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at the heart of walking

## **Area News**

South Yorkshire and North-East  
Derbshire Area  
[www.synedramblers.org.uk](http://www.synedramblers.org.uk)  
*Winter 2012/13*

### **Annual Report and AGM**

#### **Annual General Meeting**

This year the AGM will be hosted by Chesterfield Ramblers, and will be held at 2pm on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2013 at Coal Aston Village Hall, Eckington Road (B6056), Dronfield, Derbyshire S18 3AX grid ref SK364796. There is a large car park behind the hall.

As usual we have two interesting guest speakers. This year we welcome a representative from the Macmillan Trust who will talk about the walks for health scheme, and the other speaker will be Simon Barnett, Head of Walking Promotions and Programmes, from Ramblers' central Office.

As usual, the AGM will be preceded by a walk in the morning which starts at 10.30.

Most existing Area Officers are willing to stand for re-election, but we are yet again looking for a Publicity Officer. Anyone who may be interested in the post, please contact David Gadd (details on back page).

#### **Chair's Report**

Membership numbers in this Area have remained quite good, despite the poor weather and general decline in membership. Of the ten Groups in SYNED, three have shown a slight decline, while the other seven have shown an increase. The Sheffield 20-30s Group has shown the biggest increase, with 33 more members than last year. The Barnsley and Penistone Group, which includes a significant number of young members, has 25 more members. The Sheffield 40s Group has an increase of 20, and the Chesterfield 20-30s Group has 16 more members. Clearly the greatest increase in numbers is coming via the younger Groups. The total numbers in this Area were 2615, an increase of 77 on last year's figures.

Area Council has recently re-established the Access, Countryside and Rights of Way committee. It was considered that this was the most effective way of dealing with the 'technical' issues of these aspects of Ramblers' work. The Terms of Reference of ACROW have been agreed and distributed to all Groups, along with the minutes of the one meeting held so far. All Groups are entitled to send two representatives to this committee.

Area Council is delighted that the Peak District National Park Authority is carrying out, at the time of writing, a consultation regarding their proposals to establish Traffic Regulation Orders on Long Causeway and the Roych. An overwhelming majority of our members feel very strongly that trail bikes, quad bikes and four-by-four vehicles should not be allowed to drive on the green lanes on our National Parks. Green lanes were established in the days of the horse and cart and packhorse and are totally inappropriate for vehicular traffic.

The Country Stewardship Scheme, run by DEFRA, has come to an end. It will not be missed as far as Area Council is concerned. Information regarding who was in the scheme or where the areas of access are was never made public.

I would like to point out to members that our membership subscriptions can now be paid by direct debit. This Area has been campaigning for this for many years and so are delighted that central office has at last introduced it.

Finally, I would like to thank all of you who contribute to the running of the South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire Area, and your local Groups, whether by serving on a committee, distributing programmes, leading walks, or any other way. Without you, the Ramblers wouldn't be as effective as it is. Thank you.

**Allen Pestell Chair**

## **Area Access Officer's Report**

In the continuing theme of partnership the Peak District National Park (PDNP) and the Sheffield City Council (SCC) have put in place The Sheffield Moors Partnership (SMP), who have now issued The Sheffield Moors Masterplan 2013 to 2028 a consultation draft. The SMP is a partnership of the Peak District National Park, The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), Sheffield & Rotherham Wild Life Trust (SWLT), Natural England (NE), National Trust (NT) & Sheffield City Council (SCC),. The aim of the SMP is on similar lines to the Eastern Moors Partnership (EMP), and will manage the landscape and access to 56 square kilometres (21 sq. miles) of the PDNP.

The key sites and landowners or managers of this plan are, North Lees & Stanage (PDNP), Redmires Reservoir area (YWA) & (SCC), Burbage, Houndkirk and Hathersage Moors (SCC), Blacka Moor and Wyming Brook (SWLT), Longshaw Estate (NT) and Eastern Moors Partnership (NT & RSPB), on behalf of PDNP.

The vision of the SMP & EMP is 'Through a shared vision and responsibility the partnership delivers extemporal conservation, heritage management, integrated and multi-use access, and inspiring and co-ordinated engagement'.

The key sites have differing priorities so cooperation and consensus is required to deliver this plan. The National Park ethos must be maintained, to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife, tranquillity, and cultural heritage. Where there is irreconcilable conflict between the stakeholders, the Stanford Principle will be applied and conservation will be given greater weight.

