



Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum(YDAF)
Tuesday 23 November 2021
Meeting held remotely by Zoom

Members present: Jon Beavan (JB) (in the Chair), John Bucknall (JBu), Nick Cotton (NC), Debbie North (DN), Barbara Gravenor (BG), Neil Heseltine (NH), Ken Humphris (KH), Alex Law (AL), Malcolm Petyt (MP) and John Richardson (JR).

Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) officers present: Kathryn Beardmore (KB), Rebecca Greenfield (RG), Alan Hulme (AH), Rachel Briggs (RB); Helen Keep (HK), Hannah Kay (HKa) and Clare Tamea (CT) (taking the minutes).

The meeting started at 1.15pm.

21/14. Welcome and introductions

JB opened the meeting.

21/15. Apologies

Apologies were received from Leo Crone and Heather Hodgson.

21/16. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 18 May 2021, were approved as a true record of the meeting.

Matters arising from the minutes:

Members were keen to see the responses to the statutory advice provided to the Forum over the past years – the aim is to see if YDAF is making a difference.

JB offered to do some work looking at the advice given and a short report with some examples will be brought to the next meeting.

21/17. Question Time

No public questions or statements had been received.

21/18. Farming in Protected Landscapes (“FiPL”)

DN (YDAF’s representative on a panel which considers FiPL applications), gave a presentation on the FiPL scheme which started in July 2021. This scheme funds projects in National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Beauty that support nature recovery, mitigate the impacts of climate change, provide opportunities for people to

discover, enjoy and understand the landscape and its cultural heritage or support nature-friendly, sustainable farm businesses. Projects which promote public access to the countryside, such as replacing stiles with gates, building new visitor centres, putting in sections of footpath, and providing educational access to farms, are all examples of the types of project that can be considered.

Members asked whether the Authority could be proactive and encourage farmers to apply for funding, for example to put in a section of footpath or bridleway on their land where currently there's a "missing section" forcing people to use a busy road. HK (the Authority's senior farm conservation officer) advised members that, although officers do undertake some proactive work, particularly where there's a "quick win", there is only so much they can do with limited staffing resource, particularly where this would require negotiation with many different farmers. HK works closely with the rangers and the access officer. Members noted an additional complexity in that the interests and viewpoints on long term land management of tenant farmers may differ from that of the landowners and how everyone needs to work together. HK advised that the primary focus of FiPL is on farmers themselves to identify and apply for suitable projects, with guidance and help from the team. The team had already helped farmers with over 150 enquiries since the scheme started in July 2021.

In response to a query, HK confirmed that, if a FiPL project will restrict access (for example, fencing off a section of open access land in order to protect newly planted trees), the LAF will be consulted in the usual way – the usual permissions for such work are still required.

HK confirmed that FiPL is intended to end in March 2024. Some concern was expressed about the upkeep of new footpaths and other new infrastructure once the scheme has ended. Members asked how FiPL relates to other schemes. HK advised that there are also a number of other schemes available to provide funding for farmers. However, not all of these fund projects to improve access. Members were encouraged to use their relevant contacts to continue to press Government to fund access to countryside schemes in the future.

Overall, members were very interested in FiPL's potential for improving access to the countryside.

DN was thanked for her presentation and her work on this panel, which had really helped to ensure "access for all" was considered when looking at FiPL applications. DN was asked to feed back to the forum with examples of successful projects in due course.

Action: DN to feed back to the Forum about successful FiPL applications in due course
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21/19. Statutory Review and Re-assessment of Restrictions and Exclusions – Countryside and Rights of Way ("CRoW") Act consultation

AH presented this report, in which the YDAF was requested to give its views, as a statutory consultee, on three proposed CRoW Act directions (restrictions and exclusions) in the National Park, at Grassington Moor, Quarry Wood, near Ingleton and Wood End, Hubberholme.

The three directions had been in place previously – they have to be reviewed every 5 years and this was the third such review.

During the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:

- The restriction should be the most limited available, in order to achieve the purpose sought;
- The land affected by these three remaining restrictions is a tiny proportion in terms of the entire area of the National Park;
- The proposed restriction at Grassington Moor did not seek to curtail public access, simply to ensure dogs were kept on a short lead between 1 August and 10 December each year. It had been requested by the owners of the shooting rights in the absence of any known owner of the land itself. It supplemented statutory protections already in place for ground nesting birds and existing rights of shooting estates to apply to exclude the public for up to 28 days a year. As this proposed restriction applied for less than 6 months of each year, no further consultation was required;
- The footpath which runs through Quarry Wood is part of the Ingleton Waterfalls Walk. Members accepted that the Waterfalls Walk does require significant investment to keep open and supported the proposed restriction, which would permit the owners to continue to charge visitors to walk this section of the path. Parcels of land surrounding Quarry Wood are accessible to the public – they are under different ownership. The Waterfalls Walk had been made one-way (as a covid safety measure), with closure of a footbridge – it was not clear whether this would be a temporary or permanent change;
- The proposed restriction at Wood End, Hubberholme was to protect the equipment for the water supply to residential properties in Hubberholme. It was confirmed that, although mains water had been put in to some of the properties, other properties were still on the gravity fed supply from Kirk Gill. Members expressed disappointment that, despite asking that an alternative access route to the higher open access land be negotiated, this had not been successful;
- An administrative error on Natural England’s website, showing the latter two restrictions as already having been approved, was noted.

