

SIGNPOST

**Newsletter of the Peak and Northern
Footpaths Society**



Number 37

Autumn 2010

RAMBLINGS FROM THE CHAIR

Often when I sit down to pen this column I have a collection of thoughts, in no particular order, that I wish to get across. On this occasion there is a little more structure as the result of the meeting of Trustees on October 20th. The meeting was convened to discuss the key messages for the forthcoming Half-Yearly Meeting (HYM), details of which can be found on the outside back cover.

The agenda for the meeting had 3 items:

- 1 The need for volunteers, including a replacement for the chairman.
2. The Society's finances, including an update on direct debit.
3. The Society's response to government cuts in expenditure in as far as they affect rights of way work.

Perhaps I should point out that formal meetings of the trustees are few and far between; rather there is an ongoing dialogue between myself and the other trustees. A formal meeting is held shortly before the AGM and, as yesterday, before the HYM. Other meeting are on an *ad hoc* basis as circumstances dictate.

What follows are not the notes of the trustee meeting; rather it is my thoughts on how I will deliver the key messages at the half year meeting.

Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

I want to spend a few minutes reflecting on our name. It is a much shortened version of the name our founding fathers came up with back in 1894. In fact it is worth noting that the name was developed and refined over several meetings. The first part, "Peak and Northern", is

shortened from "Peak District and Northern Counties" and describes very accurately where we exert our influence.

"Footpaths" was originally "Footpaths Preservation", succinctly describing what we are still about. The last word, "Society", is the reason for my digression.

We are indeed a Society; that is, we are: "an association of persons united by a common aim or interest".

The point I am trying to make is that the Society is not just about what the Chairman, the trustees or the officers think or say. The officers of the Society are members just like you. We give our time to deliver the "common aim". Our Society is a volunteer society which relies on the good will of the members giving their time in support of that "common aim".

I will not be standing for Chairman at the AGM

There are always opportunities to get involved as a volunteer and, just as important, to have your say in how the Society is managed. The Half

Year Meeting is just such an opportunity to air your views.

Volunteers

As a general rule we get a good response to our "volunteers wanted" adverts. However, one area where we have a desperate need of volunteers is for general administrative tasks at Taylor House. There is no way to make these jobs look exciting, and the fact that they are office based does nothing to add to their appeal. However, they are essential to the

smooth running of the Society, and are also well within the capability of any member. No special skills are required and training will be given. So please give a few hours of your time to help run your society.

I said in the last newsletter that I didn't expect to be inundated with calls from people offering to lead the Society as Chair/man/woman/person. In hindsight

I wonder if that piece was seen as just a little tongue in cheek. I must make my position clear to the membership, just as I have to the trustees and the officers. My position is that I will NOT be standing for the position of Chairman at the next AGM. I repeat here the words I used in the last newsletter:

There is a great team at PNFS and you can expect a lot of support. Absolutely no experience is necessary – I had none when I took on the VC's job and went on to become Chairman. Please don't assume one of the existing officers is waiting to step into my shoes; they aren't; they are all happy doing the job they currently do. You can rely on their support and my support during a handover period. At times you will get more advice, from all quarters, than you can handle. It is a great job, one that I will miss. But I am already planning my next steps and like a lot of you I have a family and a desire to travel more. So no excuses: give it some thought and get in touch if you want to head the leading regional Society solely concerned with footpath protection.

The next Chairperson might not yet be a member of the Society. Perhaps you know someone who is looking for interesting voluntary work. If so, bring them along to the open day at Taylor House on December 8th (details on page 9).

Speaking of volunteers, this is a good point to mention that Rhoda Barnet, one of our Courts and Inquiries Officers, has agreed to become a Trustee of the Society. According to the constitution her appointment will have to be ratified by the AGM, but until then she will be able to carry out all the duties associated with the post.

Finance

Since the last newsletter the Society has received a generous legacy of £15,345 from the estate of Mr Frank Butterworth. We have also received a number of significant one-off donations from individual members who wish to remain anonymous.

Legacies and one-off donations are very welcome and are always put to good use, but they do not represent regular income and we cannot rely on them or plan our expenditure around them.

