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

This Meeting took place on **Sunday 12th May 2002** at 1.30 pm in Kettlewell Village Hall.

**Present:-** Mick Buckley, Pat & Geoffrey Hickman, Chris Musson, Pauline Robertshaw, David Smith, Colin Speakman, Margaret & Ken Staines, Alan Sutcliffe, Eileen & Brendan Walsh.

1. **Apologies** from Brian Newland
2. **Minutes** of the 2002 AGM were agreed to be a true record.
3. **Arising from the AGM Minutes.** The only item raised related to Strip Maps (Item 9 Any Other Business). The position in practice remains very similar to the statement in the minutes as virtually no progress with the Harveys Map was possible during 2001. The map is now well advanced and a copy of the Handbook was sent to Harveys recently with the hope that they would be able to incorporate the recent route changes. A proof copy will be sent to David Smith for checking. It is understood that this will supersede the previous Strip Map produced by Footprint and now out of print.
4. **The Minutes** of the last ordinary Committee Meeting (13th January 2002) were considered and were agreed to be a true record.
5. Nothing in the Minutes of the last ordinary meeting needed discussion.
6. **President's Report.** In the absence of the President, Frank Sanderson, Colin Speakman presented a report on the past year. Inevitably this had to cover the disaster of foot & mouth causing the first closure of the Dales Way for 30 years. Contradictory information on path closures made a bad situation worse. The impact on those Association Members providing accommodation or a service on the Dales Way was very serious indeed with an almost total loss of business in some cases.

However there was light at the end of the tunnel and the Association felt that, for the first time, the Dales Way needed promotion to get walkers back and equally to support our Members. To this end a special high quality leaflet was produced together with the organisation of two Events held at Bolton Abbey. The first of these was for those providing accommodation or a service to the Dales Way and included representatives of other bodies involved. This was very successful with some 70 people coming along. The second Event was for walkers and some 30 made the walk to Bolton Abbey from Ilkley for a chat in the Village Hall. Talks were given by Association Officers as well as the National Park at both Events. The Association was delighted in the lead article in the May issue of the *Dalesman* which covered the Dales Way and resulted from the Editor, Terry Fletcher, coming to the first Event. This all underlined the message of how important visiting walkers were to the economy of the countryside.

Relationships with the relevant Authorities improved all the time, especially with the Dales National Park.

The work of Officers in producing the Handbook and Newsletters was appreciated. It was also noted that as a direct result of the first of the above Events we had found someone to take on the stock of Dales Way souvenirs.



Colin went on to inform the meeting that he was aware of a change in the official attitude to National Trails. Although nothing would happen overnight, he said that the Countryside Agency was rethinking their policy on the matter. This raised a realistic hope that in due course the Dales Way might receive the official recognition & status that it had always deserved. Colin was in touch with key people involved and would guide any action to be taken by the Association to further our aims.

Overall then, despite the real disaster of foot & mouth, the future for the Dales Way looked very hopeful.

## 7. Officers Reports.

**Sales.** David Smith reported minimal sales during 2001 and these were only just beginning to pick up. A minor restock had taken place already in 2002. Most importantly Rita Smith of Dent Stores had agreed to handle the sale of Association souvenirs in the future. These were being handed over the day after the meeting. A new Order Form would be produced in due course with the new address. At the same time selling prices would be reviewed. For the moment Certificates would continue to be produced by David Smith which is no problem. Inevitably there would be a need for a lot of communication passing order details back and forth. However this was not seen to create any real difficulty and the use of email would certainly help things.

**Footpath.** Pat Hickman reported that owing to the foot & mouth restrictions, there was virtually no progress on any work affecting the route during 2001. She was in touch with Bradford Council about revised signposting to show the new route through Farfield Meeting House. David Smith will install a couple of our way marks on the new kissing gate. The new route avoiding Townhead Farm on leaving Grassington has been completed and well way marked. It was agreed however that the National Park be asked to review the position of the green lane running towards Lea Green. This would provide a much better line for the Dales Way. In Dentdale the Park is being pressed to install signs showing the revised route over the bridge at Brackensgill. The diversion to avoid a level crossing of the west coast railway is in place. This is well signed and completely satisfactory. The long standing 'mess' round Hag End Farm had been picked up by Kendal Ramblers' who were pressing the Park to take action. We have been discussing this with the Park for a number of years and we certainly back up the action being taken by the Ramblers'.

