

South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire Ramblers



Annual News 2020/21

**Sheffield 40s Ramblers Path
Warden System - PATH WATCH**

Ref: 111
Date: 26/09/2020
Grid Ref: SK 2915289497
Category: Bridges, gates & stiles
Subcategory: Unsafe stile
Reported By: Jim C
Status: Sent to Public ROW

A number of obstacles to negotiate this stile make it unsafe

SYNED AREA AGM 2021

We hope you will be able to join us and fellow members of our many other local Ramblers Groups and Affiliates at the **2021 SYNED Area Annual General Meeting** on **Saturday January 23rd 2021 starting at 2pm.**

We had hoped to have a physical AGM at a Social Club in Sheffield but with the ongoing Covid 19 Tier 3 restrictions and four weeks of lockdown in November it was decided that this would not be either wise or possible. We shall therefore be having a virtual AGM using the Zoom technology and you are more than welcome to join us on it and participate in this special meeting.

However, there is a limitation on places so you will need to book your place by going on Eventbrite at the following address :-

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/2021-syned-ramblers-area-agm-tickets-127615508421>

or email secretary@sheffieldramblers.org or call/text me on 0784-253-0128 to book your place

We shall look back over the last eventful twelve months and also look forward to the next hopefully less fraught twelve. We shall consider the Area's Annual Report and Financial Statement. All Area Officer and Area Council positions will be up for election. This is your chance to participate in the good governance of your local walking organisation and help it move forward in these difficult times.

More details on the SYNED website:

<http://synedramblers.btck.co.uk>

DO JOIN US - ALL WELCOME

CHAIR & SECRETARY'S REPORT

I don't think any of us who attended our last AGM could have foreseen how the year would work out. We had no idea how the growing Flu scare would affect us but the way the epidemic appeared to explode within days so not only did cases double on a daily basis but the reported death rate appeared unstoppable.

From March all our planned walks soon fell victim and we had to adjust to solo walking. Originally, this appeared to be how we would have to continue for the rest of the year, with meetings cancelled and the walks programme suspended. But, although the virus was still with us, from July we were able to restart our rambles again admittedly with low numbers at first, but as we were given an exemption as an organised sport and allowed larger numbers, this soon grew to manageable figures and have proved popular. However, as I write this we have gone into yet another lockdown but have been told we can continue our walks programmes. We are still unable to meet face to face away from our Rambles which appears to be a bit of a contradiction, but we shall do our best despite the often confusing guidance and orders raining down on us from above.

After not been able to meet since February, the Area Council is due to try having its meetings online using Zoom. We are, of course, aware that not all Area Council members or Group Area Reps will be able or indeed willing to proceed with this system. So alongside these meetings

we shall be using email and phone conferences as a fall back.

I am surprised that our members have continued to support us whilst we've not been very active. Nationally our membership continues to fall, although there has been some slight recent increases as we have started walking again and people have joined us as a way of getting their weekly exercise. We hope they will stay with us but we must address the overall downward trend as a matter of urgency. I feel it's shortsighted of the Trustees to keep brushing this under the carpet. We must be seen as a credible and dynamic organisation and charity working on behalf of all walkers - especially when we are getting funds from companies such as the People's Postcode Lottery.

In conclusion I must mention the reluctant resignation of David Gadd. It's been a pleasure working with David over the years and I think we have improved how the Area works. David, to his credit, was always willing to take on ever more work. But as his family situation has changed his time has become more and more valuable. I'm sure you will join with us in wishing him health and happiness.

As Chair it is my pleasure to welcome Malcolm Dixon, currently Sheffield Group Secretary and previously East Yorkshire & Derwent Ramblers Area Secretary for six of the 20 years he lived in York until recently, who has now put himself forward to take on the Role of the Secretary.

