

SIGNPOST

Magazine of the
Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

Number 66 - Winter 2020



F8 at Five Lane Ends

Photograph by Gordon Richards (see Nineteen Signpost Walk)



It was a sad day when PNFS lost its Chairman, David Hurrell, in September. The tributes to him published in this edition of *Signpost* demonstrate the high regard in which he was held. He was a calm, steady hand, guiding the Society. We miss him enormously.

But I am delighted to announce that the Society has appointed Dr Kathy McLean OBE to replace David as the Chair from January 2021. Kathy is a footpaths inspector based in Derby and an enthusiastic walker and bird watcher. Professionally Kathy has been a clinician and senior executive in the NHS. She is currently Chair of the University Hospitals Derby and Burton NHS Foundation Trust and a non-Executive Director at Barts Health NHS Trust, in London. Kathy was awarded the OBE over a year ago.

At the November Management Meeting Kathy responded to questions put to her by the officers of the Society. She spoke about how she had discovered PNFS through her friend Diane Fortescue who is also a footpaths inspector. Kathy explained how much she was enjoying the job of monitoring rights of way in her parishes in the Derbyshire Dales, City of Derby and Erewash. Kathy fully supports the aims of the Society and is keen to

increase our membership, and the influence of the Society in the region.

Kathy says: "I am delighted to be offered the opportunity to become chair of Peak and Northern Footpaths Society. The work of volunteer members has a significant impact on the availability and safety of public rights of way. I am looking forward to working alongside Trustees and members as the society continues to develop and grow."

One project which the Society will be supporting in the New Year is Slow Ways, which is a project to create a network of walking routes, using existing paths, that connect all of Great Britain's towns and cities as well as thousands of villages. A network of 7,000 walking routes will connect about 2,500 towns, cities, and principal destinations across the country. It is hoped that the initiative will lead to more people walking, more often, for more reasons and purposes and will make it easier for people to plan their journeys on foot (both short and long distance).

Our Society will be helping to ensure that all the routes identified by Slow Way are open and usable by walkers. Linda Smith will be coordinating the Society's collaboration with Slow Ways.

David Gosling, Acting Chairman

The date for the next AGM is Saturday, 17 April 2020. The walks programme remains suspended. Please check pnfs.org.uk for updates.

Editorial

This edition of *Signpost* is the eighth that I have produced since becoming editor last year. I continue to be delighted by the many contributions sent by members so thanks go to them for making *Signpost* a great read. For my part, I like to think that my choice of cover colour sometimes brightens someone's day.

Here's hoping for a better year in 2021. May the hills be alive with the sound of our boots once again.

Shirley M Addy, BA, Editor and Footpath Inspector

Thurgoland FP15, Barnsley



Before (left) and after (right) work

On 17 October I reported to Barnsley PROW Office regarding several problems on Thurgoland FP15, which involved a stile and encroaching vegetation. This stile was not a true one, but three cross timbers, making it awkward to use. Two days later, I received a reply saying that work would be carried out by the end of the month. On 27 October I was advised that work had been done the day before. I have recently started covering Thurgoland having worked through Bradfield, Sheffield, this year. Barnsley PROW Office have been very good with their prompt replies and work carried out and it would be good to give them recognition for this.

David Oldfield, Footpath Inspector

Website Redesign Volunteers Needed

A small group is working on modernising the PNFS website.

Do you have skills that would enable you to help this working group?

We are particularly looking for someone with experience as a copywriter.

But also if you have skills in web design, graphics and
use of images you could help us.

If you can help, please contact Mel Bale on mbpnfs@gmail.com.

Nineteen Signpost Walk

In response to the 'Signpost Challenge' suggested in *Signpost* issue 64, here is a route in the Hayfield/Rowarth area and visits nineteen signs of all five types in sixteen locations, so here is some variety for you! Start from Hayfield bus station, buses 61 Buxton-Glossop or 358 Stockport-Hayfield, or car parking £4.80 per day. Map is OS Dark Peak Explorer and the total distance about 16 km and 600 m ascent.

Plaque 1 is on the bus station building. Cross A624 into village, walk up Kinder Road for 400 m, turn left up steps beside S30. Stony track becomes grassy path passing P5 and Twenty Trees rising via kissing gates to Middle Moor. Turn right along wide track; near white cabin are S2, S29 and 19B. Head northwest, over large footbridge, following track to B1, P4 on far side then short descent to S1 near gate at Carr Meadow.

Turn back a few metres, follow wallside concession path uphill to Hollingworth Head where Mill Hill path joins from the east. Over stile, cross A624 (blind summit on left!), walk along Charlesworth road taking second track on left which bends right and up to Knarrs Farm. Use clearly signed path to right of buildings, at second stile jink off half right through hummocks to wooden step stile. Descend two meadows via S548 and S547 to the bridleway and a few metres north to t-junction west of Plainsteads.

Go left/west along Far Cown Edge Farm access road, past farm entrance and up cobbled path to skyline. Head SW over stile past spot height 384 along excellent high level path with long views west over Cheshire and east to Kinder. This eventually drops down to S536 (actually a fingerpost replacing the old RA post in 2017.) I claim any bragging rights to this as I suggested this to David Morton! Over the stile descend steeply to Rowarth noting tubular S159 as the lane is reached.