Our newsletter has carried an appeal for members to consider making regular, monthly donations via standing order. Those members who have responded have been very generous and are to be thanked. Unfortunately the number of members that have responded remains in single figures and we have to consider how we can increase our income.

Back in 2007 the AGM voted to close the gap between income and expenditure. The following year the AGM voted to increase subscriptions. During my time as Chairman we have examined every line of our accounts and made considerable savings.

The fact remains that we still have an underlying gap between income and expenditure of around £8,000 a year

Continued overleaf

The Half-Yearly Meeting will be a major opportunity for the membership to have a say on how we bridge that gap.

Direct debits are finally coming to PNFS. We will be writing to all members inviting them to sign up to DD for subscription renewals in the very near future.

Government cuts

I am sure we all have concerns about the latest government cuts, and those concerns will not be limited to how they affect rights of way work. However, the Society has but one concern: the protection of rights of way.

Whatever the cuts, the law has not changed: each Highway Authority is bound by law to assert and protect the rights of walkers. The Society has the same legal remedies when a Highway Authority fails to carry out those duties.

The feelings of the trustees are clear: the Society must not get drawn into political debate or discussion on how Highway Authorities manage their budgets. We must remain resolute in our determination to protect the rights of all walkers.

Clarke Rogerson

ONE MAN'S TERRORIST

as the old saying goes, is another man's freedom fighter. This contribution to the Government's Your Freedom website is unlikely to endear itself to ramblers. Especially when you know that denise is Mrs Denise Herrick of the recent Herrick case. To quote another old saying: "she would say that, wouldn't she?"

Repeal of section 130 of Highways Act

by denise on July 02, 2010 at 09:37AM

This law is the bane of all landowners who have public rights of way on their land. It allows an individual who is very likely to be an extremist neighbour with an agenda to take action against a local authority for alleged obstructions to footpaths. It engages the landowner in a lengthy and costly dispute with three parties (the local authority, the neighbour and himself) and ends in some very questionable judgements which are often of no value to anyone and could have been better sorted out if all three parties could have sat around a table to resolve an issue. The local authority ends up paying a fortune for something they have the power to control themselves. This is a law which is a typical labour law which was designed to set people against people and neighbours against neighbours and is of absolutely no benefit to anyone. It is important to remember that this applies to public rights of way over people's private land.

This idea will save local highway authorities hundreds of thousands of pounds a year and will allow them to make their own judgements and allow them to downsize their staff considerably in order that they don't have to deal with these extremists. It will also allow farmers to concentrate their efforts on making their farms viable as opposed to spending thousands of pounds lining the pockets of lawyers in defending their rights and property from extremists who's agenda is very often questionable.

WALKS FOR ALL – PROJECT UPDATE



Mike Gibson –PROW Officer for Barnsley - and Gilly Gostick at the start of a "Walk for All" route

In Signpost 35 I reported on the start of a PNFS project to provide comprehensive information on our website about "Walks for All." This is particularly aimed at people with disabilities who need level walks or who use wheelchairs, and at people with children in pushchairs or buggies.

The project has gone to plan, thanks to two people:

Gilly Gostick, who contacted our various Highway

Authorities (HAs) and researched their websites; and Mike Barnes, who has edited the Society website to display the information gathered and to show links to walk opportunities.

The website will be up and running and displaying "Walks for All" by December 1st.

The website will be up and running by December 1st

We would like members to access and check out the website and comment (bratty41@hotmail.com) on its value and user-friendliness (or otherwise!) In particular, we would like to hear from those of you who have used these walks yourselves or have family members or friends who use wheelchairs or pushchairs. We hope that they will take advantage of this initiative to find new places to go and enjoy suitable walks.

We would also appreciate information from anyone who knows and has used other walks which are not on the website, so that we can expand the facility.

So far about a third of our HAs have their information displayed and more offerings will be added as they become available.

To access the project:

- go to www.peakandnorthern.org.uk
- select "Walks for All" where a welcome message will be displayed
- select the HA area of interest (not all are active yet)
- from the individual HA summary page follow the various links to specific walks' descriptive leaflets (or how to order if they are not available online).

Those of you without computer access are invited to phone me to discuss appropriate walk options (01925 762472).

Looking forward to hearing from you.

