



South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire Area Ramblers

ACROW & AREA COUNCIL

November 23rd 2020 starting at 19:00

Using Zoom : (Copy & Paste the URL Link below into your Browser)

<https://zoom.us/j/97800582383?pwd=a2pBbmpCR1lsZmEwdnJGV2g2TXhQZz09>

Meeting ID: 978 0058 2383

Passcode: 634527

Minutes of the SYNED ACROW & Area Council Meetings (by Zoom) – November 23rd 2020

AC2020/11/01/01 Present: Allen Pestell (Area Chair, B&P); Gavin Johns (Area Treasurer, CNED); Phil Ryder (Roth Metro); Isobel McCormick (CNED); Cath MacKay (Sheff, VP); Philip Lee (DVR); Les Seaman (Sheff, Access); Kate Frizzell (DVR); Jeremy Kenyon (Sheff 40's); Nicki Speakman (B&P); Judy Gathercole (Sheff); Wayne Grounell (Sheff 40's) and Malcolm Dixon (Acting Area Secretary, Sheff).

NOTE: David Gadd (Donc) and Cath Hillier (Sheff 20's) both tried to join us but had technical problems, which they managed to sort out. However, I wasn't aware they were waiting in the 'Waiting Room' – for which my sincere apologies. I'll try to be a better 'host' next time.

AC2020/11/01/02 Apologies : Terry Howard (Sheff, VP); Cynthia Ashton (Co Op); Christine Whittaker (Sheff, Area Website) and Christine Hewitt (Sheff VIWG).

AC2020/11/02/01 Allen Pestel opened the Meeting, welcoming everybody and thanking them for attending. Malcolm Dixon took the Minutes. The Meeting was also recorded.

AC2020/11/02/02 Oct 28th ACROW Minutes had already been distributed

AC2020/11/02/03) Matters Arising

1 re RoW Digital Mapping – GJ had checked with DCC officers and they had no plans at moment to digitise their Definitive mapping.

2 re Riggs High Rd Burial Ground – LS reported that Council Officers had been sent an ecological review of the site and had accepted its findings, but hadn't sent this on as they should have done to those people who had objected to the development. However, LS had now got a copy. Council were treating this development as self managed. LS would check with Wildlife Trust (also objecting) to see how they felt about this. There was also an additional planning application in regarding surfacing of the car park.

We needed to make sure this was done in an acceptable manner and in line with local landscape. CM has replied on behalf of Loxley Groups. TH had replied on behalf of LAF. LS had replied as an individual. The area was not in use yet but you could walk through it again.

3 re Loxley Housing Development – An Appeal had now been put in – mostly repeating same arguments. We now had to wait for the Planning Inspectorate to agree Statements of Common Ground between the Council & the developers and then would issue a 'Start Letter' – we would then have five weeks to make counter objections. But may have to wait for some time yet.

4 Lost Ways Project – MD reported on behalf of David Gadd:- DG had been in touch with CO about being the LW Coordinator for our Area but post no longer required as initial work had been done. They were hoping to produce more detailed maps of the Paths that had been discovered and would get in touch about which ones would be worth doing further research on. DG would keep us informed on progress.

5 Planning Laws Reform – MD had understood initial Govt Planning Reform Proposals had been knocked back following opposition by Tory MP's and local councillors, amongst many others. But a report on previous night's 'Countryfile' had implied that they were going ahead. Not sure what the position was. Report may have been filmed in advance of decisions being made, but we needed to keep a watching brief on this as-

tood to lose local control and the chance to object in certain areas under these proposals and developers would have green light whatever local people thought of schemes.

AC2020/11/02/04 – New ACROW Business

1 Access – LS had nothing further to report

Qn on Midhope/Cut Gate matting. Owner still appealing against Enforcement Notice and still to go Planning Inspector and possibly Court. Arguing over a technicality, but just delaying getting the work done.

2 Countryside AP reported on HS2 development which although people still battling and trying to stop it, contractors were continuing to do as much damage as they could because they could get away with it.

