



# Peak Area Newsletter

November 2014

**The next Peak Area meeting is the BIG one of the year; the AGM and Annual Quiz (and Quiz means prizes), is on Wednesday, 19 November, starting at 1930, at the Maynard, Main Road, Grindleford, Derbyshire S32 2HE.**

After the formalities of the meetings, there will be a brief intermission, with chips and butties provided by the BMC, followed by that annual mayhem that is our quiz! The bar has been set high in previous years, so no pressure on this year's quiz maestro, Graham Hoey, aided and abetted by our very own Chair Neil Foster.

Lots of prizes have already been promised by you lovely people, but please feel free to bring extras along on the night – all contributions welcome.

## **Your Peak Area Needs You!**

There are a number of important positions that need filling, which will be discussed at the AGM. In no particular order!

## **National Council Rep**

As mentioned in Neil's article (see below).

## **Area Youth Co-Ordinator**

After several years of commitment, Jim Watkin is stepping down as Area Youth Co-ordinator after next year's Youth Climbing Series (after the final in April 2015). If anyone is interested in taking on this role, then please contact me [Lynn, the Sec] and I will pass your details onto Jim to find out what is involved in the role.

## **Limestone Access Rep and Northern Peak Access Rep**

Henry is relinquishing his Limestone Access Role, which means the Peak Area will lack an access rep for the Wye Valley and northern areas. Most venues hereabouts are in places which are protected by environmental designations which do not enjoy any right of access under CROW (Countryside and Rights of Way Act). If you are interested you will be joining a very strong team of established access reps; Ian Millward keeps an eye on the Matlock Area; Jon Fullwood and Kris Clemmow lend a

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**Deadline for contributions to the Newsletter is 2 weeks before each Peak Area meeting  
- send to [peakarea@gmail.com](mailto:peakarea@gmail.com)**



hand further north but we really need someone who can act as co-ordinator across the Peak, including Dovedale and the Manifold.

On our two quarry sites, Buxton MC have kindly taken over responsibility for Aldery, whilst negotiations are under way, but not concluded, over Horseshoe with Thornbridge and Hagg Farm Outdoor Education Centres. If anyone has an interest in Horseshoe in particular, and especially in the environmental management of the site, Henry would very much like to hear from you.

In the Dark Peak Adam, Louise and Henry continue to represent us over all the Sheffield Moors Partnership area, the wider High Peak area and within the Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area.

We urgently need someone to step forward and take on the role of Northern Peak Access Rep following the decision by Rick Gibbon to stand down from the position.

For any more information regarding the role of an access rep, then please contact any of the people mentioned above.

### **Peak Area Rep for the BMC Hill Walking Working Group**

For more information regarding this role, then please contact Carey Davies at the BMC Office ([carey@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:carey@thebmc.co.uk)). **This role will be voted for at the AGM**, so if you're interested then please contact the Sec (Lynn).

## **The Sec speaks (a duet in two parts)**



### **A Message from Neil & Lynn**

Although I [Neil] had been attending BMC Peak Area Meetings for several years, my first formal role started in 2009 when I was appointed Area Rep on National Council at the November AGM. I enjoyed that work, so when other opportunities came along, I decided to throw my hat in the ring. The first of these was my election as Peak Area Chair at the November 2010 AGM, and later as National Council Rep on The Executive Committee.

The post of National Council Rep is (rightly) limited to 5 years, which means the meeting I attended in Kendal recently was my last. With that went the Executive post, and my plan was to finish as Area Chair this November. However, that plan made no allowance for the persuasive powers of our wonderful Area Secretary, who has convinced me that standing for one more 'season' is the best thing to do.

And so at the Peak Area elections during the November 19 AGM at The Maynard Arms, current Secretary Lynn Robinson, and I as Area Chair will be both offering to continue for one further year. Clearly that depends on the will of the meeting, as anyone can attend, anyone can vote, and if a dark horse runner comes along to challenge we would actually both be delighted! But whether or not that happens, we have both been thinking about succession planning





recently, as we would like the Area to go from strength to strength after we do step down.

With that in mind I thought I would take the opportunity to explain these various positions, so you all have an idea of what the roles entail, and can decide if you would like your name to be put forward.

Most pressing is the role of National Council Rep, as we must elect a new rep on 19 November. Each BMC Area has 2 Reps, Simon Lee being the other Peak Rep at the moment. National Council is the policy making body of the BMC, made up of voting and non-voting members. The Area Reps form a key part of the Council, which also includes the Chairs of specialist committees and members of the Executive (President, VPs, Treasurer, Independent Directors). Typical attendance is 25-30 people.