The limitation on places for this years AGM means you will need to book your place. Please go to Eventbrite at the following address :-

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text me on 0784-253-0128 to book your place

Allen Pestel (Area Chairman) & Malcolm Dixon (Acting Area Secretary)

***2020 FIGURES FOR THE GROUPS WITHIN SYNED
- as at October each year:***

| Group | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 |
|---------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| Barnsley & Peniston | 186 | 175 | 152 | 143 | 145 | 135 |
| Chesterfield & NED | 478 | 441 | 433 | 422 | 378 | 353 |
| Dearne Valley | 103 | 107 | 116 | 139 | 153 | 150 |
| Doncaster | 234 | 227 | 208 | 230 | 225 | 228 |
| Rotherham | 270 | 268 | 248 | 251 | 244 | 229 |
| Sheffield | 617 | 605 | 584 | 565 | 529 | 507 |
| Sheff 40s | 233 | 231 | 232 | 253 | 242 | 251 |
| Sheff 20s | 232 | 261 | 232 | 228 | 217 | 167 |
| SYNED | 2420 | 2365 | 2264 | 2294 | 2206 | 2064 |
| NATIONAL | 107990 | 105990 | 104694 | 102818 | 101746 | 98717 |

BARNSELEY AND PENISTONE RAMBLERS

Before lockdown the Group continued their weekly Saturday and Sunday walks as usual. We even managed a Christmas Social to which members' friends and family were invited.

Come the lockdown members did their daily walks/runs/ and other exercises trying to keep fit within Government guidelines. As Chair I emailed members with regular updates from Area and National and members kept in touch with each other by phone or email. Once we were allowed to walk in small groups more localised walks were offered by our walk leaders so that people would feel safe and it would allow for social distancing. Numbers have gradually increased over the weeks as more people are feeling comfortable with coming on walks.

One of our techy members has set up a Whats App Group which we can all access and walks are added to the App on a regular basis, thus allowing members to choose which walks are most suitable for them. We are not car sharing at present, as we would normally do, and instead are meeting at the start of each walk, having been provided with the postcode by the walk leader. Currently this is working well as we obviously try to keep everyone safe and well.

Carol Wood (Chair)

CHESTERFIELD AND NE DERBYSHIRE GROUP

It is hard to remember but the year did start normally, however it soon became apparent that England was not going to escape the effects of Corona virus and our walks programme was suspended with lockdown on 23rd March.

Luckily, the weather at the start of lockdown was warm and sunny, ideal walking weather. Our members took advantage of this to walk independently and many helped audit our local footpaths reporting obstructions and hazards to Derbyshire County Council. Together with our team of 21 footpath wardens who cover the whole of North East Derbyshire, Chesterfield, Brimington and Staveley we walked an impressive total of 1121 paths and reported 236 problems. We have received responses to 125 of these. The audit benefits everybody who uses the footpath network and an item about it was published in the Derbyshire Times.

When the restrictions were eased to allow walking in groups of 6 the committee felt that the amount of work required to comply with Ramblers guidelines was too onerous to undertake for a walk of 6 people. Some unofficial "Bubble" walks of up to 6 people did however take place.

It was felt that it was important to try to re-start the programme when larger groups were permitted but as many members were wary about walking in large groups the decision was made to limit group walks to 15. Our Saturday walks group felt that the risk of re-starting walks was too great, and their programme is not re-starting until January, but in the meantime we have arranged some

shorter Saturday walks which we hope will be attractive to new and existing members. There have been particular issues about walks which rely on public transport and a programme merging the long and short public transport walks has been compiled. If demands for public transport walks increase, then additional walks can be added. There are no walks for Visually Impaired Walkers at present.

There has been a lot of ill feeling about the requirement by Ramblers and the Government to carry out risk assessments. This has led to the Sunday walks programme not taking place as official walks, but as unofficial Bubble walks, which are not covered by Ramblers' Insurance. It is hoped that they will feel able to start doing them soon and return to the fold improving the weekend walks programme. It is clear from the information from Ramblers that risk assessments are here to stay and that only the section relating to Corona virus will be removed when the Pandemic is over.

In summary as I write this in mid-October the following group walks are taking place Monday Short Walks, Wednesday Medium and Long car walks, Wednesday bus walks and Saturday car walks.

To try to attract new members Mel Hardy successfully organised six short walks on Monday evenings. We intend to repeat this type of walk next year from different locations. Unfortunately, membership has decreased slightly and now stands at 360 compared with 373 in October 2019.

Isobel McCormick - Chair

DEARNE VALLEY RAMBLERS

Dearne Valley Group are delighted to report that despite a few cancelled memberships during the course of the pandemic, new people have joined and therefore our membership numbers have remained relatively stable despite all the traumas of lockdown and a restricted restart.

