



A fine day on Kinder. Photo: Austin Knott.

PEAK AREA NEWSLETTER



February 2017
peakarea@gmail.com

Rocking Chair

Rob Greenwood



Even though it feels like a long time ago now, it seems only appropriate to wish everyone a happy new year. This year marks a bit of a change for the BMC Peak Area meetings, as we will – for the first time in a long, long time – have had a consistent year-round venue: The Maynard in Grindleford.

That said, our focus is still very much Peak-wide and this meeting is a testimony to that commitment, with one of the key

issues at hand being the planning developments around Dovestones in the northern Peak. With over 100 houses and 120 executive houses outlined within the scheme it is undoubtedly a cause for concern, not least for the local residents who brought this to our attention, but to climbers and walkers that visit the area.

Finally, from urban developments to upland restoration, and our guest speakers for the evening. Moors for the Future will be attending to explain what they've been doing, and what many of you have probably seen, in/around the Peak with their fantastic work that will hopefully see our open moorland flourish again.

Next meeting: Wednesday 8 February, 7.30 p.m.
The Maynard, Grindleford, S32 2HE



Stanage Plantation. Photo: Dave Parry.

Access News

Henry Folkard



Stanage North Lees

In the year 2000 I was asked by the Peak Area meeting to represent the BMC on a new initiative called the Stanage Forum. I threw the towel in this last December 2016. Here is a personal account of it.

It's been a roller coaster of an experience. In the early years the task of finding consensus amongst a group with a common passion for Stanage but very different perspectives on priorities resulted in blood on the carpet – but only metaphorically.

The method of working was for a steering group to thrash out details of how North Lees should be managed, and what needed doing. It had representatives from the climbing and walking communities, the local community, conservationists, ornithologists, hang gliders, and estate staff. They were appointed by members of the

public at a full forum meeting chaired by Matthew Croney from the national park's property services division.

At the time *High* magazine was running a campaign against changes to the roadside landscape, and promoting, with the BMC, resistance to pay and display parking. There was a lot of conflict – though some of this was due to action by the Highways Authority, which in the Peak District National Park is distinct from the national park authority.

There was also many a cross word between ornithologists, hang glider people and climbers; over parking; and about North Lees campsite. Dave Turnbull came to several meetings to give support (I seem to remember at one stage the count for meetings got to 70), but most of the time it fell to me to fight the climbers' corner.

At one meeting the ornithologist was quite blunt. Stanage, he said, was for the birds and nothing else. They got there before climbers, and there should be a 10-foot-high concrete wall topped with

barbwire erected all around Stanage to stop any person getting in. Restrictions on climbing must be year round, and not just during nesting.

In another exchange, on ring ouzels, the hang glider guy asked how many there were. The ornithologist said there were only about six – to which the other guy said if that was all there were they weren't worth bothering about. Fifteen years on I can still vividly remember the fall out from that.

The BMC line was that conservation and recreation were not mutually exclusive, and both could exist side by side to the benefit of all. Fast forward to 2016 when Kim Leyland's study showed there were more ring ouzels nesting in the Stanage and Burbage area last year than there had been in 2002. I rest my case.

It took a while to agree a way forward, but we did, and put together a 10-year management plan which was agreed by members of the national park authority.

There was a crisis in about 2005, or perhaps a year or two later, when the authority decided it wanted to sell off part of the estate, including the campsite and hay meadows. We had to fight the battle to keep North Lees intact not just then, but several times over. It was wearisome. The national park seemed to like selling things off – Losehill Hall being a classic example – and taking the proceeds which evaporated with nothing to show for the loss of what had been a really first-rate facility.

Come the 2010s, the authority was reviewing all its remaining assets. Eastern Moors went to a unique partnership of the National Trust (NT) and RSPB – supported by the BMC (Adam and I were involved in the interviews for the manager post). The Roaches went to Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and we were given to understand Stanage North Lees would go

to the NT, who alone could dedicate as inalienable. NT would be supported by RSPB and BMC who would effectively run it as a triumvirate.

