

THE PEAK DISTRICT & NORTHERN
COUNTIES
FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION
SOCIETY.



REPORT
OF THE COUNCIL

For the Year ended 31st December, 1928



Printers:
THE POLICY-HOLDER JOURNAL COMPANY, LTD.
44, Lloyd Street, Albert Square,
Manchester.

The Peak District & Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society.

President :

COL. H. T. CROOK, M.Inst.C.E., D.L., J.P.

Vice-Presidents :

| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| E. VIPONT BROWN, M.D. | W. MAXWELL REEKIE, |
| T. SKELTON COLE. | O.B.E., J.P. |
| SIR HAROLD ELVERSTON. | C. P. SCOTT, J.P. |
| ABEL HEYWOOD, J.P. | J. CUMING WALTERS, M.A. |
| F. HOWARD. | F. WILLETT. |

Council :

COL. H. T. CROOK, M.Inst.C.E., D.L., J.P., Chairman.

J. W. PRICE, F.R.G.S., Vice-Chairman.

| | | |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| F. E. AMOR. | B. GILL. | Miss L. MORRIS. |
| J. ASHTON. | J. GODLEY. | J. MACAULEY. |
| K. W. ATKINSON. | T. GREAVES. | A. MILNER. |
| F. BANKS. | A. HEWITT. | L. D. MYLECRAIN. |
| T. H. BARKER. | R. HILL. | H. PHILLIPS. |
| A. E. BOWEN. | W. HILTON. | W. A. RALSTON. |
| F. BROOME. | W. HOWARTH. | A. E. RICHARDS. |
| W. J. BROWN. | W. HUGHES. | A. ROBINSON. |
| Miss B. CARTER | E. HUNTER. | W. M. ROBOTHAM. |
| J. G. CALLENDER. | W. INGHAM. | E. ROYCE. |
| E. CHETWOOD. | J. R. JACKSON. | Miss A. SHIELDS. |
| J. CLARKE. | W. P. JAMES. | „ M. SOWERBUTTS |
| F. COLLIER. | H. H. JONES. | T. SCANLAN. |
| T. A. COOKE | W. JONES. | J. R. SLANEY. |
| G. CRIGHTON. | C. W. JORDAN. | A. SMITH. |
| H. FESTALL. | H. C. KIRK. | W. A. SPRUCE. |
| J. FIELD. | R. B. KNOTT. | Miss C. TAYLOR. |
| H. J. GIBSON. | T. LORD. | D. THOMPSON. |
| | W. R. WHITEHEAD. | |

Council—continued.

Hon. Secretary:
ARTHUR R. MOON, LL.B.

Hon. Solicitor :
L. CARADOC EVANS.

Hon. Surveyor :
COL. H. T. CROOK, M.Inst.C.E.,
D.L., J.P.

Hon. Auditor :
A. E. BOWEN.

Inspector of Footpaths :
H. E. WILD

Asst. Inspector of Footpaths :
G. H. B. WARD, F.R.G.S.

Hon. Treasurer :
F. W. WIGELSWORTH, 36, Brownsville Road, Heaton Moor,
Near Stockport.

Secretary :
T. BOULGER, c/o A. R. Moon, 55, Brown Street, Manchester.

Constitution and Rules.

1. The Society shall be called "The Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society."

2. The objects of the Society shall be :—

- (a) The preservation, maintenance and defence of the rights of the public to the use and enjoyment of the public highways, footpaths, bridlepaths, bye-ways, and other ways, vacant spaces, waste lands, and roadside slips, and to right of recreation over commons in the Northern and Midland counties, particularly in the Peak District.
- (b) The prevention of the abuse of such rights, especially trespass and damage to crops and property, and disturbance of game by trespassers.
- (c) The support by influence, petition or otherwise of Bills in Parliament promoting the aforesaid objects, or any of them, or others of a like or kindred nature.
- (d) The purchase, or promoting the purchase of rights of way and rights over open spaces to be dedicated to the use of the public for ever.
- (e) And all objects conducive to the foregoing, including the combination, or co-operation with other societies or persons in the promotion or furtherance of the aforesaid objects, or any of them.