Turn right then left beside cottages and at bottom right along slabby path which becomes a lane into the village. Turn left at lane junction to the fine Old Mill Inn with its Derbyshire Belle Carriage and former water wheel. Retrace steps for 100 metres seeking half-hidden fingerpost on right, follow overgrown path to cross B9 then south east streamside to new footbridge (not PNFS!) giving access to path around Long Lee Farm. Over stile (use of ex gravestone as step) at S54 then follow fieldpath east via stiles at S289 and S281 to Five Lane Ends for F8.

As signed follow bridleway south upfield, bearing right through metal gate up track then in a few metres right up path to top out on Lantern Pike at T2, the final 'bag' of the



day, and from where most of your route today is visible. Descend the Pike's southern ridge for 350 metres, turn left at crosswall to descend steep broken path to rejoin bridleway, turn right on track then lane to t-junction where leave the bridleway and go left down lane and over stile beside Lower Cliff Farm. Descend meadow to solitary house, go right and after a few metres left down track/path through strange wagon-axle stiles (!) to cross River Sett at footbridge and reach Sett Valley Trail at Birch Vale where you turn left/east for the final stroll back to the start.

Alternative start: If more convenient, bus stops and roadside parking in Birch Vale at SK022867. Drop down the signed path opposite former Grouse Pub and walk the last part first!

Gordon Richards, Nottingham Rock and Heather Club

This route can be viewed on an OS map with an option to view the signposts on pnfs.org.uk/routes



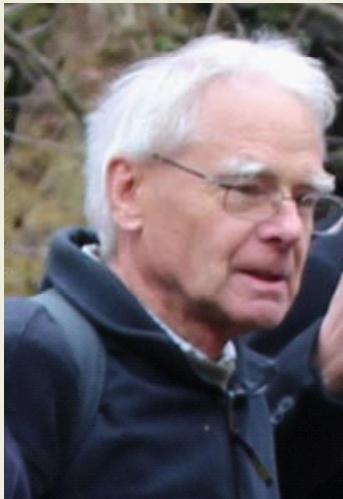
Sheffield FP307

The pandemic has forced all walkers to stay closer to home than usual. Therefore, it's all the more important that local paths are kept in good order. One of my and my partner's regular walks takes in this footpath across part of Manor Park Fields District Park on the way to our allotment. The before (left) and after (right) photos show the Manor Park Crescent end of the path. I reported the overgrowth to Sheffield Council's Public Rights of Way Unit. An email from them to the Council's Parks and Countryside Department brought prompt action.

Here is the opposite end of FP307 where it connects to Raynald Road, which received the same treatment as the first section.
John Harker, Area Officer Sheffield



Tributes to David Hurrell



David Hurrell died on 17 September 2020 whilst still in office as chairman of the Peak and Northern Footpaths Society, which was founded in 1894 and is dedicated to ensuring our wonderful northern footpaths can be fully enjoyed by the walking public - a cause that David passionately believed in and contributed to in good measure.

It was particularly meaningful to me to give the tribute at David's funeral as president of the Society because I was to retire in a few days so, David, I have saved my final public utterings for you!

Our Society has always been quite partial to having crises - situations which it emerges from stronger than before. The crisis that David resolved was that we could not fill the post of Chairman - plenty of Indians but no Big Chief.

It was on one of our 'Longer' walks that Project Phoenix was hatched whereby Gavin Miller would hold the fort for eighteen months then a suitably persuaded and girded-up David would take over as chairman. And so it came to pass.

One of the many responsibilities is leading the management team and its trustees. The trustees could on occasion be a rebellious and mutinous crew but David's calm, non-confrontational and at times ponderous style won their total support. Never personal, never angry, never a swear word. He did not do big humour. No jokes. Nothing raucous or improper. He was possessed of humour but it was at a level he was comfortable with. A quiet giggle would suffice in keeping with his elfin persona. What he gave was a solid, reliable, unflappable approach to problems. Ask him a question and there was no quick shoot from the hip response. What you got was silence whilst he, owl like, slowly and deliberately computed the options. And sometimes he would even answer emails!

Well into his chairmanship of five years another crisis unfolded. A difference of opinion as to how the constitution be improved and applied to bring further benefits to the walking public. Sounds maybe no big deal, but it developed into a lengthy and totally uncalled for personal attack on David. He never wavered in holding the line he fundamentally believed in and the trustees gave him their total support. He did not bend the knee and in due course he and the will of the Society prevailed. At the conclusion I realized David was not in fact hewn from Yorkshire gritstone but in reality hewn from the purest granite. A man for all seasons.

We have all lost out with his passing - Andrew and family, his church and our Society. The gain could be that the trustees of Paradise are now under new management!

David Bratt, Former President

As a support member of the 2014 Operation Phoenix I was impressed by the way he worked to bring the society out of its crisis and turn it back into a well governed organisation. He was a calm and pleasant man, always willing to take advice and to listen to other's ideas. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of British railways which he shared entertainingly both in the office and whilst out 'riding the rails'.

David Brown, Secretary



I was lucky enough to have known David for many years before he or I became involved with the society. He was a long standing work colleague, who quietly but very effectively just got on with the job at hand. He spent his entire working life as a projects engineer in the steel industry as did I. Years after we had both retired our paths crossed again when I discovered that he was the chairman of PNFS.

An appeal for a membership secretary in this magazine lead me to contact him again and the rest, as they say, is history. I very much enjoy the work that I do for the society and I have David to thank for giving me the opportunity to make a contribution. He was a quiet and thoughtful man, a good friend and colleague who we will all miss.