Then all change: Matthew Croney left, and authority members decided they would keep North Lees themselves and run it as a demonstration upland farm to match their demonstration farms on Warslow Moor in the south-west Peak, and because some of the members had a barely disguised antipathy towards the NT.

To the steering group it seemed all constructive vision evaporated. There were staff changes, and of course authority members kept changing. The only focus seemed to be on income generation, but the destination of income seemed to be the authority's head office at Aldern House and nothing to do with Stanage. One staff member was reported to have said, 'Who are these climbers, who do they think they are? We are going to make them pay for us.' Of course we already did, and still do, through taxation.

Along with this, as I have indicated, we kept having to go to authority members, perpetually, it seemed to us, bent on selling off bits of Stanage to swell their internal coffers, rather than make the place work for wildlife and people. That was not easy. One is only allowed to speak for three minutes to members at committee and one's work is cut out when, as happened once, one member empowered to make a decision said, 'Where is Stanage, what is it? I have never heard of it.'

Eventually officers told the steering group they would no longer service it. It would have to constitute itself as an independent body. So we did, and so it remains. Then we had a stricture we must break even financially. But it was well nigh impossible to discover how 'cost' was quantified. There was no transparency,

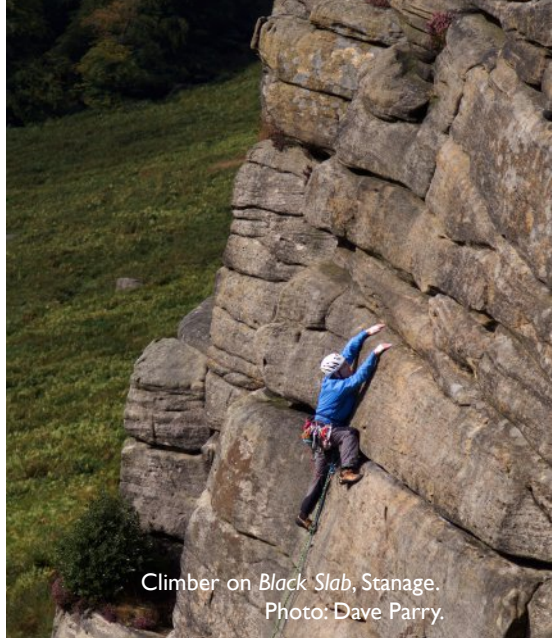
though the authority was after all a public body. It was only after public pressure from a well-attended meeting of a full forum that we began to get any idea.

A new senior member of staff, Mary Bagley, was appointed, and she came and talked to our area meeting, but more important than that she listened, and acted to make things better. We got accounting systems changed so that money taken through North Lees or donated to it, was actually spent on it. Things looked up, and looked up even more when Mary appointed Rebekah Newman as property manager. There was, all of a sudden, vision, dynamism and direction from the authority, and a sense that at last they actually cared.

We revised the now time-elapsd management plan and, working in partnership with each other and as a team, achieved a huge amount. Meantime Mary's face seemed not to fit at Aldern House: Mary who had done so much to help the authority through achieving its objectives at Stanage, and help it to recover its reput with the public, was off. Still Rebekah soldiered on, displaying huge energy, and achieving much with vision for the future, and communicating well with a public that cared about Stanage.

As a reward, and after decades of loyal service to the authority, she has been got rid of. Instead there are now four people, all on higher wages, bits of whose jobs relate to Stanage, but Stanage as a place has ceased to exist in the official mind. It's just another bit of the national park. No one person is responsible for it overall, and it seems none of the people with bits of responsibility has a clue what they are doing or how they relate to each other.