As the last Area Newsletter went to press we were planning our Christmas activities and I am pleased to report that over forty members enjoyed a wonderful evening meal and disco at the Manvers Arms at Adwick-on-Dearne in early December. This was followed, as in previous years by a Pie & Pea supper, with Quiz at our monthly meeting in mid December. Many thanks to Johnathan and Kate for an excellent quiz and to all members who provided a superb range of deserts. Thanks also to our Social team of Pat and Christine for once again ensuring that our Christmas celebrations went smoothly. Also following traditions going back many years, we held our Boxing Day and New Year's Day walks in addition to our regular Sunday programme. The New Year's Day walk attracted in excess of 50 walkers!

Our monthly Winter Wednesday programme of short morning walks proved very popular, along with ever increasing numbers on our regular Sunday walks. In January several members attended the Area AGM and at our February meeting John Watson and Johnathan organised a Photographic Review of our 2019 Walks, which was a great success. Our plans for summer 2020 included five walks organised by The Conservation Volunteers, led by Hayley Barclay their Senior Projects

Officer. Unfortunately these were a casualty of the Covid lockdown, but hopefully when times are more normal we will look to revive the plan. Sadly, along with the loss of all our normal walks and meetings, we had to put on hold a planned coach trip for a coastal walk at Flamborough and a weekend of walks in the Lake District.

Having ceased all our activities in March, we started monthly committee meetings in July, socially distanced, in the garden of our Secretary's home. These meetings allowed us to plan a careful restart, with walks limited to a maximum of 20 walkers and restricted to our Group members. The walks have been very popular with everyone adhering to the Covid-safe guidance and with the new processes not proving too onerous for our leaders and walkers.

During the summer period, several of our committee members including the Secretary, Chairman and Walks Programme Co-ordinator announced that they felt the time was right to step down after holding their posts for many years. Fortunately, a call for volunteers to step up received a good response from some very enthusiastic, energetic and thankfully younger members. We are absolutely delighted that the vacant positions were filled and ratified at our recent AGM so the Group can now move forward confidently with an excellent team in place. We would like to thank everyone for all their support over the years, and we wish the new committee and all members the very best for a bright and optimistic future.

Nigel Hebden (Retiring Chairman) & Sue Haywood (Retiring Secretary)

DONCASTER RAMBLERS

Our walks programme for Winter 2019/20 was almost over. Peter Rooke's walk near York on 17th March took over 20 of us to the site of the 1066 Battle of Stamford Bridge, but then life as we knew it came to an end. Walking, along with almost all other activities, was shut down. Our Summer programme, consisting of 77 walks through until the end of September, was effectively doomed. Collation of the walks by Dave Binnington, Bob Carlisle and Trevor Jenkins, putting together and overseeing the printing the programme by Norman Lewis, and its distribution by Peter Gravestock, had all been for nothing.

Well, perhaps not. Once the committee saw how things were working out, we decided to abandon any hope of producing a printed programme for Winter 2020/21. When the government allowed groups of six to walk in their local area we resumed some of our programme. In the absence of a printed programme walks are submitted to Peter G, who enters them on the website. Walkers were told that they must book a place. We introduced more additional walks to our regular short Thursday walks programme, stressing that non-members were welcome to join us as. In some weeks, as many as four local walks were offered. We have gained a number of new members directly as a result of these walks. However the annual coach trip had to be cancelled and no doubt Christmas walks followed by a lunch will not take place.

Later, the government allowed groups of 30 to walk, walking being categorised as a sport. The restriction to walk in the local area was removed and so that we could

walk beyond Doncaster. Gradually the walks programme increased, leaders being under no pressure to resume leading.

We had also planned a series of six monthly walks for the Doncaster carers and cared-for group, funding for them coming from Sports England. After full lockdown we managed two of the six walks, selecting Brodsworth Hall and Cusworth Hall as the local venues offering walks as well as a suitable place to meet for those who could not walk but needed to socialise. These walks are always followed by lunch. The second event was notable for the 71 year age-range of walkers doing the 'long' 4-mile walk, the youngest being a voluntary carer of 19 and the oldest being a very fit 90 year old woman.