Mel Bale, Membership Secretary and Webmaster

You will see, from the comments here and elsewhere, the degree of respect and affection the Trustees and members of PNFS had for David. I suspect this is probably true also for the various other walks of life in which he was involved. During my relatively short period as Chair of the Society, with David as a splendidly supportive vice-chair, I learned enough about his character to be absolutely confident that the Society would be in sound hands when I passed the mantle to him. And so it proved. His many qualities, including decency, courtesy, unflappability, wisdom and a certain doggedness all contributed to his success as an effective Chairman. David was adept at coping with many differing points of view and trying to steer them towards a consensus. During his tenure as Chair, as many will recall, some dissident members resisted the Society's attempt to make necessary changes to update its Constitution and tried to create strife within the Trustees and membership. David steered the Society calmly through what, in other hands, could well have turned out to be a crisis. He will be sorely missed and we are grateful for the unstinting service he gave us. On a personal note, David and I had some common interests, quite apart from footpaths and rambling. I always looked forward to our conversations on life in general when out on our walking group rambles but I shall also miss our occasional discussions on the current developments on our railways, and the ways in which they were being (mis)managed.

Gavin Miller, Former Chairman



Photographs by David Hurrell

Signpost Report

Since my August report in Signpost 65 we have gained and lost several more signposts. The total is 537.

New Signposts since August

September: **614** at SJ 98051 80903 Higher Lane/Cornfield Road junction Lyme Handley FP25 on an existing tubular post.

October: **607** at SJ 98051 80903 on Sweet Hill, Handley Fold Farm on LH FP25, in memory of Reg Boot.

612 at SE 16611 45038 on Ilkley FP65 at Burley in Wharfedale, in memory of Margaret Starmer.

613 at SD 99684 07370 near Long Lane, Dobcross to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Saddleworth Pedestrians Association Walking Group, helped by PNFS footpath inspector Ken Smith, whose short video can be seen at https://youtu.be/6iCjjAP_t0g



Maintenance

In late September at the end of a day's signpost maintenance I 'cleaned and jerked' **S369** (formerly S5), with its cast iron plate onto my roof bars at High Hills Cottage above Peep o'Day. I took it to SPC for powder-coating and shot-blasting, which is now done.

Ross Myddelton of Urmston has joined the Signpost Team, raising the number to ten. All its new members have been issued with a kit to enable them to repaint signs in situ and Richard Honeywell has done a lovely job of repainting **S155** (*see above photographs*) near Keeper's Cottage, Pott Shrigley.

Ted Wolfe has continued to help John Hodgson with erecting signposts and so have Jeremy Jones of Hyde, Steve Brown of Disley and Andy McMullan of Ramsbottom. Andy also helped me to recover **S319** (*see photograph of him at sign*), which had fallen over on Holcombe Moor, a long way uphill from my car.

S417, which was stolen from Taxal Moor Road probably by off-roaders, has been renewed.

S080, 330, 354 and **429** have been reinstated using concrete rail posts for durability.

S142 and **222** have been refurbished and reinstated at Macclesfield Forest and Peak Forest by John and Steve.



In early October, **S371** at Claire House Children's Hospice, Clatterbridge on the Wirral, was reported stolen via the website. It commemorated a very young boy called Thomas.



On 11 October, I retrieved S1's plate at Carr Meadow, with the help of a passing off-road cyclist. It was heavy and the nuts took some shifting, having been undisturbed since 1963. I fixed a small plaque to the bare, angle-iron post, saying that the plate had been removed by PNFS for maintenance.

On 17 October, S286 and 319, repainted and on new posts, were reinstated on Turton Heights, Darwen and Holcombe Moor, Ramsbottom by John and Andy McMullan.

Future Prospects :

Acting on a suggestion from Shirley, our editor, I have contacted the Duchy of Lancaster's surveyor in hope of getting her consent for a new sign at Whitewell. I have heard from her and am now waiting with fingers crossed for the response of the tenant farmer. A memorial signpost for our former chairman, David Hurrell is being planned with his son Andrew. Three new plates have been ordered from Leander for:

S316, stolen from its post at Chew reservoir, Greenfield

S258 at Jumbles, Bolton, which the United Utilities controller found, but then somehow lost.

S615 at Wessenden Reservoir, Marsden, requested by LDWA.

STOP PRESS! After numerous phonecalls and with help from Robin Tutchings of Wirral PROW, **S371** at Claire House Children's Hospice, near Bebbington on the Wirral has turned up and has been re-instated on Wirral FP4. It was reported missing by a member at the end of September. Now it needs repainting, together with the nearby 370.

David Morton, Signpost Officer



Signposts available for commemoration

Do you know that there are still some signposts available for individual walkers or walking groups who would like him to make and fix a commemorative plaque to one in return for a donation of £375? As can be seen from his article, all signposts receive periodic inspections and maintenance as required.

Please have a look at previous issues of *Signpost* to see which signs are available for commemoration and also S601 (Slaiburn), S583 (Dove Head, Buxton), S579 (Hoo Brook, west of Wetton Mill), two of which are shown below. Then take a closer look at their photographs, GR and OS map on option 2 of the signposts gallery of our website <http://pnfs.org.uk/signposts/where-they-are>. If interested, contact David on 0161 283 7824 or email him on davidcmorton@ntlworld.com.

