



Neil Kershaw on *DIY, Stanage*.  
Photo: John Coefield.

# PEAK AREA NEWSLETTER



November 2019  
peakarea@gmail.com

## Rocking Chair

Rob Greenwood



### **Our next meeting will be strange on several levels ...**

Firstly, it will be odd due to a change of location. The Maynard, our venue of choice these past few years, has changed hands and cancelled all future bookings as a result. Understandably it was tricky to find a suitable alternative at such short notice, but thankfully The Norfolk Arms in Ringinglow had space. We're unsure as to whether or not this will become our new venue, or a stopgap while we find a more suitable alternative, but it'd be good to get everyone's thoughts at the meeting.

Secondly, after four years as chair and secretary, Becky and I will be standing down, so this will be our last meeting at the helm. You'll have your chance to vote for our replacements (or should I say upgrades!?) during the AGM, but thanks to everyone that's been involved – even if it's just to attend the occasional meeting – during our tenure.

Thirdly, it's not ordinary meeting – it's also our quiz – so get yourself along for a chance to win a load of prizes!

See you there.

Next meeting: Wednesday 27 November, 7.30 p.m.  
The Norfolk Arms, Ringinglow, S11 7TS



Embankment area, Millstone.  
Photo: John Coefield.

## Access News

Henry Folkard

### Millstone

In October, Peter Judd and I went to Millstone with colleagues from the Eastern Moors Partnership (EMP) and Sheffield City Council (SCC) to seek a solution to the vexed question of whether to retain or dispose of the fence along the top of the crag. Some think it is an ugly intrusion on the landscape, while others think it is nonetheless convenient for keeping a distance between the much-used path along the top and climbers; its posts are convenient (if not ideal) as belay anchors; it is more or less effective in keeping livestock away from the crag; and necessary for public safety.

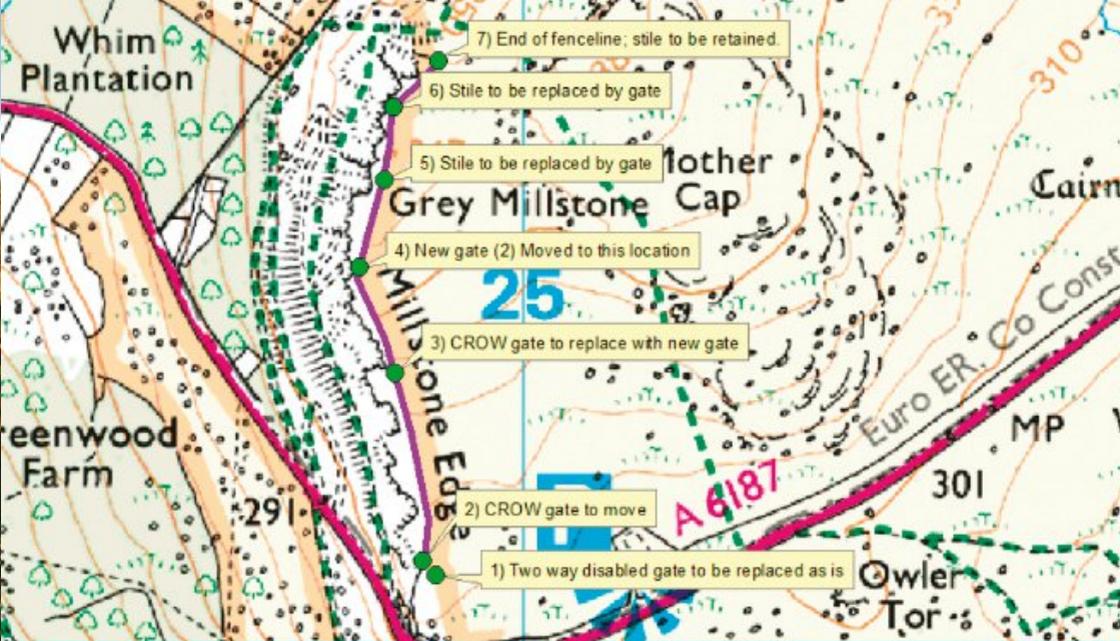
The visit was triggered by some sheep getting through the fence and falling down the crag, resulting in a call-out for the local mountain rescue team, and climbers asking whether belay stakes could be strategically placed where natural features are lacking. The issue had been raised a few years ago,

but because there was no obviously right solution that was affordable, and the matter was not deemed to be an immediate priority, any decision was deferred.

