



Name the crag.
Photo: John Coefield.

PEAK AREA NEWSLETTER



September 2017
peakarea@gmail.com

Rocking Chair

Rob Greenwood



There is a lot going on behind the scenes at the moment.

The organisational review is well underway, with the first summary/report due ... shortly after the next round of area meetings. Talks have taken place between the Peak District National Park Authority and the BMC regarding the future of Stanage, after concerns were voiced at the last Peak Area meeting; however a conclusion is likely to be reached – you guessed it – shortly after the next area meeting.

Buxton Mountaineering Club, custodians of Aldery, have had a meeting regarding the

future of the crag but are not yet in a position to confirm plans. Finally, just to unravel one final loose end: we have had three interested parties approach us regarding the role of National Council representative for the Peak Area ... but none of them can actually make the next meeting ...

On the bright side it looks like Simon Lee, regular attendee of the Peak Area meetings and recently appointed Commercial Partnerships Manager at the BMC, has made tangible progress in acquiring a retail partner and – in a completely unrelated note – rebolting at Horseshoe Quarry has now begun. If this isn't enough, I'm sure there'll be more to discuss on the night.

For now – see you there.

Next meeting: Wednesday 13 September, 7.30 p.m.
The Maynard, Grindleford, S32 2HE



Wimberry.
Photo: John Coefield.

Access News

Henry Folkard



Dark Peak

It is in the nature of access problems that they can take a while to resolve, especially on private land. This can be frustrating. Where land is mapped as open access under CRowV, which allows access on foot and for certain specified activities, climbing included, theoretically things are more straightforward. But theory is not reality.

More and more the focus is on accessibility rather than plain access. What's the difference? One needs to be able to get on to open access land to be able to enjoy it, and that is what increasingly seems to be a multi-faceted problem. One example is at **West Nab**, a brilliant bouldering area, and somewhere local people like to go for a walk. It's on open moorland, relatively remote and lacking in public transport links. Thus the only practical option, say for an evening visit,

is to drive there. It used to be possible to park in one or two informal lay-bys, but these have been blocked off by large boulders by persons unknown – presumably the landowner. This is clearly against the spirit of the CRowV Act, but not against the law which does not prevent a landowner from resisting what he/she may regard as unauthorised parking on his/her land.

A similar situation not far away at Standing Stones was successfully resolved by national park officers, and suggestions from Mark Warwicker, but there was already an existing Highways Authority lay-by there. Making one at West Nab could solve the problem – but that would need landowner consent.

The national park authority has no powers to intervene in a case like this (nor can it take down the *Private Land* signs on open access land around at Standing Stones), and the boulders are not apparently seen as a problem by the Highways Authority. Again, it does not apparently contravene any stewardship

agreement with Natural England, and repeated lobbying of local councillors by Mark has got nowhere. There have long been access problems around West Nab, but it has been possible to resolve some of these over time. Things change and those with whom an accommodation was reached previously have now moved on, while cutbacks to local authority staffing have adverse impact on resolving problems of this kind.

It does not help either that quite so many statutory bodies could have a part to play in finding a resolution to something which is clearly against the spirit of CRoW. The buck does not actually stop with any of them. If accessibility to open access land was ever on the political agenda, it isn't now, and perhaps this is something for the BMC to take up centrally and nationally.

Another aspect of the same problem is really national parks wide, and it relates to parking charges, accompanied by enforcement and draconian penalty. These are reportedly going to be introduced by the Peak District National Park Authority. This was said to be going to happen last April, but is now said to be going to happen next year. Increased charges and penalties will apply to PDNPA car parks where there is already a pay and display machine.

Accessing open access land by public transport is progressively less and less of an option, so for many venues, both for visitors and local people, driving there is the only option unless you are blessed with unlimited time for a long walk. Hard-line and expensive parking charges make an effective barrier to access by an authority that is supposed to promote it, and indeed did by exemplary work in negotiating access agreements prior to the CRoW Act.

Moreover such a barrier can mitigate against the less affluent members of society who are perhaps more likely to gravitate

towards 'honeypot' sites, where the pay and display machines are. Yet it is precisely this group the authority has a social responsibility to encourage to enjoy the precious national asset of a national park. What kind of statement about national parks, what kind of welcome, does a hefty fine make?

