



Ben Bransby on *I Like Ya Cut G*,
Gardom's Edge.
Photo: Dave Parry.

PEAK AREA NEWSLETTER



February 2021
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Rocking Chair

Andy Reeve



First rocking chair of 2021, but definitely too late to say Happy New Year; Happy Springtime?

It's starting to feel like it, and not a moment too soon if you ask me. The nights are starting to get longer, the first snowdrops are out, and as I type this up, Boris is announcing the roadmap out of lockdown. He hasn't mentioned anything about opening up climbing walls, hillwalking in large groups, or the acceptability of climbing above dodgy RPs yet, but I'm sure that working out the finer details of this is high on his to-do list.

And what better way to celebrate this changing of the season than a Zoom local area meeting! You must have known by now that this is where I was going with that introductory paragraph, right? As usual, we'll have updates from the access reps, hillwalking reps, our brand-spanking-new clubs rep and a proposal about retro-bolting some neglected trad routes in Dove Dale. (Sorry to disappoint those who are pining for the bolt wars of the 1980s, this will be far more civil and forward thinking!)

In other exciting news, we've got a speaker at our March area meeting. Here at BMC Peak Area HQ (actually, let's call it a lair, sounds cooler) we are going to make a concerted effort to get back on with the post-meeting entertainment. We let this

Next meeting: Thursday 4 March, 7.30 p.m.
The Internet. Register **HERE**.

slide a bit with the onset of remote meetings, but these are definitely back on the table, starting with Calum Muskett – see the description on page 14 for what he will be speaking about.

Register for the online Peak Area meeting by clicking [HERE](#).

Access News: General

Henry Folkard

Combined access notes from Louise, Mark, me and others will illustrate the BMC is still concerned with issues other than governance – things that are directly relevant to the membership. One has to applaud the sheer amount of time our area representatives have devoted to endless long meetings. However, it does seem to me that for our directors, governance has become the central, over-riding, dominating and all-consuming issue when what happens on the ground, as it affects our freedom to enjoy outdoor recreation, and the way this impacts on the environment and landscape we cherish, is what actually concerns most members. So here are some things the Peak access team has been keeping on top of.

The Public Inquiry concerning land at **Mickleden Edge, Midhope Moor** (Cut Gate), which is an appeal by Dunlin Limited against an Enforcement Notice regarding engineering operations consisting of the laying of geotextile matting and wooden log rafts to form a track, will now commence at 10 a.m. on 21 July 2021. A decision will be made nearer the time as to whether the Inquiry will be by video, using Microsoft Teams, or at Aldern House, if Covid restrictions have been lifted by then. The inquiry is scheduled to last for five days. An earlier date for the inquiry, in December

2020, had to be postponed because at the last moment one of the barristers was unable to attend for personal reasons. The BMC has made written representation and may be able to attend.

Elsewhere in the Dark Peak, the **National Trust** had a project to refresh the High Peak Moors Vision, but this is on hold because of Covid-related problems. The current Vision does in fact hold up well, and does not really need to be re-written, but the Trust will need to look at the potential increased role of natural processes and what this might mean in terms of positives and negatives in designated landscapes. A huge amount of progress has been made by the Trust in respect of its ambitious tree planting proposals, as anyone walking along Doctor's Gate, North Grains, the Upper Derwent above Slippery Stones, or the Upper Alport will have noticed – to mention just a few locations.

Talking of the Alport Valley, there is nothing to report on the **Alport Project** which has not really been seen as a priority during the Covid crisis, with much reduced resources and fewer staff. There had been consideration of a sensitive commercial operation, which might have begun by completing work on the east side of the river, though there was little indication this would have been practically feasible, or commercially viable.

