

SIGNPOST

Newsletter of the
Peak and Northern Footpaths Society



A Hard Act to Follow

Ian Salvage



At the last half-year meeting in November 2015, I think I must have had a rush of blood to the head, as I found myself volunteering to take on a role for PNFS as Publicity Officer.

Exactly what that means is still under discussion and it will probably take a couple more months before we have it fully fleshed out. However, as the last Signpost newsletter was published in July, an initial urgent need existed to produce one in January, and so I have been spending most of my spare time on this so far.

And here it is. I have a hard act to follow in Dave Brown, who has been putting the newsletter together alongside his many other roles. I hope that you will find the articles that are included here interesting. Please do contact me if you have any comments to make about this first issue under my control. The easiest way to reach me is by using the **'Publicity'** button on the **'Contact Us'** page of the PNFS website.

I expect that, by the time the next Newsletter is issued in June, I will be able to explain the role fully to you. As a starting point, in a meeting with Gavin Miller and Dave Brown in December, we agreed that two key aims should be to raise PNFS's profile by:

- *Increasing its influence over footpath-related activities within its geographical remit;*
- *Instituting publicity that assists in recruiting new members to PNFS.*

Wishing you all a happy and healthy 2016.

A picture of me indulging one of my passions in sunnier climes (sic) than the Peak District



Welcome to our Facebook page

David Gosling & Ian Salvage

A Facebook page has been created to help publicise the Society's work and to improve communication with members and volunteers. Regular news items are posted about the Society, covering many topics.

Even if you do not have a Facebook account, you can still access the page using these steps:

- *type 'facebook.com' into your search engine*
- *go to the bottom of the Facebook page and click on 'Pages'*
- *type 'peak and northern' in the 'Search for pages' box at the top right and press Enter.*

Please do give this a try. If you experience any problems, there is information at the end of this item on how to contact the appropriate person in PNFS.

If you do have a Facebook account, you can of course search for and add the PNFS page to your favourites.

Facebook is probably used more by a generation younger than the one to which most of our volunteers belong (am I putting that in a sufficiently diplomatic way?). So even if you are not a Facebook or internet user, why not get the younger members of your family to look at the PNFS Facebook page? This might act as a way of attracting younger members to the Society. Please also publicise to other walkers/ramblers groups and anyone interested in our work.

In addition, if you feel that you have an item that could be posted on the Facebook page, please either use the 'Publicity' button on the 'Contact Us' page on the PNFS website (www.peakandnorthern.org.uk), or send the article by post to: Ian Salvage, PNFS, Taylor House, 23 Turncroft Lane, Offerton, Stockport, SK1 4AB. Photos with any text are particularly welcome, as they help to bring the text to life.

Front page: Adrian Littleton Memorial Bridge dedication ceremony



The challenge to find “Lost Ways” before it is too late

Introduction

An issue that could affect thousands of routes currently used as footpaths and bridleways was highlighted recently in the Guardian newspaper, under a title of ‘Countdown begins to prevent loss of thousands of footpaths and alleyways’ ⁽¹⁾. All Public Rights of Way (PRoW) over footpaths and bridleways outside Inner London which existed before 1949 and which have not been recorded on definitive maps will be extinguished at the ‘cut-off date’. This date will be 1st January 2026, or a date up to five years later, depending on the decision made by the government.

Many PRoW were not recorded on definitive maps when these were first compiled in the 1950s, because the surveying authorities (county councils) depended on parish councils to survey their areas, and many were dominated by landowners. Also, many authorities thought that unclassified roads, used by motor vehicles, should not be recorded, whereas many of these now comply with the legal definition of Byways Open to all Traffic (BOATs), and should be shown on definitive maps.

There will be exemptions from extinguishment for paths in certain circumstances (e.g. the Secretary of State has the power to make exceptions for ways for which applications to add them to the definitive map have been made before the ‘cut-off date’). There is also power to extend the date indefinitely in areas where the definitive map provisions did not apply when the legislation was first introduced in 1949 (mainly areas which were county boroughs prior to 1974). It is expected that the legal details of this “cut-off” process will be finalised when the Regulations to be made by the government to implement the Deregulation Act 2015 are published, supposedly in April 2016.

If there is good evidence that an unrecorded PRoW exists, it will be possible for a landowner to agree a changed alignment or width with the council, to help remove potential land management problems.