The twin statutory purposes of national parks, loosely defined as conservation and enjoying their special qualities, seem to have been effectively subsumed by an impetus to become commercially entrepreneurial, either through seeking commercial sponsorship (which only comes at a price) or by finding more ways of charging the public – local communities and visitors alike – for use of the park for whom it was created: the sense of national pride and the common good in the creation of national parks subsumed by authorities that perhaps need to think carefully about how they balance income generation with the purposes for which the parks were established.

Do the recent job descriptions for PDNPA Members now emphasise commercial expertise above conservation, cultural heritage, community and the common good? Read them and make your own mind up.

Over the summer the assault on the open moorland landscape by the driven grouse shooting fraternity through the creation of **vehicular tracks to grouse butts** continues unabated – and the cumulative impact here is particularly significant. Since the last newsletter three new cases have come to light, reported by BMC hill walkers and others (notably fell runners). These are on Moscar on what is part public right of way and part solely grouse butt access, in the vicinity of Torside Castle, and behind High Neb. The work at Moscar has been called to a halt and is being reviewed by

national park planners in the wake of public protest, and similar action is in hand regarding the track from the small reservoir near the head of Rivelin Brook that runs up to Crow Chin. We have not got anywhere yet with the Torside/Glossop Low area, though it has been referred to the planners.

Louise is covering **Stanage** in this newsletter (page 6), and she and Dave Turnbull will report at the area meeting on the visit of the national park CEO, Sarah Fowler, and one of her directors, Simon Malcolm, to the BMC offices.

Suffice it to say here that I represented the BMC at the funeral last month of **Stella Maguire** who represented archaeological and cultural heritage interests (but not commercialism) as a Member of the NPA, and was also their representative on the Stanage Forum, the Eastern Moors Partnership and the Sheffield Moors Partnership. She engendered huge and well-deserved personal respect, and indeed respect for her authority, from stakeholders on those groups, even if she found herself, because of her integrity, at odds on occasion with the authority. Her legacy and her values will endure, as have those of earlier champions of access, accessibility and appreciation of the special sense of place of the Golden Frame, even though at a more personal level her loss is deeply felt, and very, very sad.

At the time of writing no date has been announced for **Bill Gordon's** retirement, except that it is imminent. There was, incidentally, a particularly happy strawberries, cake and champagne celebration on the announcement of Bill's award of the BEM held on Cattis Side with friends from the Dark Peak Nature Improvement Area, the RSPB, NT and others. Adam, Louise and I were there for the BMC.

The **Eastern Moors Partnership** has seen a lot of staff changes recently – five staff members out of a complement of 8.4 full-time posts – though Danny remains at the helm, along with John Mead. A stakeholder group meeting is to be arranged in the next couple of weeks.

The public consultation on the **Burbage, Houndkirk and Hathersage Moors Management Plan** is scheduled for October. As part of that consultation expect to see a roadshow display at Burbage North. If you have ideas you want to see taken on board don't hesitate to make your personal suggestions. The BMC has already submitted its suggestions, and there will be a copy of what we said at the area meeting should anyone want to read it.

A **Sheffield Moors Partnership** meeting is scheduled for the afternoon immediately before the area meeting, so feedback from that will be made at the area meeting. One proposal that will be on the table there will be to grant concessionary bridleway status to two ways. The first is the footpath across Nell Croft, near Fox House, and the second, called the Cairn Track, is a desire line linking Houndkirk Road with Burbage's Green Drive. Both will provide welcome links between existing bridleway-status ways.

Peter and I put some comments together for the Forestry Commission's consultation on management of the **Snake, Lockerbrook and West End Forests** over the next 50 years. We had quite a lot to say. It was the detail within the general approach that elicited our input: in broad terms we were basically happy with the overview and agreed very much that the forests did not need any substantial infrastructure development. Of the nine substantive comments we made the three most salient related to a near total lack of

any recognition of the existence of, or potential for, recreation, be it facilitating desire lines for walkers or opportunity for new mountain bike routes; the lack of any review process before the 50 years was up; and a preference in respect of landscape for extending the moorland into the wooded areas rather than the proposed approach of extending the wooded areas into the moorland. A copy of our response, which went under Peter's signature, will be available at the area meeting.