Cellars Clough Marsden - a path returned to the public after action by Society

Successive generations of Marsden people have enjoyed the path around the reservoir which served Cellars Clough Mill. Villagers have regarded this as a public footpath. This has also been accepted by the mill management. Industrial use of the mill ceased in 1999. A

firm of developers acquired the site and obtained planning permission for housing. In 2009 the reservoir was leased to a fishing club who stocked the lake with carp. They then put up notices claiming the land was private property and that there was no public access allowed. Dog walkers were turned away and people walking along the path were made to feel very uncomfortable. Access was then denied totally by the erection of a locked gate and barriers across the path.

Complaints to the Council requesting that the path be reopened were of no avail as the route was not recorded on the Kirklees Definitive map showing public rights of way. The Society was then asked to help. This involved producing sufficient evidence to show on a balance of probabilities that the path had been used as a public right of way for at least twenty years. The matter has now been resolved and a Definitive Map Modification Order has added the path, Colne Valley 256, to the Map. Why has this taken 12 years to sort out? The main reason is the lack of staff in the Council devoted to processing these cases and the huge backlog of claims. The first stage of making the claim is within the control of the applicant and is normally completed in a few weeks.

This involves obtaining a large scale map acceptable to the Council on which the claimed route can be drawn by witnesses. The Council will provide a user evidence form containing a series of questions concerning how long the person has used the path, whether the path has ever been obstructed, was there ever a stile or gate on the path or notices seen denying access to the public. Finally the person is asked whether they would be willing to attend a hearing or public inquiry if the need arose. In our case 34 people filled in a form showing public use of the path back to the 1940s. It was then necessary to notify the owners and occupiers of land crossed by the path that the application had been made. A form was then sent to the Council describing the route, and listing the owners and occupiers notified of the application. This was accompanied by the 34 user evidence forms. In an ideal world this material would be examined by a Definitive Map Officer in conjunction with evidence about the area held by the Council; a report would then be drafted with a recommendation to the Council that a DMMO be made. In the real world the application to record our path joined a queue of 121 other applications; the oldest of these had been submitted 23, 24, 25 and 27 years ago. Our application was ranked 27th. As only a handful of cases are considered each year, a long wait was in store. However someone who has applied for a DMMO which has not been decided after 12 months may apply to the Secretary of State for a direction, ie the Council is told to make a decision within a specified time. Our application was successful and a planning inspector directed that the Council should determine the application by 31 December 2017.



After a considerable amount of badgering of the appropriate Council officers a report was produced for the Planning Sub Committee meeting in February 2018. This contained a detailed analysis of the evidence and recommended that a DMMO be made as applied for by the Society. The landowner denied the existence of a public right of way and opposed the order; as did the fishing club stating that gates across the path had been locked, notices displayed denying public access and that, the land was private. They also asserted that dogs accompanying walkers would adversely affect the fishing. A local councillor spoke strongly in favour of granting the order; she had known and used the path since childhood. The solicitor for the landowner asked for more time to submit evidence. I spoke (subject to a two minute limit) arguing the solicitors had plenty of time to submit evidence against the order and that the people of Marsden had waited long enough to get there path back. The committee voted unanimously in favour of making the DMMO.

A DMMO cannot be confirmed by the Council if any person opposes it even if the grounds are spurious. The order must then be referred to the Planning Inspectorate, who will arrange a hearing or public inquiry to decide if the order should be confirmed. The date for the event is determined by the Planning Inspectorate and the Council. A time table is then set for submission of a statement of case and written statements of witnesses (proofs of evidence) which set out what they will say. The landowner decided not to oppose the DMMO but some members of the fishing club maintained their opposition although they failed to submit any documents. It might be useful to the reader to set out why the arguments of the fisherman were of no validity. Firstly the erection of gates, barriers and notices took place after the route had been established and a public right of way because of use over a period in excess of 20 years. The claim that dog walkers would disturb the fishing is an irrelevant argument based on suitability; similarly we cannot use the argument that the path would benefit the public using the path. Finally the claim was made that the land was private. Almost all public footpaths and bridleways are on private land; this does not prevent there being public rights over the land. Covid restrictions then intervened and the inquiry was cancelled. The inspector suggested that the matter was resolved by exchange of written statements. I submitted a selection of statements from our witnesses. The inspector made an incognito visit and then considered all the documents submitted by all parties. She then confirmed the DMMO was applied for some 12 years ago.

There are many paths like that around Cellars Clough reservoir which are used by the public and greatly valued but not recorded on the Definitive Map. At any moment the landowner can deny the public entry and neither the Council nor the Society can take steps to have the path reopened until its public status is proved. This process is not affected by the cut off date for 'lost ways' which are based on historic evidence. If you know of such a case and would like to take matters further to clarify the legal position of the path, please contact the Society at lost-ways@pnfs.org.uk. Working on these cases is interesting, worthwhile and sometimes very satisfying.

Terry Norris, Courts and Inquiries Officer



Book Review: The Book of Trespass

By Nick Hayes, published by Bloomsbury Circus

Nick Hayes is an author, illustrator, print maker and political cartoonist. Reading this book felt like being on a roller coaster ride through the history of access to and land ownership in England. He has trespassed into estates that have been fenced off from the general public by individual families for generations to reveal to us just how much of the country is out of our reach. It is a political book that some may not agree with, but you can't deny the breadth of Hayes' research and passion for what he sees as the 'meagre remnants of the countryside' that ordinary people are allowed access to.