Implications

There are believed to be many thousands of unrecorded PRoW in England and Wales - these are known as "Lost Ways". Assuming that Lost Ways which are the subject of applications for modification orders will be saved from extinguishment, if public rights are to be preserved, it is essential that applications for as many Lost Ways as possible are made before the cut-off date. We are dependent on PRoW for our countryside walks and traffic-free routes in towns, to give us enjoyment, well-being and much tourist income. To lose ways would be very regrettable.

Research

PRoW can only be added to the definitive map if, on the balance of probabilities, there is evidence that such rights exist. The need for the routes, their suitability for modern use, and any possible detriment to the interests of the owners of the land over which the routes run (except where a changed alignment or width is agreed, as above) are all irrelevant.

The evidence comes from historic documents, such as early commercial, estate and OS maps, other OS records, Inclosure Awards, Tithe Apportionments, railway and canal construction records, Finance Act 1910 records, Quarter Sessions records, etc. Most of these documents are located in county record offices, which are situated in the county towns such as Preston, Manchester, Halifax, Bradford, Huddersfield, Wakefield, Leeds, Barnsley, Rotherham, Sheffield, Doncaster, Matlock, Stafford, and Stoke (note that this is not an exhaustive list).

It is essential that research is carried out systematically, with accurate records kept. Two very experienced rights of way volunteers, Sarah Bucks and Phil Wadey, have published a book called "Rights of Way - Restoring the Record"⁽²⁾, available from the National Archives website (<http://bookshop.nationalarchives.gov.uk/9780957403604/Rights-of-Way%3A-Restoring-the-Record/>), which describes a suitable research method in detail. The PNFS Courts and Inquiries Officers can strongly recommend this book.

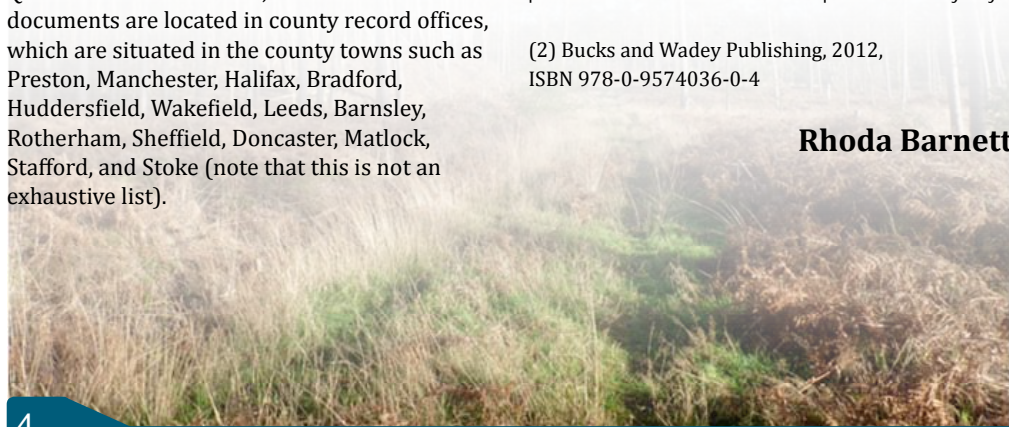
Sarah and Phil, in association with the Ramblers and the British Horse Society, run day-long training courses. They have offered to run a course in our area next year if there is sufficient demand. If you think that you, or anyone else you know (not necessarily PNFS members) might be interested in this, without committing yourself, please do let Rhoda Barnett know (email: rhodabarnett@w3z.co.uk). Details of where you live would help with arranging a suitable location. More information is available from Rhoda and at www.restoringtherecord.org.uk.

(1) Guardian, 2015 [online].

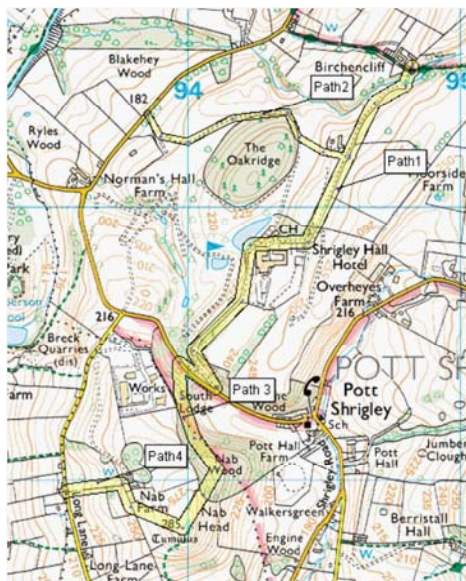
Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/dec/25/countdown-begins-to-prevent-loss-of-thousands-of-footpaths-and-alleyways>