Another consultation where we have had input was the draft for the **Peak Park Management Plan** – an inevitably lengthy document. BMC input was wrapped up in the submission from the Peak Local Access Forum (LAF), which again was somewhat lengthy, but then there was a fair bit to say. I chanced to see a draft of the response from the Peak Park Parishes Forum which made two points very directly which echoed some of my own comments, and which I quote verbatim: 'The Forum is again disappointed that yet another consultation document is presented in a far from friendly form. It is full of "management speak"', and 'the Forum is identifying too many occasions when the Authority says one thing and does another.'

Rob Dyer and Gary Gibson had a positive meeting with Luke Barley from the National Trust on access arrangements and crag maintenance for the **White Peak limestone** in NT ownership – principally the Dove and Manifold valleys – so we can get it all absolutely right for the forthcoming guide. Thanks to all involved. Rob may have some update on the situation at Ravensdale at the area meeting where the current approach to agreeing appropriate restrictions worked to good effect this year.



Burbage.
Photo: John Coefield.

Finally, a word about the **Local Access Forum (LAF)**: appointments are for two or three years, but may be extended for additional terms. They are made to individuals, not to organisations, jointly by the national park authority and Derbyshire County Council on the basis of a general interest in, and personal knowledge of, access issues as these affect all parties. Individuals may have representative roles in membership or statutory organisations, some voluntary, some paid, but are there to address access issues in general rather than to beat any particular drum.

In some areas LAFs have not been particularly successful, but in the Peak the LAF works very well and is directly effective. My current appointment (either my third or fourth) expires in August 2018 and I will not be applying to renew it again: I think a turnover is beneficial and volunteers should not hang on till long after expiry of their sell-by date. If anyone wants to know more about the workings of the LAF and the necessary time commitment please ask me, or contact the LAF Secretary, Mike Rhodes, at Aldern House.



Photo: John Coefield.

Stanage Forum Update

Louise Hawson, Access Rep

The Stanage Forum is a consultative stakeholder body which advises on issues affecting the Stanage (North Lees) Estate. The vision of the forum is ‘to care for, enjoy and promote understanding of Stanage-North Lees in a sustainable way which respects and enhances wildlife, heritage and landscape for everyone, forever’.

The BMC has been a member of the steering group since its inception, along with local residents, neighbouring landowners, conservation groups, recreation groups, and representatives from the national park. Henry stepped down last year after many years as secretary, and currently Adam Long and I represent the BMC.

Over the last three months, the forum has been re-evaluating its role and its future in relation to the national park in light of changes in management and staff on the estate. Rebekah Newman, the project

manager who drove work on the Stanage Sticker among many other things, left in April. Bill Gordon, estate warden for more than 30 years (and recent star interviewee in *Summit* magazine), will retire this autumn.

At the same time, we’ve welcomed a new management team to North Lees, which is now managed under the Visitor Experience service within the new Commercial and Outreach Directorate. The new team addressed a meeting of the steering group in July, and generally the impression was positive. However, while we welcome the broad strategy and vision, the reality of Stanage tends to boil down to the physical nitty gritty – parking management, investment plans for the campsite, path maintenance, fencing etc. For these we will have to wait and see what happens. The good news is that it is fairly certain that Bill will be replaced, and your Stanage Stickers will remain valid until the end of this year.

Prior to the meeting with the forum, Dave Turnbull and I met with Sarah Fowler (PDNPA CEO) and Simon Malcom

(Commercial Development and Outreach Director) at the BMC offices in July. Our priority was to discuss issues around the future of Stanage. Overall, the meeting was helpful in establishing a shared understanding of what we are trying to achieve, and communicating members' views and concerns to the authority.

It was amusing to note that of all of us in the room, Dave had the longest association with Stanage and the Stanage Forum, as he was part of the North Lees Management Group that created the forum 16 years ago, when he was BMC Access Officer.

