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**Unapproved Minutes of Meeting of  
Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum  
Held on Tuesday 17 October 2006  
West Burton Village Hall**

Present: Geoff Wilson (GW) - Chair, Jon Beavan (JB), Veronica Boulton (VB), Bill Foster (BF), Michael Bartholomew (MB), David Gibson (DG), John Goss (JG), Ben Heyes (BH), Pat Whelan (PWh), Phil Woodyer (PW), Harold Brown (HB), Richard Spensley (RS), Anne Lawrence (AL), Jerry Pearlman (JP)

Officers and Staff present: Alan Hulme (AH), Rachel Briggs (RB) – LAF Secretary, Kathryn Beardmore (KB), Jonah Tosney (JT), Karen Griffiths (KG), Bruce Dinsmore (BD) – Craven District Council

The meeting started at 1.15pm.

**1. Welcome**

GW welcomed Malcolm Petyt (MP) to the meeting. MP is the Vice Chair of the YDNPA Access Committee and the newly appointed Recreation Management member champion. GW invited MP to sit at the table.

Also welcome were:

Ken Miller – Access Officer, Ramblers Association, Richmondshire  
Edward Smith – local user

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from, Adrian Pickles (AP), Graeme Hall (GH), Mark Sandamas (MS), Richard Johnson (RJ), Deborah Millward (DM) and Harold Brown (HB)

**3. Approval of Minutes**

VB had the following alteration for page 4, minute 7:

VB said that her experience of cycling on hitherto quiet lanes has shown that some of them are no longer quiet at busy times such as weekends. She recommended that YDNPA think about tackling this problem, possibly by restricting weekend motorised access to selected

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roads which had a viable alternative available.

**The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.**

#### Matters Arising from the Minutes

Page 7, Item 12 – RB agreed to send members copies of the YDNPA response to the diversity review consultation paper on request.

MB asked whether the YDNPA had heard anything about a green lanes working group to be set up by North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC). GW explained that the YDAF had not received any formal communication with regards to this although he had heard about it informally. DG explained that this had been taken to the North Yorkshire LAF and gave members a briefing on what was discussed. It was agreed that NYCC be requested to bring this paper to the next meeting.

#### **4. Public Question Time**

There were no public questions presented to the Chair prior to the start of the meeting.

#### **5. Chairman's Report**

GW presented a written report featuring matters that he had dealt with since the last meeting: :

Access Committee Liaison  
National Park Management Plan  
Pennine Bridleway – Mechanically Propelled Vehicles Scoping Plan  
Secretary of State's Guidance on the Work of Local Access Forums  
'Countryside Access Cumbria'  
National Park societies conference at Kettlewell.

GW informed members that a working group consisting of the 3 chairs and vice chairs from each of the Cumbria LAF's will be getting together in late October/early November to discuss 'Countryside Access Cumbria' – a partnership approach to ensuring consistency across the county of Cumbria.

VB asked whether the Pennine Bridleway Project Board referred in GW's report had met up yet. GW said this meeting was yet to happen. JP informed members that there would be a meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Pennine Bridleway Steering group to look at the section going through the YDNP on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October. It was noted that this is a YDNPA officer/member working group including Natural England.

#### **6. Craven on the move and Active Recreation Strategy – Bruce Dinsmore**

Bruce Dinsmore, Craven District Council, gave a presentation on the Craven District Council five year strategy for sport and active recreation.

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GW was interested to know whether there were equivalent strategies in other districts. BD explained that the other district councils have a similar post to himself but the district councils had yet to produce similar strategies.

VB was concerned about possible barriers to implementing the strategy, the main one of these being finance. VB's concern was that people need to be given the greatest possible chance of participation. BD explained that the strategy is about participation in active recreations such as walking, where there are still costs but they are not as great. Also that the activity is accessible to many individuals if they were aware of the opportunities locally.

JB was interested to know how the strategy would work for local residents and how it would link with tourism. BD said CDC were well aware of the importance of tourism to the viability of local facilities and mentioned that the local swimming pool, in Skipton, is used both by residents and tourists alike, as will the Settle cycling festival scheduled for 2007.

A member of the public raised the issue of access to the river by canoeists and wondered if this was being covered in this scheme. BD explained that the issue of access to water is being tackled county-wide by The Cultural Officers Group and Transforming Outdoor Yorkshire.

JB wanted to know how reliant the strategy is on Sport England priorities. BD said that what is important locally may not be important nationally, however increasing participation was important both locally and nationally, and asked the LAF for views on how this could be achieved.

MP asked why we should invest money into new sport facilities instead of helping the ones that are already in existence. BD explained how the strategy recognises the need to ensure strong links with existing sports facilities, to ensure that instead of competing they compliment one another.

GW wanted to know how BD would like the YDAF to help. BD said a sub-group had already been formed to look at outdoor active recreation and a community sports network. He asked whether member of the LAF would join these groups. The meeting convenes every six months and PW currently sits on the group as a representative of Low Mill.

**BF and JB agreed to join the Craven District Council focus group with the next meeting in March. BD to send more information and the LAF reps to report back.**

BD said that he could come to the LAF on an annual basis to give a presentation on the progression of the project.

#### **7a. CROW Act – Exclusions and Restrictions**

In between January and September one application had been determined and there are none outstanding.

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VB asked for a definition of section 15 land. AH explained that it is land that has access rights under other enactments than the CROW Act e.g. Barden Moor and Barden Fell.