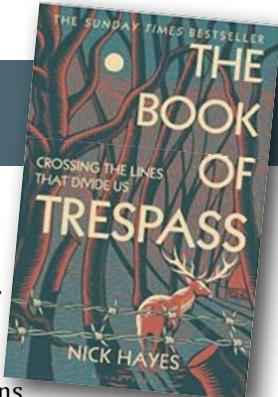
The National Parks and Countryside Act 1949 outlined procedures that would legitimise 'rights of way' in all the counties of England. They would be marked on 'Definitive Maps' and from the 1970s have also been shown on OS maps. The author tells us that there are '117,800 miles of public footpath in England, half of that of a hundred years ago' and then warns that, on January 1st 2026...any path that has not been registered on these 'Definitive Maps' will automatically be extinguished. His message is clear, unrecorded paths are now at risk. For PNFS, this is a call to arms. The society's "Lost Ways Initiative" seeks to uncover old routes that should be recognised as Public Rights of Way. Once identified, they are then reported to the relevant Highways Authorities for registration ahead of the 2026 deadline. As a contrast he draws our attention to the Scottish Land Reform Act 2003 which opened up vast tracts of Scotland to 'non-motorised activities, including walking, cycling, horse-riding and wild camping'. He argues that the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 should be similarly extended.

Hayes' acts of trespass take the reader into many areas where public access is forbidden. He provides historical background to the estates and a host of interesting information about how the land has been used down the centuries and has been written about. He writes movingly of our need to have access to our 'own wild and spiritual mind.' Each chapter heading is illustrated with the animal of its title and there are very atmospheric double page illustrations throughout the book of places he has walked through or spent the night in.

This book may not be to everyone's taste, but it is an honest and passionate account of how land has been parcelled up and then enclosed behind walls and fences. It tells of the way people have been forced off the land and of attempts by some to reclaim their ancestor's birth rights. I found it an energetic, informative and inspiring book. I thoroughly recommend it.

Pauline Williams, Member

*Illustration by Nick Hayes,
reproduced with permission*



Repair of Stepping Stones Across the River Hamps, Linking FP3 Onecote with FP42 Grindon, Staffordshire

This is an on-going saga. The river is currently, and was historically, crossed by means of stepping stones, as in the photograph, which was taken after a dry spell of weather in May this year. The stones were then only suitable for use by agile walkers in good boots, and in winter are impassable.

Since March 2016, and probably before then, the Society has been trying to work with Staffordshire County Council to restore this river crossing so that it is safe and convenient for public use at all times of the year. In late 2017, the Society's Trustees offered an "in principle" donation to the council for the construction of a footbridge, but this was declined, mainly because of lack of council staff resources. The Society then decided that it would offer funds for the repair of the stepping stones. Discussions with the council continued, but in August 2019 it was realised that only the eastern half of the line of stones was recorded as a public footpath on the definitive map - the recorded route of footpath 42 Grindon ended at the parish boundary in the middle of the river, and the continuation in Onecote, which should have been recorded as part of FP 3 Onecote, was missing from the map. This meant that the council did not have a duty to repair the stones in Onecote, and the usual practice of serving a s56 Highways Act 1980 Notice on the council to try to make it carry out repairs would fail.

It has therefore been necessary to collect and assess historic evidence that the missing link is a public footpath which should be shown on the definitive map. I have been doing this for the past year, hindered by the lack of access to archives where the relevant historic documents are stored. However, on 22 October I was finally able to submit a formal application to the council, on behalf of the Society, for the council to make a modification order to add the link to the definitive map as a public right of way. The major drawback to this course of action is that the council has a backlog of several hundred of such applications, and the Society's application may not be determined for many years.

It is possible to appeal to the Secretary of State after 12 months from the date of the application, seeking a direction from the Planning Inspectorate to the council to determine the application, but since the council has already over 80 such directions with which they have not complied, any appeal is unlikely to have much effect. Still, in October 2021 we will make an appeal, and meanwhile, since the evidence that all the line of stepping stones is a public footpath is very good, we continue to try to persuade the council to accept the Society's donation and repair the stones, or, even better, construct a footbridge.

Rhoda Barnett, Courts and Inquiries Officer





Those Feet, That Path

I walk out of the house that I've lived in for 35 years in the village I've lived in for 64 years and I turn right down the street; then I turn right again, passing the row of Aged Miners' Homes built in 1935 and then I turn left onto the footpath that we call The Field Path. I briefly look like the man on the old Barnsley MBC public footpath sign and our strides and blank expressions match as I begin to wander down the narrow path through the middle of the field. Three buzzards unwind the afternoon above me, and the traffic to the ASOS mail order clothing warehouse on the site of the old Houghton Main Pit is busy and grumbling.

I've walked this path since I could walk and before I could walk I was carried down it by my dad or pushed down it in my pram. As a teenager me and my mates walked down it in search of the mandrake that Mark's dad had said he saw as he walked down to the path to start the day shift; we never did find it, although we kept pretending that we had.

My wife and I have been married for more than 40 years and when we first went out with each other (to use that old fashioned term) we walked down this path. When my dad died on Christmas Day 2001 I excused myself late in the evening and walked down the path on my own, gazing at the stars. And in this turbulent year the path has walked me out of lockdown and showed me the world again.

