



South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire Area Ramblers

ACRoW Cttee and AREA COUNCIL

Minutes of the SYNED Ramblers Meetings on September 6th 2021 In the Main Hall of the Quaker Meeting House, St James Street, Sheffield S1 2EW Or via Zoom

AC 2021/09/06 -01 PRESENT: Allen Pestell (B&P); Cath MacKay (VP); Cath Hillier (Sheff 20's); Cynthia Ashton (CoOp); David Gadd (Donc); Gavin Johns (CNED); Isobel McCormick (CNED); Jez Kenyon (Sheff 40's); Johnathan Revell (Area Web); Les Seaman (Area Access); Phil Lee (DVR); StJohn ODonnabhain (Sheff); Terry Howard (VP) and Malcolm Dixon (Area Sec).

AC 2021/09/06 -02 APOLOGIES : Allen Hudson (Sheff 40's); Christine Parrott (RMR); Christine Whittaker (Sheff); Helen Jackson (VP); Judy Gathercole (Sheff); Kate Frizzell (DVR); Mike Pye (VP) & Nicki Speakman (B&P)

ACROW CHAIR: Allen Pestell welcomed everyone to the meeting here in QMR and on Zoom.

Also announced that John Adler, who had previously volunteered to take on the Area Footpath Secretary's role, had resigned due to pressure of other commitments.

AP thanked him for what he had done and, on behalf of SYNED, wished him well in his endeavours.

AC 2021/09/06 -03 The Minutes of the meeting of June 28th 2021 had been distributed previously
Correction: Phil Lee's name had been missed off. With that Minutes deemed a "True Record".

AC 2021/09/06 -04 Matters Arising

a) Lost Paths/DLYW Project (see update from CO)

TH had gone through the maps that CO had published and now needed to sit down with DG and others (AP, SJOB) to decide what paths were actually worth spending time on claiming.

DG said he had spent time going through the guidance notes and maps sent by CO. useful & comprehensive. Volunteers around the country had collected paths in their area using old maps. Those now needed sorting as it came to c50,000 miles of paths. Wouldn't get all of them but hoped to get 25% to 50%.

DG was recruiting fellow local volunteers to look at the Doncaster area. Was meeting with TH about Sheffield paths. Wondered what other Groups were doing? Need to start work soon. He would email them. Needed to take ownership of the project to keep it moving forward. Only had 2 months to respond. He thought the website was good and useful. Was willing to help others with it. It wasn't difficult to master. CO was intending to find people from outside the Ramblers to do the difficult stuff of background research such as Historical Societies. etc. Also 'advertising' the 'jobs' on the Assemble volunteers portal.

b) BAWI – Phase 2 & other projects

Sheffield PROW Unit wouldn't be fully staffed until Feb 2022, couldn't really do much until then.

Jez had explained to AH what would be required in Phase 2 (P2) and had given him the Phase 1 (P1) documents. Could now spend time identifying what could be done in P2 and which stiles needed repairing, etc.. Might need a group (JK, AH & TH) to do a site visit in Bradfield.

30 projects identified and got some done pre-Covid. Raised more money than expected from a number of sources and there was plenty left for a second phase.

c) SYNED River Walks Project. Was 'in hand' but not really moving. Leaflets had been collected.

TH mentioned that we could possibly work with Simon Ogden of Chair of Upper Don Trail Trust and others to develop this project. TH would contact him on SYNED's behalf to see where we could work together.

d) Dispersal or Disposal of Old Large Scale OS Maps - TH was asking if we still needed to keep these. Was willing to pass them onto local Groups if they wanted them. But they would need to collect them. Could use them with the Bradfield Ancient Way or Don't Lose Your Way projects. 1900-1910 vintage.

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e) Co-ordination & Cooperation between the Sheffield Groups

As all three Groups walked over and reported problems with the same paths within the Sheffield Council boundary it was felt we should speak with a single voice. Also to have a single address for any Council notification of Planning Applications, Consultations, Legal Orders or DMMO's to be sent to.

That person would consult with colleagues in the other groups and arrange site visits if felt necessary.

At a previous Area Council, it was agreed that CW, the then Sheffield FPO, would be this person. However, she had now stepped down. In addition Notifications were still being sent to DW her FPO predecessor by the SCC Legal Dept. There was a need to have a single Sheffield FPO generic SYNED email address or mail box for all such correspondence and this to be communicated to the various SCC departments.

Sec asked to convene & coordinate such a Meeting between the three FPOs asap.

JR was asked to set up a single generic email address that would receive all official Notifications and then forward them onto the three FPOs and possibly have an additional repository to archive the emails.

