

MINUTES OF THE 54th MEETING OF THE DARTMOOR STEERING GROUP

WEDNESDAY 12 NOVEMBER 2014

Held at Okehampton Camp

Present:

Members:

David Incoll	Chairman
Lt Col Rob Forster	Chief of Staff (for Comdt CTCRM)
James Crosfield	Head DIO Service Delivery Training UK
Peter Harper	Chairman, Dartmoor National Park Authority (DNPA)
Maurice Retallick	Deputy Chairman, DNPA
Kevin Ball	DNPA
Simon Hickman	Principal Inspector SW Office, English Heritage (EH)
Chris Gregory	Land Steward, Duchy of Cornwall
Richard Andrews	Natural England (NE)
John Waldon	Chairman, Dartmoor Commoners Council
Lt Col Peter Bates	SO1 Ten Tors (for Comd 1 Arty Bde & HQ SW)

Joint Secretaries:

Capt Ian Jarvis	Comdt & Trg Safety Officer West Devon
Dr Kevin Bishop	Chief Executive (NPO), DNPA

In attendance:

Lt Col Tim Jalland	Regional Commander, DIO SD Trg SW
Rob Steemson	Head Ranger, DNPA
Nigel Sharpe	Defence Land Agent, DIO Land Management Services
Lt Col David Marino RM	Deputy Bailiff, Duchy of Cornwall
Richard Brooks	Area Head for Conservation DIO
Victoria Harrild-Jones	LTAR, 1 Arty Bde

ITEM 1 – CHAIRMAN’S OPENING REMARKS

- 1 The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and commented that the continuation of the meetings proves it is relevant to the subject matter.

ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE 53rd MEETING HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2013

- 2 The previous minutes were agreed by the group.

ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING

- 3 James Crosfield gave an update regarding the Holming Beam Hut Project. He provided an outline of the changes within DIO (Defence Infrastructure Organisation) and the possible effect on future projects. Within DIO there is now a different approval process for expenditure and a different focus. There are also further changes to take place over the next two years. He suggested that it might be time to restate the requirement for Holming Beam Hut and why there is a need for a replacement as he could not confirm that DIO have the funding for the delivery of the replacement building. He suggested that any restatement of the requirement be broadened so that the statement included consideration of other projects within the Dartmoor Training Area and identified priorities.
- 4 James Crosfield implied that in view of the current economic conditions, he would not receive clearance before the end of the next two years for anything to be done regarding Holming Beam Hut. The Chairman asked if he was aware that discussions had been taking place for the last 10 years regarding this and public assurances given that funding was secured for the project. James Crosfield said that he was aware that over the last 15 years many people had also come to the table and reported that they were unable to secure funding and that he was now in the same position.
- 5 Peter Harper suggested that as the project has been known about; assurances provided that funding was secured; and a considerable amount of time already spent on developing proposals for the replacement; DIO should treat this project as an existing commitment that it needed to honour. He felt that it was a matter of principle and good faith that undertakings provided to the Steering Group (a statutory body) should be fulfilled. The Chairman commented that nowhere has there been a caveat put in that it is subject to funding being found, and that there was a clear understanding that it was going ahead. Dr Kevin Bishop stated that there had been two commitments regarding the funding. The first from David Olney that there was money on the table to fund the replacement of the hut and the second from Col Sloane at the 2012 Steering Group meeting re-iterating the commitment to establish the project. Dr Kevin Bishop felt there were clear commitments entered into and accepted in good faith by the Steering Group and then reported to the Secretaries of State for Defence and Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. Chris Gregory agreed with the above points.