The path goes down the field and then branches right or left; one way goes down to the Asos warehouse and I find that I learn lessons from the path about history and continuity and discontinuity because the path is now studded with red Asos jackets as people walk to and from work in the same way that it would have once been peppered with National Coal Board coats as the miners walked back and forth. Once a work path, always a work path. Perhaps, although in the empty years between the colliery closing and the warehouse opening there were only dog walkers and ghosts here. And me, of course. Always me.

Old Jim Marsden used to say that, at a point about halfway down the field, if you stood quietly you could hear the miners talking underground because the seam came very close to the surface. Urban legend had it that somebody's wife once stood and shouted to her husband that his tea was in the oven and she was going out with her mam. The man's reply is not recorded. Once I was walking down The Field Path just behind Jim Marsden when George Jobling was walking up with his dog. Being Yorkshire miners, they barely spoke to each other except that Jim paused and said 'Utopia, kid!' and George replied 'Utopia!' and they carried on.

It's raining and I haven't got my new waterproof trousers on so I turn right for the shorter stroll back up to the main road up the path that has now become The Bridle Path that more than once I've seen written down as The Bridal Path. This path is bordered on one side, on my left as I'm walking up it, by a high stone wall that, over the decades, has become less high as people, in the way that people always will, have stolen the stones or simply pushed them over.

The wall was built to show the boundary of The Big House; Middlewood Hall originally belonged to the self-styled Squire Taylor, a man who had made a lot of money in the

19th century out of linen, one of Barnsley's lesser-known industries and who didn't like to see the flat-capped hordes walking to Houghton Main so he had a big wall built. These days the house and the cottages around it still feel like they could be anywhere in The Home Counties, although the hall has long since been divided into flats. Years ago there was a rumour that it had been bought by a pools winner, a story that seemed to be borne out when I overheard a couple walking along the drive down to the house and one said 'Have you seen the lawn mower?' and the other replied 'It's in the gun room. Where else would you keep it?'

I walk up the bridal path and I look for the J's that a forgotten stoneworker carved into a number of the stones. I wonder, as I always do, who J was and was he (I assume it was a he) proud of the work he'd done on the wall.

At the top of the Bridle where it joins the main road the apple tree, despite the lateness of the year, is still full of apples, crumbles-in-waiting that are just that bit too high up to pick. I'll try and think on to bring a stick when I walk by tomorrow then I can knock a few off and take them home and stew them.

Paths like The Field Path and The Bridle Path are made of stories, of tales told over and over again until maybe the words fade but the music is still played. They're palimpsests, tales layered on tales and weathered like the earth. See you tomorrow on The Field Path.

Ian McMillan, Vice President

what3words - A New Mapping App

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what3words is a free app which can be downloaded onto any device. I am sure some readers will be aware of it, but others possibly not.

what3words has covered the entire globe with a matrix of three metre squares, each one with its own individual code. The principle is similar to the Ordnance Survey grid reference, but, I believe, more precise. An example would be Taylor House, its grid reference being SJ90257 90235, the what3words equivalent being "cases.bike.soft".

The OS will show an excellent map of the position, whereas what3words shows a mediocre map, but an excellent aerial view. If using a mobile phone the app will show the exact position of the three metre square you are standing in, where you are represented as a blue dot.

It can also be used as a navigational aid, which can be saved, shared or photographed. I have found it excellent in locating and logging such things as PNFS signposts, bridges etc. A good example would be S354 in the Weaver Hills. We recently had to replace it on a concrete base. It is sited in a huge rather featureless field, the grid reference being a bit 'iffy' at SK10723 46286, but we now have an exact three metre square of the site at webcams.homing.dawn which can be saved as a red dot for any future use.

It can also be used in preference to say, post codes, in difficult to locate areas. I feel sure that once used and familiarised with it will become an invaluable tool on your travels. Once a three metre square has been identified and its three word code saved, it can be revisited by simply typing in the code. So get out and give it a go. I would be surprised if you were not delighted with the results.

Ted Wolfe, signpost volunteer



The Big Picture

I was very tempted to offer myself for the position of Chairman. I don't have all, if any of the attributes required but I do like to see the big picture. So what is the big picture for Definitive Map Modification applications?

I can only report on the limited view from my own office window which like a horse may be blinkered. Forty applications have now been submitted to Derbyshire with a total distance of around 13 kilometres. All have been inspected by our Courts and Inquiries Officer

for Derbyshire and passed as worthwhile applications.

Some claimed routes are incredibly short, one is just 18 metres, but each application regardless of length takes much the same amount of time to prepare and submit. Most of the applications relate to routes that are already well used but are unrecorded. So why, I hear you ask, make all this work for us and Derbyshire County Council when there are more important things to do.

A bigger picture is now emerging that offers me the justification to carry on. DCC has now prepared reports on seven of our application and in all but one case their consultation has raised objection from the landowner. This suggests to me that given the opportunity after 2026 these landowners may well prevent our use of unrecorded paths, while we will have a weakened arsenal to make a valid claim.

One application that has yet to be investigated by DCC has had a locked gate installed with a 'Private Keep Out' notice erected. There is however some good news. Of the objections received to paths already investigated DCC has rejected them as invalid and DCC has agreed to make orders on all seven applications.

So the big picture from my window is this: landowners are sitting waiting for 2026 after which they may well take action to prevent our use of any unrecorded path.

