

Access, Countryside and Rights of Way

6th February, 2017

Quaker Meeting House, St James Street, Sheffield, S1 2EW

Present

Terry Howard (Acting Chair), David Gadd (Secretary), Cath MacKay, Jez Kenyon, Christine Whittaker, Basil Merry, Les Seaman.

Apologies

Philip Ryder

Minutes of the Meeting of 21st November, 2016

Agreed as being correct.

Matters Arising

BM said that the Infrastructure Act requires authorities to have cycling and walking strategies. We discussed the fact that Sustrans has a huge budget to develop sustainable transport links, whereas walking - the original sustainable method of transport, has very limited money. It was noted that Sheffield Council spent a lot of money on walking, but this money is from commercial sources. It was also noted that most of this money is spent on developing new routes, not in maintaining old routes.

TH commented that the attitude of Network Rail towards rights of way crossing railway lines remains very poor, with, for example, their consistent objection to a closure over a little-used line which will cause considerable inconvenience and potential danger to walkers. JK raised the possibility of a data exercise to establish rail line deaths caused by closures of path crossings against increased deaths caused by the resulting road walking.

Access Matters

There has been no response so far to the retrospective planning application due to be dealt with on 2nd February by the Peak District National Park regarding the plastic matting on the moors, to which we sent an emergency motion from our recent AGM.

LS said that the normal notification of moors closures had not, so far, been given. Ownership has changed to the Haddon estate.

Countryside

None

Rights of Way

The SYNED motion, originated from the CNED Group, will be forwarded for debate at General Council. It was agreed that it will be put on Ramblers-Net and that any minor changes to the wording suggested will be acceptable.

BM said that Derbyshire CC were withdrawing the support provided, consisting of one ranger and transport, to the CNED maintenance team. A letter has been sent to the CEO. It was noted that 1,500 hours of support were provided last year.

At Povey Farm, Eckington, paths had been returned to their definitive lines.

Some authorities are prioritising footpath maintenance on land that they own, to reduce the chances of accidents leading to the authority being sued.

CM commented that she inspects some access land within Sheffield CC and that any problems reported are dealt with quickly.

AOB

None