- 6 Peter Harper expressed his concern that this development potentially undermines the Steering Group and the effective working partnership that exists on Dartmoor.
- 7 James Crosfield stated that the first thing that is required is to restate the reasons as to why the hut needs to be relocated. The Chairman was surprised that the Steering Group were being asked to restate the reasons when in 2012 everyone accepted the justification for doing it and it was recorded that David Olney announced that funding had been agreed to replace the hut and that the Ministry of Defence, at that stage, had accepted the justification and committed to the expenditure, and that in be asked to restate the requirement, all that will happen will be that we go back through the minutes and bring out all the same arguments that justified people spending time in the last year.
- 8 Peter Harper argued that any 'restatement' appeared a bureaucratic exercise that effectively wasted more time and officer resource. Dr Kevin Bishop outlined that a replacement hut in a less intrusive location remained a priority because of landscape, safety, general visual intrusion and the state of the current hut. Nothing has changed. Peter Harper asked if in the future the Steering Group will be asked to choose between Holming Beam Hut and other items over the next two years. James Crosfield replied that the MoD had a budget for running the UK Training Areas and has to decide where the finance will make most impact. Peter Harper proposed that this moves forward and that this has been a long standing commitment as part of this group and he is not in favour of putting it on hold for two years. Capt Ian Jarvis informed the group that a reaffirmation would be useful as this is what James Crosfield is seeking, nothing has changed from that view. A formal vote was taken on the need for a replacement hut in a less visually intrusive location. The result was unanimous support for DIO to continue with the agreed project for a replacement hut.

Action – DIO/MOD to continue with the project to relocate Holming Beam Hut.

- 9 James Crosfield invited Richard Brooks (Head of Conservation for DIO) to the table to talk about the MOD Byelaws Review and the Inter-Visibility Study Progress Report. The Inter-Visibility Study is a commitment made under the licence to undertake a review of the range infrastructure (look-outs, flags etc.) to ascertain whether this infrastructure was in an appropriate location in terms of public safety (ie the public can see it as they approach the Range Danger Areas and look outs can see the public approaching) and landscape impact. Ian Jarvis and Rob Steemson and others around the room have attended a number of site visit days to systematically review the infrastructure across the Merrivale, Okehampton and Willsworthy Ranges. This survey is continuing but work completed to-date has led to the identification of some potential improvements including: relocation/removal of some flags, relocation of some lookouts to improve the view along the boundaries which also has the benefit of removing them from skylines.
- 10 The Review is also identifying possible improvements to the signage used for public information with the details of the byelaws. Any potential changes will have to go through the MOD range safety process and the licences would have to be signed off for range use.

- 11 Richard Brooks stated that the plan is to complete the programme of site visits and analysis in time to present an overview report and details of proposed actions to the Dartmoor Working Party meeting scheduled for March 2015. Once proposed changes have been put forward the review would be conducted within the processes of the wider Byelaws Reviews. Dartmoor is not in the top fifty. Nuclear sites, US visitor sites and other more secure sites are a higher priority. Not all of the potential changes will require a change in the byelaws but any changes will have a financial implication.
- 12 Peter Harper asked if there could be a written paper of what can go ahead and what is going to be shelved for the next 10 years. James Crosfield replied that this is not the case and things will not be kicked into touch for 10 years. Each item will be scored and prioritised individually. This will be in the report to the Dartmoor Working Party meeting scheduled for March 2015. It was suggested that the Inter-Visibility Study should be completed in total before byelaw changes are sought as a pole move may not require a change, but the effect on another area may.
- 13 Dr Kevin Bishop clarified that the paper to be considered by the Working Party and then reported to the next Steering Group would need to consider the Inter-Visibility Study as a whole, contain details of all proposed actions and timescale, identify any domino effects and clarify which of the proposed changes will require a change of the byelaws. In light of the previous discussion, he hoped that it would not come down to choosing between Holming Beam Hut and the Inter-Visibility Study.
- 14 Dr Kevin Bishop stated his gratitude to Capt Ian Jarvis for his assistance in organising a workshop on procurement. A note of the workshop and the key actions had been circulated to all those attending the workshop and was included in the papers for the Steering group meeting. Dr Bishop stated that the presentations from the MOD and Landmarc had demonstrated the potential to develop a proactive project looking at supply chain integration. A key action is the proposed workshop between MOD, their prime contractors and representatives of local businesses to explore the opportunity for supply chain integration. The DNPA has offered to facilitate this workshop in terms of providing a venue. It was noted that the Dartmoor Working Party had concluded its work on procurement and that it was now for the Steering Group to determine next steps. Following discussion it was agreed that the Joint Secretaries should draft a letter for the Chairman to send to the Chair of the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership seeking their involvement in the proposed workshop (as agreed by their representative at the workshop held in March 2014) and that the Chairman should signal the potential to use the south west as a pilot for sustainable procurement in his annual report to the respective Secretaries of State.
- 15 It was also noted that Landmarc Support Services had indicated their willingness to extend their Place Based Analysis to the Dartmoor Training Area. This would enable consideration of how Landmarc use their contractual relationships to drive the local economic benefits.

