

Area Council

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

24th February 2020

Present

Allen Pestell (Chair), David Gadd (Secretary), Gavin Johns (Treasurer), Terry Howard (MWPF), Cynthia Ashton (Sheffield Co-op Ramblers), Malcolm Dixon (Sheffield), Philip Lee (DVR), Wayne Grounsell (Sheffield 40s), Philip Ryder (Rotherham Metro), Christine Hewitt (Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group), Nigel Lamb (Sheffield 20s), Nikki Speakman (Barnsley and Penistone).

Apologies

Les Seaman (Access), Christine Whittaker (Information), Judy Gathercole (Sheffield), Jez Kenyon (Sheffield 40s).

Minutes of the meeting of 25th November 2019

Agreed as being correct.

Matters Arising

MD pointed out that plaques for Ramblers Walking Holidays had been placed on some kissing gates on the BAWI project to recognise their contribution.

Many printed copies of the SYNED Annual Report were being printed unnecessarily. Groups were asked to distribute a digital copy next year wherever possible to reduce the cost of printing copies.

Don Valley Catchment Project

TH said that he had passed leaflets of the Don Valley Trust to LS. A booklet of walks already existed, raising the possibility that we were trying to do the same thing. AP said that all we were trying to do was co-ordinate walking routes along the water courses in the Don Valley catchment area to provide a good source of information.

PR had a document from Genie Creative with good information, but that nothing further appeared to have happened since 2018. He agreed to investigate.

Group Reports

Sheffield.

The group had recently had a stand at the Sheffield Heritage Fair, which had a footfall of 4,000 people. Booklets available had been readily taken. Disappointment was expressed that publicity available from central office was negligible. MD said that the event had been useful for networking and that photos were on the Assemble website. It was suggested that at any future fairs publicity, booklets, etc from groups in addition to the host group could be available.

CNED

GJ said that the group were providing walks during the 9-day walking festival starting on 9th May. Also that they had a stall at the Chesterfield Canal Trust Festival being held at the Hollingswood Hub.

Rotherham Metro

PR said that the group were working with the Wickersley Parish Council to provide walks for their festival from 4th May - 2 June.

Doncaster

DG said that DMBC, as part of the efforts to increase fitness in the borough, are holding a Walk in May festival, to which we are providing a significant number of walks.

SVIWG

CH said that her group had established good links with the Sheffield 20s (Sheffield Walking Group). A blind academic had walked with the SVIWG but he was young and would prefer a younger group of walking companions. Members of the Sheffield 20s group had been able to accommodate the young man with some guiding training, more training will be provided. NL said that on the walk members of the 20s group had supported the newcomer effortlessly, with many members naturally offering their arm to guide him.

Sheffield 20s

NL said that the group were providing a walk in the Sheffield Outdoor City Festival in March.

Sheffield Co-operative Ramblers

CA said that this year was the centenary of the group. To mark the occasion there were adopting a PNFS sign in the Limb Valley and organising a quiz night and a meal. These events would be publicised soon.

Officers Reports

Chair

AP said that central office were organising three walk training events in our Area, specifically in Sheffield on 15th April, Chesterfield on 2nd May and Doncaster on 23rd June.

The merger of the Chesterfield 20s Group with the Sheffield 40s Group has yet to be finalised. GJ said that nothing could be done until the current cheque signatories sent a cheque either to himself or WG.

Secretary

Up-dated membership figures:

	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
1/06/17	433	213	581	255	157	114	249	23	238	2293	105136
1/06/18	423	224	559	251	144	129	227	23	253	2270	103605
1/06/19	387	230	545	251	147	150	231	21	245	2245	101928
1/12/19	373	227	527	239	143	156	211	21	241	2190	101782
1/01/20	370	230	523	240	144	154	210	22	239	2187	101714
1/02/20	368	233	516	236	140	156	202	21	240	2168	101833
1/03/20	270	239	519	237	143	158	201	18	235	2174	101655

Central Office's request that each Area have a volunteer to co-ordinate efforts within the Area for the Don't Lose Your Way campaign has been sent to all Group secretaries, with no response so far. DG will be re-send the Volunteer Role Profile document and ask again for a volunteer.

