

Dovedale Community Safety, Wildfire and Visitor Management Meeting

Minutes of a multi-agency meeting convened by Thorpe Parish Council

Date: 28 July 2026 19:00

Chair: Cat Garrett, Chair of Thorpe Parish Council

Attendees:

Bryony Sharpe, National Trust, Visitor Operations Manager

Abby Chillingworth, National Trust, Senior Community and Participation Manager

John Whitby, MP for Derbyshire Dales

PCSO Bradbury,

Vikki Winfield, Derbyshire Dales District Council, Neighbourhood Manager

Ian Frith, Chair of Ilam Parish Council

Also present: Residents of Ilam, Thorpe and the surrounding area. (55 attendees)

Purpose of meeting: To review escalating issues relating to wildfires, barbecues, camping, littering, anti-social behaviour, visitor pressures and enforcement in Dovedale, and to agree actions with relevant partner organisations.

1. Key Matters Discussed

1.1 Wildfire Risk

Residents expressed serious concern about the increasing risk of wildfire arising from open fires, barbecues, dry vegetation and high visitor numbers. It was noted that current penalties may not provide a sufficient deterrent. The local MP acknowledged the growing national wildfire risk and agreed that the matter requires wider political attention.

1.2 Anti-Social Behaviour, Camping and Littering

The following concerns were raised by residents and partner organisations:

- Open fires and BBQs.
- Illegal camping.
- Large, organised gatherings.
- Excessive littering.
- Human waste being left in the countryside.
- Visitor intimidation and anti-social behaviour.

Community members reported that conditions appear to be deteriorating year on year and requested a more coordinated and visible response.

1.3 National Trust Response

The National Trust outlined the actions already being undertaken, including:

- Increased signage.
- Additional bins and waste facilities.
- Daily litter-picking operations.
- Visitor engagement patrols.
- Community outreach initiatives.

The National Trust also acknowledged the impact of resource constraints and significantly increased visitor numbers.

1.4 Enforcement Challenges

The Council and Police outlined enforcement challenges relating to:

- PSPO enforcement.
- Limited police resources.
- Difficulty obtaining offender details.
- Large geographical areas requiring coverage.

It was agreed that a collaborative multi-agency approach is likely to be the most effective way forward.

Parishioners are encouraged to report BBQ's via 101 or on long wait times to online <https://www.derbyshire.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/> as reported crimes will enable the problem scale to be better understood

Serious or concerning fires of course to 999

1.5 Car Park Restrictions and Visitor Management

Discussion took place regarding options to reduce evening visitor pressure and improve management of the Dovedale car park, including:

- Reinstating effective barrier operation.
- Evening closure of the car park.
- Use of ANPR technology.
- Parking charges.

- Time-limited parking.
- Reducing evening visitor activity.

Residents strongly supported further evaluation of these options.

2. Action Log

The following actions were noted for tracking and follow-up: Ref	Action	Owner	Due Date
AP20260729/01	Establish a Dovedale Multi-Agency Action Group, modelled on the Castleton approach, with resident representation.	Peak District National Park / National Trust	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/02	Raise concerns and recommendations from this meeting with National Trust General Manager and senior leadership team.	National Trust	Immediate (when GM returns from leave)
AP20260729/03	Review feasibility of reinstating and operating car park gate/barrier closure arrangements.	National Trust	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/04	Investigate technical issues preventing reliable operation of existing barrier infrastructure.	National Trust	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/05	Develop a programme of multi-agency enforcement and engagement days across Dovedale.	National Trust	Summer/Autumn 2026
AP20260729/06	Coordinate participation from Derbyshire Fire & Rescue, Staffordshire Fire & Rescue,	National Trust	Update on progress within 4

	Police and Local Authority officers.		weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/07	Review PSPO signage, including use of stronger messaging and multilingual communications. Parish were given laminated signs for posting in the area. Parish to provide DDDC with //what3words locations	Derbyshire Dales District Council	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/08	Continue work to identify opportunities for PSPO enforcement and retrospective prosecutions using evidence supplied by partners.	Derbyshire Dales District Council	Ongoing
AP20260729/09	Escalate concerns regarding wildfire legislation and fire-related penalties through Parliamentary channels.	Local MP	Ongoing
AP20260729/10	Support national discussions regarding stronger legislation on fires and barbecues in protected landscapes.	Local MP	Ongoing
AP20260729/11	Review lessons learned and best practice from other National Parks and protected landscapes.	National Trust / MP	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/12	Consider increased visibility of National Trust staff and volunteers away from the main car park area.	National Trust	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/13	Explore community-based behaviour change initiatives and engagement with	National Trust	Ongoing

	faith/community organisations.		
AP20260729/14	Escalate concerns regarding conservation management, grazing levels and wildfire mitigation for review by relevant land management teams. Input from the local farming community is essential.	National Trust	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/15	Share all action updates with the Parish Council for tracking and reporting purposes.	All organisations	Monthly
AP20260729/16	Produce and circulate formal action tracker showing progress against agreed actions.	Parish Council / Meeting Chair	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)
AP20260729/17	Establish regular progress reporting to residents.	Action Group Lead	Monthly
AP20260729/18	Schedule follow-up stakeholder review meeting.	Action Group Lead	Within 6 months
AP20260729/19	Review of the availability of toilet facilities in the area to reduce the waste left behind	National Trust	Update on progress within 4 weeks (25/08/2026)

3. Decisions and Agreements

The meeting recorded the following decisions and agreements:	Outcome
Decision	
Multi-agency working	Agreed as the preferred approach to managing issues.

Resident representation	Residents to be included in future action group arrangements.
Monthly reporting	Agreed in principle to provide regular progress updates.
Further review meeting	Agreed that progress should be reviewed within approximately six months.
Action ownership	Organisations requested to nominate accountable owners for all agreed actions.

4. Closing Statement

The Chair noted the strong consensus that the situation has reached a critical point and that visible action is required before the 2027 visitor season. Attendees emphasised the importance of clear accountability, regular progress updates and coordinated action between all agencies involved.

Next steps:

Action owners are requested to provide updates within the timescales shown in the action log. Further meeting arrangements are to be progressed through the proposed Dovedale Multi-Agency Action Group.