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**PEAK
DISTRICT
NATIONAL
PARK**

Parishes Bulletin 38

15 January 2021

Welcome and Happy New Year

Thank you for all you have done in 2020, it was a tough year for everyone due to COVID-19 and we recognise the additional impacts this has made on your lives in the National Park. We have found new ways to connect with each other and we have explored new ways of tackling issues. It has strengthened our resolve to work with you and our partners.

This New Year has started in a similar vein as we continue to stay apart to fight COVID-19. As an Authority of employees, casual workers, volunteers, and members we are working as one team; caring for the place and its people.

We want to expand this principle to working with the local communities of the National Park. 2021 looks like having more challenges to throw at us, but we do now have the advantage of learning from the lessons of 2020. We know that after the current lockdown we are likely to have many visitors to our open spaces across the UK, and are acutely aware of the issues and pressures this will bring to the Peak District National Park. There are no easy answers, but there are ways we can work together to welcome visitors and encourage and support positive behaviour to reduce negative impacts.

We also want to work with you to support thriving and sustainable communities that are part of this special place - helping shape the development of strategic policies and supporting community development.

In this latest newsletter you'll find some examples of work underway to respond to the latest restriction and our work with the communities who call this place home.

Covid-19 public messaging from the Authority

Our website and social media channels (as of 14.01.21) were updated with the prominent government-supplied graphics and links to Covid-19 lockdown measures within 24 hours of the announcement by the Prime Minister. This included the three core aspects of; staying at home, exercising locally and not travelling for recreation or leisure. Our website also states the need for the public not to travel outside of their 'village, town or city'. This followed-on from similar messages in respect of the change to Tier 4 in Derbyshire and other areas prior to the UK-wide lockdown.

As legislation and guidance on coronavirus measures is set by government (with no locally devolved element), the Authority may only reiterate this information – we are not in a position to interpret, adapt or define terms such as 'local'. Doing so may be in conflict with centrally-issued information, and has the potential to cause confusion for the public. The Authority will continue to share government information via the public social media platforms we operate on.

Our visitor centres, cycle hire and campsite facilities are currently closed as a result of coronavirus restrictions and are not being shown on our social media channels.

We remain in close liaison with local police and other stakeholders across the National Park to ensure parity of messaging, and in supporting our partners where inappropriate behaviour is witnessed. As stated on our website, National Park rangers have no legal enforcement powers, which remains a police matter. We continue to engage, inform and advise where appropriate and with the resources we have.

Car parks and toilet provision

During the current lockdown (as of 14.01.21) the government has advised local authorities and those operating public car parking provision to keep these facilities open to allow local exercise for those who may need to do so with the use of a vehicle. This is also in support of those with specialist medical needs. As an example, we are aware of local people who travel to use our Monsal Trail as an accessible route with disability equipment, in the absence of facilities such as gyms and physiotherapy centres which may be closed.

Keeping our car parks open also alleviates pressure on surrounding roads that may otherwise experience unsafe parking, and supports safe access for emergency and other essential large vehicles. The Authority does not believe maintaining open car parks significantly influences the decision of those travelling to the area, and road safety remains the highest priority at the current time. The use of our facilities will remain under regular review in line with the police, local authorities and other providers.

Public-participation events on Authority-managed property

The Authority has currently suspended all applications for public events on land that we own until at least April 2021, when this will be reviewed.

Our activities across the Peak District under Covid-19 remain under constant review, in line with the latest government guidance.

Transport across the National Park

During the lockdown last year, we worked closely with the Highway Authorities to enable the roll out of additional yellow lines in some key locations impacted by parking pressures. But we know this can simply lead to traffic problems moving elsewhere in the National Park. Our long term ambition is to see a reduction in traffic and more sustainable use of transport with reductions in carbon and pollution that comes with it. However, we know this will take time to develop and deliver and so large numbers of private vehicles will be with us for some years. In the interim we can work to support temporary and low impact parking provision that manages these impacts. Due to COVID-19 the Government has extended permitted development rights for temporary use of land up to 56 days which could be positively used for managing parking. We know some communities do this already and we want to work with you to find further solutions.

#PeakDistrictProud (#PDP)

Work continues on this National Park Management plan action and how it can be used to support positive visitor behaviour in 2021. Now we know Natural England (NE) are working on reviewing the countryside code the working group will be looking at how we can use the power of a national campaign and messages to support #PDP

The NE consultation on the code can be found here: [Countryside Code Refresh survey \(qualtrics.com\)](https://www.qualtrics.com/journey-start/?utm_source=PE&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=CountrysideCodeRefresh&utm_content=PE_CountrysideCodeRefresh_Survey)
Due to this work on the countryside code we will not be producing any new signage but will be using existing stock and the online assets until the NE work is shared, we understand in time for Easter. Other work will continue on developing ways to work with local communities to manage visitor pressure, such as community litter picks. We are also looking at other ways we can work together and have a pilot at Bowden Bridge in Hayfield, where the local community are looking at having an information point run by volunteers.