It's a sorry state of affairs, and a poor reward for loyal staff. To be blunt: it's outright disgraceful. We took our case to



Climber on Black Slab, Stanage.
Photo: Dave Parry.

members, for whom we had delivered everything they had asked of us, and were told internal organisation was for officers, not members. It was nothing to do with them. Just like Pontius Pilate 2,000 years ago, they washed their hands.

Bill Gordon will be going sometime soon. He is part time now. The other half of his post is filled by Martyn Sharpe – but only on a temporary basis, not the full-time basis that was promised. And the ranger service, with which many recreation users have had positive contacts, is being 'reviewed'. I wonder what that can mean. The focus now seems to me to be not on the national park the authority exists to look after, but on the institution of the authority itself, cocooned in Aldern House.

It's all an unnecessary crying shame. Personally, I could not retain my personal integrity and loyalties and remain. I quit, after discussing things over several weeks with John Horscroft, who I am glad to say remains as steering group chair. I think a BMC person will fill my slot, and who that is should be known by the time of the area meeting.

Eastern Moors: Burbage, Millstone, Longshaw

Peak access reps have been working together to make contributions to the updated management plan for the Eastern Moors, the first one for Burbage, Millstone, Houndkirk. Copies of what we have said will be available at the area meeting for anyone who wants to read them. If any new points emerge we can always add them and send them in as a supplement.

BMC volunteers have also attended two or three Longshaw Gateway projects. There are no problems regarding access generally, or climbing on any of the crags that come under Longshaw – Lawrencefield, Yarncliffe Quarry and Raven's Tor.

Significant improvements to visitor facilities are planned at Longshaw for the future.

Sheffield Moors Partnership

The next meeting falls just after the deadline for this newsletter. There will be a verbal update at the area meeting of anything topical.

Sitka Spruce Regeneration

Anyone who wanders around on Bleaklow, above the Alport or on Kinder will have noticed an increasing proliferation of self-seeded Sitka spruce seedlings. Most of these are still small, but some have got up to 15 feet high and will soon become seed bearing themselves. We are talking with the National Trust to see if we can do anything about this. At the moment it's not a huge issue, but left alone it has the potential to become a total landscape changer.

Dovestones

The BMC has objected to a proposal for a major housing development by Dovestones, to which we were alerted by members living in Greenfield and Oldham. At the moment this is not a fully fledged planning proposal – it's still a stage back from that but included in

the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework (which includes plans for more than 225,000 new homes across the conurbation by 2035). It is an outline scheme for redevelopment on the Fletcher's Paper Mill site and surrounding greenbelt land in Greenfield, which would involve building 100 lodges and 120 executive houses. It is certainly not too soon to raise an objection.

Spirit of Kinder

Spirit of Kinder Day this year is in Edale Village Hall, alongside the main car park, on Saturday 22 April, at 2.00 p.m. This is a free event (though the parking is pay and display), and the hall will be open from 1.30 p.m. Edale WI is doing the cakes, and very good cakes they are too.

The theme for the event is the rebirth of Kinder: the rewetting and rewilding restoration of the massive area carried out by the National Trust since they bought it in 1982. We might even have our own little celebration of the high quality of Mend Our Mountains funded repairs to the Ringing Roger path (which incidentally Peter and I visited with national park people at the end of last year).

The main speakers will be Steve Trotter, director of the Wildlife Trusts, England, and former manager of the NT's High Peak Estate; Vanessa Griffiths, the new Ramblers CEO; Jon Stewart, general manager of the National Trust in the Peak; and, just confirmed, Dame Helen Ghosh, director general of the National Trust.

There will be stalls, including a BMC one, a contribution from the kids at Edale school, the launch of a new book *Clarion Call: Sheffield's Access Pioneers* (celebrating Sheffield's place in the fight for access to the Peak District Moors), and music from Sheffield folk singer Sally Goldsmith – the whole thing MC'd by Rony Robinson of BBC Radio Sheffield. See you there.



Toby Wright on *Hooters* at Stanage.
Photo: Mark Rankine.

