Moors for All

Conference Report – 28 January 2005

Enabling equal participation and access to moorland heritage in the Peak District

Edited by Dan Boys, Moor Care Ranger

Contents

Introduction

'Moors for All' is project that is being developed to enable everyone equal access and participation to the moorland heritage of the Peak District who wants to enjoy it. The principle aim is to identify where physical access improvement could be made in the moorland environment of the Peak District as it is this area where the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) have allocated funds.

However, access is not just hindered by physical obstacles, but also social, cultural and psychological barriers and as they are very much interwoven we need to look at the whole picture to understand the problems faced by many who are thinking or trying to access the moors. In order to approach the Moors for All concept holistically we are endeavouring to embrace all these issues by consulting with those who face these very barriers. By undertaking this consultation phase in the form of a conference it not only allows the delegates to appreciate the good work that goes on across the UK, but brings all the relevant parties together to discuss and debate these issues together.

The following is a summary of the day's proceedings

Moors for the Future
Chris Dean – Project Manager

Moors for the Future is a partnership project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund over five years. The over-riding priority of the plan is to restore the most degraded and important characteristic moorland areas across the Peak District for the benefit of all sections of the local community and for all visitors to the National Park.

As well as this restoration, the project aims to enhance people's experience of moorlands through improved interpretation and easier access for disabled people, and to involve them in learning how to protect and take care of the landscape for the future, through education, volunteering, and research.

The three agreed principle objectives of the management plan are thus:

1. To restore and conserve moorland sites most damaged by access and recreational pressures.

In a survey of the Dark Peak (one of the three main moorland areas of the Peak District) there was an estimated 1.2% (6.5 km2) of bare moorland, and 5% (26.8km2) in a semi-bare condition (Phillips et al, 1981). This scale of degraded moorland is higher than in any other area in the UK. This project aims to restore 3km2 of the worst degraded areas of the Dark Peak which have been caused by accidental fires and which now are extensive bare peat landscapes suffering severe erosion (up to 10mm a year).

The project further aims to restore 19 km of trampled moorland along paths which have become a series of deep gullies and widening scars (up to 11m width in places). It also aims to trial ways of reducing recreational disturbance to bird populations along 17 km of paths which cross specific sensitive sites. A major restoration plan over 5 years has been drawn up to achieve this.

2. To enhance visitors' and local peoples' experience of moorland heritage and encourage greater care.

The important story of the moorlands landscape, its history, land-use, cultural associations and of the natural and heritage qualities that make it nationally important today, is poorly told through currently limited and out of date interpretation and other information facilities. As well as this, few opportunities have been developed to raise visitors' and local peoples' awareness of the moorlands' fragile nature and of how they can help safeguard it for the future.

In response to these issues, the project aims to develop a new 'moor care' initiative, to make a major improvement in interpretation provision, and where appropriate to make access to moors easier. A plan for upgrading information

facilities has been drawn up, including new interpretation at the important moorland Visitor Centre presently proposed at Edale (the gateway for the Pennine Way). A range of 3 year programmes to launch a 'moor care' initiative, involve people in the development of local interpretation and raise volunteering in the moorlands is also being proposed.

3. To establish a learning centre to develop expertise about how to protect moorlands for the future and to meet the education and research needs of specific groups and the wider public.

Safeguarding the moors for the future above all relies on developing and sharing our knowledge and expertise and educating new generations about how to protect and conserve them in years to come. An important investment in such 'learning' is being proposed by the project. Rather than one actual centre, the moorland learning centre will be a number of facilities and initiatives involving: access to important moorland research and records, providing a range of educational opportunities to young people, and developing formal sustainability measures by which to monitor the future health of the moorlands.

The proposed plan would provide the necessary information base and facilities for people to access, and to launch a range of programmes to meet the learning needs of schools, further/higher education, professional and special interest groups, and of the wider public.

Enhancing Peoples Experience and Encouraging Greater Care
Dan Boys – Moor Care Ranger

- Today's conference is just one of a number of projects that look at enhancing peoples experience and encouraging greater care of the moorland heritage in the Peak District
- The `moor care` initiative is being developed to raise awareness of threats to moorland heritage
  - In November 2004 we launched our website (www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk) and over the coming year we will be developing a `bulletin service`, a one-stop shop for visitor information, including events, work in progress, weather reports and access restrictions
  - The single biggest threat to moors are `accidental` summer fires and during the week 16-24 April we launch our 'Fire Kills' leaflet at a series of roadshows across the district. All six fire services operating in the Park, plus the projects partners will be involved, giving people the opportunity to meet those that fight moorland fires
- This fire awareness week will herald the start of the moorland-themed events programme, culminating in a 'Moorland Festival' between 10 and 25 September.
- The project are also very keen in involving the community in our work and we currently have two volunteer projects underway:
  - The gardening project where schools and community groups help grow cottongrass to plant out on the moors. Cottongrass has extensive roots and helps stabilise the bare peat, but germination on the moors is poor due to the higher than average acid conditions caused in part by air pollution
  - Volunteers are spreading cut heather, delivered by helicopter, on the bare peat to create a micro-climate for newly sown heather and grass seed and protect them from wind and frost
- We are also endeavouring to improve access to and within the moorlands:
  - We are currently negotiating with Derbyshire County Council on how to improve public transport services and the project will hopefully be subsidising services which improve connections to a within the moors
  - Today's conference was organised so that we could bring relevant people together to primarily discuss and hopefully find solutions to physical access barriers in the Peak District moorlands (as indicated initially by both the consultation process of the Moors for the Future project and the Heritage Lottery Fund). However, we took the opportunity to also investigate the social, cultural and psychological barriers people experience, as these issues are interwoven. We therefore hope that today's events will give:
    - `users` a sounding board in which to highlight real issues of moorland access barriers in the Peak District either as specific sites where improvements can be made or, for example, where information is lacking
    - `providers` the opportunity to understand these barriers and learn what can be done to address them

Rural White Paper 2000
 "By 2005, we will carry out a full diversity review of how we can encourage more people with disabilities, more people from ethnic minorities, more people from the inner cities, and more young people to visit the countryside and participate in country activities. Initially, we will do this by seeking their views on what they need to enjoy the countryside. **Then we will draw up a plan of action.**"

Diversity and equality
- 17.5% people with long term disabilities
- 9.7% people aged 16-24
- 9.1% people from BME communities roughly equals 24.2% of English population. Visitor data does not reflect this representation.

What are the drivers?
- Legislative
  - o Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000 covers the provision of goods and services
  - o Disability Discrimination Act 1996 – from October 04 covers the provision of goods and services
- Compliance
  - o "We will target groups, especially the young, disadvantaged people and ethnic minority groups from our surrounding towns and cities to visit, understand and enjoy the National Park".
  - o 'Working Together for People 2004/09'
- Social
  - o physical health
  - o emotional well being
  - o social cohesion
  - o family and friends
- Economic
  - o £14 billion annual disabled spend
  - o £16 billion annual BME spend

Scoping research
Key research findings were lack of:
- effective - or any - evaluation
- evidence of what works - and doesn't
- evidence of benefits to users or providers
- baseline data - essential for measuring change

Phase 1: Evidence
September 03 to March 05
- develop evaluation framework
- gather national level evidence
- collect baseline data - national and local

Provider awareness
- role of evaluation and monitoring not appreciated
- lack of confidence in engaging with 'difference'
- concern about appropriate language
- lack of awareness of disabled people's needs other than physical mobility
- protecting land resource uppermost.

Needs and perceptions of under represented groups
- lack of confidence
- lack of appropriate information
- frustration from disabled people
- protecting land resource uppermost
- very strong desire to engage with the outdoors

Collect baseline datasite surveys
- under representation
- day Visitor Survey and booster samples
- catchment surveys

Local data collection
- Sheffield BME   8.8%
- Manchester BME 19.0%
- Peak Park visits   5.0%

Phase 2: Action research
- July 04 for three years
- test tools that can be mainstreamed
- evaluation from start to gather evidence
- Beyond the Boundary – Bradford and Yorkshire Dales
- By All Means – Kent
- Stepping out – Coventry and Warwickshire
- Finding Common Ground – Plymouth

Phase 3: Reporting
- Report to Defra end 2005
     - Diversity Review
     - outline Action Plan
- Five Regional Roadshows February/March 05
- National conference Spring 06
- Publications including research reports

Diversity Action Plan
Rural Strategy, July 2004
"…..Defra will put an action plan on diversity in place in 2005/6 in the light of the Countryside Agency's Diversity Review findings to enable more people from diverse backgrounds to make informed choices about taking up recreation opportunities in the countryside".

Inclusive Environments – The needs of people with disabilities
Phil Chambers

Who are " the disabled"?

- Clearly not an homogenous group
- Around 15% of the population is recognised to have a disability;
- Equates to nearly 77,000 people in Sheffield alone;
- Approximately 5% of disabled people are full time wheelchair users;
- Equates to more than 3,800 in Sheffield alone;
- More than 2 million people in the UK have sight problems – blind or visual impairment.

Defining Disability

- Disability is defined as" physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on the ability to carry out day to day activities" – not necessarily related to health.
- 2nd December 1996; made it unlawful for service providers to treat disabled people differently for reason related to their disability.

  - ➢ Applies if services are free or charged for – it therefore applies to free events, guided walks etc, as well as physical environments:-
  - ➢ Information;
  - ➢ Websites,
  - ➢ Events

Timeline.

From 1 October 1999 - a service provider has had to take reasonable steps to:

- change a practice, policy or procedure which makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of its services;
- provide an auxiliary aid or service if it would enable (or make it easier for) disabled people to make use of its services;
- provide a reasonable alternative method of making its services available to disabled people where a physical feature makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of the services.

1st October 2004 -"Panacea Day"?

- From 1 October 2004 - where a physical feature makes it impossible or unreasonably difficult for disabled people to make use of services, a service provider has to take reasonable steps to:
- remove the feature; or
- alter it so that it no longer has that effect; or
- provide a reasonable means of avoiding it; or
- provide a reasonable alternative method of making the services available.

- The Act is "Anticipatory"!

DDA(95) Spirit of the Act
- Part III of the Act – The Government & DRC launched a process of consultation to underpin the legislation;

   "A society where all disabled people can participate fully as equal citizens";
- The DDA should not be viewed as a problem –it has benefits to all people "Barrier Free Access benefits Everyone".-It may add to profitability – Domino Pizza analogy;
- Think about Access for All & Universal Design - "the design of products and environments that are useable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialist design" *Centre for Universal Design 1997.*

Meeting the Spirit of the Act.
   - Aspire to Inclusive Environments
   - "meeting the needs of all visitors whatever, their age; gender or level of disability".
- Review and develop "inclusive" policies that everyone understands the implications of;
- Apply recognised Standards – BT Countryside for All;
- Consult and encourage participation of disabled   people;
- Aspire to Green Flag and Green Pennant,

"Begin with the End in Mind" - Stephen Covey
- Highs – influence of Inclusive organisations
   - Fieldfare Trust – Countryside for All;
   - Sensory Trust
   - BEN Mosaic project
   - SUSTRANS – cycling for all;
   - Pushing back barriers and capital resources
   - DDA(95) & HLF
- Lows are mainly due to poor consultation and communication,
   - Reading an Access for All dissertation;
   - Working with an emerging users led countryside access group;
   - Talking to a young disabled woman;
   - Hearing from Open Country
   - Snake Summit.

   - **Work With** not for.

And Finally
Remember you cannot change impairments, but you can change the environments, physical and social that cause barriers to participation and engagement in outdoor leisure programmes.

'Access for All'
A presentation for the 'Moors for All' Conference 2005
Judy Ling Wong OBE. Black Environment Network

Black Environment Network
- BEN is established to work for full ethnic participation in the built and natural environment. We use the word `black` symbolically. We work with black, white and other ethnic communities. There is no such thing as a pure environmental project. A so-called pure environmental project is one which has rejected its social and cultural context

Access will lead to releasing benefits and a vast missing contribution
- Quality of life
- New interests in environmental issues, heritage, outdoor activities, careers
- New aspiration to participate in representation - National Park Boards etc.
- Volunteering for the care and protection of the built and natural environment
- The Black Pound is worth £32billion

Barriers to access include:
- No knowledge or experience of the countryside
- Not feeling welcome
- Fear of racism
- Lack of transport
- Cultural needs not attended to
- Costs too much
- Lack of support
- Unsuitable clothing and lack of equipment
- No peer experience to refer to
- Too far away
- Uncertainty

Working for social inclusion means:
- Commitment at the top of the organisation, releasing personnel time and resources
- Training organisational staff to gain skills to work effectively with newcomers
- Consulting, resourcing and working in partnership with intermediary organisations that can facilitate contact and offer advice and support
- Consulting and supporting those who offer countryside activities to enable them to connect and gain skills to work confidently with excluded groups

Methodology - partnership work to increase access
- Intermediary approaches community group to explain what is on offer and nurtures interest
- Facilitation of contact between countryside organisations and community group leaders
- Support in accessing information, drawing up a suitable programme, and running a visit
- Support in evaluation and further planning
- Capacity building - training to run safe trips, accessing funding, addressing needs, publicity
- Strengthening the framework for access

Download guidance and resources   www.ben-network.org.uk

BEN training and advice services Info@ben-network.org.uk

IMPROVNG ACCESS TO PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND THE COUNTRYSIDE
Tom Bindoff

Who uses your local rights of way now?

Who do you want to be able to use them?
- Walkers
- Grey generation walkers
- Walkers with dogs
- Family groups with young children
- People with physical impairment
- People using mobility vehicles
- Horse riders
- Cyclists

Improvements aimed at any particular group of users improves access for everyone

What are the major barriers to providing good access?
- Condition of the path
- Type of barriers across the path
- Conditions of these barriers

National standards for gaps, gates and stiles: BS 5709 (2001)
Objective to provide good access for legitimate users while providing stock proof structures where landowners have an agricultural need.

Concept of the least restrictive option:
- Gap
- Two way gate
- One way gate
- Kissing gate
- Stile

Easy of quick ways to remove barriers across paths:
- Remove redundant stiles
- Tie open gates when stock control is needed
- Improve existing stiles
- Make sure any new barriers comply with BS 5709

Try a `bottom up` approach
- Use of volunteers
- Identification of redundant barriers and their removal
- Identification of sites where stiles can be upgraded to gates
- Identification of sites where stiles have to be retained but can be improved
- Investigate 'lost ways'

Adapt a `can do` approach
- Every barrier across a path which is improved makes access easier for all users
- It is possible to resolve conflicting needs
- It is possible to provide good access for all

Rambling for Disabled People: Surely an Impossibility?
Dr Mike Bruton MBE, Chairman of The Disabled Ramblers

A. Background
I am unable to walk but I am an enthusiastic rambler, using country paths and tracks. This is possible, because I use wheels – wheelchairs, pavement scooters and buggies. The Disabled Ramblers evolved from a sponsored Ridgeway Rickshaw pull in 1990. The Disabled Drivers Association then set up a challenge event for pavement vehicles. Out of this emerged the Disabled Ramblers – a registered Charitable Company. We now run 16 supported rambles each year across England and Wales

B. How do we do it?
- A typical ramble has from 10 – 20 disabled participants
- They use a range of pavement vehicles
- These come under highway legislation, and are allowed anywhere pedestrians go.

Three Classes:
- manual wheelchairs,
- powerchairs, scooters & buggies: max speed 4mph
- powerchairs, scooters & buggies, max speed 4mph on paths; 8mph on roads

These vehicles very varied, from very light, easy to transport, to heavy duty
Their ability in the Countryside varied: need heavy duty for rougher going.

C. Types of Ramble: usually up to 8 miles per day
We define 3 types
Easy
- along mainly level, well surfaced, mainly smooth, mainly all weather paths. OK for most pavement vehicles

Moderate
- hills, up to 1 in 8, total climb <130m per day. Surface some stones, few ruts. OK medium weight scooters, buggies, well supported and/or adapted wheelchairs

Challenging
- hills, sometimes short bits 1 in 5, total climb <300m. Surface rough, some ruts. BEST for heavy duty scooters and buggies

D. Problems and Obstacles
Worst are manmade – steps, stiles, most 'kissing' gates and narrow bridges (1m or less). Surface conditions – too narrow, steep side slope, mudbaths, rocks, deep ruts. Examples of rambles:
  i)   New Forest: many miles haul roads: mostly moderate, or easy going
  ii)   Quantock Hills: miles of tracks: challenging hills or moderate on level
  iii) Peak District: old rail routes, reservoir paths offer moderate or easy going
  iv)   Thames Path: mainly moderate or easy, but many impassable barriers

Much more thought and support now given recommend:
- easy paths in developed locations
- a zone concept – moderate going in forestry areas, old railways and cycle paths
- challenging in undeveloped or remote places

E. The Zone Concept
1. Three Zones proposed
- Zone A: eg BT Countryside for All, very high standard in developed places. Suitable and needed in highly developed sites, toilet access and good car parks
- Zone B: allows some stones, hills, paths not necessarily all weather. Forestry areas, Sustrans cycle trails, Thames Trails, Railway paths
- Zone C: defined in 'Sense and Accessibility' published by Countryside Agency. Undeveloped areas eg Quantock Hills, Exmoor, remote parts of Peak District?

F. Disabled Ramblers have also organised Expeditions!
1. Thames path: Oxford to Marlow (64 miles) : major problems – kissing gates!
2. Bath to Maidenhead (100 miles)
- good going: Kennet and Avon Canal towpath for cycle use: Bath to Devizes
- tough going: Ridgeway Trail, 40 mile byway, smashed by motor vehicle usage
- easy going: quiet lanes, Wallingford to Reading – fairly safe with care
- easy again: Thames path near Reading.
3. South Downs Way (bridle path). Challenging hills, horse steps and horse stiles
4. Mountain Climbs
- Snowdon – battery changes and ramps needed
- Pen y Fan – ramps and very low geared buggies needed (3 made the summit)
- Cairngorm – by funicular railway support track and over summit boulderfield

G. Final Messages
- Disabled Rambling is feasible with proper aids
- Can tackle very varied going
- Disabled Ramblers find it very exhilarating and fun
- Offers new lease of life for some and enjoyment for many
- Needs developing!

Web-site: www.disabledramblers.co.uk

Email: chairman@disabledramblers.co.uk
or: mike@thebrute.freeserve.co.uk

Making it Happen
Andy Maginnis

Worcestershire County Council has a commitment to improving access to the countryside and urban greenspace for groups that are currently under-represented. This includes black and minority ethnic communities, people with mobility problems or other physical disabilities, people with learning disabilities, low income families, young people, older people and so on.

As part of its commitment, Worcestershire County Council's Countryside Service held a seminar to raise awareness of the issues amongst land managers and advocacy and support groups. The morning was devoted to presentations on engaging BME communities; people with physical and learning disabilities, and young people. However, in the afternoon land managers were asked to make pledges to implement tangible actions on the ground that would improve participation amongst the under-represented groups. Similarly, the advocacy and support groups were invited to commit to aiding the land managers to deliver on their pledges.

The event was extremely successful in terms of raising awareness of the issues, networking and being a catalyst for real projects that are already making a difference on the ground.

Summary of workshop on
Moors for All – Making a Difference
Chair: Dan Boys, Moors for the Future

Why do some people visit the moorlands, while others do not? By beginning to answer this question we can develop a strategy that will enable equal access and participation for those who want visit and appreciate the moorland heritage of the Peak District.

Exercise 1: Representation – who do you think uses the moors?

Well represented	Under-represented
- Recreationalists –Walkers, Mountain Bikers, Climbers, Fell Runners etc - Conservation Groups - Bird watchers - Photographers, artists etc - Youth Groups, Duke of Edinburgh Award etc - Well educated (?)	- People with sensory impairments - Physically disabled people - Unfit people - Elderly - Inner-city populations - Minority ethnic groups - Young – disadvantaged - People with learning difficulties
What encourages them?	**What deters them?**
- Information - Networks - Challenge - Health benefits - Willingness to help - Curiosity - Family Culture - Natural Beauty - Fresh air	- Lack of Information - Lack of transport - Lack of knowledge/fear - Hostile environment - No sense of belonging - Lack of fitness - Inaccessible - No inclination - Lack of money

Discussion

- It is **difficult to distinguish what `group` they belong to** from simply looking at them
- some `users` could be placed in both categories, and it was felt that in most cases, people visited the moorland if their **desire was greater than the economic outlay**, but **without knowledge there was no desire.**

Exercise 2: Perceptions – words that describe the moors

Wild	Unique	Wilderness
Unspoilt	Contrast with urban	Freedom
Solitude	Purple	Windswept
Windy	Black	Historic
Rugged	Tranquil	Natural
Feeling of not belonging	Wide open spaces	Feeling of not belonging
Wild	Wildlife	Quiet
Unspoilt	Bleak	Rare habitats
Solitude	Wet	Grim
Windy	Rugged	Beautiful

Beauty is in the eye of the beholder. It is these very words that make the moors appealing for some and unappealing for others

Exercise 3: Bridging the Gap – how can we offer `Moors for All`?

1. Develop a marketing plan that uses a variety of approaches to reach different audiences
2. For people who are nervous of the moors or unsure about their fitness levels etc use `Phase-in` walks – start with short walks in less hostile areas and build up to moorland walks
3. For those who like challenge/new experiences, but have not had the opportunity to visit the moors then offer more adventurous events that are accessible to all
4. Themed events to attract different groups
5. Life long learning
6. Training people in specialist skills to bring out groups i.e. sign language
7. Training members of groups to lead moorland events i.e. encourage /offer greater opportunities for ethnic minorities to train as National Park Volunteer Rangers
8. Providing people with a safe environment to observe the moors i.e. Moorland Centre
9. Building partnerships with advocacy groups of under represented `users`
10. Greater dissemination of information
11. Ensure a positive first experience

The invitation to the 'Moors for All' conference gave delegates the opportunity to highlight barriers to accessing the Peak District moorlands that they or others had experienced and examples of good practise elsewhere. The following responses were returned:

- A lot of the access land is fragmented, and in places it is difficult for the public to differentiate where it starts and stops. It is easy to sign this where a right of way runs over the land, but where access stops and there is no boundary wall or fence, this cannot be signed all along the boundary. The majority of users are unwilling or cannot cross boundaries unless there is a gate or stile. Walls & fences are usually top wired with barbed wire, and are therefore difficult or dangerous to cross, thus planning walks is difficult.
- Holidaymakers etc may have difficulty accessing the Countryside Agency website (for news of access restrictions)
- Experience of running several 'taster navigation days' – was well responded to. This demonstrates the lack of confidence the public have in navigation (and that was over footpaths not open access moorland)
- There is the issue of public responsibility. We need to ensure that new visitors are aware of the responsibility they have to the land. The common misconception that it is OK to camp on the moors, or to rescue crows/magpies from Larson traps. Although not a barrier, it is a block to co-operative access.
- Some landowners still don't want any gates or stiles on their land, as they believe that this will stop anybody going onto their land. Some are being proved wrong and are now asking for work to be done. There are still others that are refusing (at the moment)
- We are generally putting in little wicket gates, but some landowners prefer stiles.
- In some places access is difficult but this is the nature of the terrain. In a lot of cases it would be absolutely impossible to make "easy" access
- Much of the moorland is not easily accessible by public transport.

Summary of workshop on

Working for People – Overcoming physical access barriers in the Peak Park moorlands

Chair: Nikki Wright, Peak District National Park Authority

From October 2004, service providers have to take <u>reasonable</u> steps to remove, alter or provide <u>reasonable</u> means of avoiding physical features which make it impossible or difficult for a disabled person to use the service.

What is reasonable?
- Not defined in legislation
- Only arrived at through case law
- May include service providers resources i.e. likely disruption etc.
- **Not reasonable to do nothing**

What are the barriers?

Physical	Non-physical
• Man-made • Natural	• Expectations • Information • Managers • Financial • Access to transport

Overcoming the barriers – What we can do?

- Tell people what they will find and where
- Provide aids for people to cope with environment as it is
- Alter the environment (but ask what people want!)
- Remove physical barriers where possible
- Change as little as possible, but as much as necessary
- Do what you can
- Work with the `least restrictive option` possible

Is zoning the answer?

Need to consider:
- Demand from users
- Distance from centres of population
- Associated facilities and services

- Current state of paths and associated routes
- Constraints – landscape, land use
- Connectivity
- Land manager interest

The Countryside Agency will publish advice in Spring 2005 that will look at three types of zone concerning this issue:

Zone A	Highest accessibility Standards	"Access for All"
Zone B		"Access for many"
Zone C	Lower Standards	"Access for some"

The following would require the highest accessibility standards:
- Routes that are well used and lead to popular destinations
- Paths that local people already use or would like to use
- Paths where there are, or will be accessible toilets, car parks etc
- Routes which people can get to, or will be able to, by public transport
- Paths leading to designated historic sites, high quality scenery or features of interest
- Routes which lead to or are part of longer accessible walks

How does this legislation impact on moorland sites?

Within the moorland area, access on paths beyond the lower level Visitor Centres and Car Parks and Trails becomes a difficult issue not only by virtue of its topography and difficult terrain but because in such open country `people expect to make their own way and not to have this environment changed to provide easy access` (taken from BT Countryside for All). The issue of such `open country` access is beyond the basic public service duties of removing access discrimination at service facilities, but is clearly an important opportunity in a National Park where the open landscape is the national heritage asset that the public should have appropriate access to.

Where can we improve physical access to the Peak District moorlands?

- Trails e.g. Tissington and High Peak, including links to these
- Derwent Valley

- Longendale
- Dovestones
- Goyt Valley

However, it is important to look at what currently exists and ensure consistency.

In addition, the invitation to the 'Moors for All' conference gave delegates the opportunity to highlight specific areas where physical access improvements could be made in the Peak District moorlands. The following responses were returned:

- Resurfacing the easy access route from Goyt's Lane car park to the closed tunnel on Wild Moor in the Goyt Valley. "Although not widely used by disabled people, it is popular with families and others who cannot tackle more challenging routes."
- Developing a "moorland experience" route for disabled people from Surprise View car park (2 miles east of Hathersage on A625). From western end of our car park head west towards Millstone Edge and viewpoint overlooking Hope Valley (approx 250m). It would be possible to excavate boulders and regrade surface to provide wheelchair accessible route to viewpoint (subject to approval by ecologists/EN). It might be possible to make a circular route returning thro' the access point at the rear of the car park thro' a kissing-gate. This would only be a short route but in a very popular and accessible location (regular bus service).
- Upper Burbage Bridge

Summary of workshop on
Communication Information
Chair: Phil Chambers, CEM

Much work has already been done to improve access to the countryside. However, if relevant information is not available or presented in an inappropriate manner then people cannot make an informed decision as to whether they want to visit. Providing clear, concise information is integral to the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1995.

Leaflet Accessibility

- Font
  - Plain style i.e. Arial
  - Size – 14 (minimum of 12)
- Contrasting Colours
- Uncluttered
- Avoid text over photographs/pictures
- Appropriate title for leaflet
- "work with, instead of for" your proposed audience

See table below for further guidance

Web Site Accessibility

There is a great deal of information on the World Wide Web regarding web access for people with disabilities. The coordination of information and advice guidelines regarding web access is through W3C and the Web Accessibility Initiative. This is an international initiative to set standards and guidelines in web accessibility. In the UK the Royal National Institute for the Blind is leading good practice approaches. Web accessibility is required by legislation in the UK and Europe. In the USA government departments are required to preclude organisations from obtaining government contracts if they do not offer services on an accessible web site. Legislation also applies in Australia.