Across the Dark Peak, and perhaps particularly around the Eastern Edges, the matter of **re-wilding** constantly crops up. This is a much-discussed theme nationally. The term is understood to mean different things to different people. Examples of re-wilding projects that are often quoted include Knepp, Carrifran, the Wildland Project of the Western Cairngorms, Ennerdale, proposals at Langholm, beavers at Knapdale and the River Otter, and what was perhaps the 'original' scheme, masterminded by Frans Vera at Oostvaardersplassen. The



Swellands and Black Moss from West Nab.
Photo: Mark Anderson.

scheme at Yellowstone National Park is on a much larger scale, which means the introduction of apex predators has been possible – with dramatic positive results. All are different models and embrace different approaches suitable to the specific locations. They have been written about extensively, either in site specific books as for Knepp and Carrifran, in chapters in other books, as in *Uplands and Birds* by Ian Newton or *Woodland Flowers* by Keith Kirby, or in dedicated volumes like *Green and Prosperous Land* by Dieter Helm or *Feral* by George Monbiot. A couple of articles have appeared in the most recent edition of *British Wildlife* (Vol. 32, No. 4, February 2021). I quote two sentences from Fuller and Gilroy's article below. At the same time, here in the Peak, what the National Trust have been doing, and what Eastern Moors Partnership are doing in their approach to land management embrace re-wilding principles without using the re-wilding title. 'Natural England emphasises natural processes and habitat dynamics as overriding principles for

conservation. A common assumption that natural processes will on their own produce the complexity of habitat and niches needed to maintain and increase biodiversity is difficult to test.' All along the Eastern Edges, and including Sheffield Lakeland, there must be potential for a significant, tantalising and achievable vision on a scale that is appropriate to a bold re-wilding initiative – if there is a strong vision and different landowners are prepared to work together. Initiatives need to find a balance appropriate to the place, its size, its diverse uses and its cultural heritage. And if this did happen wildlife, habitats, people, access, sustainability, enjoyment and fiscal viability could be the prize. Perhaps re-wilding is something to seek everyone's views on at a future area meeting, post Covid? What do you think about lynx?

Nearer to Sheffield, in the **Loxley Valley**, Friends of the Peak are appealing for funds to help them make representation at a forthcoming Public Inquiry. Sheffield City Council refused planning permission for a

large housing development in the Loxley Valley, but the developers have appealed against this refusal and the matter is going to appeal.

In the **White Peak** the national park has proposed an ambitious Woodland Landscape Plan, which is exactly the sort of thing national parks should be doing. A swift look at the draft proposals suggests they are comprehensive, well thought through and well presented, though they will doubtless reap a number of reactions. To achieve any of the vision will entail working with others – not anything they seem to be able to do easily – as they don't actually own any of the land that would be affected.

One of the differences between this lockdown and the first one is that in the legislation 'exercise' is permitted, whereas the word 'recreation' has not been included. A consequence is that there have been very markedly fewer 4x4s and trail bikes about in the Peak, since 'Green Laneing' is not regarded as a valid reason for travel. There was however a notorious incursion at North Lees when a 4x4 drove across the moor, round the Buckstone, and then got stuck. Police and Natural England are involved. There have reportedly been similar incursions at Ughill. Any incursions you come across when out taking exercise should be reported (see page 6).

On **national issues**, BMC staff have been busy, often working quietly, but very effectively, behind the scenes and through the All Party Parliamentary Group on worrying developments like legislation to criminalise trespass, and agricultural and environmental subjects. In the first of these there could well be consequences that might have been unintended, but could give an opportunity for those opposed to open access to reignite old battles. Guidance on wild camping and on campervans has also been issued. Local access reps are generally consulted on initiatives like this: yours in the

Peak certainly were.

Meanwhile Dave Turnbull has been busy enhancing our profile with key players through a series of meetings. When he next meets with the Peak District National Park's CEO some of the things we will be asking him to raise include enlightenment on what they are doing by way of a strategy on car parking that encourages responsible access without infringing highways legislation or disturbing local communities, and about arguing for the removal of new Covid-driven parking restrictions where these have been imposed in the light of the very reasonable desire of people to get out and enjoy the countryside, especially where alternatives are limited by lack of public transport, or reluctance to use it for fear of catching the virus. A classic case is around Dove Stones where there are many problems, which I think were mentioned by the CEO of the RSPB when Dave had a meeting with her. Another thing we will ask him to raise is what is happening on proposals for re-instating the Matlock to Buxton railway, along the course of the old line, which is now the Monsal Trail.