The interim suggestion is illustrated in the plan drawn up by EMP (see map, opposite). This has also been circulated on the BMC Peak Area Facebook page:

<https://en-gb.facebook.com/bmcpeakarea>

Comments are welcome, though the first deadline of 13 November will have passed before this newsletter appears (we are trying, as we pass the newsletter contribution deadline, to negotiate an extension until after the area meeting). The proposal is that the fence should remain, and where necessary be repaired, but that two stiles are replaced by gates, one gate is moved to a new location, and two other gates are replaced. One stile and one gate, which are currently little used, might be removed. Besides responding to where people currently cross the fence line, another consideration in siting the gates is visibility from the road so that the grazier could easily check that they are closed



when he is driving round.

Neither EMP nor SCC was inclined to provide, maintain, or accept liability for bely stakes.

Three boulders at the top of the crag, broadly above the Keyhole Cave area, were a cause for concern because of their questionable stability at the time of the previous visit. They have been monitored regularly in the interim period, and were inspected again in October. One, above the corner which bounds the left-hand side of Keyhole Cave (above and to the right of Brixton Road), is particularly worrisome, and land managers are considering how best to deal with it. In the meantime, it would be wise not to hang about under that corner.

In the longer term, both here and elsewhere, fencing for livestock may be buried underground. Livestock would be fitted with a collar that reacts with a buried cable, to prevent them wandering outside designated areas. There have been some recent incidents in the Peak involving cattle and walkers. At Millstone the effect would be to create an apparently

unfenced area stretching some way back from the crag top which was free of livestock and would be allowed to re-wild naturally.

### Sheffield Moors Partnership

The BMC was represented at a celebration in October of the first five years of the Sheffield Moors Partnership, attended by the mayor and mayoress of Sheffield. A number of saplings were planted in the new Burbage plantation. There are no developments to report on the proposal to introduce beavers to Burbage, dependent on the outcome of a feasibility study.

### Midhope Moor

No date has yet been set for a public inquiry though the Planning Inspectorate was recently asked when one might be expected. The delay in fixing a date – over a year now – is rather longer than normal. When I phoned to check, the planning enforcement officer who is dealing with the case said that he was actually in the middle of responding to someone else who had similarly asked when a date could be

expected, and the two of us were by no means the only ones to make such enquiry.

### **Rushy Flat Dike**

The landowner, or more precisely his agent, was required to remove this track by 9 September after the appeal against the decision that they must comply with the enforcement notice was lost. Until very recently the track was still there, and the matter is being pursued by planning enforcement officers.

### **Chapel Gate**

Chapel Gate has deteriorated recently due to water erosion caused largely by a lack of maintenance to drainage channels.

A contributory factor has been the use of road planings for some of the repair work which, though available and inexpensive, are not, in my view at least, a suitable material. We believe that some work may recently have been undertaken on the boggy area at the top of the way, but as yet have no details.

### **Saddleworth Moor**

An interesting development in the wake of the serious wildfires on moorland earlier in the year is that Oldham Council has made a public spaces protection order on Saddleworth Moor under section 59 of the Anti-social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act of 2014.

### **Next year**

Looking ahead to 2020, major items, in addition to Midhope (hopefully), will be the proposal to reinstate the Matlock to Buxton railway through Chee Dale for goods (i.e. quarry) traffic and/or a heritage railway, which is receiving a lot of publicity in the local press, and also proposals regarding the A628 Woodhead Road. When we know what is proposed for each development – assuming they get past the conceptual stage – we will need to take a view on how to respond. In the

past the BMC has objected to the earlier proposals for both sites, which could only have had a major impact on landscape, wildlife and recreation, and which were ultimately shelved.

