

CONNECTED

the newsletter of the
ENGLISH NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITIES
ISSUE 2 May 2007



ENPAA LAUNCHES

ENPAA finally launched on Thursday 24th May, the European Day of Parks.

While ENPAA represents the National Park Authorities on a wide range of policy issues, our press release highlighted the dangers posed to the National Parks by climate change, and was sent out to a wide media audience. ENPAA will be using this opportunity to strengthen links with the media in the coming months and to raise the profile of National Park Authorities with key decision makers.

ENPAA received encouraging messages of support from the National Trust, Natural England, VisitBritain, CNP, Barry Gardiner MP (Defra Minister for Biodiversity, Landscape and Rural Affairs) and Clive

Betts MP (Chairman of the All Party Parliamentary Group on National Parks). Barry Gardner MP said: **"National Parks are a source of inspiration and provide opportunities for facing up to challenges such as climate change, securing vibrant rural communities and adopting more healthy lifestyles. I am encouraged by the Parks' initiative to work collaboratively on common issues. Much will be achieved by presenting a coordinated view to Government and others. I wish you all the very best for your new organisation"**.

Dr Helen Phillips (Chief Executive, Natural England) said: **"Natural England warmly welcomes the launch of ENPAA as**

the collective voice of the nine English National Park Authorities. Our shared interest in ensuring that England's finest landscapes and wildlife are protected and improved for the benefit of present and future generations provides us with a strong foundation for working together. We look forward to strengthening this partnership in the years to come."

(Please see our press release for full details of all endorsements.)

ENPAA has worked with MPs on an Early Day Motion (EDM) highlighting the multiple benefits that National Parks provide and seeking continuing support from government for National Park Authorities.

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Coast to coast path near Keld, Yorkshire Dales: YDNPA (Gordon Hatton)

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Renewable Energy Position

In March 2007 the Chairs agreed a new ENPAA Policy Position Statement on Renewable Energy.

This sets out a positive agenda with NPAs striving to be exemplars in encouraging energy conservation and improved energy efficiency – and demonstrating how the use of renewable energy can be achieved without damaging the special qualities of the National Parks. The Statement also makes clear that NPAs will resist proposals for large scale developments that are inappropriate to the setting of the National Parks.

The occasional rejection of a wind farm application might grab the headlines – but any suggestion that NPAs don't support renewables is wide of the mark. A huge amount of work is being done by NPAs to encourage suitable renewable energy projects. NPAs are putting policy into practice. From the figures currently available NPAs have been approving between 85 – 100% of planning applications for renewable energy since 1997.

Over £710,000 of the Sustainable Development Fund has been used to support 53 renewable energy projects.

NPAs are supporting a broad range of renewable energy technologies through policies; their own energy consumption; and through initiatives with remote rural communities. The Government's recent Energy White Paper signals a boost for renewable energy, and a relaxation in planning controls. ENPAA is calling on the Government to recognise the good work already being done; to safeguard protected areas from inappropriate developments; and to support NPAs wider role in tackling climate change.

Renewable Energy Position at: <http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk/enpaa/policy.htm>

Energy White Paper at: <http://www.gnn.gov.uk/environment/fullDetail.asp?ReleaseID=286525&NewsAreaID=2&NavigatedFromDepartment=False>

Welcome...

...to *Connected*, brought to you by the team at ENPAA. Our quarterly newsletter will:

- keep members informed of what ENPAA is doing on their behalf;
- Keep staff informed of ENPAA's activities; and
- Provide support and profile the activities of the Working Groups.

We hope that you enjoy the publication and if you would like to make a suggestion for the newsletter, please email

theresa.stabb@enpaa.org.uk

The next issue of *Connected* is due in August 2007.

ENPAA launches *continued from page 1...*

Tabled by Clive Betts MP, the EDM has cross-party support.

ENPAA will be writing to encourage all English MPs – not just those whose constituencies cover the National Parks – to sign the EDM so that we can send a strong message to gov-

ernment about the importance of our National Parks. A list of signatories will appear on the ENPAA website when finalised.

Following our launch, ENPAA – in conjunction with CNP – is currently organising a meeting of the All Party Parliamentary Group

on National Parks, to be held on 4th July 2007 in Parliament. We hope that this will be an opportunity to highlight key issues from across the National Parks, and to encourage further support from MPs and Lords.

