

21 July 2006

Llywydd/President: Brian Blessed
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Joanna Whittington
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Dear Ms Whittington

Gas Distribution Price Control Review (GDPCR) – Second Consultation

The Council for National Parks (CNP) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the second consultation on the GDPCR. CNP is the national charity which works to protect and enhance the National Parks of England and Wales and areas that merit National Park status and promote understanding and quiet enjoyment of them for the benefit of all.

Our initial response (dated 13 January 2006) referred to Paragraph 2.23 of the first consultation and drew attention to the fact that among Ofgem's range of environmental duties, it has a duty¹, when coming to decisions or carrying out its activities relating to or affecting land within the National Parks, to have regard to National Park purposes. We are therefore disappointed that this second consultation omits reference to this duty. The government has recently clarified² that the duty is intended to ensure that the purposes for which National Parks have been designated are recognised as an essential consideration in reaching decisions or undertaking activities that would have an impact on the National Parks (Ofgem is listed on page 9 of this guidance note as a body to which the duty applies). CNP therefore suggests that explicit reference to this duty should be made when Ofgem lists its various environmental duties.

This second consultation appears to offer less information about how Ofgem will commit to its environmental duties than the first consultation. CNP considers that it is important that Ofgem's commitment to fulfilling its environmental duties is clearly outlined in this consultation.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require clarification of any of the above or any further information.

Yours sincerely



Ruth Chambers
Acting Chief Executive

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¹ Section 11A of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, as amended by Section 62 of the 1995 Environment Act.

² Duties on relevant authorities to have regard to the purposes of National Parks, AONBs and the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads, Defra, 2005.