public Rights of Way, where livestock is present, for up to 40 days out of 90, on grounds of safety.
- The double-edged sword of the massive influx of visitors into the Park as the first lockdown eased: it was good that we saw a big increase in younger visitors who had never been to the Park before; it was not so good that a proportion of them had no idea of how to behave in the countryside, leaving litter, failing to close gates and failing to control dogs.
- Motorbike noise and the difficulty of finding a solution with three parties involved – (1) government and the potential to legislate for stricter noise limits for motorbike exhausts, (2) the Police to enforce existing law and (3) Local Authorities in setting speed limits. How do you single out a single motorbike that is breaking the law within a pack of motorcyclists riding together?

Nick Cotton
Member Champion for Recreation Management