(2) Bucks and Wadey Publishing, 2012, ISBN 978-0-9574036-0-4

Rhoda Barnett

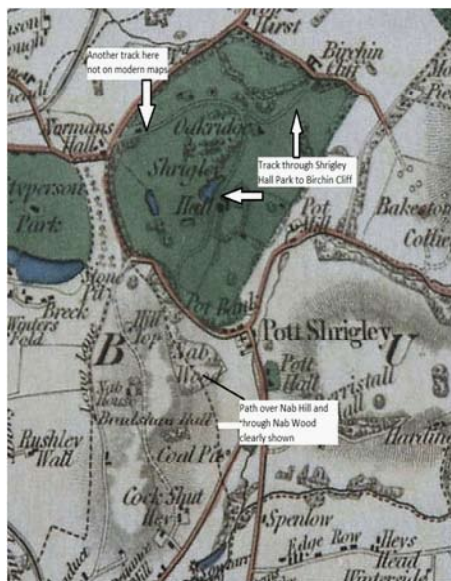


An example of “Lost Ways” in Cheshire East



I decided to look into an area quite near to where I live and where I often walk for evidence of “lost ways”. It is in the parish of Pott Shrigley, near Bollington in Cheshire East. I have often thought that there is a big gap in the rights of way in that area, resulting in a walker being forced to use roads where there are no through routes by footpath.

I picked out four potential routes to research further. The map on the left is a modern OS map and to the right is Bryant’s 1831 map of Cheshire with the same four paths shown. The existence of the paths marked on ancient maps is evidence that the routes were known as long ago as 1831, but not that they were rights of way. I have therefore consulted the Sarah Bucks and Phil Wadey publication (referred to in the previous article) to guide me through the process of looking for documentary evidence which will be sufficient to confirm (or disconfirm) the status of the routes as having or not having public rights of use associated with them.



Standard documentary evidence can include Turnpike records, Enclosure records, Tithe records, Parish maps, Railway and Canal records, and Highway records. I will need to visit Cheshire’s Records Office to determine whether or not any of these sources of evidence can be found to support the claim to restore the paths I have identified.

Also useful as a guide to reclaiming so-called ‘Lost Ways’ is the IPROW web-site http://www.iprow.co.uk/gpg/index.php/Discovering_Lost_Ways.

Why not do some footpath research of your own? My project has only just begun and I do not know what the chances are that I will be successful, but I am looking forward to finding out, and, with some luck, I might be able to contribute to restoring the record in just one parish in the Peak and Northern area. Perhaps you could perform similar investigations in your area, which would be invaluable in helping to “restore the record” and which will hopefully prove enjoyable as well. The Society can offer you support and advice, so please let us know if you decide to join the campaign to save lost rights of way.

David Gosling

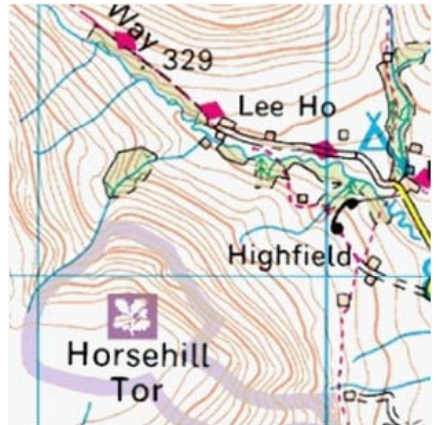
Signpost Report, December 2015



New / Replacement Signposts

By the time you read this, PNFS will have passed a small milestone. We installed our first cast metal (iron) signpost, or "direction post" or "notice" as they were called then, in 1905. On 8th October we erected our 500th (not counting finger posts).

On 17th October, representatives from Edale Parish Council, The Ramblers, Peak District National Park, Friends of the Peak District and PNFS attended the unveiling. It overlooks the route followed by Bert Ward and his group, who in 1900 walked 20 miles around Kinder using the William Clough path (reopened in 1897, mainly due to PNFS pressure on the landowners).