Consultation by the PDNP is underway on Traffic Regulation Orders (TRO) on the Long Causeway at Stanage Edge, this TRO is to stop motorised vehicles from this by-way between Redmires and Dennis Knoll. The PDNP would like

comments on this proposal and The Roych near Rushup Edge also with a proposed TRO.

We were hoping to give some good news regarding High Riggs common land but despite all our efforts access has not yet been secured, but we have not given up. Further problems have arisen on Rod Moor where a new fence has been erected along High Riggs road, meaning access on to the moor is via the public footpath at Crawshaw Lodge making the whole moor a cul-de sac, meaning there is no through route on the moor. We are talking to the PDNP on both these matters to get better access and some access to the common land.

Remember there are things you can do even from your living room, write to the PDNP about the TRO's on Stanage Long Causeway and The Roych at Rushup Edge and look at the SMP draft masterplan and comment on the ideas put forward.

**Les Seaman Access Officer**

## **Membership**

The welcome news is that overall the Area has shown a 2.5% increase in membership on last year. The total for the end of the last financial year was 2548 and this year is 2611. Monthly totals have vacillated between 2550 and 2600 for most of the year but with a noticeable increase in July and August 2012. Can this be part of the enthusiasm for the Olympics with people thinking about getting active? Groups which have increased numbers are: Sheffield, Barnsley, Bolsover, Dearne, Sheffield 20s and Sheffield 40s. Everyone else has small decreases.

Earlier this year Head Office introduced a system of e-mailing weekly Excel files containing new and re-instated members to Area Membership Secretaries for cascading to relevant Group Membership Secretaries. This has vastly improved the quality of service and response times for sending out local walks programmes and introductory material to new members. More recently Head Office refined the system by e-mailing direct to Group Membership Secretaries. It would be really helpful if this could be further extended to include monthly reports in the future e.g. complete membership files, group reports containing renewals, overdues, cancellations etc.

A new national recruitment brochure has been issued for use from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012 replacing all previous versions. Everyone will be pleased to hear that membership rates remain unchanged.

**Jenny Matkin Membership Secretary**

## **Treasurer's Report**

I am pleased to present the accounts of the Area for the year ending 30th September 2012. During the year the Area received £9,500 from Central Office and distributed £7,846 to Groups in the Area.

The Area spent approx. £1,200 during the year on administering the Area, including production of the Area News.

The final funds from the Miss Ivy Cowen (deceased) legacy of £141 were provided to the NT - Kinder 80 fund. No monies were paid from the Herbert Proctor (deceased) legacy this year.

The Groups have asked the Area for approx. £9,383 for the coming year. We will be contributing £1,680 from our own funds in line with The Rambler's Reserve policy towards our budget of £10,680 and will therefore be asking Head Office for £9,000 compared to £9,500 this year. Our thanks are due to our independent examiner, Mr Andrew Milne.

**Gavin Johns *Hon. Area Treasurer***

## **Countryside report**

The high speed rail link from Birmingham appears to have been placed on the back burner for now. However, The National Planning Framework reforms could threaten our countryside and environment (Doncaster and Barnsley M.B.C. are proposing to build housing in the green belt (plus some rural industrial developments).

**Allen Pestell *Country side officer***

## **Barnsley & Penistone Group**

The group are still providing walks every Saturday and Sunday of various lengths and ability to cater for all capabilities. Shorter local midweek evening walks in the summer have proved popular and although some new people have attended this has not always resulted in membership.

Our general membership remains fairly static. We distribute our colourful programme across the Borough at the local libraries and resource centres, plus of course the website information.

We have recently re-started an occasional social evening with speakers, covering a wide range of subjects, which again are proving to be very popular and are open to members, their families and friends.

Members of both groups are represented at Area and on local committees putting the Ramblers issues to the forefront. We have an ongoing dialogue with the Council around overgrown paths, but due to financial cutbacks very little can be done.

Our 20-40s group is growing steadily and increasing their membership. They have held several social membership evenings with some success. They have also had several walking weekends away which have proved to be successful. They have also held various social evenings for members. Some of their members have joined the group's committee, and it is good to have a different/fresh perspective on various issues. In the last year, amongst their members they have also had an engagement, a wedding and a baby – hopefully the next generation of walkers!

Ramblers themselves have had several weekends away which are always well attended together with several day trips by coach to walk in other parts of the country.

8 of our members also completed the Northumberland Coastal Path earlier this year and despite some rain and plenty of mud they had a successful and enjoyable week.

Four of our stalwart members have recently left the area for pastures new, to be nearer their grandchildren, and we wish them every happiness in the future and thank them for their valued contribution to the group over the years.