3. An annual subscription of 2s. 6d. or upwards, payable in advance on the first day of January in each year, shall constitute membership.

4. The business of the Society not transacted in general meeting shall be in the hands of a managing committee, elected annually, and consisting of the President, Vice-Presidents, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Solicitor, Honorary Secretary, and not less than Twelve other Members of the Society, with power to add to their number.

5. An annual general meeting of the members of the Society shall be held in the first quarter in every year, and shall receive, consider, and, if approved of, adopt the report of the Managing Committee for the past year, and transact any other business that may arise.

6. An Extraordinary General Meeting shall be held without delay whenever occasion shall arise, upon the requisition of five members specifying the reason for the meeting and communicated to the Honorary Secretary. Such meeting shall also be held before the institution or defence of any legal

proceedings, the costs of which the ordinary revenue of the Society shall be insufficient to defray, and a favourable vote of not less than two-thirds of the members present at such meeting shall, subject to the necessary funds being duly subscribed or guaranteed, be sufficient sanction for the institution or defence of such proceedings, provided that no liability in respect thereof shall attach to any member beyond the amount of such member's individual subscription to the Society, or the amount of such member's guarantee towards the funds necessary to conduct such proceedings.

7. The Managing Committee shall by themselves or by Sub-Committees appointed from their number:—

- (1) Induce—or, if necessary, compel—as far as possible, all Local, Public, or Urban Authorities and District Councils to perform their duties as conservators of the said public rights.
- (2) Institute, or defend, assist others in instituting or defending, continue, compromise, abandon, or prosecute to judgment, at their discretion, and generally give instructions for all the legal proceedings sanctioned by general meeting as aforesaid.
- (3) Keep a map, or series of maps, wherein the situation of all footpaths and other public ways shall, so far as possible, be indicated and recorded, and visit, inspect, survey, and report on the same from time to time, and receive, consider, and investigate complaints of violation of any of the said rights, or of the abuse thereof.

8. All Sub-Committees shall, from time to time, report to the Managing Committee.

9. The Society shall subscribe and be affiliated to such national Society or Societies constituted for like objects, as may from time to time be determined in general meeting.

10. All General Meetings, whether Annual or Extraordinary, shall be convened by the Hon. Secretary's written notice, posted or delivered to members at their usual or last known addresses, at least three days before the day of meeting, and indicating the business for which the meeting is to be convened. Ten members shall form a quorum.

11. These rules may be rescinded, supplemented, or altered by resolution passed in General Meeting, but not otherwise, and then only after a week's notice in writing of the proposed alteration.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 1928.

IN presenting the report for the year ending December 31, 1928, the Council again draws attention to the marked increase in the work of the Society in the protection of public rights of way and in the erection and maintenance of direction posts.

Some, among the many matters which have occupied the attention of the Society and its officers, are referred to in this report.

Doctor's Gate.

Early in the year the owner of the land crossed by Doctor's Gate erected at the Mossylee end of the track a notice board stating that "All persons walking along Doctor's Gate must keep to the path. All dogs to be kept on leash. By order." As it had also been reported that the periodical closing of the gate at this point appeared to have ceased, the owner was written to asking whether it might now be assumed that he admitted the right of the public over the track, and if his only concern was to keep the public to the track the Society might be of assistance to him in this respect, but no reply to the Society's communications has been received.

Portions of the path are in need of draining, and, in the area which falls within the control of the Chapel-en-le-Frith R.D.C., flood waters have made the crossing of the stream entering Doctor's Gate culvert most difficult. A request has been made to the District Council to do the necessary repairs.

Delamere Forest Footpaths.

No material progress has been made during the year towards a solution of the important questions of public rights of way in and about the area of Crown Lands leased to the Forestry Commission.

