

Access, Countryside and Rights of Way

9th September 2013

Scout HQ, Trippett Lane, Sheffield S1 4EL

Present: Allen Pestell (Chair), David Gadd (Secretary), Terry Howard, Les Seaman, Philip Ryder

Apologies: Basil Merry, Cath MacKay, Philip Wells

Minutes of the meeting 10th June 2013

These were agreed as being correct.

Matters arising from those minutes

None.

'Lost Ways' project

DG had emailed Janet Davis at central office, who had explained that the project was 'dead'. AP explained that the deadline for claiming lost routes remains 2026, although the process is likely to be a slow one and efforts need to be made as soon as possible. A Bill will be put before parliament in October which sets out to simplify rights of way claims. Central Office has had some input into this Bill.

AP said that the work needed to be done must be done at a local level i.e. by individual Groups, who are advised to liaise with their Local Access Forum, thus including the local authority, horse-riders and other interested parties.

It was suggested that the Sheffield, Rotherham, Barnsley, Chesterfield and Doncaster Groups set up committees to collect information about lost ways in their area, prioritise those routes which are important and then collect historical evidence to support claims. Evidence could be sought from original OS maps, enclosure maps, tithe maps, highway handover maps and railway and canal maps. The British Library, Boston Spa, Wetherby, W Yorkshire, LS23 7BQ would be a good place for research.

TH said that it appears that claims for lost ways are being treated the same as DMMOs, which may not be a good thing bearing in mind local authority staff cutbacks.

Area Council agreed to buy a copy of *Rights of Way - Restoring the Record*, a book published by the Hampshire Group of Ramblers, which gives detailed accounts of the process of restoring lost routes. A proposal that Area Council buy copies for the Sheffield, Rotherham, Chesterfield, Barnsley and Doncaster Groups would be put to Area Council.

Review of Access matters

The Peak District National Park Authority intends to 'dispose' of the North Lees Estate, in which most of Stanage Edge lies. The British Mountaineering Council recently circulated a petition, (forwarded on 1st September) asking people to 'Stand up for Stanage', fearful that a significant change to the present arrangements would be detrimental to all users. The Estate was given to the public in the early 1970s, on the understanding that it should forever be open to the public. Anybody who has not signed the petition is encouraged to do so.

Review of Countryside matters

The HS2 project has been severely criticised recently, with ongoing arguments about its worth. So far, the government remains committed to the project.

TH has been approached by a Stocksbridge Walkers are Welcome person regarding wind turbines. Permission for five turbines on the edge above Stocksbridge had been refused but an application has been made for one fairly small turbine. It is thought that while the industry continues to attract massive subsidies permissions will be sought for further turbines.

Review of Rights of Way matters

The Chesterfield Group have recently written to the local authority to remind them that they have taken no action regarding Eckington 34, and to point out that the Ramblers will take further action if necessary.

AOB

A draft letter for Groups to send to their Rights of Way departments, pointing out the on-going problems of the oil seed rape crop, will be sent to Groups.