Priorities for extending our rights under the **Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000)** also crop up from time to time. Three priorities we usually give are: classification by physical landscape feature rather than by small individual parcels of land; retention of open access where trees have been planted on what is currently open access land (it would be ironic if a consequence of an environmental improvement was a loss of access); and recognition of desire lines through forestry plantations when 50-year programmes for forests are drawn up. What would your priorities be? Do let us know.

Finally, as I write we are aware of recent access problems at **Moss Rake** and we will be contacting the landowner in an attempt to resolve these.

So that's it for now – except that some of us access reps are getting a bit long in the tooth. Any younger people interested in getting involved?

Stop Press: Temporary Planning Permission has been granted for 20 weeks to a film company for filming at Darlton Quarry. There is no access agreement there for climbing or anything else. It is rumoured this is for filming the next but one episode of *Mission Impossible*.

Area-Specific Updates

Stanage

The new three- to five-year management plan for Stanage North-Lees is taking shape. The BMC is part of the group developing the plan with Mark, the estate ranger, and the rest of the PDNPA team. New this time is a focus on opportunities for volunteers and groups to get involved in delivering activities on site, from conservation and path work to leading walks and engaging with visitors. If you're interested in getting involved, keep an eye out on the PDNPA website, and on our Facebook and other social media.

Last year's options appraisal is now a key part of making the case for renewed investment in the estate as part of the latest review of the national park's owned assets. Financial constraints as a result of reduced income from visitor centres during lockdown and continued reductions in government funding mean that there is more and more pressure on the national park to dispose of the assets that it owns and maintains, including Stanage. We've received assurances that selling Stanage is not on the table at the moment, and we'll continue to work with the national park to find ways to increase investment in the estate, including accessing grant and other funding.

Two things to look out for later in the year. First, ring ouzels will be back with us before we know it. Look out for the usual signage advising which climbs to avoid so we don't disturb nesting birds, and respect any guidance from rangers or monitoring volunteers.

Second, the larch trees at Stanage Plantation (Hollin Bank Plantation) look to be infected with phytophthora and are likely to need to be removed within the next 12 months. This will be a major operation, requiring closure of the bridleway during works, and probably at least part of Hollin Bank car park. Work can't start until autumn, so this is an early warning. We're talking to the estate team about ways to minimise impacts on access and ensure there is alternative parking provision during the work. As soon as we have more details on dates and the nature of the work we'll put it out on the Facebook page and Regional Access Database.

Proposal For Permanent Access Track to Swellands & Black Moss Reservoirs (Near Marsden)

The Canal and River Trust are proposing to construct 3.5 kilometres of track suitable for heavy plant equipment, to run from A62 above Saddleworth across the western extreme of Wessenden Moor. This will take the form of gritstone hardcore with matting over particular lengths. It will follow an existing track initially and for most of the route, an old leat. The reservoirs are on the Pennine Way and are visible from West Nab and Pule Hill. The track will start 200 metres from the car park normally used when accessing the excellent bouldering at Standedge.

Your intrepid North Peak access reps have visited the site, and report that although the path will be visible from the Pennine Way and other points around, its position along the leat and tracks mean the landscape impact is not as bad as we feared.



However, there could be significant impacts on the small Brun Clough Reservoir car park (above), which is already regularly full most days with walkers and climbers. We are planning to respond requesting that the car park is not used by construction traffic or workers, or that alternative arrangements are made to avoid reducing access during construction work.

For more details, and to respond to the planning application directly, see: <https://portal.peakdistrict.gov.uk/02210110>

Chew Valley Parking

It's worth remembering if walking or climbing in Chew, that the yellow lines preventing parking on either side of the road all the way from Greenfield to the Saddleworth Moor Summit (4 miles!) have placed the two car parks at Dove Stone and Binn Green under extreme pressure. Both these are regularly full in all but the worst weather, even midweek. If you want a space, arrive early!

Other news

Part of **Matlock Bank Quarry** has been fenced off with signs saying keep out. Local knowledge suggests a change of ownership and that the area is being used for pig pens!

Star Trek wall at **Horseshoe** now seems to have more bolts per square metre than any comparable bit of rock in the Peak District after developments by the

Association of Mountaineering Instructors (see www.thebmc.co.uk/horseshoe-quarrys-star-trek-wall-gets-a-facelift-thanks-to-ami-volunteers). It is being developed as a facility for both inserting and using different types of bolts, including the 'rams head' type. Anyone climbing the routes need not worry about long run-outs or dodgy lower-offs. On the conservation front, the area is becoming popular with both butterflies and butterfly lovers. In order to attract more of the former, permission for planting maiden pink has been obtained from Natural England. Well done to those involved.

