Notes of Western Parish Forum

Held at Barbon Village Hall on Wednesday 11 May 2022 (7:00-9:00pm)

Parish Attendees:

Gordon Chivers	Firbank
Carol Howard	Ireby
Mike Burchnall	Kirkby Lonsdale
Robin Ree	Kirkby Lonsdale
George B. Metcalfe	Mansergh
Mel MacKinnon	Mansergh
Michael Roberts	Middleton
Libby Bateman	Ravenstonedale
Kevin Lancaster	Sedbergh

Yorkshire Dales National Park attendees:
Neil Heseltine Chair of the YDNPA & Craven West Parishes appointed Member;
David Butterworth (Chief Executive), Kathryn Beardmore (Director of Park Services), Gary Smith (Director of Conservation & Community)
Admin: Clare Tamea (Committees Officer), Sam Parfitt (PA to the Chief Executive & Chair)

1. **Welcome and Introduction**
   Ian McPherson was due to chair the meeting – his apologies were conveyed due to illness. In his absence the meeting was Chaired by Neil Heseltine (one of four parish members on the Board who is also Chair of the Authority). He welcomed attendees and explained the principal purpose of the forum was to encourage a greater dialogue and communication between the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) and Parishes on current issues and challenges, with the aim of having positive and constructive discussions. Attendees were encouraged to ask questions.

2. **The Landscapes Review – where next?**
   David Butterworth gave a resume of issues arising from the Government consultation, in response to Julian Glover's review of England's protected landscapes (10 National Parks and 34 Areas of AONBs), which considered the future for National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) in England. The consultation was published in January 2022 following on from the report being published in September 2019.
   The Government will now consider the responses from the public to the consultation (approximately 11,500 responses had been received). The consultation had covered:
   A stronger mission for nature recovery;
   Agricultural transition – options for developing the role of protected landscapes in the new Environmental Land Management Schemes (ELMS);
   A stronger mission for connecting people and places; Managing visitor pressures – whether National Park Authorities should have greater enforcement powers to manage visitor pressures, ie should NPAs and local high authorities have additional powers to restrict recreational motor vehicle use on unsealed roads;
   Local governance - Streamlined process for removing underperforming board members; along with greater flexibility over the proportion of national, parish and local

appointments; merit-based criteria for local authority appointments; and reduction in board size;
A clearer role for public bodies - should statutory purposes be strengthened so that they are given greater weight when exercising functions? Should statutory duties be made clearer with regards to the role of public bodies in preparing and implementing management plans?

3. Save Ruskin's View Campaign

Mike Burchnall of Kirkby Lonsdale Town Council gave an informative presentation on the Council's endeavours to fund the repair a 140m stretch of public footpath which runs along the Church Brow at Ruskin's View. The Brow is in the ownership of the Town Council and Cumbria County Council have closed the footpath due to landslip. Consultants have identified the Brow slope could collapse. There is subsidence in the pavement at the crest of the slope and wall to the Church Yard is cracking.
The Council propose to raise funds to undertake major intervention work in order for the footpath to reopen, which Consultants have estimated to be in region of £1 million.
A 'Ruskin's View' Charitable Trust has been set up. The Town Council have doubled the precept which will raise £100k and are submitting an application for £250k Heritage Lottery Funding in October. If enough money is raised to undertake the work the path is likely to re-open in 2024. The Council have worked closely with the YDNPA and would like assistance with spreading their message to encourage support for funding.
Action: **CEO** to speak to the Head of Comms/Area Manager (West).

4. Update on YDNPA Projects

Gary Smith gave an update on projects being undertaken in 2022-23.
Farming in Protect Landscapes (FiPL) - £1.3 million direct investment in England over the next 3 years – transition for farmers to be paid for public goods in readiness for Environmental Land Management Schemes being introduced in 2024. FiPL was launched last year and so far there have been 150 enquiries for funding.

Grow Back Greener/White Rose Forest – funded by The Woodland Trust. The YDNPA aims to encourage landowners and farmers to plant trees that enhance the National Park's landscape. Minimum planting area is 5 ha upwards.
The Chair confirmed that this fund applies to the Yorkshire part of the National Park. The Tree Climate Action Fund could be accessed in Cumbria.
Tees-Swale: Naturally Connected – this covers Swaledale and Arkengarthdale and is the biggest nature recovery project in England. The aim is to give farmers the skills to develop habitats and raise people's awareness of these areas.
Westmorland Dales Landscape Partnership – Lottery funded with the aim of unlocking hidden heritage of the area. The 'Friends of the Lakes' are leading on this with YDNPA looking after the finance aspect.

5. Designation of the Coast to Coast walk as a National Trail

Kathryn Beardmore gave a presentation on the proposal to designate the Coast to Coast pathway as a National Trail. The Coast to Coast walk is an iconic route which crosses through 3 National Parks from St Bees to Robin Hoods Bay. The YDNPA has undertaken a piece of work on behalf of Natural England examining the wider benefits of designation. Taking into account suitability for horse riders and cyclists; surveying businesses along the route; identifying nature conservation initiatives and what information is available along the route.
There will be more government investment if the route becomes a 'National Trail'. Once it becomes a National Trail there could be a variety of alternative routes for different users bringing increased economic value to the local economy.

6. Local Plan

Gary Smith gave an update on progress with developing a single Local Plan for the whole of the National Park. There have been a series of public consultations on the new Plan - specifically what level of housing to be built and where; and development of barns. An options draft should come out to public consultation in June. Currently looking at suggested housing boundaries. Potential housing sites likely to be published in October. There have been quite a lot of housing sites put forward but many are not viable, due to unsuitable location, ie SSSIs. It is estimated the whole National Park will come under one Plan in 2 years but 'weight' could be given to the draft Plan within 12 months.

A question was asked on implications for Nutrient Neutrality. Gary Smith advised this only applies to Eden District within the Park. Any new housing development where the site is not in good condition will have to reduce nitrate and phosphate into rivers.

7. Ideas for future Forums

The Chair confirmed there will continue to be 2 meetings per year; one face to face and one by video conference. Agenda items suggested for the autumn meeting were: Local Plan; and Biodiversity net gain.

8. AOB

Advice was sought on management issues on the riparian strip of land (upstream from Devil's Bridge leading down to the river). It was suggested Kirkby Lonsdale Town Council seek advice from the Area Manager (West) – although there appeared to be divided opinion on whether the land was adequately maintained or not.

Beacon Bonfires in celebration of the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Ireby PC are holding a bonfire on Leck Fell at 9:45pm on 2 June and asked if the National Park Authority could promote/publicise the locations where bonfires are taking place.
Action: **CEO** to discuss with the Head of Comms to see if we can assist.