Action – Joint Secretaries to draft a letter for the Chairman to send to the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership

- 16 Kevin Ball asked to make a comment on the biomass boiler. He asked that DIO re-consider this in light of the payments available under the Renewable Heat Incentive, the potential to develop local supply chains and reduce emissions of green house gases.

ITEM 4 – MINUTES OF THE DARTMOOR WORKING PARTY MEETINGS HELD IN THE LAST CALENDAR YEAR

- 17 Dr Kevin Bishop pointed out that progress had been reported to each of the meetings in terms of where Holming Beam Hut had reached and there was a clear assumption through the Working Party that progress was being made towards a relocation and a newly designed building.
- 18 Dr Kevin Bishop reported that Ten Tors in its new format was an overall success but with some specific spatial ‘pinch points’ and problems during the training period.
- 19 Peter Harper sought clarity what an Individual Battle Shooting Range was. An explanation was given by Capt Ian Jarvis. He continued that a space has been identified on the south side of the Mine Leat on Willsworthy range between the Mine Leat and the boundary. An outcome of the meeting with the project team that is driving this under the Army Rebasing Programme is awaited.
- 20 John Waldon wished it to be noted that whilst initially the Dartmoor Commoners’ Council was not going to be represented at the Ten Tors Chairman’s Briefing, in fact Crispin Alford attended as their representative.
- 21 Dr Kevin Bishop spoke regarding the issue of access. He noted that the work to explore the potential to extend the notice period from six to eight weeks had stalled. He explained that the perception (through feedback from the DNPA visitorcentres) was that people believe that they can’t access the ranges. This is compounded by the Ordnance Survey Maps which do not include the open access colour wash for the Merrivale, Willsworthy, Okehampton ranges but do contain a clear Range Danger Area message and direction to the MOD website and a telephone number for additional information.
- 22 Capt Ian Jarvis had presented a paper to the Dartmoor Working Party proposing that DIO talk to Ordnance Survey regarding the mapping issue. The paper also identified some other potential improvements including use of social media and publication of a clear calendar of forward dates when each range was available for public access. Capt Ian Jarvis tabled a two year calendar he has produced showing the non firing dates for each of the three ranges, which has been placed on the Internet. Shortly there will be a Twitter account @MOD_DIO #moddartmoor with daily postings which will include any changes to the firing notices. There were proposals re-improved public communications ie Twitter, use of social media. The proposed increase of the notice for firing from 6 to 8 weeks will not be re-considered until the effect of the other actions had been seen and reviewed.
- 23 Richard Brooks was called to the table. He confirmed that Ordnance Survey are not comfortable putting an open access colour wash on Range Danger Areas and that there was a Ministerial agreement in 2004 between MOD, DEFRA and OS that said that this is how ranges would be interpreted on OS maps. He noted that a Public

Access Working Group (2007) was charged with reviewing the wording but no improvements came forward. He thought that people did understand the wording and referred to a study undertaken by Exeter University in 2007.

Peter Harper welcomed the proposed use of social media and the calendar of forward access dates. He suggested that these measures should be implemented for a trial period and then reviewed along with the issue about extending the notice period. He also asked that DIO look at reviewing the brochure on public access to the Dartmoor Training Area in conjunction with the Authority.

- 25 Kevin Ball suggested that the facility be promoted and publicised through local media to make people aware of its availability.

Action: Capt.Ian Jarvis to develop use of social media, publish a forward calendar of guaranteed access days and the Working Party to subsequently review the impact of these changes and whether there is a continuing need to look at extending the notice period.