## **Stanage**

Louise Hawson

**The annual Stanage Forum Open Meeting & AGM took place in Hathersage on Saturday 26 October. In a packed room, 53 people heard updates on what's been happening on the estate and news on some big plans for the future.**

- Andrew McCloy, chair of the National Park Authority, reconfirmed the commitment of the authority to Stanage North Lees as its flagship estate, iconic within the national park, and the place where people will see on the ground how the authority delivers its statutory purposes. However, he also underlined that there is not likely to be any new funding for national parks in the near future, and so stakeholders need to recognise that the need to save money and raise revenue may lead to decisions we disagree with.

- The new Peak District National Park Foundation has been set up as a registered charity to raise and distribute funds for the authority's work. Its first campaign is '70 at 70', which aims to raise £70,000 in its first year. Once raised, £10,000k of this will be ringfenced for work on Stanage North Lees. More information:

**[www.peakdistrictfoundation.org.uk](http://www.peakdistrictfoundation.org.uk)**

- The options appraisal of the property assets on the estate has been completed and there will be consultation on this at the end of November. This will include an open online questionnaire and an open meeting with Hathersage Parish Council.



Stanage mountain biking.  
Photo: John Coe field.

- An expression of interest has been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund's Heritage Horizons Award for £6.6 million funding to support research into the archaeology, landscape and ecological value of the estate; restoration of the buildings to a standard the national park could not achieve; and wider visitor and community engagement.

- The Heritage Open Day in September attracted more than 200 people to see the hall and the Cruck Barn. It was organised by the North Lees Heritage Action Group, who have also won a small grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to bring together existing resources on the history and archaeology of the estate, and develop new surveys, educational resources and engagement activities to share this information with the local community.

- John Horscroft from Ride Sheffield talked about progress with plans for a new mountain bike trail in Redmires plantation. The first application was rejected, but a new proposal is now being submitted with new proposals for biodiversity and other measures.

- A new tenant is looking after the farmland. Nick Deniff also farms Totley Moss and Burbage. He farms from a conservation point of view. Leaflets were distributed promoting meat produced from the cattle and sheep he grazes here. Nick's contact number is on signage around all these estates, and he urged people to contact him directly with issues regarding animals or grazing.



Peak Area hill walk from Marsden.  
Photo: Spence Ramsey.

## Hill Walking News

Peter Judd & Austin Knott

### Hill walking reps' annual report

Things we've done since the last Peak Area AGM include: provided some of the activities for the BMC's first national Hill Walking Symposium; brought in Carey Davies as speaker at an area meeting; delivered a BMC AGM weekend walk for 19 members above Buxton; attended the 'Spirit of Kinder' day on behalf of the BMC (along with Lynn Robinson and Henry Folkard); promoted and provided one of the activities for participants during Peak Mountaineering's Pick and Play annual clean-up event; joined in and helped promote Outside's Crag Clean-Up; delivered a joint walk for the BMC's Peak, North West and Yorkshire Areas from Marsden attended by eight members; attended on-site consultation meetings on behalf of the BMC with both the National Park (Moors for the Future Partnership) and National Trust; attended meetings of the Kinder and

High Peak Advisory Group; with Louise Hawson (access rep) we have brokered liaison between the Peak District and Staffordshire Local Access Forums; Austin organised a Real3Peaks litter clean-up on the Roaches and Peter attended and promoted the other Peak District Real3Peaks clean-up from Castleton; attended the Ride Sheffield (MTB'ers) organised first 'Be Nice, Tread Lightly' gathering of various recreational user groups to discuss common concerns; organised a team of 18 BMC (and Mountain Training Association) members to plant 4,000 sphagnum moss plug plants on moorland in the Upper Derwent Valley for the National Trust as part of the moorland restoration work.