The preliminary investigations and interview with the Divisional Officer of the Commission in charge of the forest were described in last year's report, and as arranged a plan* indicating the whole of the paths claimed to be public was forwarded to the Divisional Officer for the consideration of the Forestry Commission. In reply to a recent communication asking for the Commission's views on the claim, the Divisional Officer reported that the Forestry Commissioners were considering the policy to be adopted in regard to the various rights and interests of the public in all the forests under their control, and requesting that the matter of the Delamere Forest paths be deferred until a decision had been reached. In acceding to this request, the Society asked for an opportunity to make representations on the general principles involved in conjunction with the Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society. In several of the areas, such as the the New Forest, the Forests of Dean and Delamere, which have been leased to the Commission, freedom of access has not been denied to the public over a long period of years, and therefore the restriction of that freedom and the destruction of the wild beauty of these regions by systematic planting are matters of the deepest concern.

The Delamere Golf Club was approached to remove the "No road" notice on the gate on the path leading from Delamere station by the golf links. This has now been done, and the Divisional Officer has also promised to remove the Forestry Commissioners' notice board at the commencement of the same path warning trespassers that they would be prosecuted.

Benfield Footpath.

During the year, both the Society and the Hyde Society have spent a good deal of time collecting evidence in support of the public's right over the path. This evidence has been

* For the preparation of this plan, the Society is greatly indebted to its vice-chairman, Mr. J. W. Price.

laid before Counsel, who is of opinion that the path is public, and the necessary steps to be taken to preserve such rights have been determined upon.

Footpath on Coombes Edge, Charlesworth.

On receiving complaints of the obstruction of this path, which runs the length of the top of Coombes Rocks on the Coombes side of the wall, the matter was reported to the Glossop Dale R.D.C., and that Council, it is understood, has written to the landowner concerned requesting the removal of the obstruction.

Slippery Stones Footbridge.

The repairs to this footbridge have now been completed and the bridge should now be fully proof against winter floods. The cost of the repairs was £14 15s., the Society's contribution towards such cost being £4 18s. 4d.

Footpath from Knutsford to Arley.

Your Council is still urging the Bucklow R.D.C. to deal with this matter, and to see that the obstructions that periodically appear on the footpath near Hollow Wood Farm are removed and that the footbridge be re-erected, for without the latter it is practically impossible to make a crossing in rainy weather. The Bucklow Council informs your Council that they are pressing the agent to the Arley Estate to give early attention to the matter.

Footpath from Chapel Lane to Hale Road, Hale Barns.

On hearing that this path had been definitely obstructed by the erection of an iron hurdle and barbed wire and the ploughing up of one of the fields through which the path passes, your Council informed the Bucklow R.D.C. thereof, and that Council has promised to give the matter attention.

Footbridge opposite Woodford Church Vicarage, Woodford.

This footpath, which is entered by a stile opposite the Woodford Church Vicarage, in the Chester Road, has for sometime past been ploughed up and planted with potatoes.

It appears that about two years ago the path was granted as a diverted path when the original path was closed. As there could be no possible doubt that the path was public, the Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Preservation Society, on behalf of your Council, requested the owner to cease ploughing and to reinstate the path, and the farmer has now given an undertaking to do this.

Footpath between Stonyford and Tunstead Farm, Hayfield.

The stile by which this path crossed the wall bounding Harry Moor, being in need of repair, your Council asked the Stockport Corporation, as owners of the land, to repair the same. Not only has this stile now been rebuilt but other stiles in the neighbourhood have also been improved.

Footpath from Carr Brow across Disley Golf Links.

Owing to the removal of a stone wall it was found that this path was difficult to follow, and pedestrians not knowing the track proceeded straight across the golf links after crossing the stile. Your Council has suggested to the Golf Club that it would be in the interests of the Club to define the proper track either by notice boards, or otherwise, so that the public would have no difficulty in finding the track and have no occasion to diverge from the track over the greens.

