

Area Council

Quaker Meeting House, St James Street, Sheffield, S1 2EW 5th June 2019

Present

Allen Pestell (Chair), David Gadd (Secretary), Les Seaman (Access), Terry Howard (MWPF), 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), Judy Gathercole (Sheffield), Philip Lee (DVR), Ken Coupar (Sheffield 20s), Wayne Grounsell (Sheffield 40s).

Apologies

Steve Robertson (Doncaster). Gavin Johns (Treasurer), Jez Kenyon (Sheffield 40s), Cath MacKay (MWPF).

Minutes of the meeting of 25th February

With the addition of Rosemary Boyle (Rotherham Metro) to the list of those present the minutes were approved as being correct.

Matters Arising

None.

Group Reports

The Sheffield Groups reported that the Bradfield Ancient ways Improvement project was going very well, with good inter-group cooperation. As reported at the ACROW meeting tools have been purchased and used successfully on several occasions. All the timber for posts etc had been bought and was being stored at Spitewater Farm, courtesy of Jean Bond. There have been four volunteers sessions so far, including one today. Four handrails have been installed, some stonework re-built to improve steps and a section of stone path largely uncovered. Unfortunately the stone path is somewhat difficult to walk on, as it is very narrow and quite uneven, but it is still interesting to see. Sheffield RoW have also done some jobs, including the handrail from the very tall ladder stile down to the lane from High Bradfield to Low Bradfield and putting in a new gate and another handrail. Sheffield RoW will be organising the contracted out work over the summer, which includes installing about ten gates of various kinds instead of the current stiles.

The Sheffield Groups are establishing a footpath monitoring scheme.

DG reported that the series of short walks introduced by the Doncaster Group in April are not attracting people completely new to walking so far.

KC asked about funding for First Aid training. DG had responded positively to a question from central office re the provision of first aid training several months ago. A second email elicited the information that training had been organised in Chesterfield on 17th August, two sessions in Sheffield on 14th September and one in Rotherham on 26th September. Please see this link for information and booking.

<https://www.ramblers.org.uk/volunteer-zone/support-and-development/first-aid/first-aid-training.aspx>

Officer's Reports

Chair

AP said that the Spirit of Kinder event on 27th April to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the National Parks event had been excellent, despite the weather. Approximately 300 people turned up and attended the rally indoors. Several walks arrived at Castleton from different starting points. A number of people went from the hall up to Winnats to walk back. David Blunkett spoke eloquently about his experiences go walking and of his time in government. He was followed by It was pleasing to see the number of young people at the rally. TH and AP had been out with these people on the moors and their interest in the moors and the history of access was good to see. A series of badges commemorating access had been designed. (See sample below). Next year's event will probably be in Manchester.

On Saturday, 14th September there will be the National Trust's 'People's Landscape Day' at the Moorland Discovery Centre, with a talk in the morning (bookings only) and, from 11.30, displays.

AP continues to be involved in the removal of the pylons at Dunford Bridge and the realignment and expansion to a motorway of the A1 between the M18 and Barnsdale Bar.

Secretary

Up-dated membership figures:

| | CNED | Don | Sheff | RM | B&P | DVR | Sh20 | SYNED | National |
|---------|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|------|-------|----------|
| 1/10/13 | 505 | 234 | 661 | 269 | 242 | 99 | 226 | 2399 | |
| 1/06/14 | 536 | 232 | 677 | 271 | 202 | 103 | 214 | 2486 | 107837 |
| 1/06/15 | 478 | 232 | 626 | 264 | 187 | 103 | 235 | 2403 | 107473 |
| 1/06/16 | 433 | 213 | 581 | 255 | 157 | 114 | 249 | 2293 | 105136 |
| 1/06/17 | 423 | 224 | 559 | 251 | 144 | 129 | 227 | 2270 | 103605 |
| 1/06/18 | 414 | 235 | 566 | 250 | 148 | 141 | 230 | 2294 | 102296 |
| 1/02/19 | 402 | 227 | 566 | 250 | 151 | 149 | 230 | 2278 | 102023 |
| 1/04/19 | 410 | 236 | 564 | 251 | 154 | 147 | 225 | 2281 | 101982 |
| 1/06/19 | 387 | 230 | 545 | 251 | 147 | 150 | 231 | 2245 | 101928 |
| 1/07/19 | 388 | 234 | 538 | 250 | 143 | 150 | 221 | 2240 | |

Given that ACROW meetings recently have taken less time than previously we agreed that ACROW meetings would continue to start at 6.30 but that AC meetings would start at 7.15 from now on.

Treasurer.

The financial report as at 5th June 2019 had been distributed with the agenda.. From an opening balance of £1961 the amount of £1600 was received from central office for the third quarter. Groups and expenses had been paid, leaving a balance of £929.

The Bradfield Ancient Ways Improvement project balance stood at £10,300.

The current balance of the Ivy Cowen Trust is £18097.

The Clarion Call balance is £4083.

The final balance is £34159.

Affiliated Groups

Emailed central office again.

Publicity

The GHB Ward walk is now on the website. If anybody has more information or photos please send them to CW.

All members of AC were made aware of the new Ramblers app, which has been promoted in the latest *walk* magazine.

AOB

- 1 The Five Weirs Walk has been subsumed into the Don Valley Walk.
TH suggested that the Groups within SYNED contribute to a SYNED publication of walks linking the rivers of our Area. DG to contact all Groups to seek their support.
- 2 It was confirmed that all expenses for the Area AGM would be met by Area Council.
- 3 An email received yesterday from the secretary (MD) of the Sheffield Group asking Area Council to 'initiate and facilitate talks at officer level between the Sheffield Ramblers Group and the Sheffield Over 40's Ramblers Group with the aim of merging the Groups together within the next 2 to 3 years' was discussed. It was pointed out that any proposed merger should be preceded by discussions with the Sheffield 40s Group and that it was discourteous in the extreme for this not to have happened. It was also pointed out that the two Groups are collaborating very successfully (BAWI, footpath monitoring) and to talk of a merger was unnecessary. It was also pointed out that Ramblers policy is for the maximum number of groups to be established, not for two large and successful groups to merge. MD said that he had pasted the request from the Sheffield Group minutes. However Sheffield members present said that the minutes had not been approved by the committee and that the interpretation did not reflect the views of the committee. MD felt that with both groups always looking for officers and walk leaders a merger would be beneficial and that he hoped the Sheffield 40s Group would take over the Sheffield Group.

It was agreed that the three Sheffield Groups did not need three Footpath Officers and that one person could act for all three groups. It was suggested that 'liaison' might have been a better word to use, rather than 'merge'.

WG said that the angry response from the Sheffield 40s Group had been sent to everybody because the

original email had been sent to everybody. The Group was angry about the lack of discussion about a merger before the email was sent out and would expect an apology.

ACROW meetings start at 6.30pm and Area Council meetings start at 7.15pm
All meetings are held in the Quaker Meeting House, St James Street, Sheffield S1 2EW.

2019 dates: 2nd September and 25th November

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

2020 dates: 24th February 1st June
 7th September 23rd November

Area website: www.synedramblers.org.uk

National website: www.ramblers.org.uk