David Bratt

PNFS WALKS PROGRAMME

For all walks, check train or bus times near the date and bring lunch. All walkers joining a PNFS led walk should be appropriately dressed and are responsible for their own safety. Walk leaders reserve the right to exclude people from the walk without giving any reason for that decision. If the advertised transport is delayed, the leader must not start the walk until it arrives. Walk leaders should be conversant with the Society's Walk Leaders Policy, which can be viewed on our website.

SHORT WALKS

Wednesday 10th November

Leader Peter Vickers (0161 748 8135)

Hebden Bridge circular. 5½ miles.

Manchester Victoria 1048.

Walk starts at Hebden Bridge station at 1120.

Wednesday 15th December. Combined Christmas Walk. See below.

Wednesday 12th January

Leader Brian Morison (0161 483 8957)

Middlewood to Disley 5 miles. Hilly.

Manchester Piccadilly 0952. Walk starts at Middlewood station at 1020

(199 bus – Stockport 0935 – stops at High Lane at 0959)

Wednesday 9th February

Leader: Martin Riley (01706 848408)

Middleton Circular: 6½ miles.

Manchester Victoria 1030.

Walk starts at Mills Hill station 1040

Wednesday 9th March

Leader: Dave Brown (01663 733236)

Broadbottom to Stalybridge linear. 6 miles, 700ft of ascent.

Manchester Piccadilly 1048

Walk starts at Broadbottom station at 1110

Wednesday 13th April

Leader: Peter Burns (01744 893432)

Helsby Circular. 7 miles. Undulating.

Manchester Piccadilly 0950

Walk starts at Helsby station 1040

LONGER WALKS

Wednesday 24th November

Leader Vince Joyce (01942 603626)

Disley circular. 11 miles. Hilly.

Manchester Piccadilly 0952. Walk starts at Disley station at 1025

Wednesday 15th December. Combined Christmas Walk. See below.

Wednesday 26th Jan

Leader Peter Gunn (0161 291 9372)

Greenfield circular 10 miles. Hilly.

Manchester Victoria 1027 or Piccadilly 1011 changing at Stalybridge

Walk starts at Greenfield station at 1055

Wednesday 23rd Feb

Leader Martin Riley (01706 848408)

Walkden to Daisy Hill. 10 miles linear. Fairly flat.

Manchester Victoria 1010

Walk starts at Walkden station at 1030

Wednesday 30th March

Leader: Dave Brown (01663 733236)

Buxton to Whaley Bridge linear. 10 miles. Hilly.

Manchester Piccadilly 0952

Walk starts at Buxton station at 1055

Wednesday 27th April

Leader John Humpherson (0161 449 0524)

Glossop to Hadfield linear. Hilly.

Piccadilly station 0948

Walk starts at Glossop station at 1020

CHRISTMAS WALK

Wednesday 15th December

Leader: Dave Brown (01663 733236)

Dove Holes to New Mills linear. 10 miles 2000ft ascent.

Mince pies and mulled wine at Whaley Bridge.

with option to finish there. (5½ miles 900ft ascent.)

Manchester Piccadilly 0952. Walk starts at Dove Holes station at 1045

THE REAL WORK OF THE SOCIETY

is, of course, ensuring that the footpath network is kept in good repair and remains unobstructed. That can only be achieved by the vigilant and painstaking work of our many volunteers – Inspectors and Officers. The following extracts from our file illustrate the enthusiasm and energy with which our work is pursued.

Colne Valley Footpath 136 - The PROW officer has met the new landowner on site and requested removal of the unauthorised barrier. As of yesterday (21/9) there had been no response. This has been reported to the PROW officer who will issue a '14 day notice'. I sense that his new line manager – who has no knowledge of PROW law and practice – will not support further action. If the barrier remains on my return from holiday on October 12th, I will start the process under s.130A. While the worst aspects of the obstruction have been dealt with, i.e. removing misleading notices and barbed wire and making a way through at the side for walkers, there is still a locked barrier across most of the lane, which deters people from using the path.

(Terry Norris)

Inspector Keith Feltham received this encouraging reply to his concerns about paths in Sutton cum Duckmanton and Ashover:

"Dear Keith,
Thank you for your recent Public Rights of Way reports and BVPI Survey Forms for Sutton cum Duckmanton and Ashover Parishes.