Meetings take place 5 times a year. One is a 'super-meeting' where all the specialist committees present a review of their work, and their terms of reference going forward are confirmed. This is held at the BMC offices in Manchester. Another is a 'mini-meeting' held at the BMC AGM weekend, which will be at Plas Y Brenin in 2015. Other meetings are held in

**The BMC's** [Regional Access Database](#) (RAD) has up to date information on all crags in England and Wales. Otherwise access rep contact details are on the [BMC web site](#). Access reps attend most Area Meetings if there are any points you want to raise with them, or you can phone Henry Folkard on 01298 871 849 or the BMC office on 0161 445 6111 ([office@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:office@thebmc.co.uk)).

different climbing areas around the country, and I suggest that anyone volunteering for this post will get the most out of it if they can commit 5 full weekends a year.

Meetings normally take place on the Saturday morning, leaving time for climbing or walking in the afternoon / evening as well as on the Sunday, and accommodation is provided. I've only missed one meeting in my 5 years as rep, and I've been to meetings as close as Hayfield and Castleton, and as far away as North Pembroke, South Devon, Wasdale, the Wye Valley and London. Clearly you need to be prepared to travel!

As Area Rep, you will need to submit a précis report to National Council on your most recent Area Meeting, as well as bringing items of policy under review back to the Area to seek its views. If anyone interested in standing for National Council would like more information, speak to either Simon or myself before the AGM.

The post of Area Chair is elected at each AGM, and to reiterate, whilst I will stand again this time, if I am elected this will be my last term. I am happy to talk to anyone thinking of giving this a go, but one thing I would say is that for it to work, you do need a really good Secretary – not least because it is the Secretary who actually does all the work!

I have been extremely fortunate to work with Lynn during my time as Peak Area Chair, suffice to say that if she hadn't decided to do one further year, then I would definitely have stepped down at this AGM. I will let Lynn give some insight into that role, and again I would



urge anyone considering standing for either of these positions to come and speak to us so we can give you the lowdown on just what you will be letting yourself in for, and the many and varied rewards (someone offers to buy me a pint on average every third meeting) you will receive along the way.

In addition, our tireless and extremely effective Access Rep, Henry Folkard, has indicated his intention to reduce his workload in the coming months. Anyone who has worked with Henry as I have been lucky enough to do in recent years, will appreciate that his commitment to the cause is somewhat different to that of a typical enthusiast or interested party. Henry's work on various local (and national) access issues has actually been a full time occupation – a remarkable service to climbers and walkers by a truly remarkable volunteer.

Henry has stated that he intends to withdraw from his work on access matters in the White Peak, and whilst many of the Area Meetings during my time as Chair seem to have concentrated on the gritstone areas and access issues resulting from the Peak Park Asset Review, I actually think it is the limestone dales

where access for climbing is currently under the greatest threat.

It is crucial that we find someone to head up the BMC's work to defend access in the White Peak, and Henry or Rob Dyer at the BMC Office will be happy to discuss what is involved with anyone interested in taking this on.

One thing which I should state is that we aren't looking for another Henry, since it is extremely unlikely that anyone else would be in a position to commit the time Henry has, and of course Henry is unique! There are a number Access Reps already working on the White Peak Area, but what we really need is someone to co-ordinate that work and head up the limestone area access work.

One specific job which Henry currently does, is to oversee the upkeep of Horseshoe Quarry, the BMC-owned crag in Stoney Middleton. He walks round it regularly, collects litter, arranges and co-ordinates parties of conservation volunteers (from Sheffield University) who do sterling work all around the site (far beyond the faces with which climbers are familiar). Whilst this extremely valuable work takes place at a limestone crag, and Henry has again expressed his desire to hand over that role, I think it is best to regard this as quite separate from the limestone access co-ordinator role. The BMC has a Land Management Group which is responsible for all BMC-owned and managed crags, and that body will need to find a successor for Henry in that particular role.

Please send articles, letters, photos, notices and so forth, to [peakarea@gmail.com](mailto:peakarea@gmail.com) All topics considered, the only requirement is that it is relevant to the mountaineers, walkers and climbers in the Peak Area. Summit magazine is the place for the national stuff. Any length up to 600 words; if you want to go longer, best to call us first. **We particularly welcome material from clubs.** Deadline for material is two weeks before the meeting.





After a long stint in the saddle in the Northern Peak Rick Gibbon is standing down, and as well as recording a huge and well earned vote of thanks to him for all his work there, it is essential that someone comes forward to fill this vital role.

