



Unapproved Minutes of Meeting
of Annual General Meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Local Access Forum
Held on Tuesday 26 February 2008 Yoredale, Bainbridge

Present: Jon Beavan (JB), Michael Bartholomew (MB), David Gibson (DG), Phil Woodyer (PW), Pat Whelan (PWh), Deborah Millward (DM), Harold Brown (HB), Paul Tibbatts (PT), Judy Rogers (JR), Ken Miller (KM), Robert Mayo (RM), Guy Keating (GK), Malcolm Petyt (MP)

YDNPA Officers present: Alan Hulme (AH), Rachel Briggs (RB) – LAF Secretary, Kathryn Beardmore (KB), Jon Avison (JA)

The meeting started at 10.35am.

1. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

JA started the meeting by welcoming Robert Mayo (RM) and Guy Keating (GK) to the meeting. He also welcomed Andrew Coleman from Cumbria County Council.

JA explained the process of election of a Chair.

DG proposed MB. This was seconded by KM. No further nominations were received. JA asked if MB would like to speak to the meeting. MB said that he would take any questions. There were no questions.

MB was elected as Chair of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum for a year.

MB then asked for nominations for Vice Chair.

PWh nominated PW. This was seconded by DG.

PW was elected as Vice Chair of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum for a year.

2. Welcome

MB reiterated JA's welcome to GK, RM and Andrew Coleman.

3. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from: Geoff Wilson (GW), Ben Heyes (BH) and Peter Bradfield (PB.)

4. **Approval of Minutes**

JB thought that paragraph three on page two of the minutes was confusing with regards to the difference between a sub group and an advisory group. MB resolved the issue by suggesting that the comma be removed on the seventh line.

JB said that, as a matter of accuracy, the word 'special' needed to be added to the heading of the minutes.

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

Matters Arising from the Minutes

JB questioned both the limited attendance at the meeting and the balance of members. He queried whether there was a quorum, and whether members had been made sufficiently aware that the meeting would be a full LAF meeting, as opposed to a meeting of a sub-group, or working group of some sort, set up just to look at Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) consultations. It was confirmed that the meeting had been properly constituted and advertised, and that it was quorate. The reason for the 'special meeting' was that YDAF members had decided to hold an additional meeting to discuss how they would respond to the TRO consultations because the date of the next scheduled meeting fell beyond the deadline for responses to the TRO consultation. The decision to have the meeting was entirely at the discretion of the YDAF members but that in deciding to hold a meeting it had to be covered in the normal way e.g. advertising etc.

KB reminded members that they are statutory consultees for the TRO process and they had could have chosen to deal with the consultation without holding a meeting.

5. **Public Question Time**

There were no public questions.

6. **Promoting Recreation in the Yorkshire Dales**

KB presented the paper on promoting recreation in the Yorkshire Dales and asked for the YDAF's view.

JB began by commending the work that had been done on the recreation charter.

MB asked if it had been documented that 'children's lives are no longer characterised by traditional outdoor activities..'. KB said that this refers to the fact that children don't use

the outdoors in the same way as older generations. JR reiterated this by saying that rural children nowadays live urban lives.

PT noted that the Government has set targets to increase participation in recreational activities and wondered if there was any funding available. KB said that the YDNPA was seeking funding for the GoDales project from Sport England.

MB asked members how they thought the recreation charter could be publicised further.

There was some discussion about the recreation charter only been available on the website www.yorkshiredales.org.uk. KB explained that the website has a section on 'getting active' and that the charter sits in there. There are sections on most recreation activities with hyperlinks to national governing bodies e.g. BCU, BMC etc. It was noted that this was just black and white text that could be downloaded as a pdf.

GK offered a word of warning as to the over reliance on the website and suggested some promotion of what is on the site. No one thought it should be produced as a leaflet. It was felt that the recreation charter was fine: it is a policy document and so doesn't need to be anything more than it is. MB suggested firing up some enthusiasm by including some photos and designing the document to be more attractive.

MB then asked members if the YDNPA should be doing anything more to increase participation.

JB thought that any promotion should be tied in with tourism and in particular the Harrogate and Yorkshire Dales Partnership. He suggested attendance at the Outdoor Show in Birmingham. KB said that the YDNPA had attended the Outdoor Show for some years on a shared stand with the Harrogate and Yorkshire Dales Partnership but that this may not be apparent because the partnership logo was different to that for the National Park.