### 2020 BMC hill walking weekend

Some will remember the successful first BMC Hill Walking Symposium weekend that took place here in the Peak in 2018. We're pleased to say another such weekend is in the early planning stages. It will be in the

Lake District, over the weekend of 14–15 March 2020. It's likely to embrace a range of activities: evening speaker(s), learning/skills activities, led walks, learning opportunities such as looking at conservation work and/or landscape or geology or flora/fauna, an open forum debate on an access or conservation topic, and so on. It's shaping up to be a very interesting weekend – pencil it in your diary.

### **Mend our Mountains: Cut Gate and Great Ridge update**

Cut Gate fundraising (led by mountain bikers) hit its target earlier this year. A user consultation walk took place last month (Henry attended), a contractor has been appointed (who has worked in the Peak before and done good things), so work may well have started by the time you read this. The 'bog of doom' and other really bad sections will be repaired with 150 metres of paved path and the insertion of six simple clapper bridges to overcome streams, plus a further 100 metres of sub-soil reversal/aggregate path work and 420 metres of path landscaping with a focus on water management (the main driver for erosion and path spread). The same contractor will also work on the neighbouring North America Farm bridleway doing similar work (but no paving); Peter attended the consultation for this.

Great Ridge fundraising fell a little short of its target, so the original ambitious plans have been trimmed back a little. However it's still likely that some of the most damaged bits (such as the section from Hollins Cross to Back Tor and the climb up Back Tor itself) will nonetheless be repaired using a mixture of pitching, paving and other remedial path work to reverse the erosion and reverse the present path spread. A user

consultation (that we plan to attend) is expected shortly, once agreement has been reached with one of the landowners and the national park planners have given approval for the proposed work. Hopefully work will commence this winter.

### **Peak Area Marsden walk report**

*A report on the Peak Area walk (with North West and Yorkshire members) from Marsden on 29 September.*

Vikki Hughes

A week of watching the increasingly grim weather forecast, a backwards and forwards should-we-cancel discussion in the Messenger group of keen volunteers, a final decision made by Peter on the Saturday that the walk was a go, but we should urge caution on those travelling to Marsden.

On Sunday morning we all awoke to near-biblical rain and some pretty horrendous road conditions. Too late did I receive the 'save yourself and turn for home' text from Peter, so this saw him, Austin and me in the station car park at Marsden wondering if anybody would brave the elements and join us. Fortunately, five hardy Gore-Tex-clad souls turned up (including hill walking reps from the Yorkshire and North West areas), so off we set.

The route took us on to Pule Hill, a stop at the memorial dedicated to the fallen of the 2nd and 7th Battalion the Duke of Wellington's Regiment. Here Austin regaled the group with a tale (most of it true) about the Duke of Wellington and his love of sleeping in his camp bed and his fear of train travel (you had to be there). We pressed on to the trig point, the physical, if not metaphorical high point of the day. A bit of a double back and we dropped to the Stanza Stone, where a poem about snow by Simon Armitage is carved into the quarry waste rock. A beautiful recitation by Austin and



At the Stanza Stone.  
Photo: Spence Ramsey.

Peter and a discussion about whether the poet laureate is better or worse than the average Vogon poet; again, you had to be there!

We picked up the Standedge Trail and continued. By this point most of the paths were streams and we were soon at the first actual stream crossing of the day. A bit trickier than optimal but the group all took it in their stride. A bit of discussion now about a Plan B, as this wasn't even the wet half of the route. We opted for pressing on as far as the second trig point of the day on Millstone Edge where we found a bit of shelter for a brew and a speedy lunch (cold pizza, food of champions, and Norwegian Brown Cheese, food of polar explorers). From the trig we retraced our steps for a bit and then opted to follow the Standedge Trail back to Marsden; we navigated more paths that were streams and streams that were raging torrents, and I've never been so pleased to spot a bridge. One complicated wiggle of a path through a farm and we were back on the outskirts of town. A tiny bit of

tarmac and we were all safely back at the station with 15 kilometres in the bag. Dry clothes donned by those sensible enough to bring them and we had a cheeky half in the pub before farewells and journeys home.