Finally, I would like to mention that both Lynn and I are very proud of how the Peak Area has evolved during our time in office. We have enjoyed a series of interesting and varied Area Meetings, which have been consistently the best attended of all BMC Area Meetings. The standard of debate has been high, and we have had several excellent post meeting lectures on a wide variety of subjects. It is our intention to leave the Area in a healthier state than when we took over, and for our successors to take it on to the next level. Hopefully some of you reading this will have been inspired to consider volunteering for one of the roles I have described, and I'm sure you won't regret it if you do.

**Neil Foster, Peak Area Chair**

I [Lynn] took on the role as Peak Area Secretary in June 2010 in an informal capacity, when, for personal reasons Trudi did not want to continue, and was subsequently elected formally at the AGM of that year. I remember very clearly (despite all the beer that had been consumed) at the launch of "Froggatt to Black Rocks", shaking hands with Neil and entering into our 'coalition' of Chair and Secretary, a partnership which apparently works really well.

I also had originally intended to stand down this year but given the large number of role changes at a critical time for the Area, in terms of access, I thought some stability into the next year would be useful. Hence, I would be happy, if re-elected, to complete my maximum '5-year term' in the role, with a key focus of 2015 being supporting those in new roles and very clearly on succession planning for my role to ensure a smoother handover of all things Peak Area.

For anyone considering this role, I would say the keys skills it involves are organisational, communication, engaging (with welcoming new attendees) and retaining neutrality in the debates. In summary, the role involves sorting out the five meetings a year (venue, food, agenda, speaker etc) and then the taking notes, distributing them and generally communicating items that come through the office. I'm trying to embrace the use of social media, but if all else fails, then Dan, from his Bangor student digs, is always just a click away! It's also great working with Martin Wass (you're not allowed to edit this out), who produces this excellent resource for the Peak Area. I feel very well supported by staff at the BMC office, who are always on hand to help out, especially on the communication side.

Obviously the above is a very brief overview of what I get up to, so I'm more than happy to have a chat with anyone thinking about the role.

See you all on the 19 November!

**Lynn Robinson, Peak Area Secretary**



### BMC Winter Skills Lecture

Are you ready for winter? Neil Johnson and James Thacker (British Mountain Guides) will prepare you at the BMC Winter Lectures. These popular lectures are set to inspire any budding winter mountaineers out there. Sponsored by Lowe Alpine, with a free prize draw every night. And they're coming to Sheffield [*the hints finally paid off, Editor.*] on **Wednesday 26 November** at 1930 at the **Sheffield Hallam University**, Peak Lecture Theatre (Owen room 527), City Campus, Howard Street, Sheffield, S1 1WB. Tickets cost £5 per BMC member and £7 non-members. Group discount: buy 10 or more tickets in advance for £3.50 per ticket. Buy online from the BMC shop or by telephoning 0161 445 6111.  
[www.thebmc.co.uk/winterlectures](http://www.thebmc.co.uk/winterlectures)

### Establishment of a BMC Hill Walking Working Group

Many of you will know that a discussion paper on the BMC's future work for hill walkers was considered by National Council on 20 September. The paper was produced by the BMC Hill Walking Development Officer Carey Davies and it put forward a range of suggestions about how the BMC might improve and develop our work for walkers. National Council was supportive of the paper and agreed to establish a Working Group to determine how best to take forward the initiative.

\*For consideration:\*

- a. Each Area is invited to put forward a rep to sit on the Working Group. Other selected individuals with specific skills / knowledge to be invited by Carey Davies.
- b. Dave Turnbull has asked Brian Smith (our new Independent Director, and a very keen hill walker himself) to convene and chair the first meeting of the Working Group.
- c. **A date for your diaries** - A Hill Walking Engagement Day will be held in Hayfield on Saturday 29 November. This will be an open invitation members event based on the model used last December; walk up Kinder / food/drink in pub / chaired discussion session. The idea will be to gather feedback on the discussion document and perhaps recruit 2-3 additional reps for the Working Group.
- d. It is hoped that the first meeting of the Working Group will be in early / mid-December, most likely in the BMC office.
- e. The Working Group is likely to be time limited (working figure 2 years); its formal objectives / Terms of Reference are yet to be defined but in a nutshell its job will be to consider the discussion document in detail and determine the realistic priorities for implementation in light of financial and staffing considerations.

