



THE RAMBLERS ASSOCIATION - SHEFFIELD GROUP

ANNUAL REPORT AND AUDITED ACCOUNTS 2013

Chair's Report – Terry Howard

This year has seen the Group take several leaps forward particularly in the way we communicate with members and produce our walks programme. We have a current on-line newsletter produced several times a year and new electronic system of collecting and collating walks for inclusion in the walks programme. Both are simple to use and much quicker than how we used to do such things. Again we have a first class produced walking programme of varied walks. This, along with our “Walking Out” programme, offers a wide selection of walks catering for most people’s needs. However this year has seen a drop of numbers of members of the public joining such walks but this is counter balanced with the increasing numbers of existing members enjoying them. A new feature has been the development of the “Fix it” group who have working parties to maintain our rights of way.

Our Group Committee members, who are a privilege to work with, continue to give an excellent service to our members. We are well represented on various bodies to do with walking, including rights of way, access, public transport and the wider promotion of walking across the City.

I am reminded that I am becoming one of the “veterans” of the Group having served twelve years as the Chairman and have seen many changes and developments within the Group. All of which have been positive. But there is one thing that is a challenge to us, the drop in membership. We continue to attract new members and with the large numbers of people on walks, more than ever before, one would think there is no issue. The average age of the Group seem mainly bus pass users and I don’t believe we could do more than we already have done to reverse this situation. The “challenge” is not just ours as there are two other Ramblers Groups in Sheffield and their numbers appear to be growing. Together we must look at this challenge and see how all the Sheffield Ramblers Groups face the future of rambling in the City.

Access Report 2013 - Les Seaman

This last year has seen the Eastern Moors Partnership(EMP) incorporated into the Sheffield Moors Partnership(SMP), now we have a coordinated policy of land management and a recreational strategy for all the moors between Wyming Brook and Clod Hall Moor. It is proposed to have a new network of bridleways across Big Moor linking up to the National Trust properties at Longshaw Estate then onto the

Burbage Valley. These proposals for concessionary bridleways which is part of the Master Plan have been put out for consultation to all landowners, which include the National Trust (NT), Sheffield City Council (SCC) and the Peak District National Park Authority (PDNPA) as well as the general public as users of these footpaths and open access areas.

The PDNPA is deciding the future of the North Lees Estate (NLE) which contains a large proportion of Stanage Edge and the surrounding moorland. The PDNPA is short of money and wants to generate more income from NLE. There is major concern that the PDNPA will put commercial interests above conservation and freedom of access.

Stanage was all but given to the PDNPA in the early 1970s by General Sir Hugh Beach on the understanding the estate would always be somewhere everyone could enjoy quiet recreation.

In April 2014 the Sprit of Kinder event will be held in Sheffield, this will be a celebration the achievements of the access movement as well as looking forward to the future, and how we can involve and inspire the next generation of ramblers, by using the knowledge and successes of the present generation of activists to create a better future

Coach Rambles 2013 – Susan Rushworth

I have received much positive feedback on three coach rambles that have already taken place. Although the coach for the September ramble is not yet full we will probably make a slightly higher profit over all the rambles than last year.

The weather was kind for the first two Sunday rambles. In April we visited the Howgills. Some walkers climbed Cautley Spout on their way to the Calf. Others climbed Winder before following a short section of the Dalesway. Everyone enjoyed extensive long distance views when walking the ridges. Most rounded off the day with a meal at the Red Lion in Sedberg. Unfortunately I was not able to go on the second ramble and so missed an enjoyable walk across the Yorkshire Wolds and fish and chips beside the sea in Filey. The last ramble is to the Kettlewell area. One group will climb Great Whernside. The other will walk from Kilnsey Crag to Kettlewell. This year we have tried to put information about the arrangements for each coach ramble on the website prior to the departure date.

Once again I wish to thank all the group members who led walks. I appreciate all the time and effort they put into the preparation. Certain members volunteer their time year after year, but each year we usually need new leaders. Next year is no exception. Most walks are already covered and one new pair has already come forward, but I may yet need another team. If you would like to volunteer please contact me.

Next year we are planning coach rambles to the South Pennines, the lower Nidderdale area of the Yorkshire Dales, Saltaire and the Hambleton Hills area of North Yorkshire. Last year there was no increase in prices for the Sunday rambles and a modest increase for the Tuesday ramble. I am anticipating having to raise prices for 2014.

IT & Web administrator Report - Dave Jefferies

The big addition this year is the on-line walks entry system. This allows leaders to enter walks details via the web site. Paul Pugh then uses the text when he edits the printed Walks Programme. We also use it for the national Walks Finder database. The system has several advantages over the previous paper based system: walk leaders can chose their walks dates; the Rambles Committee does not have to collate and assign walks dates; walk details do not have to be typed in for the Walks Programme; and the same information can be used for both our programme and the national Walks Finder. Only members can lead walks so accredited leaders are given login codes to use it. We thought it was very important not to exclude anyone so provision was made for anyone who prefers to submit walks on paper and Judy Gathercole has entered many of these. There has been interest in the system from other groups who have heard about it.

