

Access, Countryside and Rights of Way

25th February 2019

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

Present

Allen Pestell (Chair), David Gadd (Secretary), Les Seaman (Access), Terry Howard (MWPF), Philip Ryder (Rotherham Metro), Cath MacKay (MWPF), Christine Whittaker (Sheffield)

Apologies

Jez Kenyon (Sheffield 40s).

Minutes of the meeting of 26th November, 2018

It was pointed out that 'Wharncliffe Side' should be 'Wharncliffe Wood'. With this change the minutes were agreed as being correct.

Matters Arising

- i) The bid from Sheffield Lakeland Partnership for the Bradfield Ancient Ways Improvement (BAWI) project, referred to in paragraph 2, was successful.
- ii) TH said that the Countryside Stewardship schemes finishing, referred to in AOB in the previous meeting, would certainly leave issues of access unresolved. Local authority staff had no understanding of the long-term issues involved and were not interested in dealing with matters if there no problems at the moment.

Rights of Way

No matters were raised.

Countryside

- i) The HS2 issue remains in the background, with the scheme for this area being on and off at various times.
- ii) Plans for the Woodhead Tunnel are being considered, namely a short section of tunnel at the Saltersbrook end and some road widening.

Rights of Way

- i) PR said that a collection of footpaths in the Wickersley area were being claimed with agreement between landowners and RMBC. These were all long-established, local footpaths.
- ii) TH said that the regional local access forum was in consultation with other LAFs re the De-regulation Act, whereby there will be no need to approach the landowner re a claim. This would leave the local authority to deal with the landowner, thus removing the possibility of the landowner threatening the applicant, as has occasionally happened.
- iii) Discussions are taking place in various forums re the 2026 cut-off date for claiming rights of way. It was pointed out that when the Lost Ways project was started, claiming was done by professionals but it is now being done by volunteers, who lack the necessary knowledge. Therefore the possibility of delaying, or even scrapping, the cut-off date is a possibility. CM commented that

the date was a trade-off at the time of the Act, and that a change might not be possible. DG agreed to contact central office to establish the Ramblers position.

iv) The review of access land mapping was originally due to be completed by 2014. It was then delayed until 2019. LS said that 50% of the staff at Natural England have been lost. DG agreed to contact central office to find out what the Ramblers position is.

AOB

CM commented that Bradfield parish had ceased to put footpath numbers on the waymarks.