We have also created a

new set of ENPAA website pages where you can find out more about ENPAA and the work being done. Policy Position Statements and press releases are also available to download. We will be adding further material in the coming months.

Press release at: <http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk/enpaa/pressreleases/pr-climatechange.htm>

ENPAA website at: <http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk/enpaa.htm>

Responsible Tourism: our view

Delivering responsible tourism in National Parks is important in helping us deliver on our purposes to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the areas and to promote opportunities for the public understanding and enjoyment of their special qualities.

Tourism is also a significant income generator for many communities. Given climate change and wider

pressures on our environment, NPAs have a key role in:

Promoting lower carbon tourism

We can encourage UK residents to make longer staying visits in the UK rather than travel abroad by plane. This would contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and help promote a wider social responsibility of the need to protect and enhance our natural and

cultural heritage, and support thriving rural economies.

Encouraging good practice

The Sustainable Development Fund and other sources can promote innovative, responsible tourism projects, though given limited resources, greater focus is needed on sharing good practice.

Facilitating car-free travel

We need to work with partners like DCMS, DFT,

Defra and Natural England to see a coherent strategy that promotes car free travel to leisure destinations including within protected areas.

Over the coming months we will look to develop our position on responsible tourism and encourage government and decision makers to provide the necessary support to make a tangible difference.

Quarrying Quandary

Quarrying continues to have a significant and damaging impact on the special qualities of the National Parks. This issue was recently raised with Ministers by the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on National Parks. Quarries can scar landscapes and intrude into the tranquillity of natural environments and exploit finite resources. The transport of the quarried material, frequently by heavy lorries, brings the associated effects of noise, dust and pressure for new road development. The recent case of Backdale Quarry in the Peak District has once again put the spotlight on the negative effects.

Urgent action needs to be taken within Government. In a statement, the APPG has said:

- the aim of Government minerals planning policies should be to reduce the overall demand for mineral extraction, particularly from National Parks; maximising opportunities for use of recycled materials from outside Na-

tional Parks and ensure the more sustainable use of finite natural resources.

- the Government needs to support National Park Authorities in the handling of complex quarrying cases, including financial support where it is in the public interest to revoke planning permissions. Visitors and residents should be confident that the Government will ensure the special qualities of National Parks are protected.

- the Government should introduce a differential rate within the Aggregates Levy for primary aggregates extraction within National Parks.

It goes on to say that the Quarry Products Association should be encouraged to review its four point plan for National Parks and re-launch it in 2008. This should include a review of the remaining old permissions in National Parks. ENPAA warmly welcomes the APPG's willingness to raise this important issue.

Working Group Spotlight: England Agriculture Group

Co-ordinator: Peter Barfoot (North York Moors National Park Authority)

Appropriate land management and agricultural activity are crucially important for the delivery of aims and objectives in all of the National Parks.

Many of the extensive farming systems in National Parks are particularly sensitive and vulnerable to changes in public policy, and to the delivery mechanisms of UK and EU funding streams. This has, in recent years, been an area of rapid change, particularly in the uplands. In view of this, an England Agriculture Working Group was formed to bring together experience and knowledge from across the National Parks, and to ensure a much more coordinated response to the issues facing farming. The Group's aims are to enable National Parks to discuss areas of mutual interest in respect of agriculture, land management and sustainable rural development. It also aims to share best practice and experience, and to coordinate a common view on some of the issues affecting National Parks as a whole. The Group also coordinates responses to Government consultations and advocates changes in legislation and the way that schemes operate.

Some of the most pressing issues facing the Group include ensuring that:

- the National Park perspective and 'front line' experience is heard at a national level by government and the EU, and that National Park interests are addressed by policy makers.
- a high level of communication, coordination, understanding and liaison is maintained with Defra and Natural England.
- agri-environment schemes work for farmers and land managers on the ground and that future schemes are adequately resourced and designed to meet the needs of land managers in National Parks, to deliver value for money, and to help provide a range of public benefits
- the need to retain the social fabric of working agricultural communities in National Parks is recognised and reflected in

future CAP reform

- the proposed Upland Reward Scheme adequately meets the needs of upland farmers and landscapes in National Parks

- the efforts to diversify and support farm incomes and businesses (in an environmentally sustainable and appropriate way) are maintained with adequate resources