Climbing News & Gossip

Dave Parry

Firstly, eagle-eyed readers will have already noted that I am not Simon Lee. I'll be the first to admit that. But like it or not I have been sworn in as Simon's replacement, in a secret ceremony so closely guarded that fewer people witnessed it than Donald Trump's inauguration.

I'll begin by cutting straight to the biggest news of the winter: *Perky Pinky* at The Schoolroom has had not one but two ascents lately, by James Noble and visiting Lakes wad Dan Turner. This Malcolm Smith power masterpiece of yesteryear was once considered one of the hardest board problems in the world. I was going to say that James's was probably the first British repeat, depending whether or not you give Rich Simpson the benefit of the doubt. However, I think James is from Jersey, so that further complicates matters. But with the only other ascent coming from

globetrotting wunderkind Alex 'weighs about four stone wet through' Megos, the total number of ascents can still be counted on the fingers of one hand, so good effort Dan and James.

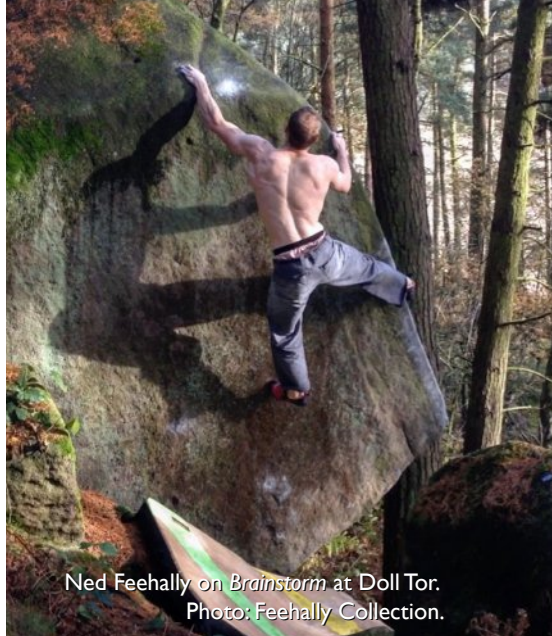
Big numbers on the grit, in either bouldering or trad form, seem to be a bit thin on the ground over the winter so far. The sole bit of trad news is that James Turnbull (not that one, the other one) has done *Beau Geste* at Froggatt, and apparently the pebble is still holding on. But no advance on a headpoint of a 35-year-old E7. Perhaps it's got something to do with the odd run of weather we've had. Or maybe it's just that everyone now is content to spend their winters Instagramming themselves one-arm deadhanging a campus rung. But either way, you kids out there better come up with hard ascents in goodly numbers by spring or I will have to continue to resort to reporting on Schoolroom problems just to pad out the column.

One effort of note is Ned Feehally's ascent, third to date, of *The Bed Of Procrustes*

at Millstone. This is an Iain Farrah 8a+ problem from a few years back, not necessarily much to look at but the moves come highly regarded. If you're operating at that grade and you have a penchant for abysmal footholds and desperate thumb undercutting then this one should be on your bucket list. Also from Ned is the low start project to *Gathering Storm* at a Birchover crag you'd be forgiven for not knowing about, Doll Tor. Grade likely to be in the 7c+/8a ballpark, this good-looking line uses 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes' to get established on the left side of the arête from underneath. The name at the time of writing is *Brainstorm*. Ned reports he's also done a right-hand variant line on *Bus Stop Mantel* at Rowtor, for both of you out there who find that problem too easy. *Mantel Illness* is the name, and getting your elbows above your head is most certainly the game.

Despite the ungritly weather December 2016 was actually one of the driest on record, meaning that Raven Tor had no respite from the advances of sickeningly keen crimp-fiends. To that end Haydn Jones dispatched two F8c Mecca-derived extensions, *Kaabah* and *Haji*, while most of us were busy imbibing copious quantities of mince pies and moaning that the grit wasn't in nick. Although now based in Sheffield, Haydn spends so much time at the Tor year-round that Royal Mail are still delivering his post there. Just write 'Haydn, The Tor' on the outside of the envelope and it'll get through.

