

# **Trails Steering Group – Workshop 3**

## ***Action Planning for the Trails***

### **Workshop Report**



**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012**  
**Aldern House, Bakewell**

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**Facilitated by Mandy Sims**

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## Objectives

By the end of the workshop we will have:

- Increased our understanding about the Trails;
- Contributed to developing the Action Plan component of the Trails Management Plan;
- Begun to prioritise the actions in the Plan.

## Agenda

Time	Session
17:00	Arrival at Aldern House
17:10	<i>Grasslands and Grassland Management on the Trails</i> Talk by Rebekah Newman, ecologist, PDNPA
17:50	Refreshment break - <i>Light buffet provided</i>
18:15	Welcome & introductions
	Update on progress of Trails Management Plan
	Action Planning - making the Management Plan happen
	Prioritising the actions
	Updates from the Steering Group
	What next?
20:00	Depart

## Attendees

The workshop was attended by:

Name	Organisation / Interest
David Ashton	Bamford with Thornhill Parish Council
Abi Ball	PDNPA
Dan Cook	Cycle Touring Club
Chris Coombs	Derbyshire County Council
Matt Easter	Sustrans
Steve Farren	PDNPA
Elaine Hill	High Peak Access Group, Disability Derbyshire CIL
Charlotte Gilbert	Local Access Forum and Peak Horse Power
Julia Gow	Derbyshire Wildlife Trust
Frank Hall	Peak Park Parishes Forum
Chris Manby	PDNPA
Gill Millward	Derbyshire County Council
Rebekah Newman	PDNPA
Mandy Sims	Facilitator
Nick Stephens	Ramblers' Association
Patrick Strange	Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust
Yvonne Witter	Mosaic Project

## Apologies were received from:

Name	Organisation / Interest
Duncan Stokes	Hassop Station
Graham Jones	Dukes Barn
Jane Proctor	Derbyshire Wildlife Trust

## A talk - Grasslands and Grassland Management on the Trails

Mandy Sims issued a quick welcome to all and asked the three new members of the group to introduce themselves. This prompted a quick show of introductions around the room.

The evening began with an inspiring talk by Rebekah Newman (PDNPA), focusing on the variety of the grasslands along the Trails, some of the glories amongst the variety, and the different approaches to managing these to maintain and improve their quality and diversity. Her talk was enhanced by slides showing many of the beautiful plants and landscapes to be seen along the Trails.

There were many questions at the end, so much so that we were obliged to overspill questions into the refreshment break time.

## Welcome and introductions

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

Mandy Sims began the session by thanking attendees for their commitment to the process, and then ran through the workshop objectives, the agenda and some ground rules.

## Update on progress of Trails Management Plan

Abi Ball began with a brief update about things happening on the Trails, including the price of new quotes to resurface part of the Tissington Trail.

She then updated the Group with the progress so far with the Management Plan. She showed the now completed Vision Statement (with one last addition from Gill Millward!), the revised Themes and the updated and agreed Objectives. She explained the process that had been undergone so far regarding the Action Plan, and explained the need for the Steering Group's input into this.



### Work on the Trails

- Tree work on Monsal Trail
- New pedestrian / cycle counters
- Millers Dale toilets
- Resurfacing part of Tissington Trail



### Our Vision

The Trails provide a gateway to new and diverse experiences, for all to enjoy and be inspired by the landscape, the wildlife and the heritage. As part of a network of regional trails, they provide easy access, multi-user routes into the heart of the Peak District, enabling sustainable travel choices to be made, encouraging healthy lifestyles, and promoting the local economy.

## Recap on Workshop 2 – Themes & Objectives

- **Revised Themes:**
  1. Managing the Trails and their corridors
  2. Optimising the benefits of the Trails
  3. Promoting the Trails and raising awareness and understanding

- **Objectives:**
  - Further refined & easier to understand
  - Consensus regarding most appropriate Theme
  - New Objectives identified

## Action Planning

- Initial brainstorming!
- Consultation with internal colleagues & Steering Group



### Action Planning – making the Management Plan happen

Mandy described briefly the stages in developing a Management Plan, explaining that now that the work to develop a vision and objectives was complete, work could now begin on action planning.

She explained that the perspectives of the Steering Group are vital to the process.

The Steering Group's job was to:

- Look for actions that may be missing
- Seek to clarify wording of any actions
- Check objectives for inspiration for more actions
- Be aspirational



The Steering Group was subdivided into three, to work on the actions under each of the three themes.