Future plans include an email contact list for all members with email addresses to make it easier to keep in touch and send out general news about group activities etc.

I am always interested in suggestions for improvements or additions to the web site or other IT services so please get in touch if you have any. I would encourage members to sign up for the Walks Updates emails (see the Walks Changes web page). We use this to let people know about additions or changes to our published walks, such as new bus times, and subscribers find it useful.

Dave Jefferies (it@sheffieldramblers.org)

Membership – Malcolm MacKay

Once again the group membership has declined over the year. We had shrunk by 74, down to 673 by 31st August 2013. This compares poorly with the peak of 927 in 2005.

The dramatic drop in the last year is not quite as dire as it first appears, although a considered assessment is still disappointing.

In the previous year 2011-12 we gained a few members and the combined loss was 65 over those two years. Over the earlier two years 2009-11 the combined loss was 70 members, about the same. On a four year perspective we are losing an average of more than 32 members each year with no sign that this rate of loss is slowing.

During this last year 51 new members joined the group, but unfortunately this is not sufficient to maintain our numbers.

Rambles Secretary - Paul Pugh

For Sheffield Ramblers 2013 has been a year of technological change. The traditional printed programme that we like to get our hands on as the bible of Sheffield walks for that year has been shifted into the twenty-first century with a sophisticated web based system that is managed and updated when inevitably the

time of a bus gets altered or a bus gets axed, but is also added to when a leader feels the need to lead any additional walk. To receive up-to-the-minute information about the latest walks it will be necessary to check online to see if the walk published in the printed programme has altered in any way. This can be done via Google calendar, the Ramblers Walkfinder or the blog on Sheffield Ramblers website *(although it is also available on the web site, we have been encouraging members to sign up for the Rambles Updates to get emails about changes so that they don't have to search the web site for information.)*

The original programme as many of you will know has been expanded during the year with a number of additional walks that have strengthened the variety and diversity of the walks led by Sheffield Ramblers. It is a credit to all our walks leaders that Sheffield has such a strong and varied programme.

It is also thanks to the members of the Rambles Committee and their tireless efforts that information about the walks programme is kept as up to date as possible throughout the year.

And finally, due to a change in my personal circumstances it is with regret that I shall be standing down as Rambles Secretary at this year's AGM.

Rights of Way – David Woodhead

Over the last twelve months we have continued our regular meetings with the officers in the Sheffield City Council Rights of Way Unit. There are positive signs that the meetings are worthwhile. We are consulted on all rights of way and access matters.

Over the last twelve months several new paths have been planned or opened in the Ewden Valley and Bradfield areas. In the Ewden Valley there is a new path at Sunny Bank and at Wigtwizzle Plantation a new bridleway is being worked on. At Bradfield two new paths are planned on land at Woodseats Farm and two at Harrison Plantation.

In the Burbage Valley Green Drive will become a bridleway but when trees at Burbage Plantation have been removed we are promised a path on the west side of the brook.

In the last week we have objected to the stopping up of part of footpath ECC/32C a path between Housley Hall and Acorn Inn, Burncross.

When members find a blocked path within the Sheffield boundary we ask them to report the matter directly to the Rights of Way Unit tel; 0114 273 4448 and let me know they have done so as this is more effective.

Public Transport Report – John Brightmore

The main issue with public transport into the countryside around Sheffield this year has been the lack of provisions at busy times, for instance summer Sundays and Bank Holidays on services 215 and 218 to Bakewell, Chatsworth and Matlock. These services are partly funded by Derbyshire County Council who are only paying the operator TM Travel to operate a single decker bus on Sundays. This is totally inadequate. To be fair TM Travel, although only being funded to operate a single

decker bus are mainly using a double decker on this service, but even this is has sometimes not been enough as highlighted on August Bank Holiday Monday when over 20 people were left behind at Sheffield Bus Station. This was despite a double decker being used on the 09.49 service.

The problems with these services have been discussed in the South Yorkshire PTE User Group meetings, and they are taking the issue up with Derbyshire.

Hopefully, better provision on the service can be obtained for next summer, but the situation will continue to be monitored.

Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group – Christine Hewitt (Chair)

Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group has had another busy year. When the group was first set up there was one walk per month – on a Wednesday. That was soon increased by including a monthly Sunday walk. Not satisfied with that, another monthly “more challenging walk” was introduced; usually lead by the Peak Park Rangers.

This year we have also introduced an easier and shorter walk which takes account of the fact that some of our members are appreciating something that is a little less strenuous. We are also hoping that it will provide a starting point for people who have not walked much before. We have always relied heavily on Sheffield Group for leaders for our walks and as sighted guides and we are very grateful for all the support the Group gives us.