Identifying an individual who would be keen to get involved with the Working Group will be an agenda item for the next Peak Area Meeting (19 November), so this is prior notice for people to consider if they are interested. If anyone would like to put themselves forward as a rep, then please let the Sec (Lynn) know. If you require more information then please contact Carey at [carey@thebmc.co.uk](mailto:carey@thebmc.co.uk)





### BMC / Sherpa Autumn Lecture

The BMC and Sherpa are running a series of Autumn lectures and master classes this winter; Bassetlaw Hill & Mountain Club are hosting a lecture by Kenton Cool and Neil Gresham at **High Storrs School, Sheffield on Tuesday 2 December**. Kenton will be talking about the 'triple crown', climbing three of the world's highest peaks in five days and his new project in the Himalaya for 2015. Neil will be talking about his trip to Nepal and his recent Deep Water Soloing trips this year.. Earlier that day, Master classes with Ed Hamer and Neil Gresham will take place at **Awesome Walls, Sheffield** – tickets £15. For tickets and further details, go to: [sites.google.com/site/bassetlawhmc/lecture](https://sites.google.com/site/bassetlawhmc/lecture)

### Access Notes

By Henry Folkard



Dateline: 5 November 2014

#### Sheffield Moors Partnership Area Stanage North Lees

The Stanage Forum, supported by the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) held its AGM in Hathersage on 1 November. A fair few of those who came were climbers. There is some good news. Without our Stand Up For Stanage campaign I do not think there would have been any.

Led by Mary Bagley, who came to an Area Meeting earlier in the year, PDNPA has re-engaged with people who use and care about Stanage. That is really positive, as is the fact that Rebekah Newman has been appointed as overall Estate Manager for North Lees. I have the sense that substantial parts of the remit to which PDNPA Members require Mary to work to was determined before her welcome revival of this partnership working. I have suggested to Members that, since things change with the effluxion of time, they review the parameters which seemed right to them some time ago in the light of current circumstance.

The BMC has a long record of contact with Rebekah, whose background is ecological. She has done a huge amount for us at Horseshoe, and if it was not for her help and support we could never have achieved what we have there. I have promised Rebekah the BMC will give her its support in her new job. Though she does not take up post till 1 December she took the trouble to come to the Forum to meet people and hear what they had to say.

Some of the key themes in our Stand Up For Stanage campaign, and in subsequent submissions (there have been quite a lot) we have made to PDNPA concern the need for transparency, for a unified management structure, for a full time on site warden, for the essential character of the camp site to be retained and the opportunity it presents for outreach and engagement to be nurtured, for income generated on the Estate to be vested in the Estate, for a refreshed Management Plan which reflects the values people who go there cherish, and for a robust approach to landscape



and conservation imperatives. These are generic concerns in that they would apply to whoever happened to be custodian of this publicly owned asset. It was I believe acquired with public funds, not PDNPA funds. It therefore belongs to us.

The point on the need for transparency was very forcefully voiced at the recent Forum. The message can not have failed to be heard. There is no clear statement of what the Estate costs to run, how such costs have been derived, what investment in it is desirable or what this might amount to. It is no good saying 'we need more money from you through, for example, increased and enforced parking charges' unless we are told what for, and how much.

There are certainly costs incurred in looking after open access land, and indeed the rest of the Estate, and it is not unreasonable to expect those who enjoy, and have a strong sense of, the place to contribute to its upkeep. However it is unreasonable to expect the public, on accessing land they own because it is in public ownership, to give an open ended and unspecified supplement in perpetuity to the amount we already contribute through taxation.

Given that much of the money (I think in the region of £32k ) that funds the Estate comes through High Level Stewardship (HLS), and this is due to be phased out in little over a year, it follows that if costs remain constant or increase the general public will be the first port of call to make good the resultant deficit. There are various leaked figures about, none of which have been substantiated, but if they are right (and only if) the suggestion is that the public

will be looked upon to provide between £80k and £90k per annum. Ever increasing and enforced parking charges may be just the tip on the iceberg.

Now perhaps this is no more than alarmist fantasy. If it is, dispel the lack of trust by being open. On one thing, and this is a plus, there has been openness. Monies taken on the Estate will now be vested directly in the Estate, whereas hitherto such monies were used more generally to support the institution of the PDNPA. The next stage will be to link such projects as are so funded with the priorities in a Management Plan about which the public have been properly consulted.

Theoretically there is now a unified management structure, but this does not translate to reality because the future of the camp site is not being handled by Mary Bagley. I have argued that it should be because it is integral to the management of the Estate, the public who use it, and the public duty of PDNPA in respect of its wider social responsibilities.

A prospectus for expressions of interest in taking over the camp site was issued a while back, and tenders have to be submitted by I think 10 November.