MB wondered if there could be a mechanism for recreation providers to follow up impact of a visit with children and leaders of groups of children visiting the Yorkshire Dales to try and increase independent visits. PW thought that this would create too much additional work for outdoor centres. JB said that the best scheme he has come across is the Duke of Edinburgh Award which generates lots of repeat visits. JR didn't think that many young people come back to the Yorkshire Dales independently and that there should be a greater focus on showing them what they can do nearer to home. Visits to the National Park should be seen as the 'icing on the cake'. JB agreed with this and suggested staff from the YDNPA should be working with groups in the urban fringe.

KB thanked members of the YDAF for their comments and it had been a very useful debate.

7. Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership

Andrew Coleman (AC), Countryside Access Manager for Cumbria County Council, presented the background to the Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership (CCA).

MB asked about the situation where the Chair from the Cumbria LAF had chosen not to take part in the groups. AC explained that it had been due to a conflict of interest involving the last YDAF chair, and that the Cumbria LAF chair would come back to the meetings now that this matter had been resolved.

MP told the group that he sits on the Partnership Board and felt it very important to attend. The three parishes within Cumbria that are in the YDNP are very large parishes (Dent, Garsdale and Sedbergh) and with the possible boundary review, more of Cumbria could be in the YDNP in the future.

JB expressed his concerns about how many meetings members are expected to attend but that he was also concerned that the three parishes in the YDNP felt that they had been watered down e.g. the loss of Sedbergh National Park centre, the loss of Dent Car Park, the loss of Whernside Manor. He felt it very important to support this area of the Park.

JB suggested that all agendas be sent to the Chair and that he decide who is best to attend from the YDAF depending on the issues.

The minutes from the last meetings of the three task groups were noted and it was requested that further minutes be presented to the YDAF.

8. Report back from Advisory Groups and other Meetings

Access for All Advisory Group

PW, as the chair of the Access for All Advisory Group, highlighted the main discussion points from the last meeting.

There was some discussion about the use of Trumper style wheelchairs on shooting tracks and it was noted that within open access land Trumper users had a right of open access.. This was in relation to the Disabled Ramblers visit to Swaledale in July for a two day holiday.

Air Sports Advisory Group

JB, as the chair of the Air Sports Advisory Group, highlighted the main discussions of the meeting. The minutes were circulated at the meeting and are attached in **Appendix 1**.

HB suggested it would be reasonable for landowners to be paid by paragliders for the use of their land, especially now that it becoming a more popular activity. JB explained that the liability would be increased if money was exchanged.

GK asked if paragliding was included under the CROW Act. KB said that this activity was specifically excluded.

Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

MP, as the chair of the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group, highlighted the main discussion points of the meeting.

MP asked for a simple explanation of the TRO process to be included in the consultation of TROs.

KB informed members that the Authority's website had been recently updated to explain the TRO process more clearly.

NYCC Unsurfaced/Unclassified Roads Group

KB explained that these meetings were about 'asset management' and how to prioritise NYCC limited resources with regard to maintenance of the list of streets. Doug Huzzard from NYCC will shortly be seeking views on how this policy will look. YDAF may be consulted.

MP said that he had attended the last meeting and that he was disappointed with the management of the group as there had been no papers circulated prior to the meeting and no agenda.

DG spoke of the minutes of the last group. He had received them in his papers for the North Yorkshire LAF. KB and MP both said that they had not yet received copies of papers associated with any of the meetings that they had attended.

MP thought that the management of the group needed to improve if the YDAF were still to attend. JB suggested the Chair write to Doug Huzzard to express their concerns.

MB to write to Doug Huzzard about the concerns of the YDAF with regards to the management of the Unsurfaced/Unclassified Roads Group.

9. Review of membership of Groups Linked to the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum

MB went through each of the groups listed in the report and the YDAF reviewed the representative for each group in turn.

Access on Foot Advisory Group

JB expressed concern that this group is a meeting of the Ramblers Association and the Ranger staff and that perhaps others should be invited. He suggested someone from the Duke of Edinburgh Award panel would be a good addition. AH said that they needed to be careful not to duplicate the work of the full YDAF. He added that a representative from the Long Distance Walkers Association had been invited.

Members were satisfied with MB and PB representing the YDAF at the Access on Foot Advisory Group.

Access for All Advisory Group

Members were satisfied with PW, MB, BH, KM, PWh, JR representing the YDAF on the Access for All Advisory Group.

Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group

Members were satisfied with KM and PWh representing the YDAF on the Bridleways and Restricted Byways Advisory Group.

Air Sports Advisory Group

Members were satisfied with JB and PT representing the YDAF on the Air Sports Advisory Group.

Water Sports Advisory Group

Members were satisfied with PW and BH representing the YDAF on the Water Sports Advisory Group.

