

## Appendix C

### **Scrutiny visit to the Peak District National Park Authority on 10 January 2014 by Councillor Howard Borrell and John Fern, communications and marketing manager.**

The PDNPA team consists of a:

- full-time head of communications and marketing
- two part-time communications officers (1.4 FTE although one if them does extra hours using income from doing videos - see later)
- part-time website content editor (three days a week)
- part-time photographer (two days a week)
- and two part-time designers (1 FTE)

#### Video

They use video for both internal and external communications.

They showed us examples of videos and explained how successful they have been, getting really positive feedback and a much higher recollection rate of key messages than information delivered in other ways.

The videos they have produced for external communications can be seen on their YouTube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/user/peakdistrictnpa?feature=mhee> I have a DVD with some examples of videos for internal communications.

When they use video this is the feedback from staff about the information they have been given which shows it has been much more effective to use video (NB figures may not add up to 100% due to rounding up or down)

Excellent – 44%  
Very good - 44%  
Good – 11%  
Satisfactory – 0%  
Poor- 0%  
Very poor – 0%

But when they had management team just talking to staff the feedback was:

Excellent – 15%  
Very good – 32%  
Good – 41%  
Satisfactory - 9%  
Poor – 2%  
Very poor – 1%

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They also like their videos to be part of a multi-media approach. For example, they interviewed a Peak District farmer about his work for their resident magazine Parklife. When they ran the interview as a story they also included details of the link to view a video which gave a more in depth interview. The video was incredibly popular with the farming community - one of the key audiences for the authority – with whom relations can sometimes be strained due to planning issues.

They use a range of equipment to record their videos:

- They bought a professional camera, tripod, microphone etc a few years ago for around £1,500
- They have around six Flip cameras, which are small hand-held cameras where you can just press a button to start and stop recording. It has an in-built USB stick and basic editing facility so you can then transfer the footage straight to YouTube.
- They also use the video facility on SLR cameras to provide some footage
- Smartphones can also be used for some footage

They edit the footage using I Movie on Apple Mac computers and you require a lot of server space to store the footage.

Staff have taught themselves how to both film and edit using an online learning website called Lynda.com, which can also be used for a wide range of other online learning.

The authority has a corporate membership that lets any staff use it. It teaches you everything from how to switch on your camera through to advanced editing. It enables you to learn something and then put it into practise immediately.

Producing a high quality three minute video will take three days including the planning process and discussion with the person commissioning the video. The actual filming will take four hours and the editing seven to eight hours. The rest of the time is needed to storyboard (ie plan in advance a scene-by-scene plan of what you want to achieve and the different camera angles you will need to get the required shots).

The better you do the story boarding the less filming and editing you have to do so time spent in the planning stages saves time overall.

### Website

They are putting a lot of effort into their website as they see it as critical to their income generation activities for the future financial stability of the authority.

They are investing in responsive design so the website is friendly for mobiles, tablets and desktop computers.

They are making a lot of use of analytics to guide what content they have and are putting more videos on all the time. They use social media to make people aware of what new content is on there and recognise that most visits to the website are through Google.

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As a result they worry more about what keywords and copy is written so that they appear in Google searches than whether something is of the front page or not.

Their website editor is also promoting the need for people approaching him to commission photos and talk to the communications officers about media relations and copywriting advice.

### Social media

Having somebody dedicated to their social media has made a big difference. From August 2013 to January 2014 their Twitter followers went from 9,000 to 11,500.

Their recently launched Facebook page went from 41 followers to 240.

They have around ten smaller accounts which they want to bring into the corporate account. ***(NB Post meeting note - this move is very much against the industry norm and all advice from social media experts who say councils should have multiple platforms for different interest areas as people are more likely to follow something they enjoy. If you only offer them a corporate account they may not follow you at all. This multi channel approach is being taken at the other two councils we visited.)***

They do all the management of social media themselves even if it is a customer service related reply. As far as possible they point people to self help options on the website.

The manager did say, however, that they get very little customer service related calls due to the nature of their work.

However, they do work with the customer service team on developing scripts for the call centre advisors to use when talking to the public about key issues.

### Brand

Traditionally the national park authority never did any marketing as that was left to the tourism board Visit Peak District and Derbyshire.

However, as the budget cuts have bit they are looking at income generation opportunities off the brand of the national park.

Planning issues affect the brand's power so they have to work hard to ensure that is kept under control from a reputation management point of view.

They have held branding workshops with staff and partner organisations.

### Design

Their designers and photographer operate as a commercial business. They have an income target to meet and anything they earn above that is put in reserves. The money

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generated pays for the posts and all their IT equipment. The cost of the staff is £16,000 (one post is on the core establishment) and they generated £36,000 last year. This year the target is to generate £40,000.

They are currently producing calendars, mugs, postcards etc to sell in visitor centres and are currently negotiating with Chatsworth to sell them there too. They then split the sales income with the seller.