Dave reiterated how special Stanage is for climbers, not just locally but nationally and globally. We recognised the investment that has been made, including the camping pods and the campsite facilities. However, we expressed our disappointment that the Stanage Sticker was discontinued without consultation with us, even though we were a driving force behind the creation, promotion and distribution of the sticker, and climbers were among the most active users. The current position is that stickers will be respected until the end of 2017. The intention is to subsume the 'donations' aspect into a new programme of fundraising across the park. We will of course be observing this process closely.

We also expressed concern that there is no longer an up-to-date management plan for Stanage (the current version expired in March 2017). A clear, shared management plan is vital to enable stakeholders and officers to work together to achieve our objectives. This is something we will continue to raise through the Stanage Forum.

We raised the issue of parking fees. It is our understanding that fees are likely to increase across all PDNPA car parks (they are currently a standard £4.50/day), and will be enforced more rigorously. We raised concerns that increased fees and enforcement at the

Plantation car park may lead to an increase in uncontrolled roadside parking around Stanage, with associated impacts on traffic flow and roadside habitats. We don't yet know what the plans are to mitigate this.

The national park is extremely enthusiastic and supportive of the 'Mend Our Mountains: Make One £Million' project, and work has already begun on raising awareness with staff and volunteers about the appeal for funds to restore and improve the path over the Great Ridge around Hollins Cross. MOM is a great advert for the power of the BMC's membership and its networks to come together to deliver real improvements in the landscapes that we value.

Both Sarah and Simon were invited to attend and to present their plans to the Peak Area meeting. As I write, I don't think that they are able to attend the September meeting, but they know that the invitation remains open and they are keen to attend. We also hope that other national park staff will come along to talk about their work in future.

2017 Stanage Forum Open Meeting

The 2017 Stanage Forum Open Meeting and AGM will be held on Saturday 23 September 2017 at 2 p.m. at the Hathersage Methodist Church Hall (Main Road, Hathersage). Everyone is welcome. Come along to find out more about what's been happening on the estate, and to hear from the new PDNPA management team about their plans for the estate.

You can find the latest management plans for Stanage-North Lees and minutes of Stanage Forum meetings here: www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/looking-after/projects-and-partnerships/stanage

For info on all current parking fees see: www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/visiting/parking



Squawk Traverse, Dovestones Tor.
Photo: John Coefield.

Climbing News & Gossip

Dave Parry

It's been a great summer blah blah blah, grit season upon us soon blah blah blah – OK I may as well cut to the big news first, the reason you're all reading this; we have new problems at Sheffield's premier urban movement laboratory: Bell Hagg.

I know there are aficionados out there ('Haggsters', if you will) so I'm sure both of you will be keen to learn of the new lines done by Joe Harding on Newcastle Buttress. It's to the east of the normal approach over the golf course, so one that most people will have missed. There are three new problems in the Font 5–6 grade range, details on UKBouldering. They look like great additions to the embarrassment of riches which is the Hagg's high-quality bouldering portfolio. See you down there.

In more mundane news, in July teenager Will Bosi made a rare repeat of *Evolution* (F8c+) at Raven Tor. Will made the news last

year by repeating *Hubble*, so now has two of the ultra-classic hard Peak power routes under his belt. Apparently *Evolution* is a fair bit harder these days than when Jerry and Malc did it back in the 1990s due to a crucial hold high up deteriorating; it may well be very high in the grade. Maybe *Mutation* next for Will? *The Bastard* at Rubicon? *Brandenburg Gate* project? When you're 18 and knocking off F9a the Peak is your oyster, so definitely one to keep an eye on.

At the other end of the Peak sport grade – and dare I say quality – spectrum, I gather that rebolting work has commenced at Horseshoe, a crag which deserves to be less popular than it is but always seems parked up when I drive past en route to better venues. The work started mid-August and will run for a few weeks and will mean certain sections of crag are inaccessible, so watch out for that if you're planning a visit.

An alternative venue might be found in one of Gary Gibson's latest additions. Crustacean Wall at Goddard's Quarry (opposite Garage Buttress at Stoney)

offers some entertainment if you like bolted routes in the F5-to-low-7 grades. Horse Thief Quarry, not far from Horseshoe, also looks like a good alternative.