Also on the new problems front, Rocketman Rob Smith has done *Who's Boss* at 6c on the Roaches Upper Tier. Described as 'a giant *Staffs Flyer*' it sounds like a guaranteed banger. Over east now and James Jacob has done a right-hand finish to Jon Fullwood's *Birdsong* in the Amber Valley. Apparently the same 7c grade as the original, I reckon it looks good. And at Stanage Popular End Mark Rankine has done *Hooters*, a necky-



Ned Feehally on *Brainstorm* at Doll Tor.
Photo: Feehally Collection.

looking super-direct start to *The Nose* at 7b, and proved that the Popular End isn't fully worked out yet. Finally, John Coefield has done a staggeringly obvious yet overlooked left-hand line on the *Velvet Crab* block, *Pincer* at 6c+. Videos of these last three problems are online if you've got one of those internets they have now.

I must at this juncture give a big thanks to my aforementioned Peak Area news predecessor Simon Lee, who has put in endless hours of hard graft in recent years. It's often a thankless task, unglamorous work, essentially just to entertain us, make us laugh, make us cry, often for no real benefit to himself. But enough about his exploits on the *Austrian Oak*, we should still thank Simon for finding time to work on the newsletter. We wish Simon the best of luck with his new role at the BMC, whatever it is – something about marketing? Anyway, I hope the commute over the Snake Pass isn't as bad as I remember. Drive carefully.

Get in touch

Send your Peak area news, gossip or article ideas to me at: peakarea@gmail.com



Dawn light across Higgarr Tor. Photo: Dave Parry.

Fracking in the Peak

Andy Tickle, Friends of the Peak District

The BMC in the Peak has always put its ‘shoulder to the wheel’ when landscapes and recreation are threatened by mineral extraction, even though the quarries of today may be the crags of the future.

In the past 15 years or so, Friends of the Peak District – who represent the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) in the Peak – have worked closely with the BMC to stave off damaging developments, in particular playing a huge part in the campaign to save Longstone Edge from illegal quarrying at Backdale. After a 13-year campaign, that land is now safe forever.

Sadly, we cannot relax. Fracking companies are now looking to explore opportunities for gas extraction hard on the eastern border of the Peak, in an area running south from Sheffield to Derby. What they are after is natural gas (methane)

held tightly in a rock formation called the Bowland Shale that underlies a swathe of northern England and the Midlands, running from Lancashire across to the east coast, including under much of the Dark Peak. Extracting the gas involves drilling down to great depths, then boring sideways, following by cracking the rock formations using highly pressured fluids thus allowing the gas to flow back to the surface. Benefits include an indigenous supply of energy, but many believe the downsides – getting out yet more fossil fuels; the impacts on groundwater, amenities, tranquility and landscape; and lorry movements – should be a showstopper. Sadly, the government believes otherwise.

Originally the government promised that fracking would not be allowed in sensitive areas of countryside like national parks. However, a sneaky U-turn in late 2015 meant they redefined the boundary



of national parks at 1,200 metres below the surface, and below that gave carte blanche to companies to drill sideways under the Peak, North York Moors etc.

Happily, some national park authorities are tabling their own policies in emerging local plans that would make such lateral drilling subject to more stringent policies where mineral extraction would only take place if exceptional circumstances were proved, including the lack of alternative sites.

However, those local policies are not yet approved and meanwhile companies such as INEOS are now actively exploring in north-east Derbyshire and already plan to start drilling at a site east of Dronfield. Most local people are horrified at the prospect.