3 Rights of Way Matters

01) LS reported that the Redmires Conduit Path had been churned up by YWA vehicles doing fencing work. SCC had spent £14k refurbishing path as an easy going trail for wheelchair & buggy users.

RoW Unit informed and would investigate on the following Wednesday.

02) Five Wiers Route – concessionary section closed between Washwood Bridge and East Coast Road. Again SCC had spent £35k re-tarmac surface although they don't own it. Other parts damaged and closed. Different sections owned by different people or companies.

But no longer a through route as had been originally envisaged.

03) BAWI – Phase 2 & other related projects – no progress to report as work had stopped due to Lockdown & Covid restrictions. RoW Unit short-handed & busy on other issues.

SYNED had plenty of money for this once we could move forward with it.

04) Refurbishment of various GHB Ward Interpretation Panels

BM, of CNED, had reported on Panel at Millthorpe (& 3 elsewhere) which were 'tired' and needed refurbishing. SYNED paid for them to be erected originally and Holmesfield & Dronfield people had done the work.

BM was now suggesting, on behalf of CNED, that panels be refurbished, an audio guide for walkers be created and the trail be registered on various social media & walking sites.

BM was asking for an initial allocation from SYNED funds of £2,500 towards the cost of this.

Proposed that this be sanctioned Prop: CM sec: JG CARRIED

GJ said this would come out of Ivy Cowen Trust fund.

05) SYNED River Walks Project had been overshadowed by recent events.

Suggested be placed on Agenda for post AGM Area Councils

AC2020/11/02/05 - AREA COUNCIL ITEMS

Minutes of October 28th Area Council had already been distributed

AC2020/11/02/06 - Group Reports

01 Sheffield JG reported that the Group intended to carry on doing walks once Lockdown 2 was over & it was known what Tier we were in & what was allowed. Probably be under "Rule Of Six" which was do-able. Most people had reverted to walking on their own again during lockdown, discovering new local places & routes

02 CoOp Ramblers CA had written to say that 2020 would have been Sheffield CoOp Ramblers Centenary Year but all the special celebratory events, walks and meals had had to be cancelled due to Covid restrictions. They had managed to have a commemorative plaque put on no 478 of the PNFS direction boards in Limb Valley just before Lockdown1.

AC2020/11/02/07 - Officers Reports

01 Chair AP reported that he & Cath had 'attended' a second Recalled GC via Zoom on Nov 19th, when Delegates had been allowed to move and discuss the Motions that would have been presented to the GC back in April. Our Motion on Affiliated Organisations getting a better deal had gone down well, although two delegates had spoken against it, including one who said he thought they were now part of Ramblers past in response to Cath's assertion that they were part of our heritage when we had started as a federation of various walking groups and still an important part of our organisation. CM felt the Board were supportive of most parts of our Motion apart from the offering of free membership.

The GC meeting had gone well as a whole. Not quite as formal as usual. Was recorded for playing to the Trustees to decide on which Motions to accept following their own deliberations.

02 Secretary - MD had produced a membership update based on (month end) figures from the Insight Hub.

		SD01 CNED	SD02 Donc	SD03 Sheffield	SD04 RothMet	SD05 B&P	SD07 DVR	SD50 Sheff20's	SD52 Sheff40's	SD96 SYNED	NATION
2019											
	Oct	371	224	522	238	144	151	210	239	2172	102151
	Nov	371	226	525	239	142	156	211	240	2181	101939
	Dec	369	229	521	240	143	154	210	238	2179	101941
2020											
	Jan	367	232	514	236	139	156	203	239	2159	102029
	Feb	368	238	517	236	141	158	201	232	2162	101818
	Mar	368	231	509	234	140	156	197	232	2135	100998
	Apr	366	226	512	231	137	152	190	225	2102	99561
	May	355	220	506	232	137	148	183	241*	2069	97993
	June	350	220	502	232	137	147	178	240	2049	97314
	July	349	224	504	233	137	140	173	240	2045	97616
	Aug	355	228	510	232	133	146	169	246	2066	98116
	Sept	353	228	507	229	135	150	167	251	2064	98717
	Oct End	359	235	509	225	138	150	164	249	2074	99216
	+/- change										
	From Oct 2019	-12	+11	-13	-13	-6	-1	-46	+10	-98	-2935
	From Sep 2020	+6	+7	+2	-4	+3	0	-3	-2	10	+499
	Nov 22 nd	367	241	515	234	143			258	2128	
	Male/Fem split	47/53	44/56	53/47	47/53	47/53	42/58	53/47	45/55	M49/F49	M43/F55
	Email Consent	34/66	45/55	43/57	44/56	34/66	58/42	48/52	56/44	Y55/N45	Y46/N54
	Yes/No										
	Mailing Labels	170	92	212	81	66	38	87	90	848 total	Inc 8 unalloc
	Sent by CO			(140)							+3 affil
		~>	~>	~>	599	<~	<~				+1 IL50