I have already served notice on the landowner for the cropping obstruction and stiles in disrepair on Sutton c Duckmanton

Footpath 18. I hope to resolve these issues very soon.

I have agreed with the landowner at Hagg Farm that Footpath 13 should be diverted legally to the alternative route avoiding the property. The landowner is applying for a permanent diversion.

I have also served notice on the landowner regarding the stile in disrepair on Sutton cum Duckmanton Footpath 13. I inspected Sutton cum Duckmanton Footpath 11 and have spoken to the landowner regarding the line of the footpath. The landowner would like to query the line of the path with our

I am not satisfied that walkers' interests will be safeguarded

Mapping Team; this issue will require further investigations. I inspected Ashover Footpath 104 and I do not consider that any further

action is required. It is not clear on the ground if the waymarked route follows the definitive line of the path; however, the route shown on your plan running down the very steep embankment is dangerous for the public to walk.

Thank you for your help. Lynn Taylor (Environmental Services)"

Rossington Bridleway 14 - I have been approached by an acquaintance in the village of Rossington near Doncaster to say that a bridleway bridge across the River Torne was systematically dismantled over 2 nights by persons unknown and removed for its scrap value. The council have removed what is left on safety grounds and imposed a Traffic Restriction Order. The Senior PROW

iis awaiting a design for a new concrete bridge from the Bridges Department, but beyond that any progress is in doubt. The bridleway is the only link between Rossington and a neighbouring village for walkers, horse riders and off-road cyclists. I am not seeking any authorisations yet, but this is one that I feel will require action eventually.

27/08/10: I attended a meeting with the rights of way unit on 30th June, at which the main item discussed was the design of the new bridge. An agreed design means that they can bid for funding from senior managers as their own budget is insufficient to cover the estimated £50,000-£75,000 cost of the replacement bridge.

Latest: The Legal Events Committee has granted me authority to serve s.56 HA80 notice at the optimum moment.

(John Harker)

South Darley Footpath 16 and Bridleway 13 - proposed s257 TCPA 1990 order to divert paths to enable planning permission for the extension of Tearsall Quarry, Bonsall to be implemented. The National Park Authority has been consulted on a proposed diversion order. I have submitted a holding objection as I am not satisfied that walkers' interests will be safeguarded before the restoration of the quarry. I am still in

discussion with the rights of way officer and, through him, the quarry company. I may need to obtain approval for a formal objection if my concerns are not met.

(Rhoda Barnet)



Eckington Footpath 50 - A success

The photo shows the western end of the newly reopened footpath, near Renishaw. Previously, one had to scramble up the bank where the new flight of steps has been built and then climb a wire fence at the top to get onto the pavement at the roadside. The man in the photos is Jack Burling, a friend of mine who is a life member of the Society and a former Inspector. He now lives in Cornwall but was visiting at the time.

(John Harker)

OPEN DAY AT TAYLOR HOUSE

There will be an open day at Taylor House on December 8th starting at 1000. This is an opportunity for potential volunteers to see what is involved and to discuss their potential involvement with the Officers.

The address of Taylor House is on the outside back cover. It is a 15 minute walk from Stockport railway station

Members' donations have continued to fund new PNFS signposts, mostly in far-flung locations, bringing welcome publicity. In July **S382** was erected at Dean Farm, east of Sabden, as a memorial to former footpath inspector Harry Sutcliffe, who is also commemorated at S376 on the Tame Valley Way.

S386 at Wiswell Moor Houses, was placed west of Sabden as a memorial to Ken Cooper, chairman of Trafford Walkers. Both signs lie in the pleasant walking area south of Pendle Hill and Clitheroe and are our first in the area.

September brought no fewer than eight new signs:

S385 at Tatham Parish Church, near Lowgill north of Bowland, celebrates the 90th birthday of Esther Horsfall (nee Halstead), presently of Whaley Bridge, but formerly of High Thrushgill above the Hindburn valley. The happy idea of her daughter Jean, it stands close to the school Esther walked to from 1927 to 1931, a _____ round trip of 4 miles. It is our most northerly sign.

