

Minutes of a Dales Way Association Committee Meeting.

The Meeting took place on **Sunday, 16th June 1996** at 2.00 pm at Blenheim Lodge Hotel, Brantfell Road, Bowness-on-Windermere.

Present:- Douglas Cossar, Pat Hickman, Frank Sanderson, David Smith, Colin Speakman, Ken & Margaret Staines.

1. **Apologies.** None received.
2. **The Minutes** of the last ordinary Committee held on 28th April together with the AGM were both agreed to be true records.
3. **Arising from the Minutes**, Frank Sanderson reported on progress towards the construction of two Dales Way seats to be sited at Black Moss Tarn and near Bowston.. In the case of the former, cash and permission were now obtained. For the latter negotiations were still in hand to seek a grant. It could be necessary to offer some Association money for this purpose. (£100?)
4. **Appointment of new Footpath Officer.** Following the AGM, Pat Hickman volunteered for the post of Footpath officer subject to an explanation of what would be involved. The committee were very pleased indeed when she now stated that she would like to take on this task. She was thus formally made a Committee member with this special responsibility.

Some discussion followed on the Lengthsmen scheme which is fundamental to the purposes of the Association. Clearly to date this has not been working properly with little if any feed back from those concerned. It would be the first task of Pat to try and overcome this problem. To this end it is proposed that a Report Form be produced as a draft for the next meeting. This would as far as possible involve ticking boxes to simplify its completion - although clearly provision would have to been made for descriptions of problems etc. Probably this would be sent out for completion just once a year to begin with & September was suggested as a good time to allow news to be included in the Handbook & Autumn Newsletter.

Reports from Lengthsmen should include any news about the route itself, corrections or additions to information in the Handbook and contact with accommodation providers. Information was needed even if only of minor importance.

5. **New Committee Members.** Following the resignation of Alyson Coney together with John & Sandra Creese at the AGM, it was felt very necessary to find replacements. One was of course already found with the election of Pat Hickman as Footpath Officer. Various other names were mentioned and committee members agreed to sound out likely candidates. More representation from the Lakes end was thought desirable.

6. **Reports.**

Footpaths. Colin Speakman reported on an unfortunate occurrence at Grassington where the National Park had illegally closed a stretch of the Dales Way. This had now been resolved but David Smith was asked to write to John Baker of the National Park on the matter. This would not revive the controversy which was now settled, but would ask that to avoid future problems, the Association, and any other interested bodies (such as the Ramblers') would be consulted in advance.

Colin had also had a discussion with Dorothy Smith at Cam Houses who said that many walkers got off course climbing up towards the Cam High Road on the Dales Way. She suggested an alternative route using existing farm tracks to the top of the plantation. This could be acceptable, but the problem really is lack of proper way marking on the present route. This of course includes the long standing problem of the blocking of the route by the forestry enforcing an unofficial diversion round its edge. This had been brought to the attention of the Park a long time ago, but no action had been taken by them. Colin agreed to have another chat with Dorothy on the matter.

Frank Sanderson reported on the long standing problem at Greenhead Farm. Time and again we have been assured by South Lakeland Council that something was to be done to keep the track reasonably clear of slurry. However nothing ever seems to result. Now apparently the plan is to introduce a new path, parallel to the affected track, which should avoid the problem. No real comment could be made to this without viewing the site.

Douglas Cossar had received a letter from Alister Clunas of the National Trust concerning the possibility of introducing a new path to avoid the unsatisfactory road walking between Beckermonds and Oughtershaw. It stated that the tenant farmer was not keen on the idea so nothing more could be done for the moment. Douglas to investigate to see if we can get any further with this very desirable project.

David Smith reported that he had not been able to distribute the new way marks actively as he had hoped. However he was in contact with Leeds and South Lakeland. Both of these would be buying the sort of quantities expected. In fact Leeds would be taking the complete stock of the Leeds Link yellow signs. It is pretty certain that Bradford will duly buy signs for their Link and the start of the main route. A guarded response had been received from the Lakes National Park. This indicated that they would install the new signs at a low priority but did not wish to pay for them. Not surprisingly we have had no response from the Dales National Park.

Sales. Margaret Staines reported good sales of Sweat Shirts and it was agreed that she purchase a further batch. (£251.10). She also modelled a similarly coloured Polo Shirt and is now getting samples of this for several Committee members. (To be paid for!)

David Smith reported steady sales of badges and certificates. Sales made by the Association made a very real contribution to its finances.

Finance & Membership. David Smith reported the membership to have risen to 271. Our finances were building up satisfactorily after heavy expenditure on way marks and other items for resale. Balance at the Bank was over £1400. (At the time of writing these Minutes the membership has risen to 281 with accommodation offered by 104 of them. The Bank balance has also increased to approx. £1800).

7. Unfortunately Arthur Gemmell had been unable to attend the meeting so the presentation of the framed certificate could not be made. It is hoped that he will be able to come to the next meeting and that the presentation be made then.

8. Any Other Business.

Douglas Cossar reported that all 1000 Dales Way Handbooks had been sold (less 100 lost by the Ramblers'). A further batch of 500 was being printed. Sales were clearly up on previous years.

Colin Speakman would be appearing on Yorkshire Television's *Dales Diary* on 18th August.

9. The next Committee meeting will be held at 2.00 pm on **Sunday, 15th September**. It will be held at 67 Grove Road in Ilkley.

Committee members thank Frank & Jackie Sanderson for the hospitality given to them at this meeting.

David Smith