

## South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire

### Area Council Meeting

26<sup>th</sup> November, 2012

Scout HQ, Trippet Lane, Sheffield, S1 4EL

Present: Allen Pestell (Chair), David Gadd (Secretary), Cath MacKay (MWPF), Christine Whittaker (Information), Les Seaman (Access), Terry Howard (President), Philip Ryder (Rotherham Metro), Basil Merry (Chesterfield), John Newrick (Chesterfield), Marion Thompson (Doncaster), Tony Liversidge (Doncaster), Nichola Farmery (Barnsley), Peter Clayton (Sheffield 20-30s), Chris Greig (Dearne Valley), Christine Hewett (Sheffield Visually Impaired), Cynthia Ashton (Co-operative Ramblers), Mike Pye (Vice President).

Apologies: Gavin Johns (Treasurer)

Thanks were expressed to Eric Andrews, who has resigned from representing the Sheffield VI Group. Christine Hewitt has replaced him.

- 1 Minutes of the meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> September.  
The minutes were approved as being correct by TH and LS.
- 2 Matters Arising from those minutes.  
It was noted that there had been no ACROW report to Area Council.
- 3 Group Reports  
TH reported that the Sheffield Group had an excellent new website ([www.sheffieldramblers.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldramblers.org.uk))  
The annual Sheffield Walks Programmes were being distributed, with a separate programme for short walks which was proving successful in attracting new members.  
PC said that the Sheffield 20-30s Group also had an excellent new website ([www.sheffieldwalkinggroup.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldwalkinggroup.org.uk))
- 4 Officer's Reports
  - a) President  
TH said that he thought that Ramblers should concentrate on three issues in the coming year. Firstly to recognise that we are living in a changing world, particularly with regard to communication. Secondly that more volunteers are needed for footpath work. Thirdly that it is possible to increase membership with a well-designed walking programme, with shorter walks to attract new-comers.
  - b) Chair  
AP reported on the ACROW meeting which had preceded this Area Council meeting. He said that the Terms of Reference had been discussed and amendments made to the first draft which would necessitate a minor change to the constitution at the 2014 AGM.. He also suggested that the Barnsley and Doncaster Groups would contact the CPRE re issues of possible building on green belt land in their areas. He reported on the responses to the Long Causeway and Roych consultations  
AP had attended the Trans Pennine Trail AGM. There was a new development strategy. Councils are responsible for the section of the TPT within their boundaries but some councils had ceased to fund the TPT. Alternative sources of funding were being investigated.  
AP had also attended a meeting in York at which Ramblers Chief Executive and Chairman met members. One idea being developed was a National Trails Trust, a body consisting of the Ramblers, the National Trust, the British Mountaineering Council, the RSPB, etc to co-ordinate the care and maintenance of the national trails such as the Pennine Way. Funding is an issue. Other matters discussed at the meeting were the new Ramblers website due soon, Ramblers encouragement of Groups having social committees (for Charity Commission reasons, the opposite of previous policy), that central office is pleased that membership nationally is only down 1%, the encouragement to get people using footpaths and the fact that blocked footpaths can be reported on the Ramblers website.
  - c) Secretary  
DG said that the correspondence list had been circulated prior to the meeting.  
A lengthy discussion took place over the issue of the increase in the fee for Affiliated groups and the response by the Chief Executive on 13 October to our letter of 22 June. Whilst it was accepted that a fee of £95 for a group was not excessive, it was felt that the lack of prior knowledge or an explanation for the 112% increase, coupled with the increase in insurance costs with Perkins Slade and their poor service, was extremely unhelpful. It was noted that three affiliated groups connected with SYNED had already agreed to de-affiliate,

with some agreeing to make a donation to Ramblers in recognition of the work it does.

Regarding insurance, it was reported that it seems the cost for an affiliated group is not less than for a non-affiliated group. It was felt that Slade Perkins insurance covered more dangerous outdoor activities such as rock climbing and skiing. It was agreed that the secretary would write to the Chief Executive again, reiterating the views of Area Council and suggesting a tiered fee for affiliated groups, depending on their membership.

d) Treasurer

The financial statement had been circulated prior to the meeting. TH said that the quote received for the Sheffield Group to publish a set of circular walks was £2,300, against the £1,000 allocated. The Group would probably request further funding. Doncaster Group reported that they were likely to request funding for a series of nine short circular walks they had developed. BM suggested that Groups save money by using Ramblers Routes, printing off a small number if necessary.

e) Information Officer.

CW requested photos and items for the Area website. She said that the Newsletter was ready to be taken by Groups at the end of the meeting. Some Groups were distributing it electronically.

5 Future distribution of Newsletter:

There was discussion regarding the feasibility of increasing the numbers of Newsletters distributed electronically. It was considered important that all members receive a copy of the Newsletter. The item would be put on the agenda of the AGM to gauge opinion.

6 2013 AGM: 26 January

Arrangements were in hand for the AGM. Several motions were discussed to be presented to the meeting. The Sheffield Group agreed to host the 2014 AGM., the date and location of which should be in Group programmes.

7 2013 General Council: 13/14 April; University of Warwick.

Expenses for two voting delegates and one visitor are covered by Area. CM attends. Anyone proposing a motion would normally attend. The decision regarding who goes can be made in the new year.

8 2013 Area Council dates.

The following dates were agreed:

11 February
10 June
9 September
25 November

2014 AGM: 25 January

9 AOB

a) TH raised the issue of continuing to meet in the Scout HQ or to change to the Quaker Meeting House. It was agreed to remain in the Scouts HQ.

b) Cynthia Ashton said that this would be her final meeting, the Co-operative Ramblers having de-affiliated. Thanks were expressed for her contribution over the years, with best wishes for the group.

c) PC said that membership fees can now be paid by direct debit online

The 2013 AGM will be on Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> January at 2.00pm. It will be held in:

Coal Aston Village Hall  
Eckington Road  
Dronfield

Derbyshire S18 3AX. Email: [www.coalastonhall.org.uk](http://www.coalastonhall.org.uk).

There is car parking in front of and behind the hall.

There is space for Groups to put up displays if they wish.

The Chesterfield Group will provide tea/coffee.

There will be two guest speakers. Nicola Jones from the Macmillan Trust will talk about the walks for health scheme. The second speaker will be Simon Barnett, Head of Walking Promotions and Programmes, from central office.

There will be a 5 mile circular walk in the Moss Valley starting at 10.30 and returning in time for members to have lunch before the AGM.