Again there is something positive on the full time on site warden front in that the current post holder's position appears secure, though funds for it will come from different sub-heads. What is less certain is whether any such arrangement will apply to his successor when he retires. Our argument has essentially been about post, not person.





Work on a refreshed Management Plan was initiated at the Forum, and there will be further consultation through the Forum. The group which was convened to produce the Gritstone Wheel vision is deemed to have done its job and does not need to meet again.

With her ecological background I am confident Rebekah will safeguard the conservation and access heritage of the Estate. A key consideration is whether the farm is seen as an essential part of delivering landscape objectives or whether it should be a law unto itself in maximising income generation through eg increasing headage and returning to a regime of overgrazing. I have argued an exemplar upland farm at a place like North Lees should be one which demonstrates how conservation, wild life, recreation, access and public enjoyment can be harmonised within a successful farming enterprise.

There is a proposal to introduce cattle to Sheepwash Bank for sound ecological reasons. This forms part of the current HLS agreement. Their range needs some restriction, and the Forum was asked whether fencing off Sheepwash Bank (there might be alternatives on the precise line of the fence) would be acceptable, or whether a cattle grid between the double walls would be preferable. I think there was a very clear preference for a cattle grid, whilst fencing was quite simply out of the question.

So: the vexed question of parking charges. A lot of climbers kind of think Stanage is theirs, and feel a sense of ownership and pride in the place. Encourage that sense of ownership and

involvement. That is why so many Stood Up For Stanage. I for one do not mind supporting organisations, projects or places I care about. I said at the Forum (after discussion in Head Office) that the BMC would support the introduction of a reasonably priced, easily available, season ticket on a logo something like Supporting Stanage. The proceeds must be shown to have contributed directly towards the attainment of agreed Management Plan priorities. Something similar has been agreed on Southern Sandstone.

Personally I don't automatically take cash or credit cards to Stanage. Hopefully a reasonable approach would increase income and, if it were supported, might obviate the need for automatic number plate recognition enforcement (as in the Lakes) and all the paraphernalia of yellow lines and notices that would be a prerequisite of a more draconian imposition of enforcement. What do you think?

Proposals may also emerge for some kind of Friends of Stanage giving scheme. Would there be support for that, or are there already enough 'Friends of' schemes? Friends of the Peak, for example already merits everyone's support. If there were a Friends of Stanage, what about Friends of Curbar and Froggatt, or Friends of Sheffield Moors, or Friends of Roaches? What would surely not be helpful would be some kind of competition between different venues for funds, resource, volunteers. A better approach would be enhanced partnership working across the single landscape all the Eastern Edges, to maximise precious and scant resource for the whole area.



If you have had time to look around North Lees you may have noticed a lot of woodland management has taken place, and even without looking too hard will have seen last year's bracken spraying at the Popular End has worked. Some more was done this year, so look again come the spring.

Though not all bird species did well at Stanage this year our ring ouzels did and bucked the national trend by successfully fledging more young than they managed last year. Sonograms show Stanage males have a distinctive 'Derbyshire' call. One male with a different sonogram spent two weeks singing like mad to attract a female – but with the wrong call none of them would be wooed, and he disappeared disappointed. The pied flycatchers – the biggest colony in Derbyshire – also had a good year.

### **Burbage and Houndkirk**

The felling of the Great Britain Plantation is progressing apace. Thanks to any volunteers who have helped with wardening duty for the helicopter. Fencing materials for the new plantations of native species have been airlifted in. Though there will be stiles on all desire lines, and the new planting has been designed to avoid areas where people tend to want to walk, there remains some concern about the proliferation of fences here, and on Houndkirk, as along Jumble Lane – where incidentally the old fence alongside the plantation is scheduled for removal. It is easier to rationalise the need for an individual fence than to reconcile oneself to the cumulative impact on the landscape of a number of fences in hitherto open areas. The need for review of the current situation has been flagged with the National Trust.

### **Eastern Moors**

Nothing much by way of update at the moment: a Stakeholder Forum is due at the end of the month. The new extension to the Curbar / Froggatt concessionary bridleway is in place, but not yet surfaced.

There has been an incident with cattle, when a cow took exception to lady walking with her dog. Though she did the right thing and let the dog go, the cow trampled her, though mercifully a rucksack she was wearing helped prevent serious injury. The moral must be to always give cattle a very wide birth indeed if you are out with your dog.

Though they will all be in their hibernacula now it was a good year for adders, if not for dogs that were bitten by them here and there. There may therefore be plenty of adders about next year.