Many thanks to Peter for all the organising, Austin for the route choice and appropriate tall tales. Thanks to both for letting me lead a bit of the walk. And biggest thanks to the five brave BMC members who turned up for the fun. We're booking sunshine for the next walk, honestly ...

### **Real3Peaks Challenge (R3PC), Peak District, 13 October**

Austin Knott

Nationally the R3PC has been running for seven years – it was started as a response by outdoor professionals to littering on the National 3 Peaks. The main aim is to raise awareness of the work already undertaken by local and international charities, and volunteer groups who frequently have clean-up events, whether down at the local park



Real3Peaks clean-up at The Roaches.  
Photo: Austin Knott.

or cleaning our oceans of plastic. These aims neatly overlap with the BMC's H2O campaign and the local annual clean-ups that area members will be familiar with.

The R3PC returned to the Peak District in October with two events, one in Castleton, which has been running for a few years, and a new one, at The Roaches. At Castleton, 34 kind souls turned up to meet organiser Gilly Nott to volunteer their time, some coming from as far afield as London. About 88 kilograms of litter was cleared from Castleton, Cave Dale, Winnats Pass, the broken road, Mam Tor and the Great Ridge. The most common finds were the usual plastic bottles, cans, food wrappers and dog poop bags. More obscure finds were safety glasses, condom wrappers, a weed grinder and dog balls. Aside from the litter still being an issue, it seems people are getting more inventive where they hide their litter; the amount of dog poop bags stuffed between stones in the drystone walls was staggering, and so much litter was pushed into cracks on the broken road.

The Roaches event was running for the first time. The weather forecast was poor but 12 hardy souls came along to support Austin Knott, one being a Cambridge-based BMC member. The group managed to collect 27 kilograms of litter varying from small bits of plastic, false nails (particularly under the climbing crags!), part of a commemorative mug for the 1968 European Cup, deliberately smashed glass bottles, various bits of paper and toiletries, plastic bottles, melted plastic bottles (really?!), fruit skins – mainly orange, and some 'crag swag'. It was disheartening to find used disposable barbecues with plenty of scorch marks to evidence their use. People's memories are short; it's not much more than a year ago that much of the estate was ablaze.

This year 30 locations benefitted from R3PC with 680 kilograms of waste being collected by 200 volunteers. The Peak District collected 105kgs with 48 volunteers.

Each of the Peak District R3PC events received support from the waste

departments at the respective local authorities with the loan of litter picking equipment and the collection of the rubbish. More importantly a huge thanks went out to each and every one of the volunteers, for their efforts and their time, and for doing it all with a smile! As ever, so good to pay a bit back to an area we all love. Watch out for the events next year, not only the R3PC but the Peak Mountaineering and Outside events that local members support each year.

### **Sphagnum moss planting**

Peter Judd

A wet and cold Saturday at the beginning of November saw 18 lovely folk give up their warm, dry homes to join two National Trust rangers and venture up on to the moors of the Upper Derwent to plant sphagnum moss plug plants on the moor tops of Ronsley Moor. The National Trust, a partner organisation of the Moors for the Future programme, hope to plant 90,000 such plugs on prepared areas of moorland this winter, all as part of the €15 million MoorLIFE 2020 project that aims to restore and protect active blanket bog. This was our opportunity to make a small but important contribution to that work.

At a time of increasing concern over climate change and recognition that greenhouse gases are a major driver of such change, it's worth noting that while peat bogs cover just three per cent of the world's surface, they hold twice as much carbon than the world's forests combined! Our own Peak District peat bogs are estimated to have 20 million tonnes of carbon locked up within them. Sphagnum moss is the main building block of peat and so its presence on our moors ensures that more carbon is still being captured, while

sphagnum's amazing ability to absorb water means its presence keeps the moor tops wet, reducing the erosion of existing peat while helping slow down rain water run-off too (hence playing a part in reducing flood risk).