At **Stoney Middleton**, on the track underneath Garage buttress, an area is being prepared for handling Ash trees felled due to dieback. It appears the tree felling will take place along Stoney Middleton Dale, likely following bird nesting season.

Reporting rural crime (including wildlife crimes)

Both Derbyshire and South Yorkshire police have stepped up the visibility and resourcing of their Rural Crimes teams recently, with a focus on addressing off-roading, raptor persecution, rural theft/damage to property, hunting and parking offences (particularly where these cause an obstruction).

If you witness a crime take place, you can report it by calling 101, or the Crimestoppers/NFU rural crime reporting line on 0800 783 0137. All forces also have online reporting forms on their websites. In Derbyshire, you can contact the rural crimes team via Facebook:

www.facebook.com/ruralcrimeteam

None of these are emergency contact numbers – if a crime is in progress, you should call 999.



*Ned & Shoulders, Gardom's Edge.
Photo: Jon Fullwood.*

Climbing News & Gossip

Dave Parry

I'll be honest, when all this kicked off last year, I didn't think that come February 2021 I'd still be relying on topical Covid-related material to fill out the opening paragraph. But one of the hidden benefits of the government's handling of the situation is that I can continue to lazily reference coronavirus for months to come in a semi-topical manner to give the appearance of currency. On that note, if the age of the usual Peak Area meeting attendees are indicative of the age of readers of this column, then I suspect most of you will have been vaccinated by now, so we can relax.

One of the biggest bits of bouldering development to report, certainly in terms of concentration of steep powerful climbing, is at the Bradley Quarry boulders in the Amber Valley. Specifically, the face of the big House Boulder containing the existing problem *Birdsong*, where a lot of work has been done in sorting the landing out, which

has opened up the lower face. This has resulted in a glut of new problems, sit-starts, traverses and link-ups on the face – far too many to list or describe here but the info is out there. You're going to get the most from this face if you're operating in the Font 7b+ to 8a+ range, and it has already proved popular this autumn. However, it should probably be noted that new-found popularity can bring with it parking issues, and that you should not park in a way that blocks access to the track at the top – this has already been a bit of an issue, especially when the Covid situation necessitates everyone driving to the crag in separate cars.

Gardom's has once again proved to be a fruitful crag for bouldering developments, one notable recent addition here from trilobite influencer Jon Fullwood is *I Like Ya Cut G* on a wall between Blacksmith's and Oread buttresses. It has been described as 'an overhanging slab', a very good Font 7c from a sit-start or hard 7b+ from standing. I witnessed Ned not do it, so that tells you something. It's left of another pair of

Fullwood problems called *Shelf Isolation* and *Shelfless Act*. I did suggest the new problem be called 'Shelf Assessment Axe Return', but it got rejected, but now at least it'll come up on google search results as I've mentioned it in this context.

Jon also did the arête left of *Drum Roll*, less controversially called *Drum Roll Arête* at Font 7a+ and well worth doing. Further south along the crag lies Jon's older problems *A Fearful Orange*, to which Jon has now added a slightly harder direct finish at Font 7a. It has also been done from Jon's recent sit-start by me at about 7b. Immediately right of this is a new hard line from Ned Feehally at Font 8a+. Named *Ned & Shoulders*, expect weird palming, slopers, flexibility – the usual hench gymnast technique toolkit required etc.

Down at the Moorside end of the crag, on the Pathside boulder, *Chun Lee* is a new 7c sitter starting on a flake and heading up on slopers (no juggy arête on *Pathologist*). At the nearby *Pit Fighter* wall, Ned has done a direct finish to its namesake problem at Font 7c, called *M. Bison*, which if started from the deck rather than the boulder (as per *Dhalsim*) notches things up to Font 8b and is in no way confusingly called *N. Bison*.