On the subject of lowering off, Gary has also cleaned and added bolt lower-offs to some E2–3 trad lines at Drabber Tor down in Wolfscote Dale. I am not familiar with the nature of this particular crag and have done no research into it so I offer the following sentence where you can delete as applicable keywords to suit the prevailing mood regarding these additions: Traditionalists/Enthusiasts will be absolutely delighted/outraged by the bolted lower-offs sensibly/wantonly added to these existing trad routes, which enhance/ruin the character of the routes by providing a much-needed/unwanted safe and convenient descent.

At Derwent, a crag definitely not cursed with convenience, a few new bits and bobs have been added. Andy Barker added a couple of new things at Back Tor (details on UKB) which I think it's fair to say you don't want to walk up there specifically for, but they add to the overall bouldering package that Derwent has to offer. At Dovestones Tor your newsletter flunkies John Coefield and myself added what probably are new problems to the roof at the left side of the crag where the existing *Squawk* is. The traverse of *Squawk* has been finished without the jammed block indicated in the Burbage guide, and is actually excellent – as is the finishing arête on its own from a sit-start. Also a couple of direct lines into the traverse were done in the Font 6c–7a+ range, both really good. If anyone wants to put forward a credible retroclaim on any of these then send it written on the back of a £10 note to the usual address. Names to follow in the new guide, but 'Kestrel Manoeuvres in the Dark' is a favourite at present.

Mark Rankine has been busy this summer, firstly with a new F8a in Tideswell Dale. It's on the first decent-sized buttress you walk past when walking to the dale from the top parking, on your left. Next to Mark's F8a route from 2016 *Pretty Peggy-O* this new route is described thusly: '*Climb Pretty Peggy-O to the good crimp round the roof then make a wild leap rightwards for a jug on the lip, pull up and then right to a glued jug and the belay of All My Pegs. Low in the grade but very reachy.*' Sounds like my kind of route. Mark has also added a good-looking slab problem at Burbage South: *Wenger Out* at Font 6c, round past Pebble Mill. Hopefully this makes a nice addition to the Burbage South slab classics like *Mad Llehtim*, *Bath House Pink*, *Home Cooking Slab* and the Welford slab at the far end etc.

Mark also reports that the Peak Bolt Fund has been active this summer, for instance Rhubarb Buttress in Chee Dale has had the treatment. The pick of the crop is apparently *The Day of the Long Knives* (F7b+); fans of technical wall climbing will be happy with this one – get down there while they're dry and clean folks.

Get in touch

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

Hill Walking Notes

Peter Judd and Austin Knott

BMC Peak Area Walk: August 2017

A write-up of the walk from Buxton that I (Austin) led with a little backup from Peter.

The starting point was the town's Frank Matcham-designed opera house and twelve of us were there at the appointed time. One reason for a town centre start was the availability of public transport, and the proximity of the rail and bus stations to the start point. The start time had been picked to coincide with the arrival of the Manchester train.

So much for planning. The train was cancelled, leaving several BMC members stranded and unable to make the start. Subsequently it was discovered that the train operating company, Northern, had suffered staffing issues. More appropriately issues relating to the lack of staff! There's a delay repay compensation scheme for disappointed travellers; ironically those who sought recompense through Northern's website were warned that there would be a delay in processing their claims because of a large number of outstanding applications!

Moving on, unlike the train, to more positive things, one participant who wasn't deterred by the cancellation was Chris Stone, the hill walking representative from the BMC's London and South East Area, who hopped on the next train and managed to catch up with the group on the access land on the way up to the trig point at Burbage Edge – good effort Chris!

I will admit to liking Ordnance Survey paraphernalia, whether it's a nice Hotine trig point, or a benchmark such as a cut mark, pivot or rivet. I'm not sure that the rest of the group were as enthused as me. Kindly, they put up with me, easily distracted by the fantastic display of heather in bloom, accompanied by its delicate aroma.

The views across the Goyt Valley were also tremendous, allowing us to pick up the intriguing curve of the old Cromford and High Peak Railway between Bunsall incline and Burbage Tunnel.