Footpath from Brooks' Drive to Yew Tree Lane, Ringway.

This footpath, which, it will be remembered, has been previously obstructed, has again been obstructed during the past year and the attention of the Bucklow R.D.C. was drawn to the matter. Your Council is pleased to report that the obstructions have now been removed, but the stile in Brooks' Drive which was demolished has not been rebuilt. Having regard to the absence of the stile, your Council has decided to erect a signpost at the commencement of the path in Brooks' Drive so that the commencement of the path may easily be found.

Footpaths on Baslow Edge and Eaglestone Moor.

When the Baslow Edge and Eagle Stone Flat Moor was purchased by the Baslow U.D.C., it was thought by the public

that access to the many beautiful paths, particularly the "Duke's Drive" would be granted to them, and it came as an unpleasant surprise when the newspapers reported the decision of the Baslow Council to exclude the public from the Moors, owing to a complaint having been made by the shooting tenant. The Society asked the Council to reconsider its decision, and agree to dedicate or reaffirm public rights of way over the paths in question, or alternatively the use on sufferance particularly during the major portion of the year when the use of the paths would not interfere in any way with the shooting tenant. The latest decision of the Council is that they cannot permit any user, permissive or otherwise, and give as their reason the conduct of motorists and "ramblers," but, at the same time, admit that the regular rambler keeps to the paths. Your Council has asked the District Council to receive a deputation so that the matter may be fully discussed and the U.D.C. of Baslow be induced to modify their decision of total exclusion.

**Footpath Commencing at Naze Farm on North Side of
Maynestone Road, Chinley.**

For some considerable time, complaints have been received with reference to the obstruction of footpaths on Chinley Churn, and in particular the above path. Your Council is making the fullest enquiries, but at the present moment has not completed its investigations.

Snake Inn Footpath, Hayfield.

The footbridge over Lady Clough, near the Snake Inn, which was erected by the Society when the Hayfield-Snake Inn path was dedicated to the public, suffered considerable damage during the past year and was in a dangerous state, caused partly by a tie rod connecting the handrails having come apart, and partly by the rotting of the end of the beam. Your Council has had the necessary repairs carried out and the bridge is now in good condition and quite safe.

On this path also the swing gate at the top of Didsbury Piece was found to be broken off its hinges. As the agreement that was entered into with the landowner, on the dedication of the path, provided that the landowner was not at any time to be required or requested to maintain or repair the footpath

or any fences or delineations thereof, your Council being of opinion that the iron gate was a delineation of the path has had the same repaired.

Footpath near Mottram Hall.

Consequent on the ploughing up of portion of this path your Society reported the matter to the Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Preservation Society, and it is understood that the latter Society are in touch with the Cheshire County Council, the owners of the land, with a view to agreeing the proper line of path, as there seems to be some misunderstanding on the point.

Footpath from Ogden to Syke.

During the construction of the filter bed by the Oldham Corporation, a chain was placed across this path, obstructing its free use. From your Council's investigations it would appear that the path is a public right of way, but apparently the chain had only been placed across as a temporary measure pending the construction of a concrete way and the latter work being completed the chain has now been removed.

Direction Posts.

New posts have been fitted to the Society's direction plates :—

- (1) At Barber Booth, Edale.
- (2) At Hope (path to Castleton).
- (3) At Stonyford, Hayfield.
- (4) Near Peep o'Day Farm, above Hayfield.

At Hope and Stonyford, new plates also were necessary, the Hope plate having been broken, while the Stonyford plate, as mentioned in the 1927 Annual Report, had mysteriously disappeared.

A second direction post near Peep o'Day Farm was repaired and the post and plate were repainted.

A fallen post below Clough Farm was repainted and re-erected.

Above Tunstead Farm, Hayfield, the Society's finger-post lettered Edale, after being broken off at the base, has now been strengthened and re-erected in position. On the path from this point to Stonyford a new guide stake has been erected to take the place of one which had disappeared, and a further stake has been repainted and re-erected.