Beginning with a small group brainstorm, the groups considered the question: 'What sort of actions would we expect to see under this theme?'

All ideas were then checked off against the draft list of actions, adding any new ideas to the list and suggesting any changes to the current wording.

Next, the small groups checked through the **objectives** for their theme. For each objective, the questions were asked:

- Are there actions written that will achieve this objective fully?
- Are there any aspirational actions?

The group considered writing further actions onto the list.

The sub-groups then moved around the other themes, checking through the previous group's work and making any additions.

### Prioritising the actions

Mandy stressed the importance of all actions (practical and aspirational) in the Management Plan, but explained that this stage of the evening was about a reality check in case budgets were to become more restricted.

She showed a slide of some quick figures / statistics, showing what budget is available, what it is to be spent on, costs per metre of path etc.

The Steering Group remained in sub-groups, looking at the actions again and considering which are absolutely vital if it comes to tough decisions. These were highlighted in green pen.



As a counter balance to this, they were also asked to highlight in yellow pen any actions that they thought would help to achieve the Vision and make the Trails stand out from the crowd.

Finally, the Steering Group was directed to a short list of actions relating to finding funding and grant aid, and asked for comments / suggestions to be written directly onto it.

To conclude, clarification was given about what would happen next with the work carried out by Steering Group.

### 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, including a short update from Chris Manby about the future of Miller's Dale Station in response to a query from Patrick Strange.

### What next?

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

- After this workshop, the draft Action Plan will be revisited taking into account all new suggestions.
- **Next Steering Group meeting** - likely to be in May - looking at the draft Management Plan and thinking about the future - details to follow in due course
- Completion Summer 2012!

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

The workshop ended at 20:00.

## The Outputs

Below are the typed up additions to the draft lists of actions presented at the beginning of the workshop.

Additions and comments by the Steering Group are shown in red.

Actions considered absolutely vital if it comes to tough decisions – number highlighted in green.

Actions considered will help to achieve the Vision and make the NP Trails stand out from the crowd – number highlighted in yellow.

# Theme 1 - Managing the Trails and their corridors

	ACTIONS SUGGESTED SO FAR	YOUR COMMENTS
1	<b>Implement a rolling programme of resurfacing in accordance with agreed specification.</b>	
2	Carry out accessibility audit of Trails.	
3	<b>Implement a programme of improving the access points onto the Trails (to an agreed specification).</b>	
4	Improve and / or maintain access signs and furniture in accordance with agreed specification.	Review the need for furniture. Include signs to the Trail e.g. brown highway signs
5	<b>Maintain Trail boundaries in current style where possible and desirable.</b>	
6	Implement a 5 year programme of boundary restoration.	Include the word 'priority' before 'boundary'.
7	<b>Prioritise, agree and implement a 5 year structures maintenance programme (bridges, viaducts, culverts, embankments, tunnels).</b>	And heritage assets e.g. Miller's Dale Station
8	Instruct contractor to carry out annual safety testing of Bridge 75 parapets (abseiling bridge) in accordance with LOLAR 1998.	
9	<b>Implement / comply with recommendations of Monsal Trail Tunnels Maintenance Manual.</b>	
10	Monitor and review electricity usage of Monsal Trail tunnels lighting.	
11	<b>Manage car parks, associated picnic sites and toilets, in accordance with individual car park management plans.</b>	And cycle hire. Visitor management.
12	Implement grassland management on all of the Trails to ensure maintenance, enhancement and restoration of species rich grassland on trail embankments, cuttings, verges and associated areas.	
13	<b>Annually trim all ditches shown on plan *</b>	
14	Maintain favourable condition on the geological and biological SSSI areas of the Trails.	
15	<b>Implement tree safety inspection policy.</b>	
16	Implement woodland thinning programme designed to deliver benefits for biodiversity, landscape and to maintain views.	No chipping of brash unless removed from site.
17	<b>Implement recommendations of archaeological survey of Trails</b>	Need policy for identifying and managing (?) heritage assets.

	ACTIONS SUGGESTED SO FAR	YOUR COMMENTS
18	Take advice on management for rare and uncommon species on the Trails and implement actions as necessary.	
19	<b>Continue to control injurious and invasive species along Trail corridors.</b>	
20	Seek to target conservation action at habitats in the wider countryside where this will extend the high quality habitats of the Trails and link these to other high quality sites nearby.	
	Interpretation – maintain and update	
	Signage to trails	
	Litter collection	
	Health and Safety audit	
	Immediate action / rapid response to deal with fallen trees etc.	