The 500th signpost at Highfield Farm, Upper Booth, Edale (grid ref. SK 10115 85046)

Since June we have installed 14 signposts:

- S492 at SK 29780 50792, 200m south of Lane End Farm, Ashleyhay
- S497 at SK 29161 52807, FPs 26 & 31, Pratthall Lane, Gorsey Bank
- S498 at SK 29243 52472, FPs 24 & 32, Pratthall Lane, Gorsey Bank

These three, on or near the Ecclesbourne Way at Wirksworth, are in memory of our deceased friend and benefactor, Geoff Errington of Belper, one of our Monday Volunteers at Taylor House.

The other signposts installed are:

- S499 at SK 10150 85066, Highfield Farm, Upper Booth, Edale – undedicated/available
- S500 at SK 10115 85046, Highfield Farm, Upper Booth, Edale - dedicated to PNFS
- S501 at SJ 97262 87606 at 14th tee Mellor GC - reserved for Manchester CHA
- S502* at SJ 98058 89393, Mill Brow, Mellor – paid for by Manchester Ramblers
- S503* at SJ 98243 89582, 200m S of Hollywood End, Mellor – paid for by Manchester Ramblers
- S199* replaces F199, a Ramblers fingerpost on the Cown Edge Way at 13th tee Mellor GC

** S502/503/199 all commemorate 45 years of the Cown Edge Way, opened in 1970*

- S505/6/7/11** at SK 18809 86048, SK 17211 86856, SK 17441 86503 and SK 19555 85884, on the Win Hill side of Ladybower - available to walkers and their clubs for donations/commemorations.
- S515 at SK 32025 88329, Rivelin Park, Sheffield, commemorates the 80th birthday of Betsy Wilson, founder and first chair of Sheffield Visually-Impaired Walking Group.

***These four signposts were installed by Peak District National Park (PDNP) Volunteers, supervised by Rangers Paul Wetton and Helen Parry. Many thanks to all of them.*



Signpost installation at Win Hill, Ladybower by PDNP Rangers and Volunteers

S504 is with Paul Wetton, Head Ranger at Fairholmes. It has a cross plate partly funded by Moscar Estate. Once Paul, Helen and the Peak Park volunteers have hauled it up the hill from Ashopton, it will stand just south of Whinstone Lee Tor at the south end of Derwent Edge. It will commemorate "Beverley Bob" (Robert Dobbs), late of Sheffield.

Three more signposts (**S508-510**) are due to appear in the woodlands between Win Hill and the western arm of Ladybower Reservoir, thanks to the Peak Park Rangers and Volunteers. They too will be available for dedication /commemoration.

S516 is ordered for Birchin Hat, Alport Castles, in the New Year. The Peak District N.T. Centre has financed it. The N.T. will help to transport it from Westend Clough before the falcons return.

Maintenance of Existing Signposts

Mike and Pete will soon be running out of signposts in need of repainting! They've done another fifteen since June, which are **S216, 257, 3, 250, 142, 144, 177, 232, 240, 258, 130, 358, 359** and **158** + repainting of the X plate on **S110** (see last report).

Ted and John have helped me to repost **S221** and **S249** East of Higher Poynton Marina using concrete stumps, which will save money and outlast all of us.

S22 (1905) at Barber Booth has been powder-coated green.

S21 disappeared sometime between 1905 and 1908, but will be replaced in 2016.

Many thanks to Mike, Pete, John and Ted and those who have either made suggestions for new locations or notified me of the condition of our signposts.

Phone me evenings on 0161 283 7824 if you have any questions concerning a commemorative plaque or a new signpost. The cost is still £300, which includes maintenance.

Dave Morton



Book Review:

The Compleat Trespasser

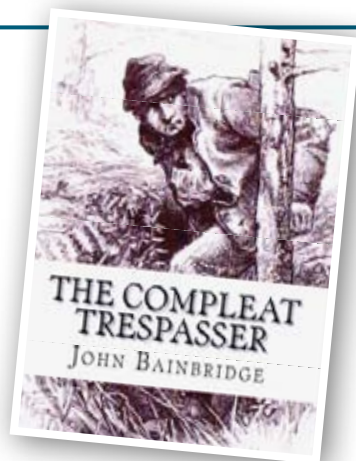
by John Bainbridge

(Fellside Books £5.80)

According to Bainbridge, too much of England is privately owned and barred to the public. In this book he sets out to convince us that it shouldn't be; that the right to roam should be universal; and that the way to achieve it is to carry on walking wherever we please, with or without permission and with little consideration for others' feelings.