Thanks also goes to all the walk leaders for providing a wide and varied walk programme and to all the members who have contributed to the social activities of the group over the past year.

**Carol Wood Secretary**

## **Bolsover Ramblers**

We are proud that our small group are able to offer walks on most Sundays throughout the year and also shorter less demanding walks on alternate Wednesdays. We have participated at the Bolsover Gala and the Outdoor Experience event held at Hardwick Hall. Numbers walking are still small and we shall make concerted efforts to maximise publicity opportunities to attract more walkers and not least for the enjoyment of the walking!!

We have welcomed several guest walkers who have seen our programme on the web and all have commented on the warmth and friendliness of the group. Our social side has involved several evening meals, which members have enjoyed and at which we have been able to catch up with old friends who are no longer able to walk with us. We also thoroughly enjoyed combining a walk with a boat trip on the Chesterfield Canal – a “plus plus” day as we had a good time and supported the Canal Trust volunteers in the valuable work they do restoring the canal.

There were no significant footpath issues in our district and one of our members has stalwartly continued to undertake survey work for Derbyshire County Council – we only wish we had more members to help with this work.

**Rita Reed Chair**

## **Chesterfield and North-East Derbyshire Group**

*Walkers stretching their legs in the north Derbyshire countryside will be impressed with some wicket gates, easy to climb stiles, steps up steep hillsides and firm surfaces underfoot.*

These walker friendly conditions could well be the result of the efforts of a small team of group members who turn out almost every week to maintain and improve rights of way. The team, which has been in action for getting on for ten years, has been pressing on with its work over the past months following national recognition when featured in an article in Walk magazine almost a year ago.

Recent projects include two flights of steps – the larger 51 steps at Holymoorside – putting in two small bridges, drainage improvement and rebuilding stiles or, where appropriate, replacing them gates.

Committee members Mike Sims and Mel Hardy liaise with Derbyshire County Council over the work to be undertaken.

Often a county council countryside ranger joins the volunteers, usually about eight of them, and oversees the work.

Footpath work got underway when volunteers ensured paths were in good condition for the launch of the 34 mile Chesterfield Round Walk in June 2005 and has continued since.

Members again played a major role in this year's Chesterfield Walking Festival leading 14 of the 58 walks on the festival programme. Joint leaders Mike Sims and Mel Hardy could hardly believe their eyes when 50 enthusiasts turned up at the Old Red Lion, Stone Edge, for a ten mile walk. They were more amazed when four days later 55 assembled for another ten mile walk.

There was a bumper turnout of intrepid walkers for another festival event – an opportunity to step out on the entire distance of the Round Walk. Thirty three walkers, including some members of the group and others from further afield, set out from the White Hart, Calow, 21 completing the circuit and the remainder covering at least 17 miles.

The sun had its hat on for two successful coach outings – one by 51 members to the Yorkshire Dales and another by 49 to the North Yorkshire coast, both with a choice of walks. Gwen Mitchell led 43 members on her ninth annual Bluebell Walk followed by a garden party and has now raised more than £900 for the Bluebell Children's Hospice at North Anston.

Twenty one members went on a walking holiday in Majorca. Last November 41 went on Tinsel and Turkey with walks in Llandudno.

**Glyn Williams, *Group Publicity Secretary***

## **Dearne Valley Ramblers**

We are delighted to report an excellent year in terms of new members who regularly join our walks. Overall membership has increased and we had a record 40 walkers recently at Sandal Castle.

We have also seen an increase over the last year in the number of dog owner members who regularly bring their four-legged friends along. It is entertaining to see, at the start of a walk, as members are greeting each other, so are the

dogs! It's difficult to know sometimes whether it is the people or the dogs who are most excited at the prospect of walking with friends! Thanks to Diane Parkin who publicises our walks to the local press.

Our social activities have really taken off and members tell us that these activities add value to their membership. In addition to birthday meals organised by various members including Nigel and Christine Hebden, Brenda Collins has organised theatre trips and Ros Bartlett has introduced several members to the Wath Folk Club. Pat White and Diane Stuart are busy arranging a quiz night and a Christmas buffet is planned for the December meeting.

These social events encourage friendships which are increasingly cementing the group together and making it more attractive, therefore increasing membership - a very productive circular process.

In December we have a coach trip to Grassington's Edwardian Christmas Festival where various walks are planned, and a Christmas meal which Chris Greig is organising. Both events are sold out – once again a measure of the interest and support of our members, for which, many thanks.

