

Trails Steering Group – Workshop 2

Getting down to the details about the trails

Workshop Report



Thursday 24th November 2011
Aldern House, Bakewell

Facilitated by Mandy Sims

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Objectives

By the end of the workshop we will have:

- Increased our understanding about the Trails;
- Agreed our Ways of Working;
- Been introduced to the Themes of the Trails Management Plan;
- Helped to develop Objectives under each theme.

Agenda

Time	Session
17:00	Arrival at Aldem House
17:10	<i>Geological history of the country around the Monsal Trail</i> - a talk by John Hunter, Minerals Planner, PDNPA
17:40	Refreshment break
18:00	Welcome & introductions
	Update on progress of Trails Management Plan
	Presenting the Themes and setting the Objectives for the Plan
	Updates from the Steering Group
	What next?
19:30	Depart

Attendees

The workshop was attended by:

Name	Organisation / Interest
Abi Ball	PDNPA
Dan Cook	Cycle Touring Club
Chris Coombs	Derbyshire County Council
Gordon Danks	Bamford with Thornhill Parish Council
Matt Easter	Sustrans
Steve Farren	PDNPA
Elaine Hill	High Peak Access Group, Disability Derbyshire CIL
Graham Jones	Dukes Barn & IOL
Chris Manby	PDNPA
Gill Millward	Derbyshire County Council
Jane Proctor	Derbyshire Wildlife Trust
Mandy Sims	Facilitator
Nick Stephens	Ramblers' Association
Duncan Stokes	Hassop Station
Ally Turner	Peak Horse Power & Local Access Forum
Yvonne Witter	Mosaic Project

Apologies were received from:

Name	Organisation / Interest
Patrick Strange	Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust
Hilary Young	Peak Parishes Forum

A talk - Geological history of the country around the Monsal Trail

The Steering Group were able to enjoy an excellent talk by John Hunter, Minerals Planner for the PDNPA.

John showed some interesting slides and revealed the meanings of the geology of the Monsal Trail and surrounding areas. He kindly took questions at the end, and all present showed their appreciation.

Welcome and introductions

After a light buffet, the Group reconvened in the Board Room.

Mandy Sims asked new Steering Group members to introduce themselves and began the session by running through the workshop objectives, the agenda and some ground rules.

Ways of Working – Mandy reminded the Group about the draft *Ways of Working* document that they had received at the first workshop. She highlighted a few points from it, and asked for any comments or questions relating to it. None were given and the Group were happy to agree with all the points in the document. (See Appendix 1)

Update on progress of Trails Management Plan

Abi Ball gave a brief update on the progress to date of the Management Plan; some further detail on the response from the internal PDNPA group; and an update about things happening on the Trails.

She drew the Group's particular attention to the *Trail Code of Conduct* that has recently been produced for the Monsal Trail. Abi asked for the Group's thoughts in relation to rolling this out to the other Trails. The *Code of Conduct* was pinned to the wall with a pile of post-its and the Group invited to use these to comment.

The Group's responses to the Trail Code of Conduct:

Text: *All users please keep to the left unless passing others.*

Comment: **Bigger writing – it is the most important point for ALL users to keep to the left**

Text: *Cyclists...Use your bell...*

Comment: **Be aware people may be deaf or hearing-impaired.**

Text: *Dogs must be kept under close control at all times*

Comment: **Dogs should be on lead at all times**



Update on Progress so far...

- Trails Saturday
- Online Survey
- 1st Steering Group Workshop
- Internal staff workshop



Internal Staff Workshop

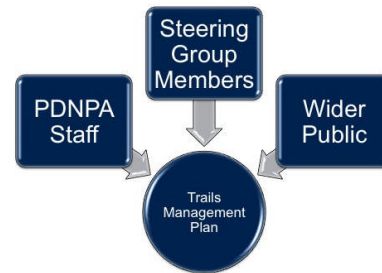
- 3rd November
- 15 PDNPA officers
- Trails Sat – checking for omissions
- Update on work of Steering Group
- Vision Statement
- Management Themes & Objectives



Work on the Trails

- Money for tree work for the Monsal Trail
- Re-doing the steps at Wyedale
- Code of Conduct for the Monsal Trail
- Completed ecological survey of all Trails
- Improvements to Millers Dale toilets

Inputs into the plan...



Mandy then highlighted the **draft Vision Statement** for the Trails. She explained that the good work done by the Steering Group at the previous workshop had culminated in the current draft, and that it had been commented on by the internal PDNPA group.