Moving on across the old Buxton coalfields and accompanying turnpikes we walked up towards Thatch Marsh before heading eastwards, enjoying a good lunch break with a rocky, sandstone outcrop acting as our windbreak. The group was split roughly half BMC members, half muggles, sorry, non-members. The stop provided opportunity to talk about the work of the BMC and benefits of membership, Peter advocating the work of the Hill Walking Implementation Group.

It was then up to the trig point on Axe Edge and the views across the limestone landscape across the Dove and Manifold valleys, picking out the attractive outline of Chrome Hill. More distant the Wrekin, Long Mynd and Cleve Hills were evident. There was a lot more to be seen and picked out as eyes scanned the 360-degree panorama, encouraging a longer stay than necessary. Off again moving down towards Cistern's Clough and over Leap Edge as we made our way to Harpur Hill and the HSE establishment.

The CCTV cameras and clearly marked paths didn't dampen the group's enthusiasm as we followed a short section of the trackbed of the Cromford and High Peak Railway. The association of Harpur Hill with the RAF and the early days of mountain rescue were touched upon, before leaving the site past the distinctive limestone shapes of Anthony Hill and a breached reservoir. This led us to Grin Low Country Park and Solomon's Tower before dropping back into Buxton.

A good proportion of the group stopped for an après-walk drink, enabling Peter to distribute some BMC goodies. All in all a sociable day out. Here's to the next one.

BMC Peak Area Evening Walk: June 2017

Thanks to everyone who came along for our evening walk in June with the Moors for the Future Partnership.

Partnership manager Chris Dean and his MFTFP colleagues took us on a fascinating journey of discovery, explaining how the moor tops became so damaged. Did you know, for instance, that there have been more than 400 significant and damaging fires on the moor tops since records were first kept? And that farmers long ago used to burn large areas annually to kill off sheep tick? There are five stages to their moorland restoration work: stabilising the bare surface with carefully harvested heather brash; reducing the acidity by adding lime; distributing suitable seeds to restore once-native species; performing strategic gully blocking to rewet the ground; distributing sphagnum moss beads to restore the blanket bog – the icing on the cake. While their work has already resulted in considerable greening of once-bare areas of peat, the MFTFP team were keen to point out that many such areas still lack the diverse range of plant species hoped for and are still very much a work in progress.

We also took the opportunity to take part in the Climate Coalition's (www.theclimatecoalition.org – of which the BMC is a part) #ShowTheLove campaign, with BMC access officer Estée Farrar bringing along some of their green heart badges for us to wear to highlight support.

We'd like to extend a big thank you to Jody Vallance of MFTFP and her colleagues for facilitating such an enlightening evening.

Hill Walking Implementation Group: Progress Report

The BMC's Hill Walking Implementation Group (tasked with steering through the BMC's Strategic Plan for Hill Walking) has held its first meeting, with another due



Three Shire Heads.
Photo: John Coefield.

very shortly. At the time of writing I (Peter) am acting chair of the group.

Early attention has been given to 'The Image Problem' as highlighted in the Plan – Hill Walking's representation in BMC media, in Summit in particular – with a constructive meeting having already taken place with the President and Chief Executive. In addition, through conversation with the Access Management Group, attention has been given to looking at ways of effective engagement by the BMC with wider upland environment debate, especially in relation to important legislation changes in the policy areas such as the environment and agriculture arising out of Brexit preparation. Lastly plans for Mend our Mountains – Make One Million are well advanced with exciting projects planned in most national park areas around Britain (including Scotland this time), with ambitious plans for corporate and public fundraising set to begin towards the end of the year. These last two feed into the the plan's 'Doing more for the upland environment' strand.

Much more to come in future months.

Ring Ouzels Update

Kim Leyland

Ring ouzels enjoyed another successful breeding season on the Eastern Edges this year. Following last year's breeding surveys, this year effort was focused on nest monitoring and protection, with the help of an increased number of BMC volunteers – recruited through the Peak Area meetings and Summit magazine. Stalwarts Bill and Flo Gordon led the work at Stanage, while the Eastern Moors Partnership (EMP) provided extensive support and resources for the project.

With the Burbage Moors tenancy now signed, the EMP has a significant proportion of the Eastern Edges ring ouzel population within its area (at least 12 pairs this year). Successful breeding at White Edge and Curbar this year indicates the potential for a southward expansion from the traditional strongholds of Stanage, Bamford and Burbage.

