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## Minutes of the Ninth Annual General Meeting of the Dales Way Association

This Meeting took place on **Sunday 13th May 2001** at 1.30 pm in Linton Village Hall.

**Present:-** Mick Buckley, Pat & Geoffrey Hickman, Joan & Russell Jamieson, Alex McManus, Chris Musson, David Smith, Colin Speakman, Margaret & Ken Staines, Alan Sutcliffe.

1. **Apologies** from Douglas Cossar & Fleur Speakman.
2. **Minutes** of the 2001 AGM were agreed to be a true record.
3. **Arising from the AGM Minutes.** There were none.
4. **The Minutes** of the last ordinary Committee Meeting (11th March 2001) were considered and were agreed to be a true record.
5. The only **matter arising** from the Ordinary Minutes was the series of meetings already held with National Park and other Authorities. Unfortunately the latest of these had had to be put off, and due to the current foot & mouth crisis would only be picked up again during the winter of 2001/2002.
6. **President's Report.** In the absence of the President, Frank Sanderson, Colin Speakman presented a report on the past year. He dealt at some length with the completely devastating effect of the foot & mouth crisis on the farming and tourist industries and in particular with the Dales Way itself which had been completely closed to walkers from the start. There was little hope of any significant reopening for several months. It was feared that the impact on many tourist related enterprises could be very serious with the possibility of numbers going out of business as a result. It did however emphasise the significance of walkers in the rural economy and it was hoped that lessons would be learned for future countryside policies.

On a more upbeat note, Colin reported on significant progress in building up relationships with all the relevant Authorities which now were on a firm and friendly footing. Future meetings would be arranged to continue this process. He also reported on a meeting he had held with David Butterworth, the new Chief Executive of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. David is himself a keen walker and the Dales Way and other walker related concerns will in future be central to Park policies.

Many thanks were made to those Officers of the Committee for work carried out during the past year. In particular the hand over of Sales to Joan & Russell Jamieson had taken place smoothly with only a few problems due to shortcomings of the Post Office. It was however stressed that 'new blood' was urgently needed to help on the Committee. This was needed to ensure the successful running of the Association into the future.

### 7. **Officers Reports.**

**Sales.** Russell Jamieson reported very slow sales so far during the year. This of course was due to the foot & mouth restrictions with virtually nobody walking the Dales Way. It was unlikely that there would be any improvement until after the crisis was completely over. Stock levels would be reviewed, although with the number of items on offer, a significant stock had to be maintained in order to be able to supply on demand.

**Footpath.** Pat Hickman reported that owing to the foot & mouth restrictions, there was virtually no progress on any work affecting the route. Arrangements were in hand, or would be made, for the regular meetings with the YDNP and the joint LDNP/S.Lakeland Authority. The aim was for a YDNP meeting in Autumn 2001 and the other in Spring 2002.

**Membership & Finance.** David Smith reported that the current membership had been affected by the foot & mouth crisis and had dropped from around the 450 mark to between 430 & 440.

The Association finances had been checked and Accounts prepared by Martin Bairstow of Accountants, Sutcliffe & Riley. It was explained that for the last few years this had been carried out free in conjunction with preparation of the Accounts for the Yorkshire Dales Society. This was not felt to be justifiable any longer and a sum of £50 had been paid to the Yorkshire Dales Society to reflect the work done for the Association. Copies of the Accounts were circulated to those present.

Overall the financial situation remained healthy with a total of over £8,000 held in the Association Bank Accounts. The surplus for the year was considerably less than for the previous year due to the printing of new Membership and Order forms. A donation had also been made of £617 to cover half the cost of constructing the new kissing gate at the Farfield Friends Meeting House. David Smith particularly welcomed the latter expenditure as an improvement to the Dales Way which was the main purpose of subscriptions & donations given to the Association.

Details from the Accounts were briefly summarised and it was explained that future Newsletters would now almost certainly be printed professionally rather than photo copied. This had been agreed in principle at previous meetings and would not incur any greatly increased cost. Subscriptions continued to be made to the Ramblers' and Long Distance Walkers Association. A considerable loss was recorded on sale of Handbooks which was not surprising as the majority were supplied free to Members. The cost is of course covered by subscriptions.

8. **Election of Officers & Committee.** There being no other nominations, all the existing Officers & Committee Members were re elected for the current year with the exception of Martin Collison and Paul Hannon. These two had been unable to participate with the Association for some time. Otherwise the Committee is as listed in the AGM Agenda.

Following this the Association is very grateful for Chris Musson who volunteered to join the Committee.

It was suggested that some publicity could be worth while to encourage new Members to the Association and its Committee.

9. **Any Other Business.**

Colin Speakman reported that steps were in hand with the hoped for revival of the Dales Way Strip map which had gone out of print. It had been reported previously that this would not happen. David Smith reported that Harvey's Maps were in the process of producing a strip map for the Dales Way similar to ones they had already published for other long distance walks. A draft would be available for us to check in advance of publication.

Colin reported an approach by the Ilkley Gazette about an historic seat near the start of the Dales Way. This is to be investigated.

Alan Sutcliffe stressed the desirability of continuing the new line of the Dales Way to the south of Bolton Bridge to avoid the remaining short and dangerous bit of road walking there. This will be added to our 'Wish List'.

David Smith will be contacting Committee Members with suggested dates for the next ordinary Committee meeting in the next month or so. It is proposed that this be in October.

David Smith