



Dartmoor Access Forum

Parke, Bovey Tracey, Newton Abbot, Devon, TQ13 9JQ

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To: All Members of the
Dartmoor Access Forum
(see below)

DARTMOOR ACCESS FORUM

MINUTES of meeting held on Tuesday, 25 April 2023

Andrew Watson
Head of Recreation, Access & Estates
E-mail: recreation@dartmoor.gov.uk

Present: Miss D Moyse, Mrs G Branfield, Mrs A Clish-Green; Mr J Daymond; Mr P French, Mr J Hayes, Mrs A Head, Mr J Howell, Mrs J Lewis; Mrs A Lovell, Mrs L Martin, Mr M Owen, Ms S Vickers, Mr M Walker & Mrs P Warren

1 Welcome and Apologies

The meeting was opened by the Chair Mark Walker (MW). Mark informed the Forum that he wasn't standing for re-election as Chair. He thanked everyone on the Forum for their work and contributions over the last few years his Chairmanship and specifically thanked Philip French (PF) for his work on the Glover Review.

Apologies were received from Annie Lovell, Dr Rachel Manning, Gavin Kelly and Peter Smerdon.

Minutes of previous meeting held on 8th November 2022 were accepted/agreed.

2 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

Michael Owen (MO) was voted as new Chairman, proposed by Alison Clish-Green (ACG) and seconded by John Howell (JH). Vice Chair continues as ACG.

MO introduced himself and described his relevant background/experience. Two new members were welcomed to the group Amanda Head (AH) and Dr Rachel Manning (RM), in her absence.

AH described her outdoor education experience, including Ten Tors, DofE, education guide for DNPA and Moorland Guides, etc.



4 Introduction of new DAF members

Forum members provided a brief introduction of themselves for the benefit of new members.

5 Backpack Camping Legal Challenge

Andrew Watson (AW) gave a brief update relating to the legal challenge and grounds for appeal, court hearing in to be held in July. Ju Lewis (JL) suggested that DNPA could show good examples of best practice of Backpack Camping through social media channels. Penny Warren (PW) commented that visitors coming from outside the area don't tend to pick up local information.

6 Farming in Protected Landscapes (FiPL)

Presentation by James Sharpe (JS) on background and progress with the delivery of this Defra funded scheme focussing on the public benefits. Up to 80% funding for farmers/land managers. Projects ranging from £2k to £200k.

Four FiPL Outcomes: nature, climate, people and place. More opportunities for people to explore, enjoy and understand the landscape. Increased opportunities for more diverse audiences, e.g. from Plymouth, Exeter.

A facilitated 'bottom up' approach and opportunities to liaise with other DNPA colleagues, particularly with priorities identified in the Dartmoor Partnership Plan. 25 projects now completed, mainly on eastern half of the national park, including farm cluster groups. ACG mentioned some interesting projects e.g. potential fenceless grazing using cattle collars. PF asked about Parishes contribution to this project.

However, there were relatively few projects that were access focussed. They have to be over and above the levels of statutory maintenance of public rights of way. This could include new permissive access routes that fill gaps in the PROW network, access improvements and enhancements to path networks, providing higher rights for other users (cyclists, horse riders) or educational access.

The Forum agreed to establish a working group with ACG and Jeff Hayes (JH) representing the DAF on the FiPL Local Assessment Panel (LAP), to contribute ideas for access related projects. Challenges: needs to be additional to access obligations.

- What are the benefits to farmers/land managers in applying for access related projects?
- Where could we best focus effort for access, locations and themes?

7 Dartmoor's Dynamic Landscapes

JS gave an overview of the forthcoming Landscape Partnership Scheme funded by Heritage Lottery Fund with a focus on access related projects. Better for People, Better for Nature, Better for Farming & Forestry

An area-based approach focussed on rivers, with gateway towns to the national park.

- 3 main focuses: Nature, People and the Future. A better understanding of what we have in terms of nature and landscape and a warm welcome in visitor hubs (e.g. Okehampton and Ivybridge). Lee Martin (LM) made the point about involving Town councils, TICs, etc in community projects.



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8 Future DAF Priorities and work programme

Future priorities for the DAF group to focus on and formation of working groups (where appropriate) were discussed, these included:

- Managing dogs and access to the countryside – ownership up 23% since 2020, National Trust initiative and PAWS on Dartmoor examples.
- Cattle incidents and public access – particularly on CRoW land
- Review of land mapped under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 – to be completed around 2030.
- Changes to the 2026 “cut-off date” for the definitive map of public rights of way - was scrapped but now back and to be completed around 2030.
- Visitor Management and recreation pressure

10 DAF Member Training

Members are asked to consider topics and site visits for the Training Day in June 2023 and to discuss a possible joint meeting with the Devon Countryside Access Forum. TBC by Chairman.

11 Dates of Next Meetings

- Training Day site visit followed by Forum meeting – Date TBC, mid-June, possibly based around Princetown.
- Forum Meeting at Parke – Tuesday 7 November 2023