Not content with the above, Ned has also made a few decent contributions to the crag area bouldering at Cratcliffe. Up behind the *Grimoire* block is an existing Jon Fullwood 7a called *Pincher's Wall*, well this now has a good looking 7c+ sit start. Also, on a newly cleaned roof above the *P Crack* block Ned has added a problem starting under the roof (left hand undercutting the back of the boulder, and right hand on a pinch in the roof) and eventually finishing up the left-hand side of the arete. Unnamed as yet, grade is around Font 8a.

Another good-looking addition not a million miles away comes courtesy of Sam Lawson. At Clifftop Boulder, continue

around to the *Golden Egg* roof then further along still should be visible a fairly obvious roof – this is now *Horizontal Limit*, a very height-dependent Font 7b+. You can probably add a few pairs of grades to that if you're a member of the short-arse community (and it is a community).

On the limestone we have some of the tardiest new route reports for a while. Pedigree dog kingpin Ben Bransby reports having done a line right of Ben Moon's *Culloden* in Tideswell Dale at F8a/+ which he did years ago on some existing bolt stubs but has finally gotten around to bolting properly. Also, at Darley Bridge's finest ne'er-do-well fishing hole aka Turkey Dip, *Cold Turkey* is F8a+/b and starts up *Onslaught* to the middle of the lip then tackles the fridge hugging prow straight above. Apparently, this is another 'done years ago but only just bolted' affair.

Thankfully not requiring bolting so can be reported this decade Ben has also put up a few things on grit. The best looking of which I reckon is re-climbing *Al's Broken Problem* up by Gun Rock, which is the bit of rock you can see across the valley opposite Birchen Edge. This is somewhere in the Font 7c+/8a range. Ben's also done a 7b+ sit start on a boulder under Froggatt/Curbar called *Bees in a Wood*: info about its location, and a video, can be found online should you chose to partake. Up at Curbar, Ben's also done the arête right of *Insanity*, climbed on its other side at the top, giving *Cognitive Dissonance* (E5 6c).

Rivelin remains a classic crag for winter, as it usually dries quickly and misses some of the worst of the Peak weather. This year it's seen some good additions, not least the somehow overlooked but blindingly obvious arête left of *Easy Picking*. Steve Ramsden (who I don't know enough about to give a humorous intro to) has done this now at E7 6b, and it looks really good. Solo, or



Greta Thumbsprag, Horsley Castle.
Photo: Tim Banton.

supposedly 'OK' with a ton of pads assuming you don't fall off after the hard bit. Steve has also done the blunt double-rib left of *Ausfahrt*, E7 6c and almost a solo – and with a potential two-pitch deck out – oooooof. I'm not sure if either of those new E7s have names yet. Also, in the quarries Mark Rankine has done a few new routes/problems, including the arête right of *Rhododendron Crack* – this is *Knife Wound* (E7 6c/7a), and a direct on *Stunt Children* which is a good E7 6b called *Geisterspiel*. The start of that last one is a good Font 7a problem in its own right to the break.

Down the South Peak neck of the woods I was going to rundown a few things from Marc Bellingall, who is relentlessly churning out 'steady stream of low quality local stuff' (his words not mine). But I've already written too much so I will simply direct you to Marc's website esotericboulderingcompanion.weebly.com for a flavour of what's been going on. Upcoming soon should be a topo for Horsley Castle near Derby for true lovers of esoterica. This venue promises 40 problems from Font 5 to 7c, walls, traverses,

including the excellently named *An Inconvenient Tooth* at Font 6c and *Greta Thumbsprag* at 6b+.

We finish up with a few things from over west. Tom Newman has done the left side of the bottom bit of *Masochism* at Ramshaw as a huge prow type thing – *Relentless Pursuit of Better* (Font 7c+), although let's be honest it's probably easier than doing *Masochism*. And up at Shining Clough, niche zine impresario Dan Cheetham has added a very nice-looking run-out direct finish in the crack of *Saucius Digitalis*; this is given E6 6b and named *The Salvia Path*.

Right, I'm off to doom-scroll through any number of weather forecast and news apps. If you don't know what those words mean, think yourself lucky.

Get in touch

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



Airlifting flagstones on to Cut Gate,
Photo: Moors For Future Partnership.