As far as maintenance is concerned lockdown means that very little work has been carried out. The pre-Christmas maintenance schedule had already been affected by cancellations in October as a result of Tony Marsh's shoulder injury, and extremely wet weather in November. Therefore, the one session, in December at Austerfield took place, where two impressive kissing gates were installed by 6 of our volunteers. The unusually wet weather continued into January, so the next session did not take place until February, when 5 volunteers erected 5 way-mark posts at Wellingley, near Tickhill. Charlie Pratt who has become out expert on 'verticals' made sure that all posts were 'up to standard' and also installed to the correct minimum depth of 21 inches! Since February no further maintenance work has been possible and the situation is unlikely to change for some time. When resumption is possible there will be significant backlog of outstanding

repairs to deal with. But we will be back eventually!!
Thanks once again to all the volunteers.

With regard to footpath monitoring Martin Wyman sent an email to all 'Square Walkers' on 1st April saying that we had been informed by DMBC that the Rights of Way Department were all working from home and not carrying out any site visits or maintenance work on public rights of way. In the light of this we decided not to do anything official on rights of way this year, but walkers were encouraged to report any problems they came across whilst walking to Julie Guest, in the RoW Dept, copying Martin and Tony as normal. When lockdown was eased several walkers reported their paths as normal and currently 270 paths have been walked. There have been no PROW Forums held this year and no updates on Path Orders, Claims, or Diversions have been provided by DMBC.

Our membership figures have held up very well during the pandemic, with 14 people joining us during the past six months. On 1st October 2017 we had 208 members, in 2018 we had 230, in 2019 we had 225. On 1st October this year we had 228.

Peter Rowsell has continued to promote the group assiduously. Barely a week goes by without an article in the Doncaster Free Press and items are published in other local newspapers and magazines as well as our Facebook page. They certainly keep the group in the public eye.

At this year's AGM Martin Wyman and Bob Carlisle are not seeking re-election. Thanks are offered to both of them for

their input over the years. Although standing down from the committee and from the role of secretary, Martin will continue to maintain his roles as webmaster and as chair of the footpath committee. And although Bob is standing down from the committee he will continue to offer the group his full support.

My thanks to the committee for the past year, much of it by email. There are clearly vacancies on the committee, most urgently for a secretary. It would also be good if the imbalance between males and females could be reduced.

David Gadd - Doncaster Ramblers

ROTHERHAM METRO RAMBLERS

Thank you to all our members for their concern, commitment and enthusiasm through what has been a very trying time, resulting in the cancellation of most if not all of our planned activities for 2020.

We got off to a good start with a full programme including a visit to Arnside, so assiduously planned by Ivor Wilson, only to be cancelled at the last minute, followed by the coach ramble to Buxton, along with the rest of the social evenings, committee meetings and contact with other members. The only bright spots were my updates, meant to keep you all in good heart.

Things were looking grim for a few months, then with the easing of restrictions we were allowed to group walk, in a fashion.

We did manage to fit in our planned few days in the Lincolnshire Wolds, based around the fair town of Louth, during September, when good weather and a fair turnout gave Diane and Richard Watson together with Suzi and Philip Bullens a welcome reward so thank you to them for their efforts.

We are now, during the latest scare, operating a limited numbers monthly rolling programme of walks through into 2021 based on what was missed during 2020.

May I now thank all the committee members for their efforts over the last few months, (with perhaps more to come). We have held meetings in gardens full of flowers with glorious views whilst because of social distancing we have had to shout to be heard, an improvement on shouting at each other.

We are looking forward to better times when normality returns..

Graham Barker, Chairman of Rotherham Metro Ramblers

SHEFFIELD RAMBLERS

The last 12 months have been pretty eventful I'm sure you'll agree. It had started well for our Group with our walks programme continuing to be well attended on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Sundays with many more planned through the new year, along with some coach rambles.

We had hosted a successful Concert starring the Clarion Call singers at the Shakespeare's Pub last October where a nearly full concert room were richly entertained on an otherwise inclement evening by this local group of musicians with songs about GHB Ward, Edward Carpenter, Ethel Gallimore and Alfred Wainwright and their place in the rambling and countryside movement.

The Group had an equally successful publicity stall at the Sheffield Heritage Fair in January, so successful that we ran out of local walk leaflets and sold many copies of the Sheffield Country Walk & other booklets. In this Internet driven age it's still surprising how many people still like to have printed copies of walking routes to follow and the chance to talk with people about their walking experiences. It also gave us the chance to network with representatives from other Sheffield voluntary organisations.