JR and JK would discuss off line.

f) Sheffield Footpath Warden Scheme JK had set up a system pre-Covid whereby the Sheffield CC Area was divided up into a number of OS map squares. Volunteers given the squares to check the paths on a regular basis and to report any problems to the Sheffield PROW Dept for action possibly with photo and grid ref, etc. JK had also devised a useful reporting website (pathwatch@jez.cc) that was still online and in use.

AH continued to monitor it and sent problems onto PROW, but not all footpath wardens were using it. Covid stopped most activity and we really needed to start things up again. Might need to organise a meeting to see who was still interested in being involved and wanted it to continue. AH interested in getting it going again, but a relative new starter in this field. Could be linked to the three FPOs getting together.

AC 2021/09/06 -05 Other Access Matters – LS – Nothing new to report.

AC 2021/09/06 -06 Other Countryside Matters - CM reported on recent Loxley Valley Housing Development Appeal hearing which had been dismissed by the Inspector. So FOLV had won.

There was a link to the Inspector's Report from their website. Developers won their argument that Sheffield CC had not recorded the City's housing needs accurately (although they should have done by now). Which possibly meant the development could have gone ahead but for the fact that it was still prevented by the over-riding Green Belt Regulations which covered the area.

However, the Government were still proposing to change many of these Planning Regulations, so this might not always be the case. So developers may return with a similar scheme in the future.

FOLV would like to talk to them about an alternative use of the site other than for housing eg a heritage site telling the industrial & social history of the area. But that wouldn't make them the money they were hoping for. CW thanked everyone who had supported the joint FOLV/CPRE Campaign.

AC 2021/09/06 -07. Other Rights of Way Matters – nothing to report.

AC 2021/09/06 -08. Any Other ACROW Business

a) Resignation of Area Footpath Officer, John Adler. Already Noted above. So the position was vacant again and we would need to find and elect a replacement asap (or by the Jan AGM).

b) Compilation of ACROW pages for Area Website. This was still a missing section on the new Area website and it had been hoped that JA would have helped in their compilation, especially as old Area website had now been switched off. Hopefully his replacement (or the other Group FPOs) would take this on once in place. Could refer to the AGM.

AREA COUNCIL CHAIR: Allen Pestell

AC 2021/09/06 -09 Welcome and Apologies : as before AC 2021/09/06 - 01 and 02

AC 2021/09/06 -10 Minutes of June 28th 2021 AC Previously distributed with Correction.
Confirmed as True Record

AC 2021/09/06 -11 Any Matters Arising (not covered elsewhere)

a) Walk Leading & Risk Assessments (RAs) (correspondence with CO)

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Sec had written to CO detailing the Area's objections to the imposition and style of the newly introduced Risk Assessment forms (RA), which CO maintained were because their Insurers had insisted on them. The Sec had responded to CO's initial reply and got a further reply basically saying that they "heard what we said, but had no intention on changing their minds and instructions regarding the RA forms". They had since slightly tweaked the design and contents of the form but they were still much as before. Whilst they still asked you to list hazards, it didn't ask for a list of any mitigating actions that would lesson or prevent these hazards.

Lots of other Areas had also criticised them. But we were told by CO that they were here to stay and we had to find a way to keep them for three years (in case of any pending legal action). They reiterated that their insurers required them to be completed and kept.

It had all been a "top down - no explanation" imposition, without any regard to how our walk leaders felt about them. As a result, a Motion to next year's General Council was already been planned.

Qn on how Groups were storing the RAs. Sheffield's were meant to be sent to Sec, but didn't always happen. Had to assume the leaders looked after them. Also had people who wrote them up for other walk leaders who weren't that computer savvy or didn't have internet, etc.

Qn whether not doing a RA would compromise our Third Party Insurance. Did look like this was the case, which was a change from what had gone before and was considered unacceptable by many.

RAs were putting walk leaders off offering walks. However, it was suggested we had to continue doing them, albeit under protest, until policy was changed.

It was also suggested that we send all our RAs to CO to store. They would then be on hand if any claim was lodged. Could also ask the Insurers what our insurance cover would cost additionally if RAs weren't required. Equally, CO could be asked to produce a generic RA for all walks on public rights of way which could be referred to by all Groups, with exceptions for walks involving scrambling or winter conditions for example. There were other Insurance Companies out there who could offer us a competitive deal without RAs if asked.

b) Sheffield Country Walk booklet – pricing and distribution

1,000 copies had been produced for just £477 from Area funds. Currently held by Sheffield Group but available to all others by arrangement. It was a reprint of previous edition with 3 amendments to text and some additional notes. Maps were still 2013 OS ones. Cover was now green rather than purple. Previously sold for £2-00 a copy. Suggested we kept that price and asked all SYNE Groups to take some copies and they kept the proceeds, rather than sending them back to SYNE. Treat as a 'donation' to funds. Suggested that each Sheffield Group take 100 and other SYNE Groups take 50. Treasurer said that Groups should write off stocks of any old copies they had. He would also write off these new copies and their sale would be treated as a donation.