Hill Walking News

Peter Judd, Austin Knott & Vikki Hughes

Mend our Mountains

Excellent news to report from both our local Mend our Mountains funded projects!

Despite the wintery weather, work is well underway on the Cut Gate bridleway. Before Christmas work began on the National Trust approach (from Slippery Stones up to the ridge crest at Howden Edge). Project manager Mollie Hunt (from the Moors for the Future Partnership) now tells us that all additional materials were flown up on to Cut Gate and the adjoining North America bridleway at the end of January, including some top dressing stone to sort out the wetter bits on both bridleways. On Cut Gate the three 'boggy' areas have all had their flagstones laid which is an instant improvement, especially for the infamous 'bog of doom'. Until the middle of February the contractors are working on water management on the tops of Cut Gate and then they'll spread the top dressing

stone on the National Trust stretch. Peter has been able to get up there for a look in recent days and reports that the new paved sections through the Cut Gate boggy sections do indeed make a huge difference resulting in nice single ribbon pathways that should end path spread in those areas. The nice little slab bridges over the stream should also help. There remain some up-turned path sections that may take some time to harden off properly but it's pleasing to report that the route retains its overall character, just without calf-deep peat wallowing! A good result.

As for Great Ridge, while ground may not yet have been broken, project manager Paul Titterton (also of Moors for the Future Partnership) tells us that they have now got all the access agreements signed, and have discharged/partially discharged all the planning conditions associated with the planning application, which means they are now able to move on to the construction phase. They are looking to get the materials airlifted on to site around weeks

commencing 15 or 22 March. Paul stresses that these dates are dependent on a suitable window for the helicopter to operate. These dates may get pushed back should the weather not cooperate or Covid restrictions get in the way. Paul also says they will be asking people to divert down from the ridgeline to the footpath that runs a little way down the ridge on the Castleton side for safety reasons as the contractor will be using excavators on site. We have asked that Paul keeps us informed about any such diversions and we hope to be able to post more info nearer the time. Peter hopes to be able to get up there for a look once work is underway and will report back in due course.

Thanks to Mollie and Paul for keeping us informed!

Swan and Limer Rakes consultation

Some of you may have seen that Staffordshire County Council (SCC) have consulted on intended repairs to Swan and Limer Rakes. The consultation was low key and closed at the end of January.

The Rakes provide useful access routes to the south of the village of Hollinsclough especially if you want an extended day's walking to include the access land at Hollins, Chrome and Parkhouse Hills. This hasn't been possible for a number of years as the Rakes have been subject to an extended temporary traffic regulation order that has closed the routes to all users because of severe erosion to the Rakes caused by, in the words of SCC, 'A combination of surface water run-off and what might be termed ill-considered use by motorised vehicles.' In truth they should also have included the neglect of the highway authority.

Their stated intention is to carry out repairs in Summer 2021 to make the route safe and, 'To bring the Rakes up to the minimum standard of a bridleway or

cycleway, with a smooth surface suitable for use by all non-motorised users.' While welcoming the proposal to make the routes safe and bring them back into use, we will need to keep an eye on developments as SCC are undertaking a concurrent exercise to ascertain the public rights on these routes.