Rock Sports Advisory Group

There was some discussion as to whether GK should represent the YDAF on this group due to his work with the British Mountaineering Council (BMC). It was agreed that the main liaison work of this group was between the YDAF and the BMC (and caving) and that GK should be there to represent the BMC.

Members agreed that JB should represent the YDAF on the Rock Sports Advisory Group.

Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group

MB asked YDAF members if they were happy that members on this group were there to represent their interest and not the interest of the YDAF. He asked whether a policy should be formulated. There was no support for this view.

JB thought that this group works well and that it should remain as it is. MP agreed and added that members are appointed to give their own views and experiences within the YDAF and therefore they should not be bound by a collective view of the YDAF.

Members were satisfied with BH, JB, GW and MB representing the YDAF on the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group, as well as their individual interests.

Active Craven

JB told members that he had not yet met with this group and that he thought it had very little relevance to the YDAF. KB thought that the main role was being on the circulation list for papers so that a watching eye could be kept on anything of interest.

Members agreed that JB should represent the YDAF on Active Craven.

North Yorkshire Unclassified/Unsurfaced Liaison Group

PWh expressed an interest in attending this meeting due to her carriage driving interests. KB said NYCC had stipulated that membership was for one YDAF member only. PWh agreed to be a substitute for MP should he not be able to make a meeting.

Members agreed that MP should represent the YDAF on the North Yorkshire Unclassified/Unsurfaced Liaison Group with PWh as a substitute.

Cumbria Countryside Partnership Board

As the Chair of the YDAF, it was noted that MB should represent the YDAF on the Cumbria Countryside Partnership Board.

It was noted that the individual appointed to the CCA task groups may not be always the most appropriate person to attend the meeting as this was dependent on the particular agenda items under discussion.

Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership – Promotions Task Group

Members were satisfied with PB representing the YDAF on the CCA Promotions Task Group

Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership – Maintenance Task Group

Members were satisfied with MB representing the YDAF on the CCA Maintenance Task Group.

Cumbria Countryside Access Partnership – Improvement Task Group

RM was elected to represent the YDAF on the CCA Improvement Task Group.

DG asked if there was a need to resurrect the CROW Exclusions and Restrictions sub group established to look at long term exclusions and restrictions. AH said there had been no applications for two years and thus the group was not needed at this point. However, there would be a review of existing long term restrictions and exclusions but it was anticipated that this would be timetabled to fit with the programmed YDAF meetings.

The meeting broke for lunch at 1.15pm and reconvened at 1.45pm

10. Open Access Management Plan

AH presented the draft plan and asked members for comments.

MB congratulated the Ranger service on the management of open access land. He then added that the report would be going to the Access on Foot Advisory Group to look at in greater detail and that broader comments were sought at this stage.

DG asked for there to be a mention of 'access' to access land.

HB asked how the shooting fraternity had reacted to the management of open access, in particular in relation to dogs. AH said that he has information on the number of dogs seen on access land and it appears not to be an issue. Similarly, he had not received any reports from landowners where users have ignored a restriction, though it was noted that restrictions had not been used on shoot days.

JB said that there should be a section on dedication. He suggested that the YDNPA dedicate higher rights to the land they own e.g. for caving on the land above Victoria Cave. This would set a precedent for other landowners. AH said he would look into this.

MP said that the figure of access land going from 4% to 62% is not realistic as it suggests an overnight increase of 58% and does not take into account that there was some previous tolerated access. It should say it was an increase to 'access as of right'.

PT asked if there have been any adverse impacts to the SSSIs, in particular Wharfe Woods where the number of people walking had increased. AH said that Natural England and the YDNPA are monitoring these areas. Regular reviews have indicated that a restriction has not been needed: people remain on the already established paths..

PWh asked for some clarification with regards to liability on access land. AH summed it up as: where the hazard is a natural feature e.g. sink hole, limestone pavement etc, the liability is at its lowest level in law and where the hazard is a manmade feature such as a mineshaft, there is existing legislation which is applied in relation to the current situations.

AH asked for any further comments on the Open Access Management Plan to be sent to him directly.

11. Secretary's Report

RB presented a report of items for Members' consideration and information. These were:

- Appointment of Yorkshire Dales Access Forum Members.
- Access Committee Dates and Venues.
- Access Management Grant Scheme.
- Annual Report.
- CROW Act Restrictions and Exclusions (not in the report – See **Appendix 2**).

Access Management Grant Scheme

MP informed members that, although National Parks are not eligible for this funding, some National Park LAFs have written in support of it. DG agreed that the YDAF should offer their support because the open access land adjoining the National Park had benefited from this.

MB to write to Sir Martin Doughty of Natural England saying that they wish to see the Access Management Grant Scheme continuing for those that are eligible.