While the Burbage area appears to rival Stanage for visitor numbers, fewer ring ouzel pairs here seem to come into conflict with climbers – only a couple of nests this year warranted climbing restrictions (at Burbage South and Millstone). Higgarr Tor with its extensive group use is now a regular 'signs required' territory – and a big thanks to all the responsible groups here as it has also been one of the most successful in recent years.

At Stanage, at least 10 pairs bred with eight successfully fledging at least one brood and three of those fledging two. Six territories had climbing restrictions in place which were largely adhered to – though at least one nest was abandoned, possibly through disturbance. Bamford held at least seven pairs, with five confirmed to have fledged at least one brood.



Photo: Kim Leyland.

Productivity was good with an average of over three young fledged per pair, and the primary cause of nest failures was predation. Thanks to everyone who looks out for, and follows, the signs during the breeding season. Disturbance has remained an infrequent occurrence, and the collaboration with the BMC is proving a real success. Special thanks to nest monitoring volunteers Adam Long, Carey Davies, Hannah Kippax, Iain Murdoch, John Coefield, John Horscroft, Louise Hawson, Luke Barley, Steve Coughlan and Tim Hill.

Peak District Boundary Walk

Friends of the Peak District

In November 1938, organisations including the Campaign to Protect Rural England, the Ramblers, and the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society, met at the Rambler Inn in Edale to begin the campaign for the Peak District National Park.

Before this, a group of campaigners, led by the Friends of the Peak District's founder, Ethel Haythornthwaite (then Gallimore), had already drawn up a proposed boundary for a national park in the Peak District which is almost identical to the one we have today.

After agreeing that national parks were not going to be 'merely a national playground for townspeople' and that landscape preservation, access, open-air recreation and protection of wildlife were equally important, the campaigners examined maps, explored the proposed boundary on the ground and engaged in many discussions and disputes before the boundary was finally agreed.

The new Peak District Boundary Walk, conceived by the Friends of the Peak District, which follows existing paths, tracks and quiet lanes and never strays far from the official park boundary, celebrates not only the huge diversity of our first national park but also its historical significance.

As with the original, there are likely to be many debates and disputes as to where the route for this boundary does and does not go. By its very nature it avoids the popular honeypots in the heart of the Peak District, but includes some spectacular, if less well-trod, scenery nonetheless.

A guidebook, *Peak District Boundary Walk*, includes Ordnance Survey maps and route directions, and articles about the issues and campaigns faced by the Friends of the Peak District and their predecessors. Find out more: www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk

Castle MC is 50

Castle Mountaineering Club

Sheffield's Castle Mountaineering Club is undertaking an extensive programme of activities for its 50th anniversary year, including a celebratory dinner in October for all current and past members, with a few places still available. The club is keen to hear from former members; further details can be found on the club's website:

www.castlemountaineering.com

President Linda McLeish said, *'It is a great privilege to be president of the club during this very important year. There is much to celebrate with a great history of exploration all over the world. What has always united members is their love of the great outdoors, whether it is the countryside on our doorstep or adventures further afield, and sharing those experiences in them. Many lifelong friendships have resulted from membership of the club.'*

Formed in 1967 at the Castle Inn in Bradway, it soon moved to a renovated barn behind The Rising Sun on Abbey Lane, Parkhead. Members of the club undertook most of the conversion works themselves and the building contains the first indoor climbing wall in Sheffield.

Below: Club members c.1970, including founder Alex Barclay.





Photo: National Trust.

National Trust Update: August 2017

Luke Barley

Summer can be a funny time as a ranger. The hills are alive with tourists and day trippers, and there's lots of work to be done out in the sun – but we also spend some of those precious sunny days squirrelled away in the office with our minds on wintery work, planning our larger-scale habitat management projects.

