

**The Dales Way Association
Committee Meeting – Thursday 15 Jan 2015
11am Friends Meeting House, Settle**

Present: Colin Speakman (Chair) Alex McManus, Tony Grogan, Donald Holliday, Chris Grogan, Tony Hill, Gordon Tasker, Kath Doyle (Minutes).

1- Apologies: Frank Sanderson,
Colin warmly welcomed Gordon Tasker to his first DWA committee meeting.

2-Minutes of the Committee Meeting of 17 July 2014 were agreed and signed as a true and accurate record.

3-Matters arising from these minutes and 2014 AGM minutes not dealt with elsewhere on this agenda:

Waymark Inserts: Tony G reported that the art work was completed for the waymark inserts and 300 would be ordered this week to enable YDNPA and Cumbria to use these in conjunction with the newly designed signs. Donald provided a cheque to authorise the payment to Briscoes.

Alternative path at Sprint Mill Cottages was discussed. Colin called for a resolution to make this the definitive Dales Way route, which was unanimously agreed by the committee. Alex stated that OS will be informed for future map reprints by the Park Authority.

Action: Tony G to include changes in next reprint of the Dales Way guide. He confirmed that this is a suggested alternative in the current edition.

Action: Chris to update Facebook/ website

Shipley Glen Dales Way sign: still awaiting a response from Rick Hill at Bradford Metropolitan District Council re offer to replace the board which has been removed.

Hebden Suspension Bridge: the work has been completed and a photograph taken to be used by Phil Richards for publicity. Alex confirmed that Eileen King had asked the association to cease pursuing the memorial bench request.

4-AGM 2014 feedback

Chris reported that she had received excellent feedback from members who had attended the AGM in October 2014. The committee discussed the cost of providing lunch and transport on the day and agreed that, with the generous voluntary donations of members at the AGM, it had represented excellent value for money.

5- Footpath Officer's Report.

Alex reported that the Burton House diversion had been established and signed.

A visit to Beck Foot and Grayrigg Foot resulted in repair of broken stile at Laithwaite Farm. Collapsed wall, broken gate and broken fence reported to Phil Richards. Also the coverings of the suspension wires on Hebden suspension bridge require some attention. Further improvements to the bridge are planned for 2015.

A new finger post has been erected near Cam Houses to direct walkers uphill. Cost of £60 met by the DWA.

Complaints from members about high stiles and broken steps between Bolton Bridge and Addingham have been taken up with BMDC. The steps are scheduled for repair however the stile problem remains unresolved.

Action: Alex to pursue this further with Bradford Council as could be viewed as an obstruction and encourage them to consider replacing with a gate.

6-Burneside Footpath update:

Donald was pleased to report that Geoff Fewkes CCC stated the funding for this work has now reached £14,850 with contributions from the Locally Important Project Fund – South Lakeland District Council, Cumbria County Council, Burneside PC, Ramblers Kendal and Ramblers Area. He stated that the work will commence in the late spring. Colin recorded a note of thanks to Donald for his work in pursuing the funding.

7-Path by A643.

Chris reported that an application for funding from YDNPA has been made by Paul Wilkinson and details of the proposal will go to Sedbergh Parish Council. They hope to complete the two roadside verges in February 2015 and then involve the owner of the land inbetween so that they can link the two sections. There should be little inconvenience to Dales Way walkers.

8-Bolton Road.

Alex stated that walkers have reported some apprehension on walking on the DW section between Bolton Bridge and the permissive path at the top of the hill, verges are overgrown and sections require walkers to negotiate the narrow road which is busy with cars and cyclists. Alex has used the complaint form to register DWA concerns.

Action: Alex to arrange a date for a site visit by committee members to consider what would be the ideal solution and invite the 2 local MPs Julian Smith and Kris Hopkins plus the Bolton Abbey Estate agent Benedict Hayes.

9-Spring eNewsletter

Kath reported that it had been agreed at the AGM to produce a Spring newsletter and ask members to contribute in addition to committee members.

Action: Kath to provide guidelines for format and content to committee members

Action: Kath to provide short piece for the website inviting DWA members to contribute

Action: Chris to publicize on Facebook/ Twitter

Action: contributions from committee and DWA members by 6 March 2015. Chris – Gift Aid and AGM 2015, Alex- Footpath update, Colin- transport update, Tony H- Guest anecdotes, Donald- where your money is spent and the story so far at Burneside.

Action: Kath to produce newsletter and forward to Tony G by 30 March for publishing on website on 1 April 2015

10-Spring Walk

It was agreed that we would arrange a Spring Walk for DWA members on the wonderful and picturesque section of the Dales Way between Dent to Sedbergh, provisionally arranged for Sat May 16.

Action: Chris to check there is no clash with FODR or FoSCL walks and confirm the date.

Action: Colin to look into the logistics and organisation of rail and bus transport and report back so this can be publicized to members soon.

11-Accommodation Providers Report.

Tony H reported that he was now on first name terms with accommodation providers along the route and that he had received lots of updates for publishing on the DWA website. Accommodation providers are being encouraged to join the DWA as members if they are not already. There are now ten holiday companies covering the route who are targeting the better accommodation providers and this is resulting in improvements in overall accommodation standards across the route. He stated that the "Clare Balding effect" had increased business by about a third and that prices had increased particularly for single occupancy.

12-Date of next DWA Committee Meeting.

Thursday 14 May 2015 at 11am in the Friends Meeting House, Settle.

13-Any other business.

Website stats: Tony G reported that the "Clare Balding effect" had resulted in a peak in visitors to the website, increasing from the average of 4,500 per month to 10,000 at its peak in October 2015.

Dales Way Leaflets for Tony H to distribute to Accommodation Providers.

Action: Chris agreed to request a box from Kevin at YDNPA .

Email addresses: Chris requested committee members to check that they were using the .org DWA email address and NOT .org.uk. They were reminded to add Gordon Tasker to their address list.

Action: Committee members to amend/add.

Alternative route Burneside to Bowston –Tony H reported that he advises his guests to walk an alternative route from Burneside over the bridge on the eastern side through the golf course to Hag Foot as it provides a route along the river where kingfishers and otters can be seen. He wondered if this could become the official route of the Dales Way as it is a much more pleasing journey.

Action: Kath and Gordon agreed to walk this section and provide feedback to the next committee meeting.

2015 AGM The committee agreed the date and location of the DWA AGM as Saturday 10 October 2015 – Location- Ilkley. An autumn walk will be arranged prior to the meeting, details to follow.

It was agreed that at the 2015 AGM we would seek the views of members as to whether they would travel further afield to Burneside for the 2016 AGM, as Tony H indicated the Parish Council would be happy to host this.

Action: Chris and Kath to seek suitable Ilkley venue.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 12.50.