ITEM 5 – MID TERM MONITORING STRATEGY

- 26 Noted that all members of the Working Party had been provided with opportunities to input to the monitoring strategy and that this is work in progress. Since the last Steering Group the MOD have contributed towards the Ring Ouzel survey. They have also helped with the implementation of the actions that arose from this study, including the erection of the fenced enclosures to encourage vegetation to improve breeding habitats, for which the MOD assisted by air lifting in the fencing material. A quinquennial archaeological survey has been undertaken at Okehampton Range and resurveyed the archaeological condition of Cramber Tor.
- 27 The quinquennial archaeological surveys are part of the new National Training Estate Prime (NTEP) contract and appropriate specialists will have to be procured to complete the work. They will have to source specialists to produce these and report back. It was noted that there is a delay of approximately six months in completing such surveys (across the entire training estate) but it is expect that Landmarc will get them back on target. James Crosfield stated that whilst conducting routine ecological surveys should not be an issue, DIO would not be able to do reactive surveys. Agreements must be in place for future funding to be shared by Natural England, English Heritage and other stakeholders
- 28 John Waldon stated that the Commoners have a monitoring duty under Farming Futures and they had been asked to lead. This might provide additional data for the Monitoring Strategy but the purpose of the monitoring by the Commoners was not to ascertain the impact of military training per se.
- 29 Natural England gave thanks for the use of the helicopter to assist the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds on their plans from the Ring Ouzel study. This entailed flying the heavy fencing material out to the sites for the contractor to build the protection around the nesting areas identified to enable the grazing there to be controlled and helping the essential ground cover for the nesting birds to improve.

- 30 Regarding surveys, Capt Ian Jarvis reiterated that the MOD is contributing to the surveys because of its presence on the moor. None of the surveys are MOD only, the training areas are only a small part. The survey work has to reach out over a wider area. Dr Kevin Bishop feels that the monitoring that takes place for the Mid-term Stocktake needs to link to with the National Park Management Plan – MOD have a seat on the Delivery Board. He wanted assurance that existing commitments are being carried over in to the new contract and there is no risk that monies will not be found for monitoring for the Mid-term Stocktake. James Crosfield said that appropriate funding will have to be found but it has to be specific. It was requested that a completed version of the table be brought back to the Steering Group next year. James Crosfield said it would have to be a work in progress.

Action – Dartmoor Working Party to progress this and report to the Steering Group.

ITEM 6 – National Training Estate Prime Contract

- 31 James Crosfield gave a brief description of the five year contract which has just been won by Landmarc. Dr Kevin Bishop asked whether DIO could take up with Landmarc to see whether Landmarc will use the south west for a pilot for local procurement. Matt Roberts is no longer with Landmarc and it needs to be established who has taken up his role in the business assessment.

Action - James Crosfield took this as an action.

ITEM 7 – TEN TORS

- 32 Lt Col Peter Bates introduced himself. In approximately one month 43 Wessex Brigade will become 1 Artillery Brigade HQ & SW. The new Brigadier is already doing two jobs and the Regional Brigadier's job will be his third. There will be a new regional point of command, and Colonel Toby Briggs will be posted in shortly.
- 33 It has been decided that Ten Tors is to be better manned and will have a Lt Col, a Major and a Warrant Officer to help run the event. The Major and Warrant Officer are to be based in Exeter. Lt Col Bates has been tasked to look at the future of Ten Tors, he is open to suggestions. Do the military want to keep control of it, do they want to take more control of it and do they still want to facilitate it? Should it be handed over to a large company or possibly the education sector?
- 34 Last year Ten Tors was a successful 'Operation'. Lt Col Peter Bates explained that it is treated as a Training Exercise for a UK Resilience Operation for funding purposes. In terms of funding: there was a budget for 2015 but no provision for future years at this point in time. The new routes were well received as were the use of trackers which were very successful, and made it easier to 'police' the routes.
- 35 Brigadier Piers Hankinson has identified six strands to guide future work. The three that are relevant to the Steering Group are: routes and timings - reducing the need for dangerous river crossings; scrutiny and the scrutiny process; and traffic management. Lt Col Bates reported that a Traffic Management Plan has been presented to Devon County Council as the relevant highway authority, looked at by both parties, and a

draft is becoming a formalised document. One of the outcomes from the work strands was to have less impact on the local inhabitants and help better management and care of the moor.

