

Minutes of a Dales Way Association Committee Meeting.

This Meeting took place on **Sunday 19th September 1999** at 1.30 pm at 67 Grove Road, Ilkley.

Present:- Pat Hickman, Joan & Russell Jamieson, Frank Sanderson, David Smith, Colin Speakman, Margaret & Ken Staines.

1. **Apologies** from Martin Collison & Douglas Cossar. David Smith was asked to convey the Committee's best wishes to Martin for a swift recovery from his expected operation.
2. **Minutes** of the previous meeting (the AGM) held on 9th May were agreed to be a true record.
3. **Arisings from the Minutes.** David Smith had received an Email from Simon Pitts who runs the Internet site covering Dales Way accommodation etc. This reported that the sites, including the one for the Dales Way, were currently undergoing a major investment. A figure in the order of £25,000 per site was clearly stated although the Committee could not understand the magnitude of this figure. The revamped site should come on line on 1st November - so we had better have a look at it then! Otherwise other matters arising are covered below.
4. **Officers Reports.**

Sales. Steady but not dramatic sales continue. No statistics were available at the Meeting to compare with previous years but Margaret Staines was surprised at the number of Certificates purchased. She was urged to submit a claim for the cost of her printer cartridges. Sales by the Bowness Information Office continue at a fairly small volume - but do provide a profit and also useful publicity. It was reported that there was a display there featuring the Dales Way and our goods. David Smith reported an ever growing number of Handbooks sold. To avoid excessive unused stock when the 2000 Handbook comes out Margaret Staines was asked to return the majority of those that she held to David Smith who in practice handles the majority of their sales.

Footpath A copy of Pat Hickman's report is attached. Pat reported that agreement was near on way marking along the canal at the start of the Bradford (Shipley) Link. David Smith agreed to survey the best line to follow from Shipley station to the canal in order to avoid very busy road crossings. This Link is only detailed in the Gemmell/Speakman guide which will duly need an update for this stretch. In the meantime advice will be included in the Handbook.

Pat had also been pressing for a simple bridge over Red Beck on the Ilkley to Addingham stretch. As the land was up for sale it was only practicable for this, and the trail beyond, to follow the definitive line. It is hoped that some work will take place here in the reasonably near future.

Pat with Geoff had made another survey of the problem forestry above Cam Houses and, armed with the latest information, were able to locate the cleared & way marked route. This starts some 20 metres above where the track reaches the edge of the trees and explains why David Smith did not see it. Nevertheless more way marking is needed there and a meeting with the National Park on site is still to be arranged.

Pat's report also quoted problems encountered by a walker in following the alternative route between Cam Houses and Newby Head detailed in the Gemmell/Speakman guide. This is **not** the Dales Way and any action is in the hands of the guide book authors. However David Smith has often followed this route and, using a map, not had any difficulty in following the right line which is now largely visible on the ground - just.

The Lakes National Park have been asked to improve way marking by Hag End Farm.

Russell Jamieson reported that the overgrown footpath on the approach to Burnside had now been cleared. Also the route was now restored following completion of building work at Cowan Head.

Frank Sanderson reported some annoyance by those involved with the improved route near Cleabarrow. This is sad in view of the successful outcome. The Spring Newsletter extended thanks to all those who had helped to make this

possible but, lacking a proper press release, had not been able to name names. Frank had managed to unravel this with some difficulty and details and further thanks will appear in the Autumn Newsletter.

Colin Speakman reported that the Association appeared on the agenda of a Yorkshire Dales National Park meeting. It was not known when this took, or is to take, place. It was suggested that David Crabtree of the YDNP should be contacted to see what is happening. Colin also reported on the Upper Wharfedale 'Best Practice' Project. This has many worthwhile aims and will include the line of the Dales Way from roughly Kettlewell to Oughtershaw.

Financial. David Smith reported Membership continuing to grow. We now have almost 450 Members. At the time of this meeting there had been 129 new Members in 1999 and 91 had not renewed - a gain of 38. Members offering accommodation had now risen to 113 and a few more new ones are anticipated shortly.

The total amount in the two Bank accounts was £6,012 and the cash flow for the year to date was a positive £2,300 (approx). These figures include the purchase of over £1,000 of goods for resale. There was no foreseeable need to increase the amounts now held and David Smith (again) suggested that we had a duty to the membership to devote roughly the positive cash flow to improvements to the Dales Way. This led to discussion on the 'Wish List' created at the March meeting. See item 6 on the agenda below.

5. **Interpretative Board by Ilkley Old Bridge.** No action to report on this which will be picked up again when Martin is recovered.

6. **The 'Wish List'.** The main items on this which are **not** already being followed up are:-

Improved sign posting on leaving Grassington.

New off road path below Hubberholme to avoid most of the road walking.

New off road route to avoid road walk between Beckermonds and Oughtershaw.

Avoidance of road walking on A683 to west of Sedbergh.

It is not really practicable to divert the route from the road down into the head of Dentdale as many will be using accommodation alongside it.

With the above in mind it was suggested that over the coming months separate informal meetings be arranged with each of our contacts in the various relevant Authorities. These would in any case serve a very useful purpose and should probably be repeated annually. Any problems could be sorted out, improvements discussed and of course items from the 'Wish List' considered.

In the enthusiasm of the meeting it was wrongly inferred that David Smith should try and set this up. This is inappropriate and apologies to Pat Hickman in whose territory this should lie. It is hoped that this will be possible and a start made before our next meeting. When any of these meetings are arranged it is suggested that all Committee Members should be informed so, if possible, they will be able to attend.

7. **Application for Millennium Trust Grant(s).** Frank Sanderson explained the background to this application and was pleased to report that the first stage had been successfully completed. It was now up to us to identify suitable projects and to make a case for them. Dales Way Seats were one of the ideas in mind but it was agreed that Interpretative Boards, such as already suggested for Ilkley Old Bridge, could well be included. David Smith agreed to knock up an initial list which would be forwarded to Colin Speakman and Frank Sanderson for further consideration and probably discussion at our next meeting. There is however some urgency in making our submissions.

8. **Any Other Business.** Frank Sanderson gave an update on the regrettable saga of the vandalised seat near Bowston. There was a possibility that those who provided funds for this project might wish to get their money back. The land concerned has now changed owners. Frank is in touch with a Solicitor (not ours!) and things move on slowly.

9. **Date & Place for next meeting.** This will be the final one in 1999 and in particular will need to include discussion on the next Handbook. In particular the pros & cons of offering additional space (boxes) to those offering accommodation. For this reason it is important for Douglas Cossar to be present. In his absence **Sunday 28th November** was pencilled in with the next Sunday, 5th December, as a second choice.

This concluded the business of the meeting. Thanks were expressed once again to the hospitality provided by Fleur & Colin Speakman at their home.