Finally, we are working with Doncaster Council on next year's Get Walking Festival and with the East Peak Innovation Partnership to co-brand some of next years walks. As always we are indebted to our walk leaders and other volunteers who continue to work tirelessly for the continued success of the group.

As the newsletter goes to press, the group was shocked and saddened to hear of the death of longtime member Reg Barradell who had and joined several walks in the first half of the year. Our thoughts are with his family.

**Sue Haywood (*Secretary*) & Paul Smeaton (*Chairman*)**

## **Doncaster Ramblers**

The Group's walks programme has continued, with the short Wednesday evening summer walks, the Thursday 7-8 mile public transport walks and the twice-weekly longer walks. A coach trip was organised in July to The Roaches, in Staffordshire. This was an area that the Group has rarely visited before and a full coach of walkers had a lovely day, with two walks taking place. In September a group of members went to the Lake District for the weekend, enjoying great weather and wonderful walks.

Member Mike Peel wrote to his MP, Rosie Winterton, about cuts affecting Rights of Way. This led to her writing to the Minister, quoting information given to her about the health benefits of walking.

We continue to support DMBC's Festival of Walks. This has developed into a year-long series of walks, with walks being submitted by DMBC staff as well as from many other organisations. We continue to believe that it is important that we participate, to encourage people to start walking and even, perhaps, to join

the Ramblers. We have ten walks in the forthcoming January to May programme.

Rights of Way work, in cooperation with DMBC, continues. All rights of way within the DMBC have now been walked. Twenty members have checked 317 paths. Thirty members make up our maintenance teams and ten maintenance sessions have been held. Very positive comments have been made in the Public Rights of Way meetings. The third area of work will take longer to develop, since partly it comprises reporting alterations or modifications to the Definitive Map. It also includes identifying pots of money available for development work and fitting that to an identified local need, then bidding for that money. This part of work will also include any campaigning about changes to rights of way.

We started almost completed developing a series of nine circular walks based on the Group's 30-mile linear Heron Way. We will probably put them online on the new Ramblers Routes scheme, as well as having a number printed.

**David Gadd Secretary**

## **Rotherham Metro Ramblers**

Despite the inclement weather this summer I am pleased to report that walk numbers are on the increase. Many thanks to all those brave souls who have walked whatever the weather.

During June we had a successful, but damp, weekend based at the Hawes Youth Hostel. Never has a Hostel Drying Room been so full of wet boots, socks, rucksacks, overtrousers, etc. Whereas the Coach Ramble to Grassington took place on a beautiful sunny, but windy day. Many thanks to everyone who supported these events.

The Footpath Committee has been as busy as ever, with a notable success being the restoration of the footpath between Scrooby Lane and Mangham Road after decades of disrepair. This success was reported in the Autumn edition of the **Ramblers walk** magazine. The Committee has also set up a monthly footpath improvement team, working closely with RMBC. The Ring Route has been on hold, awaiting action from RMBC to clear the Meadowhall Road—Meadowbank Road path. We hope that by the time you read this article the path will once again be open to walkers. The Footpath Committee has also introduced tighter arrangements with RMBC to scrutinise planning applications to ensure that Rights of Way are not compromised; already a number of potential difficulties have been avoided.

We look forward to a full Walking and Social programme in 2013. Next year we are supplementing our Saturday Walks programme with fortnightly Short Walks, which we hope will appeal to new walkers, and to those who no longer want to walk the longer distances.

I thank everyone who has so kindly come forward with walks for next year. On behalf of all Metro members I would like to thank the Committee for all their hard work during 2012.

Lastly I would like to wish all readers a Happy Christmas and lots of good walking in 2013.

**Ivor Wilson Chair**

## **Sheffield Ramblers**

The Group continues to move forward in a very positive way, building on the traditions of the past while responding to the needs and demands of a changing “rambling” world.

We have started on the path of electronically communicating with members, which is not easy for everyone, but we are gradually getting there. It has to be better forwarding current news rather than old news as before. For some it may be “worrying” as they don’t want to be left behind, so we must recognise this and help where we can.

Our walks programmes, including “Walking Out”, continues to develop offering several walks a week of varying length and interest which are well supported and enjoyed by everyone. The very successful “Walking Out” initiative has a new coordinator who is carrying forward the work of Bill McGuinness and will develop the programme with a more “interest” base of wildlife, cultural history and archaeology etc. It will also focus more on increasing the membership of the Ramblers.