February saw a celebration of the completion of the first phase of the Bradfield Ancient Ways. A total of 35 stiles were made easier to use for walkers in the Loxley Valley. Gates were put in, handrails added, stone work secured and steps made or repaired. Volunteers had come from all our local Groups, along with Council Rangers to do the work and a well attended celebration and 'Thank You' event was held in Bradfield Village Hall.

And then in mid March Covid 19 was declared a Pandemic and it was decided that all Ramblers activities had to be suspended until May at the earliest. Although we were told to stay at home as much as possible we were allowed out for exercise. This started as walks round the block but soon became longer visits to local parks, woods and golf

courses, often discovering new routes. Stretching the Govian hour as well as our legs and enjoying the unseasonal fine weather.

By July when the restrictions started to be lifted we were ready to restart our walking programme and although limited initially to groups of six, we were able to start putting on walks and meeting up again. We had to set up a booking system, to remain Covid aware, do risk assessments and (try to) stay 2 metres apart when walking but it was worth it. Dispensation was then granted to have larger groups out but it was left up to the walk leaders to decide how many they felt happy to go out with. This system will continue as we enter (and hopefully leave) the new Tier 3 restrictions again. But sadly our planned coach rambles couldn't happen this year.

The Covid situation also meant that we couldn't physically meet as an Executive Committee after March and we have been using Zoom for our nearly monthly meetings to review the ever-changing developments and guidance and decide how they affect our members. This has meant some of our EC weren't always able to 'attend' our meetings which is not ideal. It was for similar reasons that we have decided to postpone our Group AGM until further notice and until we can safely meet again indoors as a large group again

Most of our current EC have said they will stay on for another twelve months and our thanks to for all their work, assistance & companionship over the last twelve months. We'll soon have a new website for the Group and walks programme system once we can start training our walk

leaders in its use. The 'Fix-It' team has been revived and is starting to take on new & much needed path maintenance projects.

We shall continue taking the Sheffield Ramblers Group forward. We may have fewer members than last year but have been able to welcome some new ones on our walks. We shall continue promoting the Group and the joys of walking in and around Sheffield and its delightful surroundings. Do join us when you can.

In the meantime – enjoy your walking - whenever you get the chance.

Malcolm Dixon - Sheffield Ramblers Group Secretary

SHEFFIELD 40s WALKING GROUP

Our current membership stands at 256, which is an increase on last year's figure. We were pleased to welcome 15 members from the Chesterfield 20s and 30s group and hope to welcome them officially in person as soon as restrictions on gatherings are lifted. The group has also seen a steady number of people joining the membership over the Lockdown period and beyond and we look forward to meeting and welcoming them in person, too. Hopefully they have been able to attend a walk or two and meet some of us on the hills.

Our walks programme was as varied as usual up to March and we recommenced our programme as soon as Ramblers allowed walks to continue. Since then we have offered on average 3 walks a week and we have been very

pleased with the number of walkers attending the walks. We would like to thank our Walk Coordinators and all our walk leaders for making the process as painless as possible and for getting us going again in difficult times.

A few months ago we started a new path warden system in Sheffield, with 20 volunteers from Sheffield groups divvying up the Sheffield path network to check them out regularly. We have now gathered over a hundred problem reports, resulting in many stiles being repaired and blockages cleared, and the scale of the problems in the path network is becoming clear, as cuts hit the ability of Right of Way departments to keep them safe and open. If you want to help out, please email pathwatch@jez.cc.

Sadly our usual popular and varied social and weekends away calendars have been on hold since March. We had lots of activities planned and are hoping to continue with some of these as soon as possible. Keep an eye on the website (www.s40wg.org) to make sure you don't miss out on anything - hopefully in the Spring and/or Summer of 2021!

The group accounts are healthy and we are not anticipating any problems going forward. The Sheffield 40s Walking Group continues to thrive and we look forward to a fabulous 2021.

Bev Kenyon - Group Secretary (www.s40wg.org)

SHEFFIELD WALKING GROUP (20s-30s)



This year has obviously been a very challenging one for the group as a whole and this has impacted our walk, weekend away and socials programmes. However, the year began in very well and we've had some notable achievements.

In January the group hosted the Area Ramblers SYNED AGM for the diverse range of groups within it. We run the pre-meeting walk and historical tour of the Norfolk Park area of Sheffield and organised the venue, tech support and refreshments. 9 of our members volunteered on the day ensuring its successful and smooth running.