- 36 The 2015 Team Managers Briefing and Training day was held in October 2014 and deliberately involved more of the Commoners and local stakeholders so that the Team Managers could get a clear understanding of whose land they were using. This worked well. Three of the farmers took the Team Managers away in small groups and it was of benefit to both parties. The MOD struggles with effective “policing” or compliance although they are aware that they have a moral responsibility to do what they can to protect the National Park and they are working with the National Park Authority to help ‘police’, deter and monitor breaches to the Ten Tors rules and the National Park area. This will be done by setting in place a Compliance Monitoring Team (CMT) from February 2015 that will be effective on most weekends that Ten Tors Teams train.
- 37 The information from the trackers that were used on the 2014 event has been analysed and they have already penalised people that have come off route. The organisers will look at refusing registrations for organisations/team managers that have not adhered to good practice..
- 38 Compliance Teams and Scrutineers will have a higher profile, especially in the Gidleigh Woods area, and the best way to effect that is being looked at.
- 39 Regarding distributing of information (during the build up phase) , it is difficult to ‘police’ who is on the moors as units book in and out via the web several days in advance. Once the data protection issues are sorted, some of the details can be given to the monitoring teams so that it can be policed more rigorously.
- 40 Dr Bishop raised the issue of ‘Pound for the Park’ and the agreement with 43 Wessex Brigade that they would actively promote this initiative to all Team Managers and teams. He noted that this had not happened for Ten Tors 2014 and that no payment had been received despite assurances at the Working Party. Dr Bishop asked for a reassurance that Pound for the Park would be actively promoted as part of Ten Tors 2015 and included on the registration forms as a voluntary donation. He agreed with Lt Col Bates that there was a need to publicise how money raised by Pound for the Park was used to fund conservation and access projects.

Actions:

1. Lt Col Peter Bates to ensure that Pound for the Park is publicised and promoted through Ten Tors web site, at team manager meetings and included on the registration forms. Also to provide clarity on whether any money was raised in 2014.
 2. Robert Steemson to provide details of how money raised in the past has been used to Lt Col Peter Bates so that there can be joint promotion.
- 41 Maurice Retallick wanted assurance that Ten Tors will use local suppliers and vendors. Lt Col Bates reported that they are looking at income generation and would be looking at the deal with local traders. Maurice Retallick then led on to ask that the issue of parking and problems associated with the amount of vehicles in the car parks be addressed. A reply was given that this has already been addressed.

- 42 Kevin Bishop reported that a letter had been sent from Penny Warren of the Gidleigh Commoners to Brigadier Hankinson (copied to the Joint Secretaries) and was concerned that he had not seen a response and wanted confirmation that it had been responded to. Lt Col Bates will look into it this and report back to the Joint Secretaries which will hopefully ensure that she is happier now with the way things are.

Action - Lt Col Bates to report back to Joint Secretaries on the response to the letter from Penny Warren to Brigadier Hankinson.

ITEM 8 – USAGE STATISTICS

- 43 Capt Ian Jarvis apologised for not having updated usage statistics due to the fact that Landmarc haven't provided them as their focus was on the way forward with the new NTEP contract. He wants to focus on the 2014 firing statistics.

ITEM 9 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 44 Peter Harper enquired as to whether there were any events taking place commemorating the role of the Dartmoor Training Area in the First World War. Capt Ian Jarvis confirmed that he had not organised anything. Peter Harper reported that there is to be an exhibition at the National Park Visitor Centre, Princetown. He also stated that the military display at the Visitor Centre was to be removed and invited DIO to contribute to a new display.
- 45 Peter Harper stated that Dartmoor would be hosting the UK National Parks conference in October 2015 (14-16). As part of that conference there would be a programme of study tours and he hoped that one of those could be focused on the management of military training in the National Park. The study tours would be on 15 October 2015. Capt Jarvis indicated that he would welcome the opportunity to be involved and help host a study tour.
- 46 It was reported that English Heritage are doing a study of all war memorials to ensure that every war memorial is listed. It was noted that English Heritage are undergoing organisational change: The historical properties side will retain the name English Heritage and become a charity; and English Heritage will become Historic England.
- 47 John Waldon thanked Capt Ian Jarvis for attending two events of the Dartmoor Commoners' Council to explain the role of the MOD. Capt Ian Jarvis on both occasions mentioned the demise of the Commoners' Lunch this year for funding reasons. The majority of the Commoners commented that they would miss this event, they feel it is valued as a way of the MOD saying thank you. Capt Ian Jarvis is making further enquiries as he is required to conduct engagement with the Stakeholders on an annual basis to discuss business and wishes to do it in a way that is beneficial and affordable. Maurice Retallick gave an outline of the history of the Commoners Lunch and said that the Commoners felt something should be in place for next year. James Crosfield emphasised that the Stakeholders are important but there has to be some guidelines put out across the country. He is all for a

briefing with lunch, but the monies that are spent on this across the UK are extraordinary.

ITEM 10 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

48 The next meeting will take place on 18 November 2015 at Parke HQ.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12:00