I am delighted to say that, working in teams of two, we managed to exceed the National Trust's expectations and plant all 4,000 plug plants that their rangers had brought along for the day. Participants Tracy and Jess had this to say afterwards: *'Fabulous day, even the weather couldn't spoil it. Great collaboration with the BMC and NT would love to do more volunteering like this. Learnt lots about the moors, peat bogs, carbon and conservation, loved it and it felt nice to give back to Mother Nature.'*

Not only was this our first get-stuck-in conservation work opportunity but it was also the first time we've tried cross-promoting an event with the local Mountain Training Association's regional group (an overlapping membership after all), and its success means I'm sure it will not be our last!



The first ascent of *Steampunk*, Dale Quarry.  
Photo: Daniel Lee.

## Climbing News & Gossip

Dave Parry

It seems like only 12 months since I was writing the final newsletter of 2018, and indeed it was. This is because the earth's orbital period around the sun has once again steadfastly remained at 12 months long. But leaving the basic workings of the solar system for a minute, regular readers will have noticed that I have largely recycled the opening paragraph from the corresponding newsletter last year. This is not because I've run out of ideas, although to the casual observer it might seem that way. It is in fact in done in an attempt to exemplify responsible consumerism. Recycling last year's opening paragraph – like all recycling – saves valuable natural resources (in this case my creative juices, which are finite), compared to creating a paragraph afresh. Although it has to be said recycling any product,

including this paragraph and the supporting text you are reading now, does require additional energy expenditure, so it's not entirely a free lunch on the environmental front. With this in mind I will just reuse an existing paragraph verbatim in future, and in doing so drive this column towards a net carbon neutral state. (I should however point out that this column is in fact FairTrade – in that I am remunerated appropriately for its production bearing in mind its value, i.e. nothing.)

For those who have stuck with me through that opening paragraph, you are now duly rewarded with some recent developments from Dale Quarry at Wirksworth. This limestone venue has some routes from the 1980s and 1990s, mainly trad, but has seen some recent cleaning and development of sport routes. An old F7a classic in *Handy Wallhole*, originally put up in 1987 by Seb Grieve, Simon Lee and Phil Dickens, has been recleaned. Notable additions

include *Underground Resistance* by Simon Cundy, and *Ascent Given* by Daniel and Dominic Lee, both routes weighing in at F7c. The latter was apparently donated by Lucian Cottle. So many 1990s Peak legends crammed into this one paragraph, what a treat.

Less of a treat has been the recent weather. It's been a wet autumn, but the Tor has seemed to fare well for dryness until very recently. Mat Wright took advantage of the cooler temps to tick off the relatively rarely repeated hard routes of *Hajj* F8c and *Evolution* – both F8c+. There's a video of *Evo* on his YouTube channel which is well worth about 30 seconds of your time, given this is about as long as it takes him to rattle off the route in impressive rat-up-a-drainpipe fashion. Please join me in petitioning the IOC to replace the current nonsense speed climbing format with time-trial laps on *Evolution*.

Ned Feehally has come up trumps again with some much-needed news content despite the terrible weather. Over on the unjustifiably popular Rotherham limestone, Ned has added a couple of variations on the existing *Apache* at the Impossible Roof area of Roche Abbey. *Last Anasazi* (Font 8b+) laments the demise of the once mighty Five Ten rock shoe and goes up *Apache* and climbs leftwards into the end of *Serenade* (no jugs over the lip obs). Also, *Apache Direct* finishes direct from the original problem on pockets at Font 8b.

At a slightly more manageable grade, Ned has added a Font 7c low start to Jon Fullwood's Font 7a *Piggy Biscuits* at Baslow. He's also climbed *Flatword Sit Start* into *Flatworld LH* at 7c+, although this has conceivably been done before. Down at Cratcliffe, *Ova Arm* has been added to the iconic Egg boulder. The new addition is the rightmost problem from a sit start. Expect slopers, expect 7c.