Friends of the Peak are firmly opposed to fracking in or near the Peak. Our main beef is the effects on the countryside,

amenity and the environment and that it would damage the much-needed transition to a low carbon energy mix. It's the wrong development, in the wrong place and at the wrong time. We therefore intend to fight this hard across our patch, working with affected communities (both of place and interest) who we hope will want to band together to stand strong.

We hope Peak climbers and walkers in the BMC will also join us!

www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk



Taking a look at the repair work on the Ringing Roger path.
Photo: Peter Judd.

Hill Walking Notes

Peter Judd

Mend our Mountains and the Ringing Roger path

At the end of last year Henry Folkard invited me to join him on a short walk up Ringing Roger with Mike Rhodes and Sue Smith from the Peak District National Park Authority in order to take a look at the MoM-funded footpath work that was just coming to a conclusion. I was thrilled to discover an expertly crafted and attractive stone footpath that will be easy to safely ascend and descend for the many walkers who are drawn to this popular route. More importantly it will confine those walkers to its narrow thread, so finally allowing the dreadfully eroded and scarred surroundings to heal and the natural vegetation to slowly recover. The highly skilled craftsman that has led the work came from Cumbria I gather, but we were pleased to hear that he has passed on some of his knowledge and

skills to remain in the area by using locals to work alongside him. A very satisfactory outcome I'm sure you'll agree.

A Strategic Plan for Hill Walking

The BMC's Hill Walking Working Group (HWWG) has concluded its fixed-term two-year life by asking the Executive and National Council to take the next steps towards bringing about the BMC's stated aim of becoming a 'Natural Home for Hill Walkers'. We've sent to the BMC Executive a document consisting of seven strategic aims, or steps, by which we think the interests of the hill walking members of the BMC will be best served.

To start with we'd like to see the BMC moving towards an '**All-Mountain' approach**, becoming a unifying 'umbrella body' for everyone who actively enjoys, or aspires to enjoy, the mountain environment, regardless of activity. We think it's

important the BMC recognises **the extraordinary popularity that adventurous hill walking has** amongst the public (as evidenced in a number of national surveys). This offers a fantastic opportunity to grow our membership and so bring more weight to our ability to influence the powers that be, in order to advance and protect mountain users' interests. It would also ensure that a greater proportion of hill walkers become more knowledgeable, better skilled and informed, more aware both of the issues that threaten the fragile upland environment and also of the impact they themselves have upon it (as well as discovering how to minimise that impact). This can only be a good thing, surely? However, we still have a bit of **an image problem**.

Take a look at *Summit* covers over the last year or so for example. Seen an eye-catching purely hill walking-themed cover amongst them? No, me neither! We're calling for more to be done to ensure a fair balance of hill walking content, both words and images, in BMC media.

We would also like to see the BMC **commit to do more for the upland environment**, the places where adventurous hill walking takes place. We want the BMC to be widely perceived to be a force keeping the countryside open while simultaneously rising to the challenge of preserving and enhancing the health and integrity of the mountain landscape.

Headline-grabbing campaigns based on access, conservation and adventurous participation can play a big part in this. Mend our Mountains demonstrated just what can be achieved. What better way to reach large numbers of people, galvanising them into action and showing them that the BMC really does make a difference to things they care about?

Furthermore, if both existing and new hill walkers are to become more actively engaged in the work of the BMC then the organisation must also do more to foster **a welcoming and supportive environment for volunteering**.

To make all this stick for the longer term we think the BMC really needs to deeply **embed its commitment to hill walking within the organisation**.

As these proposals suggest, while a journey has begun, there is still a considerable way to go. The HWWG has fulfilled its limited purpose, but we are clear that the hill walking activities of the BMC will continue to need oversight for some time to come and hill walkers need dedicated and authentic voices embedded across the whole spectrum of the organisation's work.

Reinforcing these seven steps are specific suggestions for new staff roles and work programmes. It is now up to the organisation's decision-making machinery to decide how to proceed with these.