JB wanted to know how many discretionary exclusions had been given in 2006 compared to the previous year. AH informed him that the figure in 2006 was slightly less than in 2005.

JP asked which areas of land have been permanently excluded. AH answered that the field behind the George Inn at Hubberholme has been excluded but that all restrictions are reviewed on a 5 year basis.

JB wanted to know if the YDNPA are still paying the Open Access Contact Centre for restrictions. AH explained that the YDNPA are still paying for the service but that with all the fire restrictions, 28 day discretionary restrictions, website etc, it is considered good value for money. KB explained that Natural England is reviewing the system in 2007/8.

## **7b. CROW Act – Fire Restrictions**

Jonah Tosney (Access Technician) was introduced to the YDAF. JT gave a presentation on fire restrictions and how the YDNPA dealt with these during the summer of 2006.

RS said that more use should be made of parish councils and landowners when fire signs are erected and that the removal of these signs should be quicker. AH said that the Rangers put up all the signs and take them down. This work is a priority when fire restrictions are in force. AH would look at the issue of quicker removal of signs.

MB made the point that he believed that most people use the rights of way and not the open access land. Therefore he wanted to know how many people are being excluded by the fire closure, and that it was a lot of work to prohibit a few people. AH agreed with the point made but said that there is an expectation of land owners that the authority will close the land when the fire risk is extreme.

BH felt that the Fire Severity Index (FSI) is inadequate as the level required for the land to close is too severe. There should be more reference to knowledge on the ground and during the summer of 2006, BH believed that the land should have been shut before the FSI was triggered.

VB pointed out that when the restrictions were lifted the weather was no different than it had been when the restrictions were put on. AH explained that the FSI is being modified to take more into account the condition of the ground.

AH pointed out that North York Moors and Peak District National Park Authorities have an emergency plan in case of fires. The Fire Brigades are currently looking into involving officers of the YDNPA in a similar plan for the Yorkshire Dales.

## **8. Geocaching (Karen Griffiths)**

Karen Griffiths (Interpretation Officer) gave a presentation on geocaching in the Yorkshire Dales, and its use as an interpretation tool to aid understanding and enjoyment of the

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National Park. KG had set up two geocache trails on National Trust land in the south of the National Park.

JB pointed out that this issue had been brought to the YDAF at a previous meeting and they had decided that the YDNPA should keep an eye on the caches that are in the Yorkshire Dales National Park. JB asked if this is being done. KG said that the national geocaching website is monitored by the rangers and that two are being removed as they were unsuitable locations. In addition if any caches are placed without landowner permission they are removed from the website.

AL asked if it is possible to monitor where participants are coming from. KG said that visitors to the caches put in by the YDNPA are coming from areas such as Leeds and Addingham.

KG said that she was keen to develop a geocache trail in the North of the Park and asked the LAF members for help and advice in finding a suitable location.

**Any LAF members with ideas/contacts on a suitable location to contact RB in the first instance.**

## **9. Work Programme 2007-08**

GW began the discussion on the work programme by saying that no members of the LAF had come forward with any suggestions for 2007/8. GW suggested that the Forum meet three times a year instead of four, so that it can focus on sub groups. GW believed these were more productive than the full meeting in taking forward specific issues/work.

PWh suggested that members should be spreading the word of the work of the Forum to Parish Council meetings. AL explained that not everyone has time to attend other meetings, in this way.

MB asked if any of the Forum's advice has changed the National Park in any way. MB agreed that the reduction in the number of meetings from four to three was a good idea and that the only items on the agenda should be those that the Forum can make a decision on.

JB put the suggestion forward that the LAF should get involved in projects in a less formal manner and supported sub-groups as a positive way forward. With consultations being sent around by e-mail.

AH said that he would be looking for help on the open access management plan. He has a blank piece of paper and would appreciate the help and expertise of forum members. It was suggested by members that a workshop looking at open access be the basis of the next meeting.

MB asked if RB could send a monthly bulletin to members with all the information received during that month. This would prevent members missing deadlines for consultations etc, and they would be aware of what's going on if the forum was meeting less frequently.

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**LAF agreed the chair should draw up the work programme for 2007/8 in discussions with Authority officers.**

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## **10. Secretary's Report**

### North Yorkshire ROWIP

The informal, draft ROWIP for North Yorkshire is to be sent out to members later in the week with the formal consultation going out early 2007.

RB asked for members to volunteer to attend a joint local access forum meeting to look at the document in more detail.

**VB, PWh, JB, BH, DG agreed to attend the meeting on 22 November to look at the North Yorkshire ROWIP. RB to organise more information to be sent to those members.**

### Cumbria ROWIP

An update paper was tabled at the meeting. GW asked for volunteers to attend a working group of LAFs/officers to review the draft Cumbria ROWIP following consultation.

**GW and JB to continue to attend / advise the Cumbria ROWIP work group.**

### Appointment of Yorkshire Dales Access Forum Members

Those members up for reappointment are MB, VB, RS, MS and JG as a co-opted member. MS has decided not to reapply and RS announced at the meeting that he would not be reapplying. GW thanked those members for their valued expertise to the forum.

## **11. Update on Members Activities**

There were no reports from members.

## **12. Future Forum Meetings**

Due to the decrease in the number of meetings to be held, RB to look at alternative dates for 2007. The next meeting will still be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of January at Yoredale in Bainbridge.

GW thanked everyone for helping in the running of an efficient meeting and the officers who had made special presentations.

The meeting closed at 4.30pm

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