He describes with authenticity and some fine writing how much he has enjoyed some scenic walks and explains how he would like to do more of them. Being authentic, this desire comes across as the main pillar of his argument. The other pillars come across as less authentic, less substantiated and much flimsier: some shallow historical material; the bullying tactics of some landowners and gamekeepers (undeniable, but piecemeal); the author's exasperation with the softly-softly approach of footpath preservation societies and the CRoW legislation.

The book does make you think about the right to roam, but it would make you think much more deeply if it gave fair consideration to other points of view. Farmers and other landowners don't necessarily sit on tracts of land just to stop others enjoying it: they use it to produce the country's food and preserve its landscapes. How can they know whether the stranger walking through their crops or lurking in their woodland by night is simply enjoying the countryside or out to cause mischief or steal valuable stock or machinery?



The author doesn't seem to recognise that societies like PNFS (which isn't mentioned), the Ramblers and other bodies working behind the scenes to promote access may use less dramatic tactics than Rothman and other mass trespassers, but could be said to have achieved a good deal more by negotiation than by confrontation. They recognise that many landowners feel they are guardians of the land, holding it in trust for future generations and concerned to care for it rather than exploit it. Unlike Bainbridge, they understand that it is in the interests of both walkers and landowners to respect each other's rights and needs.

If the author were to bring out a second edition, he might like to consider editing the structure and layout as well as balancing the content. The rather muddled 'arrangement' of chapters and paragraphs, with inconsistently weighted headings, doesn't make for an easy read or coherent argument. It's a rambling book, certainly, but not really in the sense intended.

Dave Brown

New PNFS Policy on Gates and Stiles

A new policy was discussed and agreed at the Half-Year Meeting in November relating to replacing gates and stiles. At the time of going to press, a final version of the policy was not ready, and so it has not been included in this issue of Signpost.

The new policy will instead be posted on the PNFS website as soon as it is available.



Adrian Littleton Memorial Bridge

Adrian Littleton, who contributed so much to PNFS over a number of years, died in 2012. In the Annual Report for that year, David Bratt paid tribute to his work for the Society. It is fitting that the memory of a man who did so much for the Society, and all walkers, should be recognised by the erection of a footbridge, in a location which has been fraught with difficulties over the years. Indeed, the footpath on which the bridge has been erected is something of a cause celebre for the Society (see John Harker's article from the Summer 2012 issue of Signpost, 'A Brief History of the Benfield Path' (<http://www.peakandnorthern.org.uk/newsletter/1208-benfield.htm>)).

The dedication ceremony for the new bridge was a great success. It was organised by John Harker and well attended by both Adrian's family and PNFS members, past and present, and the sun shone throughout as David Bratt recalled Adrian. Afterwards we retired to the comforts of the Andrew Arms at Compstall for sociable talk and recollection.



Family and friends at the Memorial Bridge to Adrian

Short Walks

John Fisher

The short walks in PNFS's walks programme are up to 8 miles long and occur each month. New Leaders are urgently required for the walks.

We would like to see the Walks programme become more integrated with the work of the Society, and therefore ask Footpath Inspectors to consider leading a walk, enabling them either to provide evidence of use of paths which may be disputed, or to help beat out a marked route on little-used paths.

We operate Short walks in most of the areas covered by PNFS, except for the more distant ones such as South Yorkshire.

To register interest, please contact John Fisher (01625 439298, johnfisher560@btinternet.com).

Wednesday March 9th

Leader Ian Salvage (01663 746979)

New Mills to Hayfield via Lantern Pike

6 miles, some climbs

Walk starts 11:15 from New Mills

Central Station

Train from Manchester Piccadilly 10:49

Wednesday February 10th

Leader John Fisher (01625 439298)

Adlington to Macclesfield via White Nancy

6 miles, one climb

Walk starts Adlington station 11:10

Train from Manchester Piccadilly 10:46

Wednesday April 13th

Tram: Radcliffe Metro to Bury Metro via Affetside

8½ miles and 1,000ft total climb

Walk starts at Radcliffe Metro stop at 11:00

Longer Walks

David Bratt

Longer walks attract 10-15 lively participants and take place on the last Wednesday of the month (except December - second Wednesday). Distance covered is typically 10-12 miles, usually in hilly terrain, with a combined ascent of 1000-2000 ft. Railway transport is the norm (departing from Manchester Piccadilly or Victoria after 09:30 - we are big into minimising cost!). Thanks are due to a great team of leaders and the inspirational walks they conjure up.

