

Area Council

10th June 2013. Scout HQ, Trippet Lane, Sheffield, S1 4EL

Present: Allen Pestell (Chair), David Gadd (Secretary), Gavin Johns (Treasurer), Cath MacKay (MWPF), Philip Ryder (Rotherham), Basil Merry (Chesterfield), Christine Whittaker (Information Officer), Nichola Farmery (Barnsley), Marion Thompson (Doncaster), Cynthia Ashton (Sheffield Co-op), Chris Greig (Dearne Valley), Terry Howard (President)

Apologies: Les Seaman (Access), John Newrick (Chesterfield), Judith Gathercole (Sheffield), Christine Hewitt (Sheffield VI Group)

Minutes of the meeting of 11th February 2013

The minutes were agreed as being correct.

Matters Arising from those minutes

i) Area Council agreed that Section F of the Terms of Reference for the Access, Countryside and Rights of Way (ACROW) sub-committee should state:

- 1 The powers of the ACROW sub-committee will be directed by Area Council
- 2 There will be a report on ACROW to Area Council after every meeting.

All agreed.

ii) It was agreed that Groups would be reminded to establish how many copies of the annual Area Newsletter/Annual Report could be sent out electronically and how many paper copies they would need. Groups to let Christine Whittaker know by 15th October, printed copies of the Newsletter/Annual report to be collected at the Area Council meeting of 25th November.

Group Reports

The annual Walk Sheffield event had been successful this year, concentrating on people new to walking who wanted to explore and discover Sheffield on a programme of short walks at various times of the day.

The Doncaster Group has produced a series of nine short walks, based on the the Heron Way 30-mile linear walk/ The local MP, Ed Miliband, helped to launch the leaflets, with publicity on local radio and press.

The Chesterfield Group had participated in the local walking festival, a successful event which brought new members to the Group.

The Dearne Valley Group had taken part in the Get Doncaster Walking festival. Concerns about some leaders (not Ramblers) would be referred to the festival organiser.

Officer's Reports

President: TH said that Group's should start researching 'Lost Ways' in conjunction with their Local Access Forum. Unrecorded RoW need to be researched and recorded by 2026 or they will be lost for ever.

TH then suggested that Area should review how it does its business, whether it is achieving what it wants to achieve as efficiently as it can, bearing in mind the current state of technology. He said that all officers don't attend AC meetings, nor do all Groups, and yet the Area seems to function well. It was agreed that SP/TH/DG would establish something for discussion by AC.

Chair: AP noted that Shaun Prendergast had died in March. He was Chief Ranger of the Peak District National Park and worked tirelessly for the benefit of the countryside.

At General Council, AP's motion regarding government removing restrictions to allow development in the National Parks, had had an amendment, which was voted on, leaving AP unable, for procedural reasons, to respond. He intends to put a motion to next year's GC regarding this anomaly. A motion to extend the term of the chairman had been defeated.

Membership continued to decline by about 1% pa. A suggestion to introduce a 2-tier membership, one for walkers only, was under consideration. Various other suggestions, regarding marketing, had been made. A Ramblers Routes training session had been held in Sheffield last month. It was agreed that the concept and practice of Ramblers Routes was good. CW would try to arrange another half-day training session on a Saturday in October.

A meeting had been held in Chesterfield on 15th February regarding the cooperation and coordination of

attempts to improve the off-roading situation in the PDNP.

The earlier ACROW meeting sought approval re two terms of reference, specifically that 'The powers of the ACROW sub-committee will be directed by Area Council' and 'There will be a report on ACROW to Area Council after every meeting'. These were agreed unanimously and the item will be on the agenda of the next AGM. Other items discussed at ACROW were the restoration of moorland from forestry but access has not been given, the ongoing HS2 situation, and particular issues around oil-seed rape. Area Council agreed that a letter would be sent in support of the permanent TRO on Chapel Gate TRO, with the agreement of the host Area; this was unanimously agreed. Additionally, the Chesterfield Group sought support from AC regarding issuing an order on Eckington 34 (see attached information sheet); this was agreed unanimously

Secretary: DG distributed a correspondence list; an up-dated email list will be sent out with the minutes. We have been informed that the terms and conditions of usage of Scout HQ have been up-dated. DG would like to make contact with adjoining Areas easily and has asked central office for contact details.

Treasurer: GJ presented his financial report. He said that Groups had been asked to submit their budget requests by 12th July, that the Area draft budget would be sent out before the end of July, with responses due mid-August. It was proposed by GJ and seconded by CM that an extra £500 be given to the Sheffield Group for printing costs. GJ said that he will review the situation before the 4th quarter payments from central office and refuse them if they are not needed.

AOB

TH showed the meeting the content of the Five Weirs walk presentation boards.

CM reported the death of Irene Bunting, who she said had been a stalwart of Ramblers, prepared to express her views, as vociferously as necessary, whenever there was a need!

Irene and John Bunting - an appreciation by Allen Pestell

I started to write a tribute to Irene but sadly I was told by Kate Ashbrook that John had passed away too. Fittingly Kate and I were in Edale at the youth hostel for a Ramblers conference, a place much loved by both John and Irene.

John and Irene.... makes a good title for a Saturday night love story. And love story it is. Much of their free time when they were young and courting was spent at youth hostels, including Edale.

The freedom of the moors was important to John and Irene and John spent much of his early life trying to outwit the gamekeepers and landowners who were determined to keep the common rabble off their land. It was ironic that in the war years John was placed on guard duty keeping the moors safe for the very people who had been trying to keep him out.

I spent many happy hours with them both, on the moors as we tried to get an access law into parliament, and at meetings and conferences the length and breadth of Britain. Irene would run up to me and give me a big hug, and John was always there with a smile and a quiet word. John was made a national vice president of Ramblers, an honour of which they were very proud. One could only live with the other, and although John's death was due to a heart attack, I think it was more likely to have been caused by a broken heart.

If there is a heaven, John and Irene are reunited and walking the moors arm in arm in love forever.

Allen Pestell, Chair, but more importantly, a friend.

ACROW and Area Council:	6.30 and 7.30, 9 th September, 2013
	6.30 and 7.30, 25 th November, 2013
AGM:	2.00, 25 th January, 2014

Area website:	www.synedramblers.org.uk
National website:	www.ramblers.org.uk