CROW Restrictions and Exclusions

AH informed members that he had received notification from Cumbria County Council that they were reviewing their land parcels for fire closure (See **Appendix 2**). He offered members the chance to comment on this and there were three choices:

1. They are revoked.
2. The proposal is varied.
3. That they should remain unchanged.

AH said his advice would be that they remain unchanged. MB suggested that the YDAF rely on the YDNPA making representation on this issue. All agreed.

Annual report

DG felt that a section on the detailed advice of the forum should be included and for this to include responses to consultations. KM didn't think it necessary to put in all the recommendations made as it would turn the Annual Report into a lengthy document and that if people are interested in the recommendations and consultation responses, they can contact the Secretary.

MB raised the issue of financial cost of the YDAF and value for money as this had been raised by Richard Johnson (past member of the (YDAF). It was agreed to look at the effectiveness value for money of the YDAF at the next meeting.

Any further comments on the Annual Report to be sent to Rachel Briggs.

JB left the meeting at 2.30pm

12. Formal Consultation with the YDAF on Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders

MP declared an interest in this item as the independent chair of the Yorkshire Dales Green Lanes Advisory Group (YDGLAG) and as a member of the Access Committee. He stated he would not vote on any decisions and would only take part in the debate to clear up matters of clarification. DM and HB both declared an interest in this item as members of the Access Committee and took no further part in the discussion. HB left the meeting.

Consultation Under Reg 4

KB outlined the consultation process and explained that this was the first stage of the statutory consultation process for these five routes.

For each route, DG asked for the YDAF's response to be under section 94 of the CROW Act – giving advice to the appointing authority. It was noted that the difference between 'consultation' and 'advice' was still unclear and a response on this issue was still awaited from Defra.

Mastiles Lane

All of the members present agreed that for Mastiles Lane, a permanent all year round TRO be made to exclude all recreational motor vehicles.

Long Lane

PT noted that there is a BOAT application on Long Lane and asked what would happen if it were granted. MB explained that all questions in terms of rights of way status are ignored for this process, as it is about use and management of the route, not the route's status.

PW asked for confirmation that it does not restrict emergency vehicles e.g. cave rescue. MB said that emergency services and the landowners were exempt from the TRO.

GK asked if landowners were on board with this or would they allow mpv users to use these routes in return of payment. JA believed that the vast majority of the landowners were on board.

All of the members present agreed that for Long Lane, a permanent all year round TRO be made to exclude all recreational motor vehicles.

Horsehead Pass

All of the members present agreed that for Horsehead Pass, a permanent all year round TRO be made to exclude all recreational motor vehicles.

Garsdale Foot to Barth Bridge

All of the members present agreed that for Garsdale Foot to Barth Bridge, a permanent all year round TRO be made to exclude all recreational motor vehicles.

Carlton to Middleham High Moor

All of the members present agreed that for Carlton to Middleham High Moor, a permanent all year round TRO be made to exclude all recreational motor vehicles. The vote included MP who said that the decision was in line with that of the YDGLAG.

JR and GK left the meeting at 3.00pm. It was noted that a quorum of members were still present.

KB explained that the outcome of the consultation process would be going to Access Committee on 17 April. If it was decided to take it to the next stage in the process, the YDAF will need to be consulted again. KB said the YDAF may wish to consider how it would wish to deal with this as some members were unhappy with the special meeting held in December to discuss the consultation. There was some discussion how this would best be done and members agreed that a special meeting would be required if these five

routes did go to the next stage. However, the timing of the June 17 meeting may fit into the consultation period.

MB to write to Natalie Thompson with the consultation response from the YDAF.

Consultation under Reg 5

Members had the following comments with regards to the notice:

DG asked that the exemptions under a) be extended to the other public amenities and not just water e.g. gas, electricity, telephone.

DG asked that the exemptions under d) include forestry.

RM thought that point c) in the exemptions could be misread and was open to abuse. KB said she would check the working with the YDNPA Solicitor.

DG had some concerns with regards to the route map for the High Way as the definitive line is different to the used line. KB said that the Authority can only place a TRO on the definitive line as the powers only relate to rights of way of routes on the list of streets. MB suggested a sign be placed at the bottom of the route with an explanation saying route closed in x meters.

All of the members present agreed that the TROs suggested for each of the eight routes should be permanent 24/7. MB to write to MA with the consultation response from the YDAF.

13. Update on Members Activities

JB informed members that he had become a director of the Independent Hostels UK.

14. Future Forum Meetings

The next meeting of the Yorkshire Dales Access Forum will be held on the 17 June 2008. The meeting will be held at Yoredale, Bainbridge and will commence at 6.00pm.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm