

APPENDIX 3: DRAFT

Statement of the principles of joint-working between Gwynedd Council and Snowdonia National Park in the field of rights of way and access to the countryside.

Gwynedd Council (CG) and the National Park Authority (NPA) recognise the need for joint working in the field of rights of way and access to the countryside with the aim of providing the best possible resources for local people and communities as well as for visitors to the area.

A great deal of joint working already occurs and it is expected that this will continue, the purpose of this statement is to introduce the principles that will be the basis to closer joint working between both bodies. The Statement is the first step that will lead to further discussions in order to agree and inform joint working for the coming years.

When establishing a joint working arrangement we have to be aware of the legislation that is the basis to the work of both Authorities in the areas of access and landscape conservation. Special attention should also be given to the relevance of new legislation such as the Environment Act and the Well-being of Future Generations Act. These acts emphasise methods of working that are based on joint working and co-ordination of the efforts of different bodies and agencies. It can be seen that developing and maintaining assets and access opportunities are in accordance with the principles of well-being, such as a prosperous economy, healthy population and cohesive and equal communities.

Principle 1: Prioritising

Establish the order to prioritise and share the workload, by taking these steps it has to be recognised that it is not practical to operate within rigid boundaries and the priorities and statutory requirements will mean that the work areas of both bodies will overlap at times.

How will this be achieved?

- SNP will prioritise work to maintain and manage the following paths/networks:
 1. Snowdon Paths.
 2. Upland Paths namely paths within a group (to be defined).
 3. Network of leisure paths and other paths created and promoted by SNP.

- CG will prioritise the maintenance work of public footpaths
 1. Within categories 1 and 2 of the Council's categorisation system that are not part of SNP's leisure network.
 2. The National Coastal Path

- CG will lead on legal matters associated with rights of way.

Principle 2: Communication

In order to act in accordance with the priorities agreed in Principle 1, it has to be ensured that there is open and fluent communication between the officers of both bodies.

How will this be achieved?

It should be ensured that the officers of both bodies dealing with access matters within the Park area are familiar with each other.

- The officers of both bodies will be familiar with each other's work areas and the statutory duties that fall on both bodies within the access and rights of way field.
- Formal meetings will be arranged occasionally to exchange information, however, emphasis will be placed on informal links between officers to discuss matters that arise and problem solving.
- Information about work programmes will be shared regularly and disseminated within both bodies.
- Communication and information sharing will occur early on as part of the development of new projects.
- Ways of sharing information kept on the technical systems of both bodies will be sought in order that both bodies have a correct record of the work undertaken on the access network.
- Guidelines will be prepared to explain how operational matters will be dealt with and to set standards consistent between both bodies.

Principle 3: Forward Planning and resources

Both bodies will agree on how to implement the Statement, this will include ensuring an understanding regarding the definition of uplands, sharing information and communication methods between Park and Council staff. Then it will be possible to proceed and draft a work programme, direction and long-term priorities for access within the Park and nearby communities including identifying the resources required to achieve these.

How will this be achieved?

- Both bodies will contribute and work jointly to undertake a review of the Rights of Way Improvement Plan in accordance with the Welsh Government's guidelines.
- Opportunities will be sought to collaborate and to attract grants to improve access.
- Both bodies will be willing to share resources and staff expertise in order to achieve tasks or specific projects.