



Peak District National Park Authority – Meet the CEO Roadshow Community Feedback

Venue: Bamford Village Institute

Date: 13 February 2025

NPA/Authority – the Peak District National Park Authority

Issues raised

Affordable Housing

Our remit is limited to local affordable housing and not general housing market need. The Authority takes a proactive role in supporting our constituent local authorities to look for appropriate sites for affordable housing (we are not a housing authority (HA) ourselves). Housing authorities are usually approached by parish councils (PC) to do a local housing needs survey and based on that we work with the HA and the PCs to find appropriate sites. We respond positively to parish councils who can demonstrate a local housing need and want to find a site suitable for housing that a registered provider can deliver. Responses comprise insight by planners, policy officers, conservation officers, landscape and ecologists, and highways.

Following our recent Local Plan Issues & Options consultation (October-November 2024) there will be an upcoming opportunity to further contribute under a 'call for sites'. This is a process for people to put forward sites that could be considered for development. It forms part of the Land Availability Assessment which is part of our evidence base to support our approach to housing, employment and other issues. It is purely a process to understand what land is available. It is not a process to allocate sites.

Visitor pressure

[please also see all additional previous roadshow notes and questions regarding visitor management concerns available online]

Phil has previously hosted a roadshow in Castleton (and other locations) where concerns regarding visitor pressure were raised by a number of attendees. We also receive the regular updates directly from Concern for Castleton, although matters of criminality and illegal activity remain a matter for the police and not the NPA. We recognise that the Authority is seen as a natural convener to a potential multi-agency approach and are already attending meetings specifically regarding highways and parking matters in and around Castleton with senior management involved. However, the nature of any proposed changes, necessary consultations, planning and development matters and/or physical changes to the local environment and landscape determine that decisions and approaches to managing the issues are likely to require detailed consideration. Tactical solutions such as fines, road closures or enforcement are enacted by the local authority or police directly and not require or involve the National Park Authority.

We are aware of the desire for a comprehensive visitor management plan and/or local area approaches, however the Authority is currently limited by a number of financial and resource pressures to focus on this.

Roadside verge conversion to parking bays

Whilst these areas may be seen as an opportunity to increase parking capacity, a number of considerations are required such as the long-standing landscape character of verges in the local area, wildlife interest, places where they may already act as a suitable deterrent to nuisance parking and sufficient capacity to allow for full and legal parking alongside the pre-existing highway. Practical matters such as their construction and drainage once in place also need to be addressed.

Park & Ride

The Authority provides public transport information online (along with the Local Visitor Enterprise Partnership) and promotes seasonal services, when operational, directly through social media. We are not a transport authority or operator ourselves, and any Park & Ride service is likely to require both an appropriate commercial provider and potential grant funding to underpin any pilot services or ongoing timetables. We are also currently consulting the public on improvements to accessible routes in the region with support from Active Travel England.

Walks information is available for free on our website and hospitality venues can make use of this via the LVEP. Our bike hire network also provides parking – including EV provision – away from villages and communities and immediate cycle-based access into a number of popular areas of the Peak District.

Countryside Code

Our Communications team have regular meetings with the national Countryside Code team (there is no specific local or regional provision for the Countryside Code) however this national team has had resources reduced significantly during 2024. The current financial resources at the national park limit our ability to undertake 'outreach' work to higher education colleges or universities.

Social media / influencers

The Authority has no powers to intervene or request removal of third-party social media content unless it breaks existing legal rules or those set by the account provider, which is extremely rare. The Authority itself has a following of approximately 170,000 people across four channels and an extended 'reach' beyond this of many millions. We are working with partners and the Local Visitor Enterprise Partnership (LVEP) to understand how we can have greater impact on the channels where the Authority may not have a presence, but others do. Working directly with high level 'influencers' generally incurs a commercial fee, which limits the Authority's opportunities to engage due to the limited financial and capacity resources available.

Does the NPA cover bad weather communications / Can your car parks be cleared of snow to facilitate increased use? The Authority has a very limited role in operational matters concerning extreme weather events (e.g. snow, flooding etc) which is typically under the remit of local authorities, however where the Met Office issues severe weather warnings likely to impact on the region, or road closures and flooding is taking place we will share updates on our social media channels from these or other agencies.