### **Alport Valley**

The specialist contractor who was advising on how to progress the felling contract without damaging the valley is currently looking for a solution to the steep western (Swint Clough) side of the Valley. A meeting to discuss the current situation has had to be rescheduled to the New Year, but in the meantime if anyone has any bright ideas or would like more information, please do contact me.

### **Chapelgate**

Derbyshire County Council (DCC) have commenced work on the Rushup Edge end of the route, and it has been met by a howl of protest, particularly by mountain bikers, but also by some horse riders – though there are differing





views and not everyone finds what is in hand objectionable.

The BMC has asked for the matter to be placed on the Agenda of the next Peak Local Access Forum Vehicular sub-group – which is the appropriate place in which to raise it as DCC normally attend. This has been agreed, and in the meantime further work by DCC has been suspended.

It should be possible to give a verbal update at the Area meeting as the sub-group meets before the Area Meeting.

### **Wish List**

I have mentioned before that the Peak LAF retains a Wish List for improvements to access provision. Inclusion on the Wish List does not guarantee requests will be met, but it does mean they will be progressed whenever an opportunity to resolve them can be engineered.

Take one example – a direct concessionary route from Ward's Piece to Edale End, for which funding has been made available by Peak and Northern. The Ranger Service has put a lot of time into bringing this about, and identified four different possibilities. These are all on private land owned by different people all of whom have found different reasons to refuse permission. Like many access things it takes time, but hopefully we will get satisfactory resolution eventually.

I generally bring the wish list to Area Meetings, so if you have suggestions or want to see it, have a word. It is a good opportunity to get things improved as you would like.

### **Hurst Reservoir**

At the Glossop meeting someone asked about access to open country via the old Hurst Reservoir site. I got nowhere on this with UU, but PDNPA are supportive and agree further consideration is merited. A site visit with both parties is in prospect and we will also look at other access difficulties with the golf club, and on a recently locked access track (by the gamekeeper), at the same time.

### **Horseshoe and Aldery**

Having stepped aside from the Northern Limestone access brief I also relinquish responsibility for these two BMC owned sites. Both are in good shape at the moment, having had their autumn trim.

I do however want, before I sign off, to record a huge thanks to those (few) volunteers without whose help maintaining the sites would be impossible. Individual climbers do, I know, make their own contribution silently along the way, and it does not go unnoticed – so thanks for those contributions.

But an even bigger vote of thanks and recognition goes especially to Duncan, and also Pete, Tony and Sarah (and to those who were in Kathmandu so could not make it) without whom nothing could have happened this year as I was suffering from old age. Along with Duncan, Conservation Volunteers from the University of Sheffield have given us a huge amount of help over the years and unfailingly done a great job for us. Apart from doing the work, they are always a bunch of guys it has been a pleasure to work with. Every year I urge them to come back



in the Spring so they can appreciate the fruits of their work. One day I hope some of them will.

Also at Horseshoe I should report the programme of badger inoculation at both of our major setts went accordingly to plan. The badgers enjoyed their peanuts – which they were not used to – and obligingly followed the trail of them into the traps where they were inoculated, and released for a little more of their treat.

Buxton MC have kindly agreed to take on responsibility for Aldery, and I hope arrangements may be in hand for Horseshoe.

### **Rheged Conference**

The BMC recently hosted a conference at Rheged to look at challenge events in the uplands. The conference addressed issues such as pay back schemes, commercial providers and how to pay for care of the landscape, especially in honey pot locations. One problem, and it is only one, is that though there are often substantial returns to the local economy, such returns tend not to accrue to the organisations or landowners whose land takes the brunt of the wear and tear.

It is a pretty major problem, and one which gets more acute as availability of funding options dwindles. There is good practice, but also bad practice. If the recreation community does not propose its own solutions others will do that for them. That is something of a challenge, especially for commercial providers, but it is one which is not going to go away. Which brings me to:

**ACT** (see page 16 for more about the ACT)

the BMC's Action and Conservation Trust. It was good to hear public tribute paid at the recent BMC Conference to schemes ACT has supported and which have helped to address serious conservation issues – Fix the Fells is one, the Yorkshire Three Peaks another, the Roaches work a third – because it shows the Trustees are targeting ACT's limited funds in the right place. A recent approval has been to help address the formidable problems caused by the mass of people doing Three Peaks Challenge events, to the benefit of all sorts of charities but the detriment of the landscape.

[You can donate to the ACT fund via the BMC web site or even become a Trustee...](https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-access-conservation-trust)

(<https://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-access-conservation-trust>).