We sought help, advice and support from the Sheffield Visually Impaired Walking Group (SVIWG) in order to enable a visually impaired person to join our walks. This work built on that from the previous committee. SVIWG were extremely helpful and welcoming and it has been a pleasure to work with them. Their help enabled us to

understand what we needed to do and how we could support visually impaired people on our walks. In February, on a very wet, cold and windy Sunday we were delighted to have our 1st visually impaired person join a walk. Out of the 7 people who attended 5 of us had a go at guiding which included two guides from SVIWG who had very kindly offered their support. It showed our willingness to follow the Ramblers value of inclusiveness and embrace a greater diversity of people with our group.

We managed to secure an event hosting place as part of the prestigious Sheffield Outdoor City Festival in March. This would have promoted walking, the Ramblers and our 20's and 30's group and shown the quality of the walking on our doorstep. Sadly, this was cancelled due to the lockdown

As a committee we felt strongly that we should not only be living the Ramblers value of protecting but also in giving back to the environment which we use and rely on for the enjoyment of our walks. As such we ran a litter pick walk around the Redmires area and collected a huge load of rubbish along the way leaving the place in a much better state for all to enjoy.

We promoted some of the Ramblers campaigns this year including 'Feel More' and 'Where did you walk this weekend?' which aimed to encourage people to get outside and make the most of the walking we were able to do. These helped us to engage better with our members.

Weekends away before lockdown proved very successful. A near sold out trip to the Lake District in late November

and a highly popular break staying in a windmill in Norfolk, which, understandably, sold out within hours. Due to lockdown restrictions no further weekends have been run and as a significant part of our group this was a big loss.

When lockdown arrived the committee and group pulled together in order to both engage and, to an extent, support our members through this difficult time. We encouraged members to use the one bit of exercise we were allowed a day back in April, May and June promoting the benefits of walking for all and encouraging our members to share their experiences via photos of stories as they explored more local areas. This helped us to all stay more connected with our fellow walking friends. We celebrated member birthdays online whilst we whilst people weren't able to celebrate with their friends as normal.

Again, the year began very well with some exciting new socials for all including a Christmas meal, a ceilidh, a blues night, board games and regular trips to a climbing wall and some very well attended new member pub meets. With lockdown social activities moved online and become our main programme whilst all other activities were suspended. These included quizzes, a 'where am I' treasure hunt, Pictionary, crafts and short films. To replace our regular Easter Egg Hunt a new solo Egg Hunt was devised to encourage people to seek out things from their local area such as bluebells, bees, a post box and the Easter Bunny.

We had a very active and full walk programme before lockdown which included two walks a weekend, both near and far and also regular scrambles which proved very popular.

The committee and especially the Vice Chair, worked very hard to get the walk programme up and running following restriction easing, trialling new bookings systems and leading many of the initial walks to re-launch very positively. We started our programme within a remarkable 3 weeks which included trialling the changes beforehand which was well ahead of many other Ramblers groups. It has taken some time for both walkers and walk leaders to engage but we have seen a whole host of new members and new walk leaders since then. By the end of the committee year the walk programme was looking very positive and attracting many walkers, both new and old.

Nigel Lamb - <http://Sheffieldwalkinggroup.org.uk>

SHEFFIELD VISUALLY IMPAIRED WALKING GROUP (sviwg.co.uk)



Unfortunately because of the Pandemic our walks have been limited. The last group walk was in March just before the first Lock-Down. It was a lovely walk led by Rob Haslam from the Sheffield Ramblers.

We haven't been able to hold our Annual General Meeting, and the Group Holiday to the Lake District has also had to be cancelled. Some of our members have been meeting up in twos or threes and walking out together, observing the social distancing rules .

On a very sad note we have lost two of our established members. Betsy Wilson was one of our most respected V.I.P.S. who played a significant part in forming the S.V.I.W.G. and John Bater, who for many years was our Walks Co-Ordinator and fantastic Team Leader (*John and Betsy are shown in the photo above on either side of George Napier*). Both will be missed by everyone in our walking group.

We may not be walking and socialising in the way that we would wish to, but our spirits are high, and we are looking forward to getting back to where we were before.