In the White Peak we're very much in this planning phase, but champing at the bit for autumn and the chance to get cracking! You may recall that we created a new plan for our internationally important ravine woodlands in order to try to mitigate the effects of ash dieback and ensure resilient, dynamic ecosystems for the future. We're now finalising plans to fund that work and will start cutting this winter. The work shouldn't be too obvious to most visitors, but we may cut up to 15 per cent of any

one compartment over the next few years, in areas of 0.1 hectare (a circle of about 35 metres diameter). We'll mainly be felling ash in order to open up other native species and improve their chances of reproducing naturally, and some of the work will also simply improve the chances of the remaining ash by decreasing the stress they're under. Creating different light conditions in our woods is also just basic good management that should improve the habitat for a wide range of woodland species.

The project to restore the ecological condition of the River Dove – known as 'Letting the Dove Flow' – will also see its first practical work over the next few months. Working in close partnership with Natural England, the Environment Agency, the Wild Trout Trust and local anglers, we'll be breaching a couple of weirs in September, then installing 'large woody material' (fallen

trees) into the river to improve habitat and create variation in the way the river flows. The weirs were installed for stocked fly fishing in the early part of the 20th century and have created 'wet deserts' where silt is deposited on the riverbed above them. River flies and the many other invertebrates we should see in the Dove need fast water over clean gravel to survive, and this is also where fish lay their eggs – so breaching the weirs will have a big benefit for fish spawning and the whole food chain. The two angling clubs involved now choose to fish for wild trout and don't stock the river, so the work benefits them as it improves the habitat for wild fish. We also think the beauty of the valley will be improved as natural cascades will be revealed and the river renaturalised, as recorded on the many paintings of Dove Dale from before the weirs were installed.

At Longshaw the summer has mostly been devoted to hay meadows – one of the sensory highlights of the season! Over 8,000 seeds of species like oxeye daisy, black knapweed and field scabious were grown on into 'plugs' and have been planted back into Yarncliffe Barn Fields to improve their species diversity. Similarly, some of the hay cut from existing high-quality meadows has been spread around less diverse ones in order to improve them. The less glamorous side of hay meadow management is removing unwelcome species, so staff and volunteers have been hard at work pulling ragwort and topping thistles.

The huge MoorLIFE 2020 project continues apace in the High Peak, with rangers using a new 'alpine' tractor to cut heather on the steep and uneven terrain. The cutting increases the age structure of the heather, making it better for a wider range of species, and will also create and maintain firebreaks to restrict potential wildfires. Some of the cutting work has been



Photo: National Trust

followed by sphagnum planting into the bare ground; sphagnum mosses are the building blocks of the moorland habitat and the core component of peat once they die, and getting them back on the moors is a key element of the project. Sphagnum and the habitat as a whole also rely on being wet, so we've been busy blocking more inappropriate drainage gullies to hold the water up on the moors. Last but certainly not least, the bulk of the tree planting in the clough woodlands is now complete, but there will be further trees to put in this winter and beyond to fine-tune the design of the woodlands in order to provide the best habitat and ensure they fit in to the landscape.

If you have any queries about any of these projects or would like more information, please email:

peakdistrict@nationaltrust.org.uk

Peak Area Meetings

2017

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>

BMC Peak Area Autumn Hill Walk 23 September, 10 a.m.

Join us for the BMC Peak Area autumn hill walk and see some of the best views available from Bleaklow. This fantastic nine-mile walk, led by Peter Judd, will start from the bus turnaround on Shepley Street in Old Glossop. Please share details around your club too.

Find out more:

<http://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=3888> or email Peter:
Peak10roam-bmc@yahoo.co.uk

Boardman Tasker Night, Buxton 11 October, 7.30 p.m.

Join Boardman Tasker Prize winners Andy Cave and Stephen Venables to celebrate the lives, climbs and books of Joe Tasker and Peter Boardman.

Find out more:

<http://community.thebmc.co.uk/Event.aspx?id=3873>

BMC Peak Area Contacts

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

Secretary: Becky Hammond.
becky@bmcvolunteers.org.uk

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

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

Peak Area Hill Walking Reps:
Peter Judd.
Peak10roam-bmc@yahoo.co.uk
Austin Knott.
austinjknott@gmail.com

Peak Area Newsletter Editorial:
Dave Parry and John Coefield.
peakarea@gmail.com

Next meeting: Wednesday 13 September, 7.30 p.m.
The Maynard, Grindleford, S32 2HE