AC 2021/09/06 -13. Officers Reports (as available)

a) Chair – nothing to add.

b) Secretary Area Membership update – as at end of September year end.

	SD01	SD02	SD03	SD04	SD05	SD07	SD50	SD52	not	SD	
	CNED	Donc	SHE	Roth			Sheff	Sheff	allocatd	SYNE	
			FF	M	B&P	DVR	20	40		D	National
01/01/2016	473	230	614	266	180	105	231	230	0	2329	106,452
01/01/2017	439	224	590	259	167	114	258	233	0	2284	105,234
01/01/2018	424	204	580	246	152	117	233	240	0	2196	104,617
01/02/2019	410	236	564	251	154	147	225	250	0	2237	102,023
01/10/2019	371	224	522	238	144	151	210	239	73	2172	102151
2020											
Sept	353	228	507	229	135	150	167	251	44	2064	98717

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Oct	359	235	509	225	138	150	164	249	45	2074	99216
Nov	363	234	506	230	135	146	158	247	46	2065	99229
Dec	361	236	509	230	136	148	156	245	44	2065	99408
2021											
Jan	359	226	507	221	136	144	149	234	44	2020	97275
Feb	355	225	506	218	135	141	144	231	42	1997	96708
Mar	350	224	505	220	137	141	139	233	41	1990	96716
Apr	356	224	507	220	138	141	140	239	42	2007	97712
May	368	223	508	215	144	143	150	252	45	2048	98763
June	370	223	508	217	141	139	155	261	49	2063	99945
July	371	227	506	215	141	140	153	265	51	2069	100702
Aug	365	229	504	211	141	138	157	264	52	2061	100949
Sept	363	231	505	212	143	142	157	268	52	2073	101130

Still showing some slight increases, but really should be greater than they were, given increased interest in walking and outdoor activities because of Pandemic & Lockdown and greater spare time & home working. Qn about number of "Not Allocated" which seem to remain high, although included those who chose not to join a Group. Sec would ask CO Membership Team about the number.

If they could be identified, could ask local Groups to approach them about joining their activities.

c) Emails Received

1) Open Spaces Society AGM coming up and they were intending to adopt some new Articles of Association which needed members' approval via a Special Resolution. We had a vote as SYNED was affiliated to the OSS. Nothing really contentious. Sec suggested we ask for a Proxy Vote. AP was an individual member and he would take our Vote with him if we approved.

2) Also Notice of a Friends of TransPennine Trail Steering Group Meeting on Sept 30th. The first since Oct 2018 due to Covid.

3) Notice that Ramblers Volunteer Updates would be fortnightly in future but would collect together all items deemed of interest. A recent survey had shown that we wanted fewer emails from CO but we would now get them every two weeks. Not sure if that was an improvement. Shorter but mostly contained links to larger articles mostly on Assemble. Didn't really encourage items to be fully read and taken on board. Let alone respond back to CO about. Were getting more "Conversations" and Clusters Meetings but most discussions were one way.

d) Treasurer – Report previously distributed.

General Account started with -£540. Got Quarterly CO funding of £1375 and a transfer from Ivy Cowen Fund of £500. Had paid out to Doncaster, Dearne Valley and CNED & for last meeting at QMR.

This left a current balance of £94. Shortage of funds due to having missed two quarters of CO funding.

The BAWI Project Funds remained at £9989. But there were plans for a second phase.

The Ivy Cowen Fund started at £17,267 and after internal transfer stood at £16,767.

A further £3,500 of Fund had been allocated to four projects (Lost Ways, PD Access Fund, GHB Ward Walk, SCW booklet reprint) but hadn't been spent yet.

Clarion Call account remained at £4813.

Our overall Bank Balance stood at £31,663 as at September 6th 2021.

Qn on Peak District Access Fund to which we had allocated £1,000, but were waiting for invoices for specific projects or an indication of what it was/could be spent on. However, they worked the other way in that they collected the money from us and other donors and then decided on what projects they could afford to spend the money on. But it was likely that they would include projects we had ourselves suggested.

For CO purposes we needed them to identify specific project/s and we could then send them the money.

JK & TH would compile a list of likely projects with PD staff.

