

South Yorkshire and North-East Derbyshire Area

Access, Countryside and Rights of Way

4th September, 2017

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

Present

Allen Pestell (Chair), Terry Howard, Basil Merry, Philip Ryder, Les Seaman, Jez Kenyon.

Apologies Cath MacKay, David Gadd

Minutes of the meeting of 5th June 2017

With these two amendments the minutes were accepted:

- i The airstrip referred to at Somerby should have referred to Summerley. The diverted footpath around the end of the runway forms part of the Dronfield Round.
- ii A reference to Eckington RoW should have said '... the former parts of Eckington which are now in the Sheffield City Council area'

Matters Arising

- i The barrier on Stump Cross Lane on the Sandbeck Estate, Tickhill, has now been removed by DMBC.
- ii Mosborough Countryside Walk revamp – BM reported the planned resurrection of Mosborough Round Walk, originally set up by Sheffield City Council in 1992, has not proceeded due to other time demands and priorities. The 10-mile route is now mainly in Sheffield CC area, but dips into Derbyshire. The route was used recently for a Chesterfield Group walk and is all available but barely any way marks were evident. The proposal is to buy and replace waymarks (possibly jointly with Sheffield Group), and to promote the route either via an online map or leaflet. Once a short Chesterfield route is similarly published this will be the next project and when the Area funding would be needed.

Access Matters

Cyclists in Wales are trying to get a change of law so that they can use RoW, meanwhile some horse riders are seeking to convert RoW to bridleways.

LS suggested this was unlikely to proceed with any English legislation due to the costs of making all footpaths, 3-metre-wide and suitable for shared use i.e. removal of stiles, footbridges etc. BM felt that the increased demands by some cyclists, and the recent fatal accident involving a cycle with no brakes, combined with greater expenditure on cycling provision (cycle lanes/ greenways) may in turn lead to calls for greater responsibility by cyclists, some form of identification, and possibly taxation and insurance requirements.

The Code applicable for shared use clearly gives priority to pedestrians but some cyclists seem unaware of this. Whilst the Highway Code has statute backing the shared use Code doesn't. TH pointed out that Local Access Forums are working to benefit all users.

Countryside

CNED are hopeful that the recently-stopped maintenance work carried out by their members may be re-started, although maybe in a smaller way than previously.

The possibility of maintenance volunteers carrying an identity card to show that they are working with the blessing of their council has been raised.

BM is awaiting an email from DCC giving more details, following a recent meeting with them involving the DCC Council Leader – who was supportive of volunteer use.

TH will try to find out if the new owner of Derwent Edge intends to re-surface the RoW.

Rights of Way

Work on Lost Ways has stopped or almost stopped in many areas. There are issues over the uncertainty of RoW in the next few years, with cyclists and horse-riders seeking to change their status, and thus the legal situation. Brexit might also be considered to be adding to the melting pot.

It was suggested that if lost ways are to continue to be sought then it might be a good idea to concentrate on those areas with a marked shortage of footpaths. It was then pointed out that many of these areas are near some of the old estates such as Welbeck, Wentworth, Chatsworth, Sandbeck, Sitwells, etc.

BM pointed out that cycle routes, such as the TPT, may not need claiming. This is because if they have a Cycle Track Order in place they are effectively adopted highways already. If an existing footpath is used to form the basis of a greenway, PROW status is subsumed by the Cycle Order. If the route was previously neither adopted nor a PROW, it becomes a highway maintainable by the Highway Authority.

AOB

The deadline for responding to the latest HS2 consultation is 29th September.