

Version2 circulated to all the committee

MINUTES OF THE DALES WAY ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MEETING
The meeting took place at 2.00pm on Saturday 1 March 2008 in Dalegarth, Ilkley

- 1 Present:** W.K. Griffiths, C. Musson, D. Smith, C. Speakman, R. Thornton.
2 Apologies: M. Buckley, D. Cossar, A. McManus, P. Robertshaw, F. Sanderson.
3 Minutes of the last meeting on 18 November 2008 were accepted subject to three corrections:

Item 4 (Harrogate-Bolton Abbey Link) ...organize a meeting with the *Harrogate Ramblers* by January.

Item 6 (Future of the Dales Way Association) *delete* November 22, 2007...

Item 7 Postal Questionnaires... *Change* FREEVIEW to FREEPOST

4 Matters Arising:

Harrogate-Bolton Abbey Link: In January C. Speakman met with Peter Goldsmith of the Harrogate Ramblers. That group was keen to maintain the existing link to Bolton Abbey but agreed that when the Bolton Abbey Estate closed sections, walking along part of the A59 was not a satisfactory alternative. On these occasions, they were in favour therefore of a route leading from Harrogate to Ilkley along existing RoW in a manner very similar to that in C. Speakman's recent book "Green Networks of the Dales".

The committee welcomed this plan. David Smith will obtain details for inclusion in the next handbook.

Postal Questionnaire for users of the Dales Way: David Smith reported with regret that it had not been possible to do the initial distribution of questionnaires in February and that there was probably insufficient time left to carry out the survey as originally planned.

It was agreed to discuss the survey at the AGM.

Future of the Dales Way Association: David Smith reported that although there had been one response for help in running the Association, this had not been specific enough at this stage. Since the last meeting, he (David) had come to the conclusion that now we needed someone with commitment to take over completely the running of the Association with the assistance of some volunteers. He was firmly of the view that unless we could find someone to fill this role by the 2009 AGM, then steps should be taken to wind up the Association by 2010. It might be possible to keep the web site running for longer if a way could be found of keeping the in4/24/2008 formation up to date.

In the ensuing discussion it was pointed out that it was one thing to do occasional committee work and quite another to do all the extra work undertaken by David a.k.a "Mr. Dalesway". The idea that the Ramblers could become responsible was discounted. Attention was drawn to the possibility of forming a "Dalesway Trust" as discussed in the October 2007 committee meeting.

It was agreed that David Smith would prepare for circulation with the calling papers for the 2008 AGM, a statement on the future of the Association. If there were no satisfactory help forthcoming as a result of publicity then, with the 2009 AGM in mind the Committee would take the steps necessary to wind up the Association.

5 Officers Reports:

Membership and Finance and Sales: It was reported that the membership continues at about 450. The accounts for this year will have the costs for the handbook for 2007 and 2008 because of the timing of invoices. (Two hundred copies of the handbook are sold for distribution to the Northern Map Company at a 50% discount). The cash flow thus far for this year was £840. **Footpaths:** It was reported that the Footpath Officer had assumed responsibility for the information boards and that he had investigated the possibilities of getting boards that did not fade so rapidly as the first generation of boards. He had located a new supplier who not only offered a 10 year guarantee against weathering but also did so at a cost of £250 compared with £400 for the old ones. He requested authority to get such a board for Barden Bridge. There would be some alteration of the information to high light features of the Bolton Estate. Subsequently two older style boards could be located at north facing sites and a new one ordered for Ilkley. The Committee *agreed* to the purchase of a new board for Barden Bridge. It was also reported that the LDNPA had installed a Dales Way information board by the TIC at Bowness and that the County Council had erected a Dales Way sign to nearby a lamp post.

Web Site: The number of hits averaged recently ~ 2000 per month, with 475 from the UK and 1356 from abroad.

6 The Dales Way Web site: The Web Officer had investigated further the pros and cons of the Association establishing and controlling a new Dales Way web site. Although the financial costs of doing this were relatively small, the cost in manpower of maintaining it was high and he therefore recommended to the Committee that, despite the difficulties experienced with QDK in operating the present web site, we continued to use it. Key subjects such as accommodation, transport, route changes and facilities were in an area of the site that we could access. The site itself was a good one with many links that were worth continuing.

The Committee *agreed* to this recommendation.

In view of the uncertain future of the Association, the question of whether the handbook should appear in both a printed form and on the web was unresolved for the long term but for 2008 at least, important information would appear in both formats with the Web Officer being provided with a CD version of this year's handbook.

7 Editorship of the Handbook: Rhona Thornton, the current editor was congratulated on getting an excellent handbook out early this year. In the discussion it emerged that both she and David Smith had been duplicating the work of updating information in the handbook. David had been provided now with a CD copy of the Handbook that enabled him to edit it as and when new information reached him. This was a significant task but he felt that he could do it for the 2009 version and indeed possibly take it to the printers. He requested that new information be channeled to him.

Attention was also drawn to the increasing practice of accommodation providers not offering single night accommodation.

8 AGM Business: As the AGM was earlier this year; only draft accounts could be presented at the meeting. The audited accounts would be published in the autumn newsletter but would be available for inspection before then should anyone wish to do so. The Secretary would provide 10 copies of the draft minutes of the 2007 AGM at the

meeting. Attention would be drawn in the calling papers to the attractive walk earlier in the day of the meeting.

9 Any Other Business: It was *agreed* that the date of the next committee meeting would be decided after the AGM.

The committee expressed their warm thanks for the hospitality that afternoon and the meeting finished at 16.00.

Chris Spink

28/6/08