The draft Vision Statement, and a summary of the internal group's comments were placed on a flipchart on the wall for Steering Group members to scribe their comments during the evening.

Responses to draft Vision Statement

Draft Vision Statement:

The Trails provide a gateway to new and diverse experiences, for all to enjoy and be inspired by the richness of the natural environment and cultural heritage.

As part of a network of regional trails they provide easy access routes into the heart of the Peak District and foster sustainable choices and healthy lifestyles.

Steering Group's comments:

- Quite wordy for a vision statement.
- Need terms which the public will understand and relate to.
- 'Richness' – change this.
- 'Richness' – I like this but 'depth' as an alternative?
- 'Sustainable choices' – Change this.
- 'Sustainable choices' – Meant to be sustainable travel choices
- At end of statement – 'and local economic benefits.'

Presenting the Themes and setting the Objectives for the Plan

Mandy described briefly the stages in developing a Management Plan, and explained that now that the work on visioning was almost completed, the next stage for the Group would be to work on the Themes (or Aims) and the Objectives that relate to those Themes. (A future stage would be working on action planning.)

She presented the 3 draft Themes (re-drafted by Abi) and explained that the exercise focusing on Objectives would allow the Group to ponder the Themes and make any comments about those also.



The draft Themes and their attendant Aims presented were as follows:

1. Managing the Trails and their corridors

Aim: to manage the Trails and their corridors to the highest access and environmental standards

2. Enhancing the Trails experience through increased awareness and understanding

Aim: To enhance the Trails experience for all users by interpreting the interest and significance of the Trails and providing information to help realise their potential.

3. Optimising the Benefits of the Trails

Aim: To optimise the social, economic and environmental benefits of the Trails.

The Group divided into sub-groups of 3 or 4. Each group had a pack containing: 3 pieces of coloured A4 card, each with a Theme printed on; a pile of 13 draft objectives on strips of paper; and some blank strips. (The draft Objectives were originally compiled by the facilitators, amended and expanded by Abi Ball's team, commented on in detail by the internal PDNPA group, and finally re-drafted by Abi and team.)

The exercise involved:

- Making any suggested improvements to the wording of objectives if necessary.
- Placing the objectives under the most relevant theme.
- Adding in any 'missing' objectives using the blank strips.
- Looking for draft objectives that were not agreed with, and marking with a cross.

The results were as follows:

NB. Figure after objective = number of groups who placed the objective under this theme

Theme 1: Managing the Trails and their corridors

1.	Maintain a safe, unobstructed trail surface enabling access for all legitimate users. X 4
2.	Provide adequate visitor facilities, appropriate to the character of each Trail. X 1 (Suggestion: addition of the word 'Seek' at beginning)
3.	Restore and maintain the species rich grassland along the Trails' corridors. X 3 (Suggestions: 'special habitats' instead of 'species rich grassland'; 'verges' instead of 'corridors' [jargon])
4.	Preserve the geological and cultural heritage significance of the Trails. X 2 (Suggestions: 'important geological' instead of 'geological'; delete 'significance')
6.	Maintain all former railway structures in good condition using traditional methods where possible. X 2 (Suggestion: query the word 'traditional')
8.	Responsible use of the Trails by all user groups is encouraged through effective communication by the Authority. X 1
13.	Sustainability principles underpin the management and use of the Trails. X 3

Theme 2: Enhancing the Trails experience through increased awareness and understanding

2.	Provide adequate visitor facilities, appropriate to the character of each Trail. X 2 (Suggestion: querying the word 'adequate')
4.	Preserve the geological and cultural heritage significance of the Trails. X 1 (Suggestions: 'interpretation of the features')
5.	Open up and maintain views from the Trails but ensure that this is managed appropriately and sensitively, balancing the benefits to users with the benefits for biodiversity. X 1
6.	Maintain all former railway structures in good condition using traditional methods where possible. X 1
7.	The landscape and features along the Trails are interpreted and celebrated through innovative, appropriate methods, to increase people's awareness and enhance their enjoyment of the Trails. X 4
8.	Responsible use of the Trails by all user groups is encouraged through effective communication by the Authority. X 1 (Suggestions: needs to specify that it's the Peak Park Authority.)
13.	Sustainability principles underpin the management and use of the Trails. X 1 (Suggestions: addition of 'Ensure' at beginning; 'underpin' is jargon)