### **BMC Peak Area Contacts:**

Peak Area Chair, Neil Foster:

[neil.foster@bmcvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:neil.foster@bmcvolunteers.org.uk)

Secretary, Lynn Robinson:

[lynn.robinson@bmcvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:lynn.robinson@bmcvolunteers.org.uk)

Peak Area Reps (your voice on the BMC National Council): <http://community.thebmc.co.uk/peak>

Newsletter Editors (articles, comments, threats, etc): [peakarea@gmail.com](mailto:peakarea@gmail.com)

Access Reps Co-ordinator, Henry Folkard:

[henry.folkard@bmcvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:henry.folkard@bmcvolunteers.org.uk)





## Access Volunteers

Some members of the Peak Access Team are ageing and have done a significant stint, whilst others are squeezed for time with business and family commitments. It's nothing you can't do, but it does require some commitment of time which, depending on what you do, can be during the working day.

Rick Gibbon who has done a huge amount for us all in the Northern Peak has announced he has done his stint and is standing down. He deserves a terrific thank you from us all. He leaves a big gap in our coverage, and if you can help fill it, or feel you can commit to another part of the Peak, don't be shy. Have a chat with Rick or me or Adam or Louise or Dave or Andi or Neil or Lynn – or get in touch with Rob Dyer in the BMC Head Office.

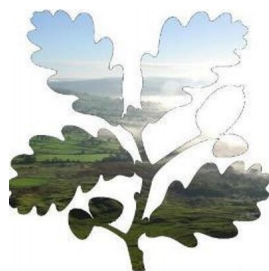
Happy Christmas, and all the best for 2015.  
Henry.

The National Trust have refurbished the Dalehead Bunkhouse in Edale recently and now offer self-catering accommodation for 20 people - ideal for walking groups and close(ish) enough to the mighty bastions of Kinder Downfall for climbers. Charges, based on filling it; £9 Mon-Thu and £12.50 Fri -Sun per person per night with a minimum 2 night stay at weekends (and 3 nights on Bank Holidays). For more detail, call 01433 670368 (option 1), or email [peakdistrict@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:peakdistrict@nationaltrust.org.uk) or go to: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dark-peak/visitor-information/article-1355812314375/](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dark-peak/visitor-information/article-1355812314375/)



## The National Trust

by Helen Tuck



### High Peak Moors Vision and Plan

We have linked the web pages for the High Peak Moors Vision to the Dark Peak website ([www.nationaltrust.org.uk/darkpeak](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/darkpeak)), so that everyone using the website can find out more about the work that's going on and why it's so important.

Ranger teams have continued to lead guided walks, talking to people about the Kinder Mass Trespass, the management of the moors and the local archaeology and history of the area. We have also created some recommended walking routes which can be downloaded from the website. Rangers use social media (Twitter; @PeakDistrictNT) to post updates of places, plants and wildlife which they come across in their work (nearly 11,000 followers on twitter). We have been supporting a few local well-established fell races over the last few years by working with race organisers to ensure access is



appropriate for the event as well as for the environment. We are currently in discussion with PDNPA and other environmental organisations to try and manage the influx of mass participation events which have become more and more popular in recent years. We'd like to be able to provide consistent guidance across the area and make it easier for organisers to get in touch with us so that we can be sure we have effective communication.

We appreciate that we are making changes in the way we look at our land and are working hard to involve our tenants in decision making, especially around woodland creation plans and moorland management. Farming and shooting (in some form) will continue to be an important part of how we deliver improved habitats and favourable condition on the moors.

With Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) agreements and an English Woodland Grant Scheme (EWGS) contract in place, we are working with our tenants and other stake holders to deliver our Vision. These stewardship schemes have enabled us to carry out significant, large scale restoration works on the moors to reduce and prevent erosion, increase biodiversity and improve water quality. These larger projects include blocking gullies and revegetating the bare peat areas, as well as smaller scale experimental work to encourage the growth of important bog building sphagnum mosses.

NT Land Management & Conservation Adviser Chris Wood started work in the summer. His role is to support the High Peak Moors Vision through the development of vegetation

management plans and by monitoring the results of our Land Management Programme. Chris is developing a monitoring scheme which aims to enable us to track the changes in vegetation that take place as a result of the changes we make in land management. Largely this monitoring will be undertaken by a team of volunteers who have been trained to collect key information. We are also collecting information on the condition of our boundaries and footpaths to ensure that we are managing the land effectively and fulfilling our agreements with funders. Working with rangers and tenants, the volunteers record progress on specific areas and report issues with infrastructure, such as stiles, gates and fences. We are keen to recruit more volunteers to help with this really vital work over such a large area.