This whole process began when the BMC came to realise just how many members it has who see adventurous hill walking as their primary activity and interest. As a consequence a course was set to become as much the 'natural home for hill walkers' as it already is for climbers, boulderers and mountaineers. Let's not stop now. I very much hope National Council will adopt our recommendations wholeheartedly. Let's boldly build a future together as a bigger, stronger, more influential organisation that speaks loudly and effectively for all who journey through our uplands and mountains!



A great day out on Kinder. Photo: Austin Knott.

Peak Area Walk on Kinder Scout, 26 November

Austin Knott

Led by BMC Peak Area hill walking rep Peter Judd, a group of hill walkers enjoyed the Peak District at its best, offering the participants a chance to soak in the views of blue skies, contrails and a day-long cloud inversion that enveloped Edale and the other Peak District valleys as far as the eyes could see, to the south, east and west.

Walkers with homes from all around the Peak clock-face, including Warrington, Stoke-on-Trent, Derby and Sheffield, converged on the rendezvous point to have a great day in the hills and learn more about the BMC. Once out of Edale and on to the slopes of Kinder, the sight of BMC-sponsored path repair work below Ringing Roger led to a discussion of the BMC's award-winning Mend our Mountains campaign while watching our starting point disappear under a sea of mist.

Peter, supported by myself as a new Peak area hill walking representative, took the group over Grindsbrook Knoll and up to and along the Kinder plateau's edge path. A quick, straightforward crossing over the plateau's groughs and hags took the group to the northern edge then on to Madwoman Stones before regaining the edge path and continuing until descending to Edale via Ollerbrook Clough.

There was lots of chatter throughout the day and the opportunity for plenty of stops to talk further and take photographs of the great panoramas. Other topics of conversation included the recent controversy of the BMC's proposed name change, engagement with BMC members in the Peak, access issues, sitka spruce and local mythology.

Keep an eye out for information about further walks led by Peter and me in 2017.



The major section of boggy ground on Cut Gate.

Cut Gate Path Repairs

Simon Bowns

If you've used the path over Cut Gate in the Peak District recently you will have no doubt noticed that it has sections that are very boggy and seem to be getting worse. Peak District MTB and Ride Sheffield have identified this as something to act on and are leading conversations with user groups, land/access managers and other stakeholders in order to improve the situation.

The two groups have co-produced a booklet outlining their concerns, raising questions about what the options are regards voluntary restrictions, user education and potential repair works. The aim is to open this for discussion with as many interested groups as possible and collaboratively determine what can or indeed needs to be done.

The approach is supported by the Peak District National Park Authority, Sheffield City Council, The Outdoor City, Keeper of the Peak and local businesses.

A PDF download is available here:
<http://shop.l8bikes.co.uk/smsimg/cutgatev8.pdf>

This document will also be an agenda item at a future Peak District Local Access Forum meeting.

Of course we also want to know what you think. Comments and feedback are very much appreciated. If you'd like to put your support behind the document, we'd love to hear from you on our Facebook groups or directly via:

info@peakdistrictmtb.org
info@ridesheffield.org.uk



Tree planting at Cold Side in the Upper Derwent Valley.
Photo: Tom Harman/NT Images.

National Trust Update: Creating New Woodlands in the Dark Peak

Tom Harman

Woodlands are important to us, but even here in the Peak District, the nation's first national park, trees and woodlands are significantly under-represented.

In prehistoric times, most land in the UK below 600 metres was covered in trees; by the time the Domesday records had been written, it was recorded to be as low as 15 per cent, with the needs of the growing population being the reason for the decline. The reduction of tree coverage continued into the 19th century, by which time it was below five per cent. Today, despite increased awareness of the importance of trees, coverage has struggled to increase nationally and around 34 per cent of our woodlands are conifer plantations with little wildlife value.