Environment Bill

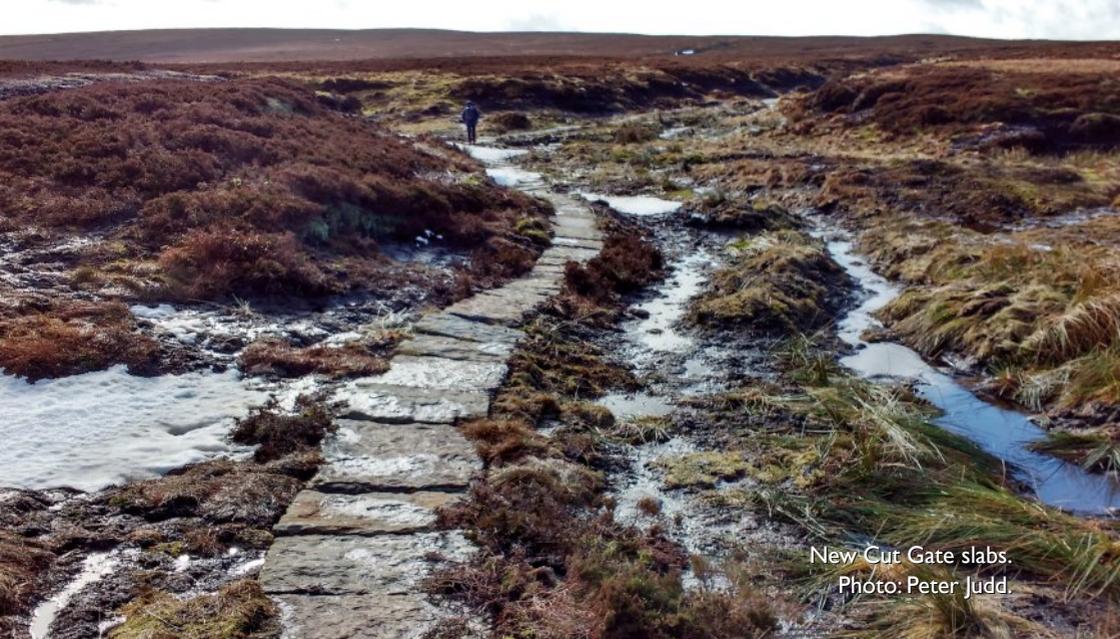
The Environment Bill did get some parliamentary debate time 26 January. The Bill does require the government to set long-term, legally binding plans and targets for air quality, water quality, biodiversity and waste.

These elements are all areas where we're likely to agree that environmental improvements will impact positively on everyone's lives. The Bill is also a golden opportunity to improve people's access to and enjoyment of the environment. However, as drafted, the bill does not compel the government to do anything to address these matters. Amendments were debated but a lack of government support means the bill remains unchanged.

The government has announced a delay to the progression of the Bill through parliament. Optimistically, this breathing space will give them an opportunity to reflect on the debate and to boost provisions so that everyone is able to access green space. It also gives us a chance to write to our MPs to ask them to reflect on this issue. Undoubtedly the BMC will continue to work with the Ramblers to shape the debate when the Bill gets more parliamentary time.

Trespass Bill

When the current government rode into parliament with a huge majority in December 2019 one of their manifesto pledges was that they would make intentional trespass a criminal offence. A number of outdoor organisations,



New Cut Gate slabs.
Photo: Peter Judd.

including the BMC, wrote to the government departments involved to express their misgivings about this move and responded to the March 2020 Home Office consultation to reiterate concerns. There's a lot more background on this on the BMC website and if you've not had opportunity to do so Law of Trespass Could Change (www.thebmc.co.uk/law-of-trespass-could-change) is recommended reading, as well as Ed Douglas' excellent article Forgive Us Our Trespasses:

www.thebmc.co.uk/forgive-us-our-trespases

In addition, the concerns of the BMC et al. were backed up by a public petition which drew almost 135,000 signatures not to criminalise trespass which also has impacts for responsible 'wild' and 'van' camping. The petition triggered a parliamentary debate which was slated for 25 January 2021 but has been postponed as a result of Covid. At some point this will be rescheduled. BMC officers are continuing to work with other organisations to shape the debate and there's opportunity for us as individuals to do the same. A first step would be to contact your

local MP. Guy Shrubsole has provided a template letter for that purpose, should you be motivated to do so: [click HERE](#).

Around all the debate on this issue it is quite clear that the powers already exist to tackle the stated target of the new legislation, namely unauthorised encampments, perceived to be an issue of the travelling community. So a rhetorical question, why would you want a new power that is already on the legislative book, albeit in a slightly less draconian fashion, for an issue that is relatively small? As Henry Folkard said at a previous area meeting, excuse the paraphrasing, 'rights are hard won but easily lost'. If the legislation goes through it has a potentially massive impact upon all who enjoy the outdoors and a huge deterrent effect on those who would like to enjoy it.