The total number of signposts in the ground is 319

S387 stands a good mile south of it, above Stair End bridge, and is also on Esther's route. It is dedicated to Roy Clough, who now lives in South Devon, but who sent us a more-than-generous donation asking that we should keep an eye on S267 on Turton Moor, north of Bolton, which is in memory of Roy's aunt, Ruth Clough.

S393 went up a day later at Manor House Farm, Marsden. It is a third memorial to

Frank Griffiths of Alkrington. The other two are at Torside Clough, Longdendale and Dunsop Bridge, Bowland (see below).

John Hodgson and Ted Wolfe had a further busy and wet day erecting three signposts at Brennand Farm, Dunsop Bridge, Bowland.

S388 has its plate bolted to a stone outbuilding, like S255 (1995). To minimise maintenance for S388 we used stainless steel expanding bolts. An earlier donation from Graham Bullough paid for it. His parents are commemorated on S033, in the area near Hayfield where they walked.,

S389 (see above) stands at a key junction uphill and north of the farm; the gift of Mrs Pat Griffiths.

S390 stands 200' or so below by the side of the Brennand River, where numerous tracks diverge through a series of five-barred gates. It was funded by Martin Lee and bears his chosen couplet by Walt Whitman : "Afoot and light-hearted, I take to the open road." These three signs are our first in Bowland and stand at its geographical centre, thanks to the consent of Ian Grindy of United Utilities and farmer Geoffrey Walker, their tenant. Thanks are also due to John and Ted, who worked in poor conditions to get the job done.

S391 stands at Further Harrop Farm, below Charles Head on the old route to Rainow, in traditional PNFS territory. It celebrates the 70th birthday of our footpaths inspector John Goodman, who lives locally.

S392 stands in front of Goldsitch Farm,



Black Brook, Quarnford, about one mile east of Roach End.

If I've got my sums right, it brings our total number of signposts in the ground to 319. Four more signposts are in the pipeline: one at Bonsall near Matlock Bath; one at Taxal Moor above the Goyt Valley; and two at Padfield, Glossop.

So what can you do to help? Planned signposts at Mixon near Onecote and at Vincent House Farm, Hartington are still awaiting donations, but now a modest sum has been made available by the officers, thanks to a recent bequest. More pressing is the need for your help

AND FINALLY

Congratulations to octogenarian member James Cain (right) on completing his Lands End to John o' Groats walk on September 23rd.

The statistics of his walk are

- 96 days walking
- 1050 miles covered
- 292 pints of beer drunk
- 3.5 miles per pint
- 80 years of age at Land's End
- 87½ years of age at John O'Groats.

with maintenance, whether it is unskilled cleaning of algae from "Join Us" and memorial plaques or the semi-skilled task of repainting, which calls for a steady hand. If you feel the urge to help, call me on 0161 283 7824.

Finally I'd like to thank John Harker, who shares my interest in the history of Signpost 112, which was re-erected recently at the Moorland Centre, Edale. Rather than being "lost" between 1965 and 2008, when it resurfaced via PNP Ranger Sheila McHale, John tells me that it spent much of the intervening time in a Sheffield member's garden.

In 1965, when the Society had no use for it, he offered to give it a home in return for a donation. When he had to move to a flat, it found its way back to Edale via another Sheffield member. This probably explains why the plate was in such good condition after 43 years' absence, but it leaves me wondering where its counterpart S113 might be. Is it somewhere out there in need of re-adoption? Watch this space!

Dave Morton



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Reg Charity No 212219
0161 480 3565 **mail@peakandnorthern.org.uk**

YOU ARE INVITED TO THE HALF-YEARLY MEETING OF THE PEAK AND NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY

On

Saturday November 27th

At

THE BRITANNIA HOTEL, DIALSTONE LANE,
OFFERTON, STOCKPORT, SK2 6AG

FREE CAR PARKING IS AVAILABLE AT THE HOTEL
NUMBER 383 & 384 BUSES STOP AT THE HOTEL
NUMBER 192 & 199 BUSES STOP ON THE NEARBY A6

1030 COFFEE, TEA AND BISCUITS

1100 MEETING COMMENCES

1230 HOT BUFFET LUNCH

1330 MEETING CONTINUES

1500 MEETING CLOSES

To reserve your place at the meeting please inform the
Editor (01663 733236 or pnfs.meetings@gmail.com)
no later than November 21st.

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