This is an opportunity for us to thank you for all that help. John Bater will be putting together the programme for 2014 over the next couple of months so please, if you think you can lead just one walk for us, on either a Wednesday or a Sunday during 2014, please contact him on **John Bater 0114 2334080**. Also this year – for whatever reason - there have been fewer visually impaired members joining the group. If you are aware of visually impaired walkers who do not know about the group – please tell them about us and give them my phone number **0114 2366685**.

Treasurers Report and audited accounts year ending 30th September 2012 – Jackie Knight

Treasurers Report - year ended 30th September 2013

We received £2,350 from Area as was requested for the year. This has proved to be adequate for the groups needs and we end the year in a strong position with £3,245.92 in the bank adjusted to £2,842.04 once account is taken of outstanding deposits and cheques. This figure includes £1,000 allocated towards reprinting of the Sheffield Country Walks leaflet. We were wrongly allocated an additional £620 from RA which was repaid in July and therefore our actual total operating receipts and payments are overstated by this amount.

We spent £903 on producing and delivering the annual walks programme and £495 on Walking Out leaflets. Hire of meeting rooms and refreshments totalled £313 and group administration costs including web hosting charges totalled £117.

We received £240 from Ramblers holidays this year in respect of member's bookings.

The lecture programme ran a deficit of £121 as a result of less good levels of attendance and the decision was reluctantly taken to end the series.

Four coach trips were funded by members producing an overall surplus for 2012/13 trips of approximately £130.

We have submitted a request for funding of £2,550 from Area for 2013/14 (£200 more than in 2012/13) which will be adequate to cover our needs including some provision for equipment for practical work – we are awaiting the outcome of this request.

The following tables (pages 8 and 9) show Sheffield Ramblers Group Receipts and Payments, and Bank Account details for 2013.

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

Receipts and payments

Name: Sheffield
 Code: SD3

Year ended: 30/09/13

Main					
Receipts	Current yr	Prior yr	Payments	Current yr	Prior yr
From CO (funding)	-		To CO	-	
From CO (other)	-		To Area	-	
From Area (funding)	2,970.00	2,400.00	To Group (funding)	620.00	
From Area (other)	-		To Group (other)	-	
From Group	-		To S/W Council	-	
From S/W Council	-		Walks programmes	1,397.79	1,054.00
T/fer from 'Self-funded'	-		Walks related	-	427.00
Donations	248.00	173.00	Walks leader training	68.50	160.00
Legacies	-		Newsletters/publicity	-	424.96
Grants	-		Publication/goods costs	-	
Fundraising	-		Campaigns/casework	-	30.00
Deposit interest	2.82	2.43	Practical work	40.64	
Investment income	-		Fundraising costs	-	
Publication/goods sales	-		Meetings (inc. AGM)	312.85	262.50
Advert sales	-		Admin	117.24	190.76
Other	38.00	347.00	Other	94.00	659.00
Total receipts	3,258.82	2,922.43	Total payments	2,651.02	3,208.22
Surplus/(deficit)	607.80	-285.79			

Self-funded					
Receipts	Current yr	Prior yr	Payments	Current yr	Prior yr
Day walks	1,716.50	1,751.00	Day walks	1,575.00	2,110.00
Holidays	-		Holidays	-	
Socials	237.16		Socials	358.00	750.25
Deposit interest	-		T/fer to 'Main'	-	
Other	-		Other	-	
Total receipts	1,953.66	1,751.00	Total payments	1,933.00	2,860.25
Surplus/(deficit)	20.66	-1,109.25			

BANK ACCOUNT DETAILS

Cash and bank

Name: Sheffield **Year ended:** 30/09/13
Code: SD3

Cashbook reconciliation					
		Main	Self-funded	Total	
Opening balance		922.99	1,290.59	2,213.58	[A]
Surplus/(deficit) on R&P		607.80	20.66	628.46	[B]
Closing balance (rows A + B + C)		1,530.79	1,311.25	2,842.04	[C]

Closing balances (please give breakdowns below)	Cash	Bank	Total		Variance
	-	2,842.04	2,842.04	[D]	-
					[C] - [D]

Cash		
	Held by	Amount
1		
2		
3		
4		

Bank account 1				
A/c no:	20168100	Institution:	Unity Trust	
A/c name:	RA SD3 Sheffield Group		Balance per statement	3,245.92
Reconciling items:	Date	To/from	Ref no.	Amount
	29/09/13	P Hodgson	300298	-325.00
	30/09/13	F D Woodhead	300301	-33.00
	30/09/13	M MacKay	300302	-45.88
Add: receipts not yet on statement				
Subtract: payments not yet on statement				
Balance per cashbook				2,842.04

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