We had **8** walking organisations affiliated to SYNED

Ramblers Membership Figures had shown quite a drop overall compared with last October.

However there has been some recovery since Group Walks restarted again at the beginning of July.

This was obviously welcome but we were still not back to last October's figures by the end of this October and should still be a cause of concern, especially with this second four week period of Lockdown just starting. All our Groups had been getting new members but our 'older' members were letting their subs lapse.

Secretary also reported that the Insight Hub stats had showed how many of our members consented (or not) to receiving (marketing) emails. This meant that Central Office had sent double the amount of mailing labels to use for distribution of the Area Annual Report than local Group Secretaries had thought necessary when ordering copies to be printed.

This raised the concern over whether members not getting emails were in fact still getting information from, and about, the Groups and Area and felt they were getting full value from their subscription.

Sec reported that the Area Annual Reports were in the process of being printed and CW would distribute them, along with the mailing labels, to the various Group Secs as soon as they were ready.

03 Treasurer GJ reported that we had some £35,362 in funds at the moment.

Made up of £3,293 in General Acc; £9,989 in Bradfield Ancient Ways Improvement Project Acc;

£17,267 in the Ivy Cowen (deceased) Trust Acc and £4,813 in the Clarion Call account.

There had been no payments made since October Area Council.

He had therefore decided that funds were adequate for our needs and we did not need to take our Q2 Area Allocation from Central Office – a decision which he had emailed to CO. But had not received any reply.

04 Access LS – nothing further to report

AC2020/11/02/08 2021 Area AGM

01 Would be via Zoom on **Saturday January 23rd 2021 – starting at 2pm**

with an Eventbrite Booking required in advance:-

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/2021-syned-ramblers-area-agm-tickets-127615508421>

or by contacting the Area Sec by phone or email

(CM suggested that Chair/Sec had a Co Host as an assistant during the Area AGM as had been done at GC)

02 Area President, David Blunkett, had been contacted and requested to attend, but, as he was assuming he would still be able to go abroad then for a holiday next January, he was not going to be available. He hoped to be able to make a short pre-recorded speech to the AGM instead, which, AP reported, would be filmed at the same time as DB making a presentation to David Gadd for his services to the Area.

03 Nominations for all AC Positions

Chair	Allen Pestel	prepared to stand
Secretary	Malcolm Dixon	
Treasurer	Gavin Johns	
Access	Les Seaman	
Footpaths	Continue to be covered by ACROW	
	Nicki Speakman willing to receive Official Documentation	
	Christine Whittaker did this for Sheffield Groups	
Countryside Officer	Allen Pestel	
Membership	Malcolm Dixon (as Area Sec)	
Area Annual Report	Malcolm Dixon (as Area Sec)	
Area Webmaster	"vacant"	
Publicity & Social Media	"vacant"	

AC Members Without Portfolio (to represent general membership at AC Meetings
currently Cath MacKay and Terry Howard (also VPs)

General Council Delegates & Visitors April 17th 2021 at NEC, Birmingham

We were allowed two Delegates – Allen Pestel, Jeremy Kenyon and Nicki Speakman were nominated
Would be voted on at the Area AGM. Losing nominee would attend as a visitor. (if allowed)

04 Motions for GC 2021

Discussions at the previous AC had suggested there were 2 possible Motions that we could send to the GC although we were only allowed to send one. So would need to debate and vote on them at the AGM.