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Clarion Call fund had £4,813 not being used. A distributor had been contracted to sell the books for us. But nothing heard from him for some time and it was suspected he may have gone into administration. Which left us with a number of books (c500) looking for a home, which we may have to sell ourselves or find an alternative distributor. TH would investigate and liaise with Roly Smith. Given the book wouldn't be reprinted, would look at alternative ways of spending this particular fund's money.

Our overall Bank Balance stood at £31,663 as at September 6th 2021. Budgets had been submitted and awaited approval. End of year accounts due on September 30th - group treasurers please note.

SYNED's Zoom Pro License was due for renewal on Oct 13th 2021. Sec was suggesting it was renewed. Already had 4 meetings booked after that date. Now being used as a back up or in addition to in person meetings. Would cost around £119 plus taxes.

TH noted that SYNED had been mentioned as one of the donors towards the refurbishment of the Great Ridge footpath in article in recent 'Walk' magazine, although we had been criticised at the time for doing so.

PL mentioned that we had discussed pre-Covid putting up a seat in memory of Ivy Cowen. Suggested it be linked to the Bradfield Ancient Way. Another option would be Blacka Moor near where she had lived. Could approach Sheffield Wildlife Trust again about it. Generally felt we could sponsor both. GJ would progress.

e) Webmaster – JR had nothing to add. Was open to suggestions for any additional content or pages to put on the website. Had now included a link to the Sheffield 20's on the site which he had previously missed off.

f) Publicity / Newsletter / other Social Media – nothing to report. Still looking for someone to take this on.

g) Sec would be compiling an Area Annual Report if Groups & Officers could send them in by October 31st.

AC 2021/09/06 -14. Group Reports

a) Dearne Valley Ramblers had been able to celebrate their 25th Anniversary at last. Well attended walk followed by a picnic. Great day & weather. Enjoyed by all - including members of original committee.

b) Doncaster had restarted their walks with disadvantaged walkers. Had done 3 so far. First was in Yorkshire Wildlife Park with atrocious weather. Not regular walkers so suffered a bit. DG now had a store of ponchos for future walks. Had one more planned and had established a group of regular leaders.

c) Sheffield had encountered problems restarting its walk programmes again post Covid. Fewer walk leaders coming forward. And walks going in at short notice. Writing up risk assessments were an issue. Walks were taking place involving our members but were 'off programme' to limit the paperwork. Fewer walks in the programme meant fewer walks to attract new members and encourage older walkers to come out and join us again. Also meant we had less chance to sound out potential new volunteers and committee people to replace those who wished to step down. Reliant on a few leaders putting in walks. Members generally less tech savvy. Needed help filling the forms in. But still happy to do the recce's and lead walks.

Doncaster & Chesterfield echoed the concerns over the Risk Assessment Forms.

No such a concern for Sheff 40's as leaders had got their heads around the issue and were putting their walks in, although at shorter notice. Filling in two Word docs rather than just the one. Had found that those leaders who only offered 1 or 2 walks a year were no longer coming forward.

More walks but by fewer people which wasn't sustainable in the long term.

Finding many people trying them out. Found the Group via Facebook where they had over 1,000 followers and useful for recruiting new members. Posted photos of walks and information about future walks.

AC 2021/09/06 -15. AOB :

a) End of Year Area Annual Report (Reports to Secretary ASAP or by October 31st)

b) Area AGM – January 29th 2022 Crookes Social Club, Sheffield

inc: Choice of Speaker – Andrew McCloy (Chair of the Peak District NP) had been suggested. Supported by CM. Had previously been a journalist who had worked on access matters for the Ramblers.

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Suggested we open the talk up to the other Ramblers Groups in the Peak District. Agreed to invite them.
Hoped to arrange morning walks prior to the AGM as well.

c) GDPR in relation to Minutes and Archived Material

Sec had received a request for some guidance on this. Given that Minutes were now archived what personal identification and information could be included or allowed for under the new GDPR regs?

Additionally, meetings were also recorded, but should recordings be kept or deleted?

AP said he thought he previously had to sign a waiver when minutes were archived. But didn't know if that was still the process. CM felt that Minutes should just record decisions rather than identify people, other than to name proposers and seconder for Motions, financial matters, or formal votes, etc.

People shouldn't be mentioned unless they had given their consent.

Suggested we do this at the start of each meeting. Agreed we do this at the next meeting.

d) Date of next Meeting:- Monday November 22nd at the QMR, with a Zoom link, starting at 18:30.

Area Secretary: Malcolm Dixon, 27 Longford Drive, Sheffield S17 4LN

secretary@synedramblers.org.uk or 0784-253-0128

SYNED Area website: www.synedramblers.org.uk

National website: www.ramblers.org.uk

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