It had not proved possible to arrange a meeting with South Lakeland & Lakes Park this Spring as planned. It is intended therefore that both this and the meeting with the Dales Park will be arranged for some time in the Autumn.

**Membership & Finance.** David Smith was pleased to report that Membership had not been too badly affected by foot and mouth. Quarter 2 subscriptions were currently in hand so an estimate of present membership is about 420. This compares with a peak of about 450 in the past. A steady stream of new Members are now coming along - quite a few as a result of the new leaflet.

The accounts had been checked and the report prepared by Martin Bairstow of Sutcliffe & Riley as in previous years. The Association makes a contribution towards the cost of this.

The overall surplus for the year was £1,126 which surprisingly was greater than the previous year despite the effects of foot & mouth. Sales income was very small but there was only a slight reduction in subscriptions and donations received. Another factor affecting the result was that no payments had been possible towards improving the Dales Way. It must be noted however that the costs of the Relaunch ( leaflet plus 2 Events ) came to nearly £2,000. Although these took place before the end of March, the bills were not received or paid until the new financial year in April. This will have a marked impact on the finances for the current year.

One other point is the marked reduction in photo copying. This is because the Newsletters are now printed professionally for us. This costs £295 per issue - say £600 for the year. This compares well with the past when it cost us some £400 producing the Newsletter 'in house'.



8. **Election of Officers & Committee.** We lost Joan & Russell Jamieson from the committee during 2001 following their evacuation to Crete. This was particular disappointing as they provided welcome representation from accommodation providers. However since the issue of the Agenda with the Spring Newsletter we have a volunteer to look after Sales and also new ordinary members for the committee. These were 'recruited' at the first Relaunch Event. Sales are taken on by Rita Smith of Dent Stores & Garda Guest House. This is of course more or less on the Dales Way which is a big bonus and sales can readily take place to passers by. The new committee members are Pam Knowles-Fitton from Howgill and Brian & Pauline Robertshaw from Grassington. These all provide accommodation and are specially welcome as we do need input from their perspective.

A change to the duties of the committee was welcomed when Ken & Margaret Staines kindly agreed to take on the Secretarial activities. This will include preparing the minutes of future meetings and the arrangements of date and place for such occasions. This will be a great help for David Smith.

There being no other nominations, all the existing Officers & Committee Members (as listed in the agenda) were re elected for the current year together with the new Members.

9. **Any Other Business.**

There was no Other Business to record.

A date for the next ordinary committee meeting was not included in the agenda. Our new secretaries will therefore be arranging this. Taking the present three monthly spread it seems that this will be in August or early September.

**David Smith**

David Smith's Report. In the absence of the President, Frank Sanderson, Colin Spenshaw presented a report on his past year. Involving the bid to open the Dales Way for a 2nd year. The bid was successful and a bid was made a bid was made a bid was made. The impact on the Association members providing accommodation as a service on the Dales Way was very positive indeed with a change in the bid of Dales Way in the Dales.

However there was light at the end of the tunnel and the Association left well. In the first year, the Dales Way received a number of good reviews from the Members. To this end a special high quality leaflet was produced together with the report on the Dales Way held at Bolton Abbey. The first of these was for the Dales Way and the second was for the Dales Way and included representation of other bodies involved. This was very successful with some 100 people coming along. The second event was the working and some 100 people came to Bolton Abbey from 11:30 to 4:00 in the Village Hall. The event was given by Association Officers as well as the National Park and other events. The Association was delighted in the fact that in the first year of the Dales Way and the Dales Way and the Dales Way.

Continuity with the national authorities was maintained all the time, especially with the Dales National Park.

The work of Officers in producing the Handbook and Newsletters was appreciated. It was also noted that the Dales Way report of the first of the Dales Way was very successful in the Dales of the Dales Way.