Theme 3: Optimising the benefits of the Trails

5.	Open up and maintain views from the Trails but ensure that this is managed appropriately and sensitively, balancing the benefits to users with the benefits for biodiversity. X 1
8.	Responsible use of the Trails by all user groups is encouraged through effective communication by the Authority. X 1
9.	To further develop the surrounding access network to allow easy access to and from the Trails, in line with the Greenways Strategy. X 4 (Suggestions: What is Greenways Strategy? Link; and public transport)
10.	To maintain and enhance the health and well being benefits of the Trails and rights of way network. X 4 (Suggestion: difficult to understand)
11.	The Trails provide a positive stimulus to the local economy. X 4 (Suggestion: addition of the word 'Ensure' at the start)
12.	Commercial opportunities associated with the Trails are developed where appropriate. X 4 (Suggestions: addition of 'and sympathetic' at the end; addition of 'to benefit the Trails' management' at the end)
	Suggested additional objectives:
	To develop a more connected and accessible network (need to connect Trails to rights of way)
	Trails should be promoted to attract the widest possible audience.
	Community involvement in the widest sense- volunteering opportunities – local residents

There were some draft objectives that the groups wished to put under two Themes; they are outlined below.

Themes 1 and 2

4.	Preserve the geological and cultural heritage significance of the Trails. X 1
5.	Open up and maintain views from the Trails but ensure that this is managed appropriately and sensitively, balancing the benefits to users with the benefits for biodiversity. X 2
6.	Maintain all former railway structures in good condition using traditional methods where possible. X 1
8.	Responsible use of the Trails by all user groups is encouraged through effective communication by the Authority. X 1

Themes 1 and 3

3.	Restore and maintain the species rich grassland along the Trails' corridors. X 1
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Themes 2 and 3

2.	Provide adequate visitor facilities, appropriate to the character of each Trail. X 1 (Suggestion: addition of 'and use of each Trail' at end)
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There followed a whole group discussion on the proposed themes and objectives. Apart from a general feeling that the readability for the general public could be improved, the Group did not have much more to add. They were happy to allow Abi to make a decision about the objectives that possibly cut across 2 themes; whether to change /add to the themes, or to choose the best fit.

Comments on improved wording for the Themes included:

- Managing the Trails and their corridors – “corridors” - What does that actually mean? Will the public know?



The Steering Group was thanked for their hard work, and the next steps were outlined:

- After the workshop, Abi and team will re-visit the vision, themes and objectives.
- Then, Action Planning and prioritisation for each Trail
- More input from internal staff and Steering Group
- Completion Summer 2012!

Updates from the Steering Group

Mandy invited all members of the Group to feedback to the rest of the Group a key point about the current work of the user / interest group that they represent, if possible in relation to the Trails themselves.

There were many interesting and useful points shared, involving a fruitful exchange of information in some areas.

What next?

Mandy concluded the workshop expressing her thanks to everyone for their time, constructive comments and support for the process thus far.

She reminded everyone that the next Steering Group meeting would be in late January or early February 2012, and that more details would be circulated in December.

The workshop ended at 19:30.

Appendix 1 - Trails Steering Group Agreed Ways of Working

Purpose of Steering Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To act as the principal consultation forum for the Trails Management Plan process ● To represent the main user and interest groups associated with the four trails ● To establish a clear 5 year Vision for the Trails ● To draw from own experience / expertise ● To help identify current and future management issues, and make recommendations as appropriate ● To help build consensus amongst trail users ● To sign off Management Plan
Expectations of Trails Steering Group on PDNPA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Timely information sent out in advance of meetings ● Minutes of the meetings are produced and circulated in a timely manner ● Effective communication of up to date information ● Maintenance of Trails Management Plan web page ● To keep to pre-agreed timetable for Management Plan process ● Consult / involve internal experts as necessary ● To identify in advance of the management plan process, matters that can not be consulted on
Expectations of PDNPA on Steering Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Members to do their best to attend Steering Group meetings ● Members to contribute their expertise and lessons learned from experience ● Each member will do their best to keep the people they represent fully informed and involved in the Steering Group's work and in the progress of the Management Plan ● Members will respect the views of other members ● Every effort will be made to reach agreements acceptable to everyone ● Everyone will have the opportunity to have a say and their opinion will be valued ● Steering Group decisions will normally be made at the meetings ● Steering Group members should recognise that we operate within a statutory framework which impacts on our work

Membership: Who, Duration etc.

- Membership should represent the main user and interest groups
- Optimum membership of 15, max of 20
- Membership to initially last for the duration of the management plan process (until 31 May 2011)
- Continuing future role to be discussed (implementation of plan)

Frequency / Location of Meetings

- Maximum of five steering group meetings to be hosted by PDNPA
- Meetings to be held in the evening at locations to be agreed