David Cadet - Chairman S.V.I.W.G - <http://sviwg.co.uk>

AREA ACCESS OFFICER'S REPORT

During the current Coronavirus pandemic, we have appreciated the open access to the local moors more than ever. The number of people using the western fringes of Sheffield's moors and countryside has been fantastic and a life line to so many.

We reported last year that the government would be publishing their alternative the European Union (EU) Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). The then Environment Minister said that taxpayers money should be used to boost public access to the countryside, and spent on infer

structure and to support for local communities. The first proposal was for £3bn for Environment Land Management Scheme (ELMS) improving access, planting trees and hedges. Since then a new proposal has been floated, the Sustainable Farming Incentive (SFI) which states as its basic activity to conserve the soil, gone is improving access, planting trees and hedges. The government says landowners prefer SFI to ELMS and the government says SFI would be much easier to administrate, looks like we may have CAP, UK stile, the bigger the plot more money you get, watch this space.

The local moors of Hallam, Moscar, Bamford and Derwent now owned by the Haddon Estate, have continued with the Dog restrictions for the next five years 2019 to 2024, carrying on where the Moscar Estate left off.

We are still awaiting the outcome of two consultations and planning appeals, the Plastic Track on Midhope moors and the Natural Burial Ground on access land at High Riggs near Stannington, let's hope these have good out comes for unfettered access.

So let's keep using the open access land. At least it helps us to escape from this awful pandemic. Stay safe and keep roaming.

Les Seaman (Access Officer)

BRADFIELD ANCIENT WAYS IMPROVEMENTS

January 2020 saw the end of Phase One of this Project. A total of 35 stiles were made easier to use for walkers in the Loxley Valley. Gates were put in, handrails added, stone work secured and steps made. All to make the walk between Worrall,

Holdsworth, Low Bradfield and High Bradfield that much more enjoyable.

Several of our members of the "Fix It" team were involved, along with volunteers from other Sheffield and Rotherham Ramblers Groups. We also had the help from the Peak District Rangers volunteers along with specialist help from the Steel Valley Project. It has always been a joint initiative.

To celebrate the finish, and to thank all those involved, we held a "Thank You" event at Bradfield Village Hall in February, which was well attended despite the inclement weather on the day.

The Project had been made possible and successful due to various grants from Bradfield Parish Council, Ramblers Walking Holidays, the Lottery Heritage Fund via the Sheffield Wildlife Trust's "Sheffield Lakeland Project" as well as the SYNED Ramblers Area's own funds.

In all, it was a great joint enterprise and worth continuing. With this in mind, we have agreed to look at a Phase 2 to improve more stiles in the Bradfield area, and research has already been carried out to identify them. We still have funds left over to carry out this new phase 2 but unfortunately the current Covid situation has put a hold on this. We hope to carry on when things have improved.

Terry Howard - Sheffield Ramblers

TREASURER'S REPORT

The Ramblers Association - South Yorkshire and N E Derbyshire (SYNED) Area

Report of the Area Treasurer - For the year ending 30th September 2020

I am pleased to present the accounts of the Area for the year ending 30th September 2020

During the year the Area received £6,500 from Central Office and distributed £5,462 to Groups in the Area.

The Area spent approx. £932 during the year on administering the Area, including production of the Area News.

We allocated £18,097 from the Ivy Cowen Trust Legacy Fund to the 5 Year Ivy Cowen Project to support the Area and Groups to meet the Ramblers charitable objectives. To date we have spent £830.

The Clarion Call earned £466 in book sales.

The Bradfield Ancient Ways Initiative (BAWI) spent £5,311 and received a £4,250 donation, leaving a balance of £9,989 for phase 2 of the project.

The Groups have asked the Area for approx. £6,145 funding for the coming year

We will be contributing £2,096 from our own funds in line with The Rambler's Reserve policy towards our budget of £7,596 and will therefore be asking Central Office for £5,500, a decrease from last year.

Our thanks are due to our independent examiner, Ms Lorraine Watson.

Gavin Johns

Hon. Area Treasurer

South Yorkshire and North-East Derbyshire Area

www.synedramblers.org.uk

Go to **www.synedramblers.org.uk** for the latest news about 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 be of interest to, or effect other groups/walkers. We now have separate pages for new footpaths, campaigns, etc. These are regularly updated with news from active members and campaigning groups.

Area Website Editor *Christine Whittaker* at

www.synedramblers.org.uk