Treasurer

Our opening balance was £1877 and with Q2 payments and expenses made the current balance is £1872.

The Bradfield Ancient Ways Improvement project opening balance was £10777 and, with expenses of £5020 paid, the balance is now £5757. Grant money is being retained to cover phase 2 of the project.

The Ivy Cowen Trust opening balance was £18097, and with expenses for a navigation course paid out, it is now £17617.

The Clarion Call opening balance was £4346 and with money received it is now £4531. Clearly Clarion Call continues to sell well.

NS is looking at footpaths around Cannon Hall for an improvement project, which grant money will be able to pay for.

Information

CW would welcome the opportunity to stand down as Information Office for personal reasons. If anyone would like to consider taking on this role please contact Christine.

Central Office have recently rolled out a Lost Ways app, bearing in mind that, as things stand, people have until 2026 to make claims for historical lost routes. Given that a considerable amount of work needed to make a claim claim this process is thought to be aimed at getting lost ways 'in the bank' before 2026 so that actual claims can be made subsequently. The app allows a modern map to be overlaid on an old map to show a lost route. It is hoped that all Groups will do this in their own area. The National Library of Scotland has many old maps available for downloading.

TH requested funding for a re-print of the Sheffield Country Walk. It was agreed that SYNED would pay for this after the booklet had been up-dated.

AGM

AP expressed Area Council's thanks to the Sheffield Walking Group's hosting of the 2020 AGM, in particular to NL and his impressive group of volunteers.

MD said that the Sheffield Group had agreed to host the 2021 AGM, at a venue to be confirmed. TH suggested that we invite Dan Jarvis, Mayor of the Sheffield City Region, to the 2021 AGM to speak on transport policy. DG to contact him.

The CNED Group had agreed to host the 2022AGM.

General Council

The motion passed at our AGM has been accepted for consideration at GC, with minor modifications. It now reads: **"This General Council is concerned by the reduction in engagement with affiliated organisations and calls upon the Board of Trustees to put in place a proactive programme to recruit affiliated organisations, including considering reducing or removing the fee, and to look for ways to increase collaboration with our affiliates at local and national level."**

The background information reads: "In April 2012 Ramblers raised the joining fee for affiliated groups from £45 to £95 - a 112% increase. This led to the decline in number of groups affiliated within the SYNED Area from 29 to the current number of 10. The fee was subsequently reduced to the current £65, but the damage had been done. The 29 original groups included small walking groups and a number of parish councils. More recently, SYNED Area Council asked central office what, if anything, was being done to encourage walking groups to affiliate to Ramblers. The answer was that nothing was being done. We then went on the Ramblers website to establish how easy it would be for a group to find out how to affiliate. It was almost impossible to find any information and the link to the affiliation form was not working. The latter issue has been fixed but merely searching for 'affiliated groups' is ineffective, although we have been told that it will be sorted.

As a national walking charity, it is incumbent upon us to represent all walkers, and to do that we need to involve as much of the walking community as possible, and working with non-Ramblers groups represents a key way to achieve this.

A related issue is that the so-called benefit of cheaper third party insurance by affiliating is invalid, with no decrease in the fee for Ramblers affiliates (as tested recently by someone requesting quotes). A strong case can be made for eliminating the affiliate fee completely, especially given that we are a charity."

AOB

The Bradfield Ancient Ways Improvements project launch is on Wednesday. All organisations involved have been invited to attend. JK will be giving a short introduction to the project, followed by the leader of the Sheffield Lakeland Landscape Partnership and the retired leader of the Bradfield council.

PL said that information on Ivy Cowen, SYNED's £42,000 benefactor, had been found. She was born in Sheffield (Bole Hill area) on 6 Aug 1907 to John and Florence Cowen. Her will shows she died on 26 March 1997 in a care home in Low Edges, Sheffield. Her last known address was 22 Dalewood Avenue, Beauchief, Sheffield, S8. She lived here with Mabel 'Pat' Wilkinson until her death and allowed Pat to live in the house until her death on 4 Oct 2016 when we then received the Trust money. The possibility of establishing a memorial bench was raised.

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.

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

2021 AGM. Date: Saturday, 23rd January. Venue: tbc
2022 AGM Date: Saturday, 22nd January. Venue" tbc

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