Another new Ned 7c can be found behind Grotto Slab at Stanage Popular End. *Möbius Strip* starts sitting at the right side of the cave with a pocket and the start of a ramp feature,

then works up left until you can rock around on to the slab. (I'm worried Feehally 7c is turning into a latter-day Welford 7b+ grade.) The left arête on its own from a sitter is *Cross-Cap*, around 6c. And finally, and saving the best for last, at Rubicon Ned has done fellow fingerboard supremo Dan Varian's hard problem *A Bigger Belly*, only this time finishing along *Kudos Traverse* to the Press jug. It's Font 8b and named *A Bigger Disappointment*, although I think that is uncharitable – I mean whoever has been disappointed at Rubicon? Honestly.

Back to the grit, one for the local collectors is Sam Lawson's *Liam Kneescum*, a Font 7b sit start at the base of *Parthian Shot* at Burbage South. On a boulder just down the hill is a new Font 7c called *Truffle*, courtesy of Bachar ladder aficionado Jim 'one arming his way up death E9s' Pope. Photo on his Instagram, check it out if you get the chance. Crag of the summer.

Last but definitely not least, a mention must go out to former BMC Peak Area news correspondent, white Anasazi speculator and one-time *Right Eliminate* chockstone *enfant terrible* Simon Lee for his quick ascent of *Ben's Roof* at the Tor. Well, I say 'quick' – such terms are of course relative. Simon's penchant for a protracted war of attrition that would put the Siege of Thessalonica to shame (how's about that for an obscure reference?) means that his five-year blink-of-an-eye ascent of *Ben's Roof* stands out for its merciful brevity. Simon may have been camped out in those kneebars like an Extinction Rebellion protester; but all mickey-taking aside, it's a tremendous effort. Simon kept the faith, showed great resilience and walks away with a coveted tick of one of Peak Limestone's most sought-after 7b+s. Chapeau.

### Get in touch

Send your Peak area news, gossip or article ideas to me at: [peakarea@gmail.com](mailto:peakarea@gmail.com)



Ned Feehally on the low start to *Piggy Biscuits* at Baslow.  
Photo: Nick Brown.



Above Marsden.  
Photo: National Trust.

## National Trust

### Achievement on the High Peak Moors

Henry Folkard

*'We want to see people out there loving the moors as their own, and feeling free to explore them.'*

So said Dame Helen Ghosh, the then Director General of the National Trust, when she launched the 50-year vision for the 12,000 hectares of moorland owned by the National Trust in the Dark Peak, on 20 September 2013.

The vision was radical and bold. Its five elements were to inspire people; to work with people in looking after the land; to secure healthy peat bogs; to enhance its defining wildlife; and to plant more trees and shrubs in the valleys and cloughs, making a radically better, more natural, landscape for people and wildlife to enjoy. Over the years this landscape had become severely degraded through wildfire, industrial pollution and overgrazing. These factors outweighed the more concentrated damage, significant though it could be, caused by the feet of many walkers

on the fragile peat soils. In this high and often harsh environment the growing days when characteristic vegetation can re-establish itself are very limited.

Amongst those who spoke in welcoming the proposals was a representative of the BMC. But the vision was not universally applauded: the element which was the most contentious related to the establishment of clough woodlands which some farmers argued would cause a loss of grazing land.

So, what has been achieved, how has it been achieved, and what more is there to do?

A range of techniques was developed by the National Trust following its purchase of Kinder in the early 1980s. These became the basis for all subsequent moorland restoration work.

Everything that has been achieved has been done through working in partnership with people – volunteers – and organisations like United Utilities, Natural England and Moors for the Future. Much has been delivered through Moors for the Future Partnership which was established by the Peak District National Park Authority and is part-funded by

the National Trust, water companies, the European Union and others, while other elements have been funded directly by the National Trust itself. Also, Moors for the Future's work extends beyond land owned by the National Trust.