Our membership numbers remain disappointingly low for a City the size of Sheffield but we must be realistic about the situation. Although we continue to attract new members this has to be linked with an ageing membership and two other Ramblers Groups in Sheffield, which contribute to us showing a fairly static membership. Also the City has a vast array and choice of walking and rambling clubs along with family and friends groups, and not forgetting the many solitary walkers. It is these we should be encouraging to join our “ranks”. Although attendances on our walks remain increasingly high we could do even better without the competition. We must not forget that we are the only organisation working and campaigning for all walkers and ramblers across the City so we need to make more of this.

We have embarked on reviewing and reprinting the “Sheffield Country Walk” in a different form than before which is being done in partnership with Sheffield City Council and Sheffield Walking Forum. Other walks leaflets will also be printed along with a new historical “Inner City Round Walk”.

All the officers in the Group give a high degree of commitment and we remain indebted to them along with all committee members and supporters. We must also recognise and offer thanks to Bill McGuinness for his contribution to walking in Sheffield. It is a great pleasure to work and walk with members of Sheffield Group who are always friendly and welcoming.

**Terry Howard Chair**

## **Sheffield Walking Group (20s – 30s)**

The Sheffield 20s and 30s Walking Group has been running the normal large numbers of walks and socials over the last year with 79 walks, 30 socials and 9 weekends away over a 6 month period. The group continues to attract new members at its monthly meet for new people, at the start of every month and has many unofficial social events going on too.

The transition to an electronic version of the programme (for all except those without internet access) has been successful in reducing the costs and time spent on preparing the sending out the programmes. The Sheffield 20s and 30s Walking Group AGM will be held on 17 October 2012.

### **Peter Clayton**

*Chair of Sheffield 20s and 30s Walking Group*

## **Sheffield 40s Walking Group**

Time flies and here we are again reflecting on another amazing year with membership up again to 163 members on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012, wow we are a great group.

### **In summary this year has had:**

Approximately 170 walks

Approximately 32,000m of ascent! (100,000 feet in James speak!)(4 Everests from sea level)

Approximately 8 regular walking doggies

Approximately 15 socials

Approximately 18 silly hats on a Christmas walk!

5 weekends away (including the water sports at Dent!)

2 shared weekends away with other 40s groups

3 Peaks walk

2 climbing experiences

Photo of the year award goes to Dee in a tutu

We continue to organise 3 walks each weekend, evening walks in the summer months and extra bank holiday walks. We have made links with Mountain House Walking who run navigation courses and several of our members have been on their day courses. We have bought a Garmin GPS this year, specifically for our walk leaders to use when walking in unfamiliar terrain and on weekends away. We have joined the Ramblers Holidays to participate in their loyalty payment scheme if any of our members go on one of their holidays. Our galleries page on the website, which highlights our light-hearted approach to walking, continues to attract new members. This year we organised a walk leaders' thank you buffet and social funded by members.

Finally, a massive thank you to our fab walk leaders without whom we wouldn't be out there walking. One of them in particular has been leading since we started 5 years ago and has lead over 100 walks so a smiley face sticker to Jim. Also a toast to Griselda (retiring walks coordinator) for organising the walks and patiently cajoling walk leaders to send in their walk templates! Cheers! Finally, finally hip, hip, hooray to Dee (retiring social secretary) who has kept us all

laughing and smiling at all the social events but he has said he will give us a hand on some social events so we can still hang onto his superb expertise and repertoire. Our AGM is on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> October when a new committee will be appointed.

**Carol Wilkie *Chairperson***

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## **WHATS GOING ON IN OUR AREA**

Go to **[www.synedramblers.org.uk](http://www.synedramblers.org.uk)** for the latest news about - and walks in - the whole of our area. The site is well used, but please help me keep the website up-to-date by sending me any local information that you think may effect other groups/walkers. We now have separate pages for new footpaths, campaigns, etc, which are regularly updated with news from active members and campaigning groups. John Harker is still an active contributor to the website (thank you John) with news, and interesting articles and photographs.

So if you have anything for our website, please contact Christine Whittaker  
01433 650705 – **[christineteacher1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:christineteacher1@yahoo.co.uk)** or  
**[synedramblers@gmail.com](mailto:synedramblers@gmail.com)**

**[www.ramblers.org.uk](http://www.ramblers.org.uk)** for national information or  
**Membership Department**, the Ramblers, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Camelford House, 87-90  
Albert Embankment, London SE1 7TW – Tel 0207 339 8500 - for membership  
information, changes of address, etc.

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