AP was proposing a Motion on the Declining Membership Issue and JK was looking at one related to the Ts & Cs of the Insurance that the Ramblers had negotiated, but he thought there might be something similar coming from another Area, so would wait and see. They were asked to provide their proposed wording prior to the AGM if possible, so that they could be included on the Agenda that would be sent out to participants.

AC2020/11/02/09 Any Other SYNED Business

01 AC/ACRoW dates for 2021 Nothing had been fixed up yet. Had to presume that physical meetings would remain impossible for the foreseeable future and meetings would have to be held using Zoom.

These could be scheduled at very short notice.

Agreed that next Area Council after the January Area AGM would be held on Zoom on

MONDAY FEBRUARY 15th 2021 starting at 7pm. Secretary to make the necessary arrangements.

It was intended that we again start with the ACROW business at 7:00pm and the full Area Council meeting would follow on as and when we had finished those discussions.

Hopefully by February we would also know what restrictions were still in place regarding meetings, etc.

02 Shared Use of SYNED Zoom Pro Licence by constituent local Ramblers Groups

As previously reported SYNED had purchased a Zoom Pro License. This had fewer restrictions and allowed the use of polling (for elections & quizzes) within meetings as well as other privileges not available with the free Basic Account.

It was intended that it would be made available for use by our Groups if they wished for Group meetings and other events, or arranging meetings with officials, etc.

The only proviso being that bookings had to be made through the Secretary to avoid any clashes. (Once the meeting was scheduled, the Secretary would not necessarily have any other involvement in the meeting.)

Sec had been consulting with colleagues in CAMRA who already allowed their Branches to use their National Zoom account. And following their instructions, he was hoping to have a test run with Kate & colleagues in the Dearne Valley Ramblers to see if and how it could work similarly for our Groups.

Once set up, he would distribute a list of protocols and invite Groups to use the Zoom Account.

03 SYNED Google Groups / SYNED Website Domain Name and generic email addresses

All members had been placed in a Google Group for using to share information and discussing common issues. As members joined or left the Area Council they would be added or removed from the listings accordingly. You just needed to email items to "syned-ramblers-council@googlegroups.com" and what you posted would go to everyone on the list – currently 30 people.

Sec was currently using the Sheffield Secretary's email address to send out Area Council correspondence, etc which wasn't ideal and it was hoped to change this to "someone@SYNED.com" address as soon as possible.

However, we currently didn't have access to the SYNED website name and domain, as it had been allowed to lapse in the past (We used a BT Community account to host the current SYNED website).

Dave Jefferies, the Sheffield IT Bod had been pursuing this and hoped to track it down asap. Once we did recover it (assuming we were able to) it was hoped to have generic email accounts for all SYNED officers.

04 Donation of SYNED Money to Central Office to Pay for Lost Ways Research

We had discussed this previously and wasn't clear if any money so donated would be used towards local research or just go into a general fund. And possibly wouldn't go very far anyway.

GJ suggested that AP consult with David Gadd and see if he could utilise any money from SYNED funds for doing Lost Ways research in our Area. AP promised to follow this up with DG.

05 A57 Link Road in Longdendale Three routes had been proposed to connect with the A628 and A57 to form a new expressway bypass to the M62. One had been selected but local objections continued as only moved the bottleneck from affecting one village to affecting two as well as increasing CO2 emissions, etc. AP had previously objected to these proposals and would keep a watching brief on developments.

Meeting closed at 20:09 Everyone thanked for attendance and contributions.
(83 mins : 76.4 MB WAV file now available)

Appendix 'A' Following AC - CW provided a list of 'hits' the website had received over the years:-

SYNED WEBSITE COUNT			
	APRIL 2012	23/11/2015	24/11/2020
Home Page	6067	28960	77896
Local Groups	984	3715	8265
Walks	1282	911	10059
New Footpaths		1881	5740
Sheffield 40's	977	4861	10615
Area New Campaign		13865	
About Us Meetings	3131	799	7474

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