On Kinder itself specifically, or more correctly, that part of Kinder largely at the western end owned by the National Trust, the £2.7 million investment of the five-year Kinder Project has resulted in 90 per cent of bare peat being revegetated, the installation of 6,000 gully blocking dams, the planting of half a million plants (mostly grasses, mosses and dwarf shrubs), the planting of 20,000 trees, and the erection of 14.4 kilometres of fencing to exclude vagrant stock. The peat, which is up to 12 feet deep in places and which took 6–7,000 years to form, largely from sphagnum mosses, was eroding at the rate of two and a half inches per year. This is dramatically apparent where trig points appear elevated on top of stone plinths: when the trig points were put there, they were placed on the land surface as it then was. The plinths indicate the depth of the erosion across the whole plateau.

More generally across the 12,000 hectares owned or leased by the National Trust in the High Peak, a conservative estimate is that 20,000 gully blocking dams have been created, over 100,000 trees planted and 200 hectares seeded.

The outcome is there for all to see – enhanced biodiversity, a protected historic landscape complete with its associated cultural heritage, a stop to active erosion, an enhanced ability to withstand climate change, improved water quality, improved carbon retention, improved soil quality and better flood mitigation – all resulting in a vastly more diverse and interesting, if wetter, landscape for all to explore, enjoy and respect, freely.

Under the MoorLIFE project – a €15 million project over the Peak and Southern

Pennines – more of the same is continuing up to 2020 with 3–4,000 more gully blocking dams, heather cutting (no burning) and reseeded, the control of invasive species, and the planting of hundreds of thousands sphagnum plants.

Some achievement, and some inheritance for the next generation to be proud of and enjoy, freely – and volunteers are always welcome!

The National Trust's Peak District Appeal can be found here: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/PeakDistrictAppeal](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/PeakDistrictAppeal)

### **Marsden Fire Appeal**

Victoria Holland

The National Trust Marsden Moor fire appeal has now reached over £100,000. This area was devastated by moorland fires in April, with the largest fire destroying 700 hectares and burning for four days.

Donations have come from the local community and National Trust members. It means the rangers can work on restoring the moorland and the peat as well as trying to prevent future fires. They've been cutting vegetation breaks alongside roads and car parks, which are the places fires are most likely to start. This reduces the fuel on the ground and can slow the spread of fire. In its place, volunteer groups have been planting sphagnum moss, which soaks up water, reducing flood and fire risk in the future.

National Trust lead ranger Tom Harman said, *'We're really grateful for everyone's support after the devastating fires. These moors are so important for nature and fighting climate change. It's essential we protect them, respect them and don't take them for granted.'*

For more information about the National Trust in the Peak District, please email: [peakdistrict@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:peakdistrict@nationaltrust.org.uk)

# Peak Area Meetings: 2020

Dates and venue to be confirmed.



## Forthcoming Events

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

### Reel Rock Film Tour

**22 November, Matlock Bath**

Details of this date and more:

[www.reelrock.co.uk](http://www.reelrock.co.uk)

### Brit Rock Film Tour

Various dates including Buxton on 19 November, Wirksworth on 27 November and Manchester on 1 December.

Full details and dates on the website.

[www.britrockfilmtour.com](http://www.britrockfilmtour.com)

### Gary Gibson and Franco Cookson,

**Buxton Adventure Festival**

**21 January 2020, Buxton**

An evening with a Peak sport climbing legend.

[www.buxtonadventurefestival.co.uk](http://www.buxtonadventurefestival.co.uk)

### Sheffield Adventure Film Festival

**20–22 March 2020**

Presented by the BMC, ShAFF returns for another year with more great events and films.

[www.shaff.co.uk](http://www.shaff.co.uk)

## BMC Peak Area Contacts

Peak Area Chair: Rob Greenwood.

[robgreenwood@bmcvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:robgreenwood@bmcvolunteers.org.uk)

Secretary: Becky Hammond.

[becky@bmcvolunteers.org.uk](mailto:becky@bmcvolunteers.org.uk)

Peak Area Reps (your voice on the BMC National Council):

David Brown and Alison Cairns.

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

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