

Area Council

25th February, 2019

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

Present

Allen Pestell (Chair), David Gadd (Secretary), Gavin Johns (Treasurer), Les Seaman (Access), Terry Howard (MWPF), Jez Kenyon (Sheffield 40s), Christine Whittaker (Information), Cynthia Ashton (Sheffield Co-op Ramblers), Nicki Speakman (Barnsley and Penistone), Christine Hewitt (Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group), Philip Ryder (Rotherham Metro), Malcolm Dixon (Sheffield), Cath MacKay (MWPF).

Apologies

Judy Gathercole (Sheffield), Steve Robertson (Doncaster).

Minutes of the meeting of 26th November 2018

On line 4 of the item about the event on 27th April 'mass trespass' should read 'mass rally'.

With this change the minutes were agreed as being correct.

Matters Arising

- i) There appears to be no information available now on the Five Weirs Walk. It had been agreed that it is not worth re-establishing the information boards because the previous boards had been vandalised and any future boards would probably be similarly vandalised. The map of the route is on the SYNED website.
- ii) It was re-proposed that £400 be given to the Kinder and High Peak Advisory committee to assist with the costs in organising the rally on 27th April. Proposed by AP, seconded MD. Passed unanimously.

Group Reports

- i) CNED. GJ said that problems with Derbyshire County Council re the CNED Group doing maintenance work were ongoing. George Redmayne, from central office, had talked to DCC.
There was a Countryside Service Review meeting on 6th March, with consultants coming from London, which, unfortunately, no member of Ramblers is able to attend. A suggestion that the meeting be re-arranged had been ignored.
- ii) Doncaster. The Group were introducing a series of short walks into their Summer Walks programme. A significant increase in members during 2018 had encouraged us believe that we would have sufficient leaders. DMBC are in receipt of a £13m grant, over three years, from central government to try to improve the health of the 25% of the population who take less than 30 minutes exercise per week. Cycling, swimming, dancing, etc were being encouraged, in addition to walking. We anticipate that DMBC will publicise our short walks.
- iii) Sheffield. MD said that the group are hosting the Liverpool Ramblers in August for some urban walks.
TH stated that at least £15,300 had been raised for the Bradfield Ancient Ways Improvement project, with SYNED contributing the initial amount, which had encouraged other contributors. Hence the project could proceed. Some work had already been done and a photo-shoot at Bradfield had been help to publicise the project. JK said that 30 mini-projects had been identified, with the majority being done by contractors in the June-August period. Sheffield volunteers worked monthly on Mondays. Issues of transporting dirty tools and machinery and the storage equipment were being worked through. JK said that he would like to get more of the Sheffield 40s Group involved, although it was appreciated that most of them worked. JK also pointed out that it took about 6 months before the project got off the ground and thus that any potential projects in other parts of SYNED would be considered as soon as possible. There is a page on the SYNED website about the project.

Officer's Reports

Chair

AP said that planning for the rally on 27th April to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the National Parks Act was going well. Between 300-500 people are expected to attend. Moors for the Future will have a display caravan, there will be a marquee, a band, and toilets. The year 2000 plaque will be refurbished before the event. Because of a link with the National Trust property Wightwick Manor, near Wolverhampton, a group from there will attend the rally, dressed in costume and carrying an original banner. They may join the walk organised by the Doncaster Group. Maxine Peake is unable to attend, but a substitute will read a moving poem written by a 16 year old girl involved in the 1932 trespass. Jarvis Cocker will attend. CH said that the visually impaired group will walk from Hope to Castleton. The rally will be chaired by Andrew McCloy, Chair of the Peak District National Park Authority and the main speaker will be David Blunkett.

Secretary

DG said that the new Ramblers dashboard is up and running. It has dashboards on Membership, Pathwatch, Volunteer Roles and Walking. The membership dashboard updates membership figures every night, as well as giving information

on the numbers of new members, members who have left completely or to another Group or Area. It was considered appropriate to continue to provide information as at the 1st of every month.

	CNED	Don	Sheff	RM	B&P	DVR	Sh20	Ch20	Sh40	SYNED	National
1/10/13	505	234	661	269	242	99	226	22	179	2399	
1/06/14	536	232	677	271	202	103	214	23	219	2486	107837
1/06/15	478	232	626	264	187	103	235	37	227	2403	107473
1/01/16	473	230	614	266	180	105	231	33	230	2392	106452
1/01/17	439	224	590	259	167	114	258	25	233	2334	105234
1/06/17	433	213	581	255	157	114	249	23	238	2293	105136
1/01/18	424	204	580	246	152	117	233	23	240	2256	104617
1/06/18	423	224	559	251	144	129	227	23	253	2270	103605
1/11/18	422	235	564	247	146	141	229	24	254	2301	102645
1/12/18	414	235	566	250	148	141	230	22	247	2294	102296
1/02/19	410	236	564	251	154	147	225	23	250	2300	102023

Minutes of the 2018 Area Council, ACROW and AGM have been sent to Sheffield Archives.

Treasurer.

GJ distributed the financial report as at 25th February 2019. From an opening balance of £2439 the amount of £1600 was received from central office for the second quarter. Groups and expenses had been paid, leaving a balance of £1961. The Bradfield Ancient Ways Improvement project balance stood at £10,300.

The current balance of the Ivy Cowen Trust on 26th November was £19,217.

The Clarion Call balance is £3451.

The final balance is £33,107.

AGM

i) Thanks were expressed to the Barnsley and Penistone Group for hosting the 2019 AGM. The event was considered to have been successful, with the morning's walk, the venue and refreshments, and the AGM itself all happening without a hitch.

ii) The draft minutes were agreed as being correct, with the subject of affiliated groups being referred to Area Council.

Affiliated Groups

The reasons for the sudden reduction in the number of walking groups affiliated to Ramblers via SYNED was briefly discussed. The sudden reduction was without doubt due to a massive increase in the affiliation fee, which caused affiliated groups to consider the whole matter, including the lack of value from the tie-in with the insurance company. We expressed our concern to CEO Benedict Southworth in a letter dated 22nd June, 2012 after CA drew our attention to the 112% increase in fees the Sheffield Cooperative Ramblers were being asked to pay (they declined). Before this fee increase there were 29 walking group in the SYNED Area affiliated to Ramblers; the present number is ten. It was pointed out that groups affiliated to Ramblers/SYNED enable us to represent a greater number of walkers.

DG agreed to contact central office to establish whether the issue is under consideration. Such matters as the fee (if there needs to be a fee), the right to attend Area Council meetings, receiving Walk magazine, etc could be considered.

AOB

TH raised the subject of the Deregulation Act. He said that the Act seems to be going nowhere. Members making claims under the Lost Ways project are still having to contact landowners themselves re their claim. There is certainly one example of a claimant being threatened by the landowner. Also, the 2026 cut-off date was established when local authorities had the staff to process claims. The current situation, when most local authorities had had severe staff reductions, means that claims have to be made by volunteers, who frequently do not have the expertise to deal with the matter. DG agreed to raise the matter with central office.

ACROW meetings start at 6.30pm and Area Council meetings start at 7.30pm

All meetings are held in the Quaker Meeting House, St James Street, Sheffield S1 2EW.

2019 dates: 3rd June
2nd September
25th November

2020 AGM 25th January
Sheffield Walking Group (Sheffield 20-30s) to host.

Area website: www.synedramblers.org.uk

National website: www.ramblers.org.uk