The Authority does not have the resources to clear snow and ice during extreme weather events from our 45 car parking sites, but our teams aim to keep our facilities open as much as possible, 365 days a year. Despite a capacity of some 1,800 parking bays within our facilities network alone, we are increasingly seeing drivers make a discretionary choice not to park in our sites to avoid the Pay & Display fees which are required to maintain these, and other facilities such as public toilets and accessible trails.

Ranger Service

National park rangers who take care of our estates, support several volunteer groups and conservation activities are largely unaffected by the current restructure proposals, however those who undertake direct work involving young people's education and wellbeing programmes may see capacity reduced. This is unlikely to affect rangers who are involved in day-to-day presence in key areas, often alongside or supported by our many hundreds of fully-trained volunteer rangers. This remains a highly experienced and knowledgeable team, especially regarding engaging with activities such as camping, BBQ-use, wild fires and other challenging issues. More volunteer roles will be created with a specific focus on welcoming, informing and encouraging responsible behavior; operating both within and outside of our visitor hub network.

'Mass Participation' events

The National Park Authority's website provides a detailed and comprehensive set of information, including [event guidance](#) and a Code of Conduct for those wishing to undertake a large capacity event. This includes location, access, impact on sensitive sites (such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest), provision of support facilities for participants and consideration of local communities as well as transport, stewarding and waste management. Whilst the code is not formally enforced, a large proportion of professional and amateur events organisers abide by the guidance. A general hosting 'licence' is not required for events unless as part of our own property (see below) or where separate highways or other legal restrictions are necessary.

In addition, those wishing to undertake events all or in part within our own National Park Authority landholdings must complete a separate application, upon which permission may be declined if the impacts are considered to be inappropriate. Similar requests are typically required by other major landowners within the National Park. Whilst the Authority endeavors to monitor the publicity and promotion of as many major events as possible within the Peak District, we do not have the resources to ensure all and any event is covered, especially when organisers do not engage with us or similar agencies beforehand.

Those agreeing to the voluntary Code of Conduct are [listed on our website](#) which is publicly available. The Authority does not provide further promotion, social media sharing or publicity of these events as it may contribute to both additional footfall as spectators, create conflict with those who may disagree with the purpose of any event, or in the case of commercial event operators, 'free' advertising which would not be in line with our public sector role. Exceptions to this may be major national or regional events where significant levels of visitor impact could occur to highways, attractions or accessible routes. The Authority may be able to explore the potential for the above event listings to be sent direct to parishes, however this will be dependent on the available resources to do so.

Whilst we liaise with other relevant landowners and agencies on large scale events when we are made aware of them, decisions to approve or decline smaller scale local and regional activities not on our own landholdings may remain at the discretion of the landowner(s).

The Authority does not currently have sufficient resource to provide a multi-agency, coordinated events management service in the Peak District.

Concerns regarding unauthorised events which may involve illegal or unlawful activity or disruption to highways or access should be reported to the police on 101.

Hope Cement Works

The NPA as Mineral Planning Authority deals with all planning applications related to Hope Cement Works and its associated limestone and shale quarries, ensuring control of development at the site. A minimum of two chargeable site monitoring visits are made to the quarries each year in order to

ensure compliance with the relevant planning conditions, in particular to ensure the environmental control standards are adhered to in order prevent and minimise adverse impacts on residential and environmental amenity, and to ensure the appropriate progress is made in terms of restoration and aftercare of previously quarried land. Officers attend a quarterly liaison committee with representatives from the operator, elected Members and the local community to ensure an open dialogue is maintained between the interested parties. A separate 'Rail Liaison Committee' has also been created since the approval of the importation of alternative raw materials to the site by rail in 2022. This group also meets quarterly and focuses on reducing impacts on local residents in close proximity to the branch line and Earles Sidings.

The Authority's strategic position in regards Hope Cement Works is to work with the operator within the confines of extant planning policy to facilitate the continued production of cement on the basis of the existing consented reserves of limestone, whilst seeking to minimise environmental and residential impact. Early discussions have been opened between the operator and the NPA in regards to the future development potential for the site post cement production. The parties intend to work together to steer the future of the site through the development plan process.

19 February 2025