In 2015, walks started from all points of the compass across our PNFS patch (Buxton, Hope, Littleborough, Greenfield, Matlock, Hebden Bridge, Irwell Vale, Romiley, Kids Grove, Disley, Broadbottom and Stalybridge). The combined knowledge of the regulars on matters animal, vegetable and mineral is quite awesome, with differences of opinion being resolved by stalwart sources of knowledge such as Wikipedia. On one of our walks, it was heartening to come across our signpost artist-renovators hard at work.

On the final walk of the year (my lead), we visited a special Grid Ref at the confluence of squares SJ / SD / SE / SK, it being SE 00000 00000 (as confirmed by various GPS's!).



The elusive SE 00000 00000

Post walk, it is the true measure of the leader to find a decent pub / Wetherspoons and a nice tradition of the group is that while Pete Gunn's friend does not actually walk with us, he always turns up in the appointed pub!! Come and join us – you will be made very welcome.

Wednesday January 27th

Leader Gavin Miller (01565 634510)
Linear walk Stockport to Marple Bridge
(Midshires Way 1#)
10 miles, 1500 feet ascent.
Start Stockport station 10.00
09:46 train from Manchester Piccadilly

Wednesday February 24th

Leader Martin Riley (01706 848408)
Circular walk Shaw and Crompton Metro stop
Walk starts 10:30. 11 miles, 1700 feet ascent

Wednesday March 30th

Leader Vince Joyce (01942 603626)
Linear walk Huddersfield to Dewsbury
11 miles hilly
Start Huddersfield Station -> short bus ride
Manchester Piccadilly 09:41 (Stalybridge 09:54)

Wednesday April 27th

Leader Bill Minshall (07771 988846)
Macclesfield circular
10 miles hilly
Walk starts Macclesfield Station 10.30
Manchester Piccadilly 09:46

Wednesday May 25th

Leader David Hurrell (0114 288 6474)
Edale circular
10 miles hilly
Walk starts 11.35 Edale Station
Manchester Piccadilly 10:49. *Note: walk starts 10.35 if 09:49 from M'chr Picc running by then*

Wednesday June 29th

Leader Ken Brockway (01949 843572)
Uttoxeter circular
10 miles undulating
Walk starts Uttoxeter Station 11.00
Manchester Piccadilly 09:35, Stoke on Trent 10.11
Stoke 10.33, Uttoxeter 10.57
Walk concludes at Wetherspoons!



Fighting to keep our footpaths open

John Harker



In the Sheffield Telegraph's issue of 3rd December 2015, it mentioned PNFS in an article entitled 'Rangers brave the Peak District elements for a slab of the action'. The article described slabbing work performed on a Blacka Moor footpath for Sheffield Wildlife Trust, in a notoriously wet area. It continued: 'The path work was largely funded by the Peak and Northern Footpaths Society through a bequest from the great local ramblers' champion GHB Ward, and should be completed this week' (*Sheffield Telegraph*, 2015).

The photo shows Steven Hodson (left) and Adam Kirkland, Peak District National Trust Rangers, who were contractors for the work, moving flags ready for one of the new paths.

I have visited the site to take some photos, two of which are reproduced above. You can see how boggy the ground is and there has been lots of positive feedback from local walkers, including one I met while I was taking the photos. Natural England, with ultimate responsibility for the site (part of a SSSI & Special Area of Conservation) is delighted with the work done, which will protect an ecologically sensitive site from erosion & further damage. I also responded to the article in the paper with a letter, since published, promoting and publicising the work of PNFS.

My letter is summarised below:

Your article on the stone slabbing of a footpath on Blacka Moor (December 3rd) mentioned the £10,000 funding provided by the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society.

The Society is also funding improved signage on Blacka to the tune of £1,700 next year.

Our latest two 'battles' are to save public footpaths: leading from Bradway to Dore & Totley railway station which Network Rail wants to close while redeveloping the station and; across the railway line used by walkers for decades in Wharnccliffe Woods near Deepcar, which has been blocked off by Network Rail with no notice (local MP Angela Smith is assisting us in our efforts to get it reopened). Walkers must be ever vigilant in fighting to keep paths walkable, as resources for highway authorities are reduced year on year. The importance of societies like ours will only increase in years to come.

Sheffield Telegraph, 2015, Letters page, 6 Dec 2015.



The Peak and Northern Footpaths Society
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mail@pnfs.org.uk.



Looks as though this bridleway was lacking a Peak and Northern sign?

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The views expressed in this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the Society