Despite positive legislation and inclusive policies within EU membership states and the specific requirements within the

Disability Discrimination Act (1995) the RNIB is concerned that not enough websites are accessible to disabled people in general and people with Visual Impairments in particular. A survey of leading UK companies that offer on line shopping found that many who purported to offer accessible websites were found lacking when evaluated by people with visual impairments. A similar survey of companies in Ireland found that 94% of the 159 company websites viewed were not accessible to disabled people.

The RNIB and other organisations such as Loughborough University have published guidelines which provide support to people designing web sites so that everyone can use them. The principle of Universal Design is fundamental to designing for everyone. Accessible Design requires a range of adaptive techniques such as:-

Providing Text alternatives where graphics are provided;
Providing a clear colour contrast between text and backgrounds – black text on a white background or blue text on a yellow background are recommended;
Do not embellish text with *Italics*, <u>Underlining</u> or writing text in CAPITALS,
Avoid "plug ins" and JAVA script – offer HTML alternatives.

Designing web sites so that everyone can use them reflects a Social Model of disability which shows that an organisation recognises its responsibilities as a corporate citizen. It also makes good business sense to offer accessible websites as increasingly disabled people and older people are using the web to buy and learn about goods and services.

The RNIB emphasise the need and value of consulting with disabled people through the design and development process.

Hints on Designing Accessible Websites and Leaflets.

Colour – Choose a plain single colour background, avoid patterns and textures. Don't mix shades of similar colours.	Plain Backgrounds offer the best contrasts.	Choose clear contrasting colours. A darker shade contrasts more effectively.
Ensure that there is a Contrast between background and text. The choice of colours is less important than making sure they contrast.	Black on Contrasting Colour – white background is usually preferred	Blue and Yellow are preferred by some visually impaired people
Use plain text and avoid unnecessary effects – italics or long underlining. Align all text to the left, centred text is more difficult to read	*Text in italics and long underlining should be avoided.* *Known as the Wobbly Screen Effect.*	Don't Centre Text. It is often more difficult to read than left aligned text.
Do not present all text in Capital Letters	Use a normal mix of upper and lower case letters.	AVOID USING ONLY CAPITAL LETTERS AS THEY ARE MORE DIFFICULT TO READ. It can also give a psychological effect of shouting at the reader.
Images and Graphics – provide a text alternative to describe images		

Conclusion

In conclusion, the conference proved to be a very successful event, drawing a good mix of users and service providers that filled the venue. The high calibre of speakers set a firm foundation for the workshops that preceded them and very constructive debate was fuelled as a result. While the morning presentations gave a general overview of social inclusion and countryside access across the UK, the workshops focused on the moorlands of the Peak District and the specific issues that at present hinder equal access and participation.

These workshops were as valuable for what was said as what was not said, in so much as there were very few specific sites highlighted where delegates thought physical access improvements could be made on the moors. The reasons were twofold: many didn't want to see rather drastic changes made to the environment to accommodate wheelchairs etc, while others thought there were no obvious locations where subtle changes could be introduced to allow greater access. This gives Moors for the Future the opportunity to investigate and introduce some innovative and understated improvements in an environment that is considered inaccessible to many.

Since the event, a number of positive outcomes have already transpired. A meeting took place to develop a strategy that will encourage more BME communities to utilise the moorlands and we are now working closely with SHEBEEN and a number of community leaders in Sheffield on projects to diversify the Moors for the Future Moorland Festival into a multicultural event and encourage school and youth groups to visit the Park. In addition, as a direct result of the conference, the defunct Countryside Access group which looks at physical access issues in and around the Peak Park will be meeting again and will be fundamental in auditing any proposed works.