## Theme 2 - Optimising the benefits of the Trails

	ACTIONS SUGGESTED SO FAR	YOUR COMMENTS
1	<b>Maintain links with Derbyshire Community Health Services.</b>	
2	Review provision of distance markers along certain stretches of trail.	Linked to 14
3	<b>Review Bridge 75 abseiling licence (terms and fee).</b>	
4	Review potential for additional abseiling facility on Monsal Trail.	
5	<b>Establish a Trails Stakeholder Group or 'Friends Of' group.</b>	
6	Issue standard licence agreement to all third parties with signs on Trails.	To ensure that all business promotion signs are of suitable design and consistency by using standard licence to adjacent business.
7 also 7	<b>Provide public transport links to Trails on Trails Webpage.</b>	Bus to Trail then walk back. Wheelchair accessible bus. Clear information.
8	Review refreshment concession provision (including tender process, new opportunities etc.)	Hurdlow (Royal Oak)? Bakewell Station?
9	<b>Ensure Trails management is compatible with Cycle Hire Business Plan.</b>	
10	Explore the potential for sponsorship opportunities for sections of the Trails.	
11	<b>Explore ways of linking with / promoting local accommodation providers and businesses.</b>	
12	Seek to explore opportunities for developing new linking rights of way.	+ Greenways. Where it does not damage the environment.
13	Provide sufficient information to enable visitors to fully appreciate the environment of the Trails.	
14	Provide a safe and secure facility and make sure we let other people know that this is an ideal place for all to enjoy.	
15	Explore opportunities for economic development to increase economic sustainability.	Carbon footprint 'green standards' for building design etc.
16	Need to address issues around car parking – in some villages	



	ACTIONS SUGGESTED SO FAR	YOUR COMMENTS
17	'Carrying Capacity' of Trails	
18	Make decision on whether to make the Monsal Trail a definitive right of way.	

## Theme 3 - Promoting the Trails and raising awareness and understanding

	ACTIONS SUGGESTED SO FAR	YOUR COMMENTS
1	Agree and promote code of conduct for Tissington, High Peak and Thornhill Trails.	For all users. Where and how? Enforce? Speed limit? DCC
2	Develop local interpretation plan for Monsal & Thornhill Trails, and review existing High Peak and Tissington Trail plans (include audit of current provision).	Audio trails and phone apps. Web cam
3	<b>Review Trails byelaws (including where and how to display).</b>	
4	Develop and maintain a Trails webpage on PDNPA website.	Would it include private cycle hire?
5	<b>Use Trails' webpage to promote circular routes; where possible including how to travel to the Trail by sustainable transport.</b>	Safe horsebox parking. Water troughs, hitching rails.
6	Review strategy for Trails leaflets.	
7	<b>Improve signage to Trails from town / village centres, with an emphasis on sustainable links to the Trails (walking, cycling &amp; public transport).</b>	Consistent, clear use of symbols
8	Following access audit, produce detailed access information for website.	Link to Picture Trail website
9	<b>Develop curriculum suitable self-guided trails linked to cycle hire centres.</b>	
10	Use the Trails to promote the special environment of the White Peak.	
11	Events	Link with DWT 'Trails week'
12	Inform and consult with local communities and listen!	
13	Ongoing group of interests	
14	Raise awareness of land bordering the Trails e.g. DWT reserves	
15	Signage to facilities of the Trails (and charge?)	
16	Educational visits - schools	
17	Use the local press and radio	
18	Distribution of literature - website, Twitter, leaflets. Scope of distribution – schools, parish councils, shops	
19	Signage on the Trails – destination, distance, (miles and time)	
20	Make sure TMP is adequately taken account of by other NPA policies / strategies.	
21	Promotion of the Trails to local communities including access onto the Trails and local relevance (to local residents and visitors).	



# Funding and Grant Aid

	ACTIONS SUGGESTED SO FAR	YOUR COMMENTS
1	Source funding to implement interpretation plan / apply for Heritage Lottery Funding.	
2	Apply for HLS agreement for the Tissington & High Peak Trails to support the management of the grasslands.	
3	Investigate potential for / apply to Woodland Grant Scheme to support the management of the Trails.	Unlikely to be a good source of income as award amounts are low.
4	SITA Trust	
5	DCC R.O.W. and LTP3 Local Transport Plans	
	Health Funding Disabled access	
	'Localism'	
	Raise the fee for abseiling groups	
	Contributions from businesses / private sponsorship	