

**NPMP Steering Group Meeting
Wednesday 16 June 2021
10:30 – 12:30
Via video conferencing**

Notes of meeting

Present:

Cllr. Richard Foster – Craven District Council
Anthony Bradley – Dales Farmer Network (Yorkshire)
Lord Shuttleworth – Dales Rural Estates Network (Cumbria/Lancashire)
Adrian Thornton-Berry – Dales Rural Estates Network (Yorkshire)
Jonathan Smith – Dales Tourism Businesses (Yorkshire)
Martin Christmas – Environment Agency
Paul Duncan – Natural England
Cllr. Richard Good – Richmondshire District Council
Dan Hudson – South Lakeland District Council
David Sharrod – Yorkshire Dales Millennium Trust
David Butterworth - Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
Neil Heseltine - Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority
Laura Day – Youth representative

Secretariat: Gary Smith (GS), Peter Stockton (PS), Josie Wilson (JW)

Others present: Jim Smith (Forestry Commission); Tim Thom (Yorkshire Peat Partnership)

1. Apologies

Crispin Thorn (Forestry Commission); Joe Hudson (Youth Representative)

2. Welcome

The Chairman and Members of the Steering Group welcomed Laura Day who is one of two newly appointed Youth Representatives on the Steering Group.

3. 'Very ambitious objectives' – Peatland (Objective D3)

Tim Thom gave a presentation and update on the work of the Yorkshire Peat Partnership. There are around 57,000 ha of peat in the National Park, more than 20,000 ha of which have been restored. A further 2,000 ha is being worked on at the moment. Over 40,000 ha have been surveyed. Lots of work still to do to hit targets: More funding; greater research; more contractors, helicopters, suppliers, materials and plants; try to persuade landowners and managers to do some of the work.

In discussion, the following points were raised:

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- There were some landowners who were reluctant to allow works to be done on their land but others who were looking to do the works themselves;
- The key to unlocking private sector investment is if landowners sign up to the Peatland Carbon Code (but there is very little uptake as yet);
- The importance of lowland peat (of which there is a very small amount in the NP)
- The difficulties of doing peatland restoration under the Countryside Stewardship scheme

Action: *Secretariat* to put a copy of the presentation on the website;

Tim Thom to let GS have figures for the area restored by YPP in 2020/21 so it can be added to the Annual Report.

4. Annual Progress Report 2020-21

GS gave a powerpoint presentation covering progress on some of the key objectives last year. Overall, there had been positive progress on many of the objectives despite the impact of Covid-19. In discussion, the following points were raised

- The pros and cons arising from the number of first time visitors to the National Park. The importance of retaining 'staying visitors' whilst managing the impacts of day visitors on traffic/parking etc at a few 'honeypot' sites. This might mean encouraging visitors to visit the lesser known areas. This is an issue that is here to stay and will need to be considered in the Management Plan;
- Natural England is focusing on connecting people with nature;
- The new Countryside Code is not hard enough on the importance of dogs on leads.

The draft report was approved, subject to finalising some of the data.

Actions: *Secretariat* to finalise the Annual Report and submit it to the National Park Authority meeting on 29 June.

Secretariat to publish the final report and progress on every objective via the website

Secretariat to produce a press release promoting the work of partners in 2020-21.

5. Engagement with Young People

David Butterworth introduced the paper summarising the work the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) is doing with young people, either on its own, or in partnership with others in and around the National Park. The paper seeks comments and ideas from all those involved. This information will be used to help determine the future direction of the YDNPA's young people's work with partners, to ensure a clear and coherent programme.

All those that were interviewed for the two Youth Representative opportunities on the Steering Group have been invited to join the Authority's *Generation Green* programme.

Action: *Steering Group* asked to get any comments on the paper back to DB by 1 July

6. Light touch review of objectives

GS introduced the paper, asking the Steering Group to consider the rationale for amending and updating the Management Plan. Some of the objectives have already been achieved, some are out of date and some may now be unachievable as a result of external factors. In discussion, the following points were made:

- B11 – the Dales Rural Estates Network should be added as a lead partner.
- D2 – should we now set a more challenging objective for new woodland, or continue to overachieve on the original one?
- B3 – could be changed to include changing facilities at ‘hubs’ for disabled visitors.

Action: *Steering Group* to get any final comments/suggestions back to GS by the end of this week.

Secretariat to discuss the agreed list of objectives with the relevant lead partners and bring proposals for any amendments to the next meeting.

7. Partner updates on NPMP objectives

- FC has launched the [Forestry Innovation Fund](#) to support getting more woodlands into active management.
- FC has also announced new funding incentives for woodland creation: [the England Woodland Creation Offer](#)
- ‘Farming in Protected Landscapes’. Public statement from Defra to launch this 3-year programme (announced in November 2020) is due next week. Funding (of c. £1 million in the first year) will be available to farmers in YDNP for ‘projects’ that benefit nature, climate, people or places. A local assessment panel will be set up to advise on the allocation of grants. Recruitment of new staff under way.
- Raydale Landscape Recovery test has just started. With funding from Defra, YDNPA is working with farmers and landowners to demonstrate how to optimise collaboration in the development of a landscape-scale recovery plan (for the new ELM scheme);
- The new online habitat map will be updated shortly with data showing the best opportunities for new woodland creation.
- YDNPA is finalising agreement with the Woodland Trust for a new 4-year programme of funding for new native woodland in the National Park.
- Farm Carbon Audit project – has been working with 14 farmers (in YDNP and Nidderdale) to carry out carbon audits and produce action plans. The final report should come out at the end of this month.

8. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from 24 November 2020 were approved as a true record.

9. **AOB**

None.

10. **Date of next meeting**

17 November 2021(10:30 – 12:30) – venue tbc

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