In William Clough an uprooted Mile Post has been repainted and refixed.

On Mickleden Edge the direction post has been strengthened by a supporting wooden stay. At Little Brookhouse a cross-plate has been added to the Society's post, worded "Flouch Inn and Hazlehead Station."

A cross plate bearing the "Hope" and "Ashopton" directions has been added to the direction post on Win Hill and the post has been repainted.

New direction posts to replace fallen posts in Ashop Clough and at Alport Bridge are in hand.

New direction posts will be erected during 1929 as follows :—

Three finger posts at Glossop.

Two iron-plated direction posts on the Oyster Clough Roman Road.

Iron-plated post on footpath Brooks' Drive to Yew Tree Lane, Ringway.

Iron-plated post on footpath Yew Tree House to Flittogate Farm near Knutsford.

Iron-plated post near Errwood Farm, on "The Street."

Finances.

Your Council regret to report the fact that the expenditure of last year exceeded by £22 19s. 3d. its income (other than donations to Defence Fund). It need hardly be pointed out that the income of the Society must determine the extent of its activities, and unless it can depend upon a larger income the Society will be very much restricted in the work it undertakes.

It had been the intention of your Council to obtain copies of the Enclosure Award Plans, which would be of great

assistance in determining the questions affecting many old roads and paths within the Society's area, but the cost of making each plan would be, roughly, £6 to £7. Your Council does appeal to its members for further financial support to enable this to be done and also renews its appeal for a larger membership.

The burden of the support of the Society would still appear to be taken by a small percentage of ramblers and those interested in the preservation of footpaths. The Secretaries of Rambling Clubs and kindred societies would be doing a very useful service if they would bring to the notice of their members on all convenient opportunities the objects and claims of the Society, and urge individual membership.

The Defence Fund has, during the year, increased from £117 16s. 8d. to £129 12s. 8d but the sum still falls short of the minimum fund of £250 aimed at.

Membership.

The terms of membership are quite simple ; there are no formalities other than the payment of a subscription of not less than 2/6 per annum, which entitles the member to a copy of the annual report, and to any information which it may be in the Council's power to give.

In fixing so small a minimum subscription, the Society had in view the desirability of obtaining the largest possible amount of public interest but, of course, the revenue from subscriptions at this low rate is quite inadequate to the requirements for the conduct of the Society's operations.

The Council, therefore, renews its appeal for subscriptions higher than the minimum and for donations to the Defence Fund, mentioned above.

Affiliation.

The minimum fee for Rambling Clubs and other Societies desiring to become affiliated is 10/6 per annum. The payment of the fee carries with it the right to nominate a delegate to attend the Council's meetings.

There are still many Rambling Clubs and similar associations in the district which are not yet affiliated, and a special invitation is extended to these to attach themselves to the

Society, for, by so doing, they would help financially, and, through their delegates, take a part in its management.

"The Rambler and the Law."

The second edition of this very useful booklet is still on sale at the exceptionally low price of 3d. No member should be without a copy of the booklet, which clearly defines in simple language the legal points which are always a source of trouble to pedestrians.

The Footpath Way.

The Society's Inspector of Footpaths over a period of several years has taken a set of photographs to illustrate a lantern lecture which he has now prepared under the above title. To a very large extent, the slides picture the history of the Society and Mr. Wild has kindly offered to give the Lecture to any affiliated society without fee, with the exception of out-of-pocket travelling expenses.

Affiliated Rambling Clubs & Societies.

Alderley Edge, Wilmslow and District Footpaths Preservation Society.

Altrincham & District Natural History & Literary Society.

Ancoats Brotherhood.

Ardwick Rambling Club.

Art Museum Field Club.

Associate Rambling Club.

Barnsley C.H.A. Rambling Club.

Bolton C.H.A. Rambling Club.

Bury and District C.H.A. Rambling Club.