You have been warned.

Ken Brockway, Footpath Inspector

Parish Notes ~ Eyam, Derbyshire

The village of Eyam in the parish of the same name has an unenviable claim to fame. It is perhaps better known as the plague village. In this year of the Covid-19 pandemic, the events that led to the use of this epithet are worth recounting.

Samuel Pepys recorded that Black Death returned to London in June 1665. On 7 September of the same year, George Vickers, a tailor's assistant died of the disease in Eyam after he unpacked roll of cloth that had arrived from the capital. Five more people had died by the end of the month. Fearing for their lives some villagers left, others sent their children away. The local vicar, William Mompesson and his predecessor Thomas Stanley realised that people were passing the plague to one another and that if they left the village even more people would probably die. Over 350 years before the term 'self-isolate' became common usage throughout the world, Mompesson and Stanley convinced the population of Eyam to do just that. The village stayed in quarantine for 14 months, out of a population of 700, 257 died. They included Catherine, Mompesson's own wife. Elizabeth Hancock, lost her husband and six children. They are buried in graves that she dug in Riley's Field, now a National Trust site called Riley's Graves. The village paid a terrible price, but the sacrifice wasn't in vain. The plague was contained and didn't spread to neighbouring areas.

Ironically this sad history means that Eyam and the surrounding parish has made it one of the most popular in the Peak District. Ed Douglas has described the area as 'a place of geomantic charm and mystery, hidden corners and unexpected angles'. It is situated on the ill-defined boundary between the limestone country of the White Peak and



gritstone moorland of the Dark Peak. Some would say that it contains the best of both. It certainly offers some of the finest and most interesting walking in Derbyshire.

The parish is home to two PNFS signposts, 78 (SK22456 78029) and 457 (SK21296 78866). When it is safe to get out and about I'd recommend that you plan a route between them and then explore the 20 km of PROWs which criss-cross the parish. You won't be disappointed, there are great views, ancient remains, old field systems and much more.

Feel free to email me your routes and photographs and I'll post the best of them on the website.

Eyam's history is never far away though. It is almost as if it has seeped into the landscape. Until this year it was possible just to see Eyam as a pretty village with a sad history. We have now lived in the shadow of the pandemic for too many months and understand how vulnerable we still are despite all our luxuries and technology. The self-sacrifice of the people of Eyam shows us the better side of human nature. In the words of the poet, Robert Frost, 'the only way out is through', let's hope that we are getting there.

Photographs: Ring Cairn on Eyam Moor; map of Eyam (reproduced with kind permission of Derbyshire Record Office).

Mel Bale, Trustee, Membership Secretary and Webmaster

This article is part of a series of Parish Notes which will be published both on the website and in future editions of the magazine. Readers who would like to contribute are encouraged to contact Mel Bale at webmaster@pnfs.org.uk.

Inspector Spotlight: Nigel and Ann Hackney

Nigel and Ann are a husband and wife inspection team. They inspect Charlesworth in Derbyshire High Peak - a big parish with 111 paths, and the smaller neighbouring parish of Chisworth (30 paths). Nigel comes from a PNFS family. His parents were inspectors back in the 1980s and the family tradition has been continued by his sister, Jane Hodgson, who has recently run or walked most of the paths 230 paths in Colne Valley.

Here is their PNFS story in Nigel's words.



Ann and I became inspectors a few years ago. I suspect like many new volunteers, we felt we had more time and it seemed an interesting and worthwhile role. We were aware of the PNFS through my family: my dad and his brother were both inspectors in Staffordshire and my mum is a long-standing member. We even had one of my dad's more dramatic inspection reports read at his funeral, which involved him returning home with no trousers on. Not something that's happened to either of us yet fortunately. We have been fell walkers for many years and met through a local climbing club in the 1990s, although our rock climbing days now appear to be behind us. Ann was by far the better climber, which was handy when we transferred our attentions to a sailing boat, as it meant she was the one volunteered to go up the mast whenever a tricky job beckoned.

Some inspectors may prefer to do an area which is new to them, but we have our local patch in Charlesworth and find it very enjoyable to get to know bits of it that perhaps we wouldn't otherwise. We tend to do most of the inspecting together and the parish is a good mix of rural and moorland paths, so there's plenty of scope to make decent walks while inspecting at the same time. It's also nice to be able to pop out for just a few hours and tick off a few paths any time you feel like it.

I joined the local Glossop Mountain Rescue Team at about the same time as we became inspectors and I have been able to align the two interests occasionally. Through the PNFS we got the Peak Park to reinstate one of their Pennine Way stone markers at a location on Bleaklow in Hern Clough. The path here makes a sharp turn, away from the clough, and many walkers have missed it and gone astray in bad visibility. The Park was not keen on a nice big PNFS green sign unfortunately, perhaps with flashing lights on, but maybe one day.

My sister Jane has now joined the pack, taking on her local patch in Marsden. That already seems to be throwing up more than its share of challenging situations, perhaps because some of the network includes little-used semi-rural paths and much of it has not been inspected in a while. I'm sure she will be doing her best to keep Kirklees Council on their toes. Speaking of councils (or, more correctly, Highway Authorities), I

think it can fairly be said that one of the downsides of inspecting is the sometimes poor communication from the public officials. I am sure there must be some who are great at working collaboratively with us, but it is a little frustrating when some of our work appears to vanish into the void. Nevertheless, we press on regardless, of course (I think that was the title of my Dad's report ...) and it is three cheers for the Courts & Inquiries Officers for everything they do.