In the Dark Peak, we've been planting saplings and making areas for trees to regenerate naturally to create new woodland and increase the coverage of woodland within our national park. This work is part of our Clough Woodland Project. It is the biggest woodland creation project we have carried out in the Peak District. Over 100,000 native broadleaf trees, such as oak, rowan and birch, have been planted in cloughs and valleys across the area. Where we can, we've fenced sheep out so trees can naturally regenerate in areas where they've been suppressed by grazing pressure in the past.

So far we've secured 200 hectares of land for creating new woodlands across the Dark Peak. Our biggest new woodland, Alport Dale, is equivalent to 100 football

pitches in size. This iconic landscape, which is home to the country's largest natural landslip, Alport Castles, is undergoing a new era of conservation. In the valley bottom below and to the north of the Castles, trees have been planted, open spaces and views have been maintained and areas have been excluded from sheep.

We are maintaining what's special about all of these places: views, freedom to roam, historical features, wildlife, and rare plants. The trees will be very much kept down within the cloughs, valleys and by rivers. Maintaining the character and feel of the Dark Peak, the vastness of the views, which are special to the area are as important to us as trees and woodlands. We've worked with partners, tenants and the community to identify the best areas for new woodlands to be created. The trees will take a long time to establish, but we're in this for the long-run, and in some areas we're happy to wait for things to come through naturally. In others, we're giving nature a head start.

Trees are an ever-more important asset to our countryside and indeed our country. Not only will these trees increase the insect, bird and mammal life in Britain's first designated national park by creating river corridor habitats, they also help to improve water quality, reduce flood risk, and studies show trees are good for our health and wellbeing. There are many positives to having more trees in the Peak District. We're not trying to recreate the past, we're moving forward in conservation, using the land we have and improving it while not taking away or having a negative effect on our internationally protected blanket bogs, heath or the uniqueness of the Dark Peak.

We're also continuing to working closely with access groups, to ensure public access is not restricted and ensure what we are doing does not prevent you from feeling free to roam the cloughs, moors, valleys and tors.



Photo: Tom Harman/NT Images.

Paths, desire lines and historic routes are being kept clear. Fences are being installed below horizons so as not to spoil the views, gates and stiles are put in where people want to walk and we're not using barbed wire. We're also taking fences down; last year we removed the same amount of fencing as we put up and this year we aim to take down more.

These woodlands will take many years to establish, but their value to the landscape and the nation will last forever.

Peak Area Meetings

2017

8 February, 7.30 p.m.
The Maynard, Grindleford

5 April, 7.30 p.m.
The Maynard, Grindleford

7 June, 7.30 p.m.
The Maynard, Grindleford

13 September, 7.30 p.m.
The Maynard, Grindleford

22 November, 7.30 p.m.
The Maynard, Grindleford

Forthcoming Events

<http://community.thebmc.co.uk/peak>

Sheffield Adventure Film Festival 17–19 March, Showroom Cinema

Sheffield's celebrated annual adventure film festival, now in its 12th year, returns in 2017 as part of The Outdoor City Weekender. Expect a packed programme of carefully curated films from the world's best outdoor filmmakers.

www.shaff.co.uk

BMC Peak District Youth Climbing Meet

The BMC Peak District Youth Climbing Meet is for young climbers (12–17 years) who want help making the move from indoor walls to climbing outside. It will be held in the Froggatt area over the weekend of 25–26 March 2017.

www.thebmc.co.uk/the-bmc-youth-climbing-meet-2017-peak-district-froggatt

BMC Peak Area Contacts

Peak Area Chair: Rob Greenwood.
robgreenwood@bmcvolunteers.org.uk

Secretary: Becky Hammond.
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Peak Area Reps (your voice on the BMC National Council):
Rob Greenwood and Dave Brown.
<http://community.thebmc.co.uk/peak>

Access Reps Co-ordinator:
Henry Folkard.
henry.folkard@bmcvolunteers.org.uk

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Next meeting: Wednesday 8 February, 7.30 p.m.
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