Members NOTED the proposed restriction for Grassington Moor regarding dogs and ADVISED that the YDAF supports the Authority’s proposals for CRoW Act public exclusions at Quarry Wood, Ingleton and Wood End, Hubberholme.

21/20. Access Officer’s Report

RB presented the Officer’s report, which included a request for Members to comment on the consultation regarding fencing on Arkengarthdale Common, which was taking place under s38 Commons Act 2006.

21/21. Arkengarthdale Common – consultation on application for fencing

RB advised members that a revised notice for the proposed fencing on Arkengarthdale Common had just been received (the only change being the date for submitting representations - extended to 17 December 2021).

Members indicated they would find a map of the area helpful, for this and other similar applications.

Members noted that this was an application to extend the lifespan of *current* fencing within the National Park. No information had been located about the previous section 38 application, for the initial erection of the fencing.

Members noted that none of the proposed *new* fencing was inside the National Park.

Members agreed to send a response to the relevant body (Planning Inspectorate – Common Land Division, handling the matter on behalf of the Secretary of State), and that the response should include the forum’s standard fencing policies, including that all fencing should be non-barbed, the inclusion of access points and a limited timespan (normally not exceeding 10 years).

**Action: RB to circulate a map showing the location of the fencing.
JB to submit a response on behalf of the YDAF by 17th December 2021.**

21/22. YDAF Membership

RB explained the process for the annual membership recruitment to the Forum, which would begin in the New Year.

Members were keen to encourage diversity of forum membership and suggested use of social media and contacting groups such as Generation Green to see if any younger people would be interested in applying.

21/23. Future Forum Meetings

The dates for the next meetings were noted as 10 May 2022 and 22 November 2022. Members agreed that the meeting in May should be held face to face if at all possible, and going forward, to have one meeting a year online and one face to face.

Future items - A number of items had already been suggested previously for inclusion at future meetings. In addition is the Chair’s suggestion (noted in the officer’s report) that the YDAF consider the tourism potential of the Pennine Bridleway; a suggestion by JBu that the meeting in May be preceded by a short site visit, outside in the National Park, to consider something relevant to the Forum; and a suggestion to consider how to check that fencing conditions are adhered to (eg bringing back cases to the YDAF when a 10 year removal condition is about to expire).

**Actions: RB to schedule previously suggested items into future agendas
JB to liaise with relevant YDNPA officers and bring a report on the tourism potential of the Pennine Bridleway to a future meeting.
YDAF members to consider how to check fencing conditions are adhered to and how to update the forum
JB and RB to discuss ideas and arrange for a site visit to take place before the next forum meeting.**

21/23. Update on Members' Activities

1. MP advised that he had recently visited other National Parks and had been impressed with the walking routes available from their websites. He asked if something similar was available for the Yorkshire Dales National Park. KB advised that there's a section of suggested walks on the website [here](#). KB was delighted to announce the launch of a simple, easy to use new walking app, with an offline mapping tool that allows you to track your walk regardless of whether you have a mobile phone signal or not. The app can be downloaded from these links: [iPhone](#); [Android](#)
2. JBu had been working closely with the rangers to improve public pedestrian access from Sedbergh to Cautley Spout, with a view to increasing accessibility. A kissing gate had replaced a stile and further work was planned.
3. KH reported that, during interviews of visitors to Devil's Bridge, the popularity of the ice-cream had been a factor for encouraging people to visit. The ice-creamery was still proving popular even now winter had set in.
4. NC reported that a section of the walk in Kirkby Stephen close to Ruskins View had been affected by flooding and the work required to remedy this would be very expensive. The Town Council was seeking funding from other bodies. In the meantime, a request was made that a sign be erected at the start of the excellent path, recently put in by the rangers, to warn people that at present, they couldn't use the path to access to Kirkby Lonsdale.
5. NC reported that he and KB are in exciting discussions with Sustrans about the potential for a new, possibly off-road cycling route between Kirkby Lonsdale and Ingleton.
6. JB had attended three regional LAF meetings (2 x NW and 1 x Yorkshire and Humberside). One of the topics discussed had been the cut-off date of 2026 for registering rights of way to appear on the definitive map. It was agreed that this should be put onto the agenda for the next meeting, possibly inviting someone from Cumbria and North Yorkshire County Councils to come along, as keepers of the current definitive maps of the area. JB also advised that the issue of dedicated cycleways not appearing on OS maps had been raised by other groups – this was not thought to be an issue in the Yorkshire Dales National Park as most were either public bridleways or on the National Cycle Network, both of which were shown.

Action: AH to see if signs can be erected at various points in Kirkby Lonsdale warning of access issues resulting from the closure of the Ruskin's View footpath.

Next agenda to include item on definitive map and cut-off date for adding rights of way – RB to see if definitive map officer can attend from relevant councils.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 3:07pm.