Camping Club of Gt. Britain & Ireland (Manchester Section).

Co-operative Holiday Association.

Chorlton Road Congregational Church Rambling Club.

Comradeship of the Christian Endeavour Holiday Homes (Manchester Section).

Derby C.H.A. and H. F. Rambling Club.

Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society.

Edgeley Botanical Society.

Field Naturalists' and Archaeologists' Society, Manchester.

First Timperley Rovers.

Glossop Field Naturalists' Society.

Hans Renold Social Union Rambling Section.

Hallamshire Footpaths Preservation Society.

Heywood and District Botanical Society.

Holiday Fellowship Limited.

Holiday Fellowship (Manchester Group No. 1).

Holiday Fellowship (Stockport Group).

Hyde and District Footpaths Preservation Society.

Manchester Amateur Photographic Society.

Manchester & District Library Fellowship, Rambling Section.

Affiliated Rambling Clubs and Societies—continued.

Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "A")
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "B")
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "C")
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "D" West)
Manchester C.H.A. Rambling Club (Section "E")
Manchester Pedestrian Club.
Manchester Rambling Club.
Moorlanders Rambling Club.
Manchester Social Club Ramblers.
Oldham and District C.H.A. Rambling Society.
Onward Rambling Club.
Plymouth Grove Wesley Guild.
"R" Club.
Ramblers' Federation (Manchester and District).
Rotherham C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Rucksack Club.
Russell Rambling Club.
Salford P.S.A. Rambling Club.
Sheffield C.H.A. Rambling Club.
Sheffield Clarion Rambling Club.
Stockport C.H.A. Rambling and Social Club.
Stockport Field Club.
Stockport Municipal Secondary School Old Students' Rambling Club.
Stockport Co-operative Sports Club.
Trinity Wesleyan Rambling Club.
United Field Naturalists.
Vegetarian Society Social and Athletic Club.
Whalley Range Presbyterian Rambling Club.
Workers' Educational Association (Stockport Branch).
Y.M.C.A. Rambling Club.
Zion Rambling Club.

PEAK DISTRICT AND NORTHERN COUNTIES FOOTPATHS PRESERVATION SOCIETY.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1928.

| INCOME. | £ | s. | d. | EXPENDITURE. | £ | s. | d. |
|-------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---|-------|-------|-------|
| Balance from 1927 : | | | | | | | |
| Defence Fund ... | 117 | 16 | 8 | Printing and Stationery ... | 16 | 15 | 6 |
| General Account ... | 51 | 19 | 6 | Hire of Rooms ... | 2 | 17 | 0 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | Lecturer's Expenses (Annual Meeting) .. | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Subscriptions, 1928 ... | 94 | 18 | 3 | Insurance Premium ... | 0 | 18 | 4 |
| Sale of Booklets ... | 0 | 3 | 0 | Advertising ... | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| Bank Interest ... | 2 | 1 | 9 | Counsel's Fees (Doctor's Gate) ... | 7 | 19 | 6 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | Signposts ... | 13 | 2 | 9 |
| Defence fund... ... | 11 | 16 | 0 | Repairs to Slippery Stones Footbridge.. | 4 | 18 | 4 |
| | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> | Travelling Expenses ... | 9 | 19 | 0 |
| | | | | Maps, etc. ... | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| | | | | Secretary's Honorarium ... | 30 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | Footpaths Inspector's Honorarium ... | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | Subscription to Commons and Footpaths Preservation Society ... | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| | | | | Postages ... | 7 | 0 | 2 |
| | | | | Sundry Expenses ... | 1 | 7 | 2 |
| | | | | Donation towards Expenses of Leicester Conference ... | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| | | | | Balance—Defence Fund ... | £129 | 12 | 8 |
| | | | | " —General Account | 29 | 0 | 3 |
| | | | | | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | | | | | 158 | 12 | 11 |
| | | | | | <hr/> | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | | | | | £278 | 15 | 2 |