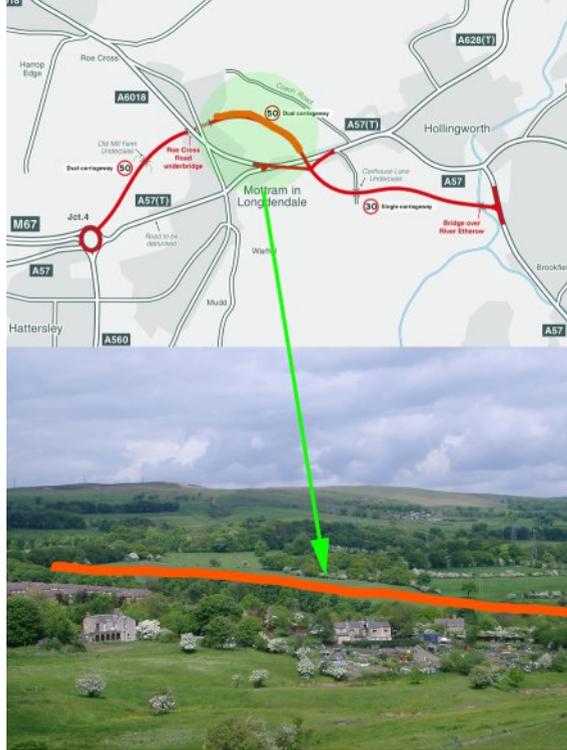
CPRE Update

Tom Thompson

The story of the A628 trunk road corridor through the Peak District continues its twists and turns. Before Christmas, a six-week consultation during a national lockdown repeated the consultation of 2018. The A57 Link Roads turned out to be the same old Mottram Bypass and Glossop Spur presented as the solution to the Mottram traffic jam. Once again there was little evidence to validate claims made by Highways England that they would improve air pollution and congestion. The frustration felt by everyone, public and statutory consultees, at the lack of information found outlet in holding objections from High Peak and Derbyshire councils, and the National Park Authority.

Traffic issues along the route are complex and not easy to address. The mix of local and commuter traffic (which makes up the majority of the trips within the Longendale villages) and through traffic of heavy lorries creates congestion, air pollution and noise, intimidation of vulnerable road users, accidents, visual intrusion and a poor environment for residents and for visitors to the strongly protected Peak Park. However, what no one has done is to consider the future purpose of the route within the changed circumstances of the last year.

The climate and nature emergency coupled with the impacts of the pandemic require a radical rethink. This year also sees the 70th anniversary of our first national park – the Peak District. In the name of economic growth, the Link Roads were to be the start of dualling of the whole A628 corridor between the M67 and the M1 with aspirations to continue east to the M18. However, last month, quoting environmental and financial problems, Transport for the



North turned this idea on its head. Its advice to the Secretary of State, yet to be taken, is to abandon plans for dualling and focus on improvements for safety and resilience with only a single carriageway tunnel under the moors. This may sound like good news, but the improvements could still be devastating – a resurrection of a bypass of Hollingworth and Tintwistle, of the Woodhead climbing lanes, of yet more road furniture and signage?

Instead of downgrading old plans, the future of this route passing through internationally protected wildlife sites and carbon sinks should be reset to address the top priority strategic goals – carbon reduction and bigger, better, more and joined-up habitats. The reset needs to happen now, before the A57 Link Roads progress any further through the planning system.

To find out more about our work, please visit www.cprepsy.org.uk

Peak Area Meetings: 2021

4 March, 7.30 p.m., The Internet.
Register **HERE**. Followed by Para-alpinism:
the lazy way down (details below).

Para-alpinism: the lazy way down!

Not dissimilar from the Three Musketeers, where swashbuckling, heroic, chivalrous swordsmen fought for justice (description from Wikipedia), Calum Muskett is a swashbuckling, heroic, chivalrous climber, renowned for his cheese puns (not what it says on Wikipedia).

After the meeting on 4 March, which will feature a maximum of seven minutes on ORG stuff, Calum is going to speak about para-alpinism: climbing up big alpine faces and flying back down. Expect some aspirational bits of alpine rock and some amusing stories of returning to the ground. It'll be brie-lliant.

Forthcoming Events

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

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, most events have been cancelled or postponed. For the latest information on forthcoming events in the Peak Area, please keep an eye on the BMC's community pages.

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The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) is the representative body that exists to protect the freedoms and promote the interests of climbers, hill walkers and mountaineers, including ski-mountaineers. Find out more: **www.thebmc.co.uk/bmc-governance**