

Southern Area Parish Forum

Thursday, 15 April 2021 at 7.00 pm via Zoom

Notes

Attendees:

Maggie Farey (Community First Yorkshire); Hedy Gibbs (Levisham PC); Mr Brian Miller (Lastingham PC); Mike Dunn (West Ayton PC); George Winn-Darley (Local Access Forum); Andy Dunlop (Levisham PC); Professor Stephen Richardson (Thornton le Dale resident); Catherine Cussons; Val Arnold (NYCC); Robert Sword (Moorland Association); Janet Sanderson (Ryedale District Council).

Officers: Chris France (Convenor/Director of Planning); Tom Hind (Chief Executive); Paul Fellows (Head of Strategic Policy); Clair Shields (Policy Officer); Ben Jackson (Head of Ranger Services); David Smith (Senior Ranger, Southern Area); Judith Seaton (PA to Chief Executive).

Members: Andrew Scott; Sarah Oswald

Others: Robert Ling (Assistant Director Technology and Change, NYCC)

CMF welcomed everyone and outlined the format of the meeting

Robert Ling outlined the digital strategy for North Yorkshire. Slides are available on the website [Southern Area Parish Forum \(northyorkmoors.org.uk\)](http://northyorkmoors.org.uk).

- Working collaboratively with NHS, Community First and others.
- Ambition to use technology to improve lives of residents, communities and maximum benefits. Skills and assistance for vulnerable people offered, some not on line and others who are operating on line but not making maximum use.
- Broadband infrastructure is improving now in a position that within next 12 months with phase 4 97% superfast coverage of North Yorkshire. It is expensive to install the infrastructure to less populated rural areas, planning issues for poles prefer underground but expensive. 1,300 premises (out of approx. 13,000) in the NYM will not get superfast but should have at least 10mb.
- Moorsweb (private company) cover 2,500 premises.
- Gigabit new programme to be run by central government consultation now open – will involve local authorities to engage with communities. NY split in to 3 so will run at different times.
- Reboot NY donation of unwanted IT to be reconditioned and given out to people who need them.

- The connectivity will feed in to the Management Plan with the aim to gain 100% connectivity – not necessarily superfast speeds. Coordinate with others laying pipes/cables to put ducting in readiness for connecting new houses etc.
- Mobile phone companies have little incentive for sharing networks so mast sites are placed where they are easy to do (landowners and usage). Planning issues are also there as masts are more visible higher up. Michael Grayson working on rural network to get sharing of masts/networks between mobile phone companies. Overseas networks roam and just use what is available – not so here roaming is not legally allowed in the UK.
- Phase 4 is wireless earlier phases are wired. Wireless providers submitted better tenders. Preferable to have fibre to home.
- There is a programme from central government £5m and service providers put in same to see how they can share masts. Emergency services have got their own masts/connectivity.

Management Plan

- Concern over funding for plans and work. Thornton le Dale have a conservation/character assessment management plan picks up what is important to residents/community but is there the finance to fund the work in that plan. Funding may not be an issue the Government seems positive recovery. There has been an increase in planning applications (120% above normal). There is an enormous amount of activity in tourism providers, visitor economy and expecting an influx of visitors. Government putting funding in to landscapes and wildlife, need for funding for more protected areas. There is an awareness of possible financial challenges. The plan will show what we aspire to; want to do and what we can do. Funding is from central government but also externally funded projects/grant.
- The plan is for 20 years but reviewed every 5 years.
- 15 UK National Parks are part of a visitor management group to prepare for an increase in tourism numbers. We have a sense of where people will go, the activities and where we need extra support. Ranger team and volunteers out and better coordination with local police forces. Challenges in short term dealing with pressures of visitor numbers but in the longer term the national parks are a source of health and wellbeing and are very important. The North York Moors NPA is preparing to do a Recreation and Visitor Access Strategy in tandem with Management Plan.
- The new Management Plan is a partnership and collaboration with others about what can be done together through collective sources of funding.
- The pandemic has been a great learning exercise, working from home is more feasible and perhaps this will encourage people to move to rural areas but may

price out the local people. It should be an opportunity for new businesses to employ local people and try to deliver more low cost affordable housing.

- Thornton le Dale has community volunteer groups working to enhance the village. A large part of the plan is nature recovery and ecosystems which are high in people's concerns. The beck is being degraded with silt deposition and affects the pond, also intermittent sewage. This is becoming an eyesore due to mud and silt and will adversely affect wildlife. Local MP has received a complaint about this. As a result of this, 2 volunteer groups (village hub and Thornton Beck group) have withdrawn their labour which was to help Park to prevent weed and algae growth. How does the National Park intend to maintain the beck and pond in the future and can National Park put any pressure on EA to work with National Park to maintain watercourses to acceptable standards?
- The National Park Authority is aware of the issues and are in touch with the Environment Agency to deal with these issues. The Authority will report back to Thornton le Dale and inform of any progress
- Pollution is an issue in other areas across the country with a recent Panorama programme highlighting this. Perhaps the Management Plan could include potential solutions and actions. In the Esk Valley a number of sewage works are repeatedly discharging untreated sewage in to the River Esk. Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water and Northumberland Water are key partners and will address this through the Management Plan process.
- Population of the National Park has fallen whilst national population gone up. National Park should take on the challenges of population in Park reducing in the Plan. There is a need to get balance right: between 1960 and 2000 pop increased by 5% and 2000 to now has decreased having lost 5%. To seek to try and address this a separate discussion group, Living and Working Landscapes, has been set up to see what can be done to secure a more stable population. The Local Plan has been amended to be less restrictive to help to get the balance right.
- Thornton le Dale has plenty of volunteers who want to work with and support the National Park in what they do but don't seem to get enough support for that voluntarily sector, dissuaded rather than supported. Not just the Beck group, but the playing fields association. The National Park want to charge them for accessing the playing fields with a licence. Surely we should be saying we want to support young people to get out and participate in sports and enjoy landscape and playing the fields rather than charging them for the benefit of doing that. We need to work together we appreciate the voluntary groups and not going to charge you to do things within the village.

The Authority is aware of the situation, is working towards a solution and in touch with the Playing Field Association.

This is the start of the engagement process on the Management Plan. The meeting on Zoom is not an ideal mechanism but further engagement will follow. The draft plan will not

be done until November so looking at how we can engage better before then. Feedback and comments can be made on the website [New Management Plan \(northyorkmoors.org.uk\)](http://northyorkmoors.org.uk)

Thanks to everyone for joining the meeting and contributing, the comments as well as the local issues will be taken on board. Next meeting in October will hopefully be in a village hall and in person.