- landscape and cultural heritage objectives are incorporated into current and future schemes, as well as biodiversity issues

- land management policy in National Parks continues to support and maintain extensive farming landscapes - with their many special qualities - into the future, and helps National Parks adapt to the challenges of climate change and the changing social and technological environment

The group's recent achievements include:

- the production of a Land Management Funding Protocol for joint working with English Nature, Countryside Agency and Rural Development Service (RDS) (currently under review with Natural England)

- influencing policy development as it affects National Parks at a national level and working closely with Defra across a range of important areas

- developing a joint National Park perspective on agriculture and land management

- effectively sharing experience and best practice

In the coming year, the group hopes to review how it interacts and works with the changing government agencies, especially Natural England. In particular, it aims to review and reinvigorate the Protocol with Natural England.

The England Agriculture Group meets around 3-4 times per year, depending on need. The next meeting will be held on 13th June in London.

CONSULTATIONS

This is not a comprehensive list. Please email theresa.stabb@enpaa.org.uk for further information.

Heritage Protection for the 21st Century White Paper (DCMS) deadline 01/06/07

http://www.culture.gov.uk/Reference_library/Consultations/2007_current_consultations/hpr_whitepaper07.htm

Draft Climate Change Bill (Defra) deadline 12/06/07

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/climatechange-bill/index.html>

Transition from CPA to Comprehensive Area Assessment (Audit Comm.) deadline 14/06/07

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/caa/downloads/TransitionfromCPAtoCAAconsultation.pdf>

Consultation on Unitary Govt (CLG) deadline 22/06/07

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/94/ProposalsforfutureunitarystructuresStakeholderconsultation_id1509094.pdf

Changes to Permitted Development: Permitted Development Rights for Householder Microgeneration (CLG) deadline 27/06/07

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/367/ChangesToPermittedDevelopmentConsultationPaper1PermittedDevelopmentRightsforHou_id1509367.pdf

Draft Rural Development Programme for England 2007-2013 (Defra) deadline 05/07/07

<http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/rural-dev2007-13/index.htm>

Guidance on the Consenting Process for Onshore Generating Stations above 50Mw in England and Wales: An Energy Review consultation (DTI) deadline 03/08/07

<http://www.dti.gov.uk/consultations/page39308.html>

Planning for a Sustainable Future: Consultation (CLG) deadline 17/08/07

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/672/PlanningforaSustainableFutureConsultation_id1510672.pdf

Planning Performance Agreements: A new way to manage large-scale major planning applications (CLG) deadline 17/08/07

http://www.communities.gov.uk/pub/663/PlanningPerformanceAgreementsanewwaytomanagelargescalemajorplanningapplications_id1510663.pdf

DIARY OF EVENTS

Relating to English NPA's
INTERNAL

6th June 2007

ENPOG: London

5th July

Joint Improvement Group: London

10th July

Development Plan Officers Group: North York Moors

11th July

ENPAA AGM: North York Moors

12th July

UK-ANPA Executive Meeting and AGM: North York Moors

30th July-3rd August

National Parks Week

1st August

Communications Group: venue TBC

DIARY OF EVENTS

Relating to English NPA's
EXTERNAL

4th June

TUC - 'Environment Policy and the Climate Change Bill' conference

6th June

APPG - Climate Change Group meeting

11th June

House of Commons CLG Select Committee hearing on Planning White Paper

14th June

Commission for Rural Communities Conference on Rural Affordable Housing

18th June

Health and the Natural Environment: Natural England Conference

20th June

House of Lords Debate on Local Government Bill

27th June

New Prime Minister announced with Ministerial re-shuffle to follow

4th July

APPG Meeting National Parks

5th July

David Miliband - Speech to LGA Annual conference and exhibition 2007

10th July

Green Alliance Summer Reception

18th July

CNP Council Meeting

ENPAA (the English National Park Authorities Association) is the body that represents the National Park Authorities in England. It was established in April 2006 and provides a collective voice for the nine National Park Authorities.

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The next issue of **Connected** is due in August 2007. If you would like to make a suggestion for the newsletter, please email Theresa.

This newsletter complements **UK ANPA eNews**, a quarterly update of the issues and innovations from around the National Parks. UK ANPA eNews at:

<http://www.nationalparks.gov.uk/newsletter>



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