70th anniversary celebrations

We are looking forward to marking our 70th birthday year in 2021, and you may already have seen early outputs on this across our social media as we share '70 people for 70 years' and also an exclusive logo that will be used throughout the year. Coronavirus remains a challenge and uncertainty to many of our activities and proposals, but we still anticipate the press and public will engage with us frequently across the next 12 months. This is being supported with a 'media pack' for the press, which is already available on a dedicated section of our website and has informed several initial interviews and articles. We share this milestone with three other UK National Parks, and you might have seen this reflected in a brand new range of stamps launched by the Royal Mail in the New Year. As it becomes clearer in the coming weeks and months as to the extent to which other events can take place, we will remain in regular contact with Parishes to let everyone know how they can get involved. We hope to announce more exciting opportunities before the end of the year!

A Definition for Thriving and Sustainable Communities

Before Christmas we began a consultation on our draft definition with a range of key partners (local councils, universities, health sector, voluntary sector, etc) and we have already received some useful comments but we are keen to hear from as many partners as possible, particularly our local councils so we are giving a little more time for this. We hope to have this piece of work completed by the end of March from which point it will assist our thinking on policies and programmes of work going forward.

Local Plan Survey

We started an early [survey](#) into views on development issues for a new Local Plan. This is a long process but we wanted to start with a broad discussion to inform the core issues for the Plan. We've already had a lot of responses which we will collate and summarise.

One early learning from this work is the need to frame consultation language in a way that is accessible to as many as possible, including younger audiences. We have a target in our corporate plan to increase the number and range of people and organisations engaging in our strategic policy development.

With this in mind we are developing an alternative version of the survey which we intend to use with local schools and youth groups. We are also updating our engagement plan and building on the success of various on-line conferences we held last year. We expect to run a range of area and topic based conferences as we move through 2021 to develop our issues and options for policy.

We hope to get a many communities involved in these as possible.

A New Management Structure

From 1 January 2020, the Peak District National Park Authority has implemented a new organisational structure in response to the financial impacts of the coronavirus pandemic.

The implemented changes – agreed after an extended period of consultation with staff, members and union representatives – will allow the Authority to move into 2021 and beyond in a robust position, and remain resilient in the face of ongoing uncertainties around the lasting legacy of Covid-19.

The changes include the loss of director-level positions (x3) from 2021 and reduction in service head roles from 12 to 9.

Our new Heads of Service working directly to our CEO Sarah Fowler are as follows:

<p>External Facing policy lead and champion</p>	<p>Head of Planning</p> <p><u>Brian Taylor</u></p> <p>Lead on planning and community engagement, setting and implementing the regulatory planning spatial framework and related policy matters</p>	<p>Head of Engagement</p> <p><u>Sarah Wilks</u></p> <p>Audience engagement, communications, commercial development and fundraising. (including; rangers, access and rights of way, visitor centres and cycle hire, Peak District Foundation)</p>	<p>Head of Landscape</p> <p><u>Suzanne Fletcher</u></p> <p>Lead on landscape management/conservation (wildlife, heritage, natural beauty), including policy development, delivery and provision of advice</p>
<p>Implementation in service of external facing</p>	<p>Head of Moors for the Future Partnership</p> <p><u>Chris Dean</u></p> <p>Lead on Moors for the Future Partnership Programme</p>	<p>Head of Asset Management</p> <p><u>Emma Stone</u></p> <p>Development of retained property, achievement of carbon reduction targets and disposal of surplus property,</p>	
<p>Enabling Services</p>	<p>Head of Finance</p> <p><u>Justine Wells</u></p> <p>Lead on all financial matters</p>	<p>Head of People Management</p> <p><u>Theresa Reid</u></p> <p>Lead on all human resources matters, staff and volunteers</p>	<p>Head of Law</p> <p><u>Andrea McCaskie</u></p> <p>Lead on all legal related matters, on good governance and member support</p>
<p>Set Partnership Plan, oversee performance and develop digital capability</p>	<p>Head of Information and Performance Management</p> <p><u>Emily Fox</u></p> <p>Lead on information and digital development, performance management and National Park Management Plan</p>		

If you have any queries about this bulletin please contact the Planning Liaison officer fiona.todd@peakdistrict.gov.uk