Shane Bates, the Area ranger for Kinder and Edale has been working with Hayfield allotment holders who wanted to help with the restoration work on the moors. They have been growing cotton grass on the allotment site until it's ready to be taken up onto the moors. Moors for the Future (of which we are a partner), have submitted a MoorLife2 project bid to Europe, to continue the successful restoration work done under the first scheme and others. If this is successful it will provide more funding to support further gully blocking and fencing on Kinder and Bleaklow as well as planting of more cotton grass plugs and continued spreading of lime, seed and fertiliser and heather brash. Helicopters have been flying frequently to airlift heavy gully blocking and fencing materials to remote sites such as Stainery Clough. In most cases, flying is limited





to the period outside the spring nesting season, so when the weather is suitable we take every opportunity to transport materials to site. It's a long term project but the effects are already noticeable. The water level has risen and extensive areas of what was once bare, exposed peat are now covered in healthy vegetation. This will provide more much needed habitat to a wide range of invertebrates and birds. Also, for the wider public benefit, by getting the peat bogs intact and vegetated the emission of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere and the run off of peat soil into the reservoirs below will be reduced.

### Looking ahead

This winter the National Trust estate team will be continuing the gully blocking work across Kinder and Bleaklow, the monitoring volunteers will be out and about, reporting back to rangers and the woodland work will continue, making the most of the time of year for tree planting as well as thinning out plantations. Preparations will be made for winter weather and repairs to fencing will no doubt be ongoing. We'll be working hard to deliver our Vision, working with our partners to look after the land, securing healthy peat bogs in a landscape full of vibrant wildlife with more trees and shrubs in the valleys and cloughs and inspiring people to enjoy the moors for themselves.

## Improvement work at the Roaches

by Dave Bishop



Roaches grit has been crushed into the grit aggregate to help it blend in. The aggregate used for the recent footpath repairs to the diagonal path was obtained from Marchingtons of New Mills; [www.marchington-stone.co.uk](http://www.marchington-stone.co.uk). The mix was 20 m/m to dust.







## The BMC's Access and Conservation Trust (ACT)

ACT exists to fund projects to protect our cliffs and mountains; to promote sustainable access and use; to inform and educate on the benefits of mountain recreation and tourism.

What does that mean in practice?

In the last few years a range of projects from all around the country have been funded or part funded. Examples are the Ogwen Winter Climbing Information Service, Eridge Rocks Land Appeal, Fix the Fells (path repair of the Scafell massif ridge), the ClimbBristol project (regeneration of the Avon Gorge), Black Mountain path erosion repair, Chee Dale boardwalk, Fall of shot signs for Shooter's Nab, Hell Hole rocks access plus the BMC Occupiers' Liability leaflet, BMC Access Charter, & Climbing Gear reuse and recycling (Green Peak Gear).

ACT is a registered charity, so donors can take advantage of tax initiatives and incentives. Its funds come from individuals, companies, climbing clubs, guidebook sales, recycling of phone & printer cartridges, and climbing walls. We can only give out what we get in, and at the moment some funding streams, like contributions from guidebook sales, are not too buoyant.

Most projects come in at under £2,000, but a little can go a long way especially when availability of a relatively small amount from ACT can work as a trigger for the release of a perhaps larger contribution from elsewhere.

Having one charity prepared to commit to a project can make a huge difference. The ClimbBristol project is by far and away the biggest thing we have ever funded – a little over £17k to date (and that is a final amount), but it is having huge benefit in re-vitalising a major venue whilst enhancing understanding of conservation issues and cementing relationships with the City Council. By contrast the Shooter's Nab signs cost £96.

Anyone can apply for ACT funding – clubs, trusts, individuals, landowners, representative organisations. It is a simple process. Forms are available on line (so is the opportunity to donate) and may be made at any time of the year. Alternatively Cath Flitcroft is the BMC Head Office contact. BMC officers are authorised to agree non contentious proposals of under £500, but otherwise applications get circulated to Trustees. Trustees may or may not ask for more information, and normally invite comment from local BMC access reps. If all Trustees agree to support (or decline to support) decisions are made quickly. If there is a difference of view and Trustees need to meet to discuss the pros and cons, it can take a little longer.

Two projects we have expressed 'in principle' support relate to the Cromlech screes and the Roaches footpaths. If you or an organisation you know may have an idea for a project, or indeed for ways to enhance income generation so we can support more projects, do let us know. Two Peak Access Reps, Dave Bishop and Henry Folkard are currently Trustees and one of them – if not both of them – are always at Peak Area Meetings. Visit [www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-access-conservation-trust](http://www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-access-conservation-trust) for more information.