The technology we have these days to assist us is great. Phone mapping (Viewranger, OS maps, etc) makes it so much easier to be 100% accurate about the correct line of a right of way and also to record the pinpoint locations of faults - as an MRT member I should also say for keeping up your paper map skills as well. The PNFS FID makes record keeping and information sharing a breeze, which surely will have many long term benefits. Even online reporting to the local authorities is good as it makes it easy to give them what they need and hopefully do what we want.

I mentioned the iconic PNFS signs. We got one put up for my Dad - number 442 near Chapel, if you happen to be passing - and if we'd thought about it sooner, we should have got a photo of us next to it. But we didn't, so instead the picture is with us at one of our local signs.

If you would like to become a Footpath Inspector for PNFS contact me at inspection@pnfs.org.uk or ring 07841647275.

David Gosling, Footpath Inspection Co-ordinator

PNFS



Peak and Northern Footpath Society, or PNFS for short
Keeping open rights of way, people for to walk
Dedicated volunteers, giving freely of their times
My job, to get out, about, planting footpath signs

For a hundred years and more, this dedicated band
Have striven for our access, to more of English land
Council, parish, highway authorities that we know
Also, landowners, farmers, with whom we hope our friendships grow

Much work goes unseen of course, studying ancient maps
And writing many letters to unseen council chaps
Often were successful, but this isn't always so
That's when we raise our hackles, and into battle we do go

Our work it is unending, unfettered access is our aim
Whether, woodland, pasture, coastline, or moorland holding game
Most of us are elderly, but persevere just the same
Whether brickwall of authority or obstacles that remain

So next time you're out walking and a signpost guides the way
It didn't appear by magic, we planted it one day
And we will have been successful if it guides an open path
Then back home you will have enjoyed your walk, whilst soaking in hot bath

Ted Wolfe, signpost volunteer

Countryside Steward Scheme

In the early 1990s, Natural England's predecessor, the Countryside Agency, began a scheme that paid landowners a subsidy to create new permissive paths and areas of open access for walkers and sometimes riders.

The agreements were for 10 years, renewable with both parties agreement, for further ten year periods. Then in the mid-2000s the whole scheme was cancelled except for those sites where a further ten year agreement was still running. Some of these paths and open access areas are still current even today, as a ten year agreement still has time to run. For example, there is one site left in Calderdale, West Yorkshire near Mytholmroyd, and one on the river Dove in Staffordshire near Rolleston-on-Dove.

To find what other sites are left open, check the link:

<http://cwr.naturalengland.org.uk/walk-ride.aspx>

There is also a link on the Society's website in the section "For Members". From that page click on "Links".

John Harker, Courts & Inquiries Officer

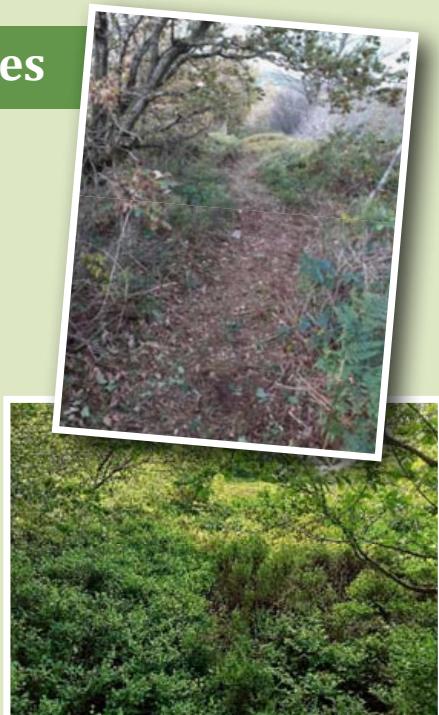


Meltham FP42, Kirklees

Meltham FP42, Kirklees is only a short path but avoids a bit of walking on what can be a busy road. On 22 June I reported that it was overgrown and I later received a reply that work had been carried out on 28 October.

I don't know what the normal times are between faults being reported and work being carried out, but I was impressed by the fact that Kirklees supply pictures of their work. They have done this on several occasions with faults I have reported.

David Oldfield, Footpath Inspector



Don't Lose Your Way: Ramblers Campaign to Save Public Rights of Way

You will probably have heard of this Ramblers campaign. It was conceived because in 2026, under provisions in the Countryside and Right of Way Act 2000, public rights of way which existed before 1949 and are currently not legally recorded will be extinguished. The Ramblers work to save these rights has started rather late, but now they are making up for lost time. At the beginning of November they announced that they had found that 49,138 miles of rights of way were missing from the definitive maps in England and Wales. This was achieved by volunteers finding paths shown on late nineteenth century Ordnance Survey (OS) maps which were labelled "F.P." or "B.R." (bridle road), and seeing if those paths were currently shown on definitive maps. If they were not, they were considered to be lost. The next steps to be taken by the Ramblers were announced on 17 November. They said that within the next few weeks they would be releasing a full map of the lost paths that have been found; anyone registered for email contact would be emailed this map when it is ready. Finding and mapping these paths was just the start, and the next step was to save them. Over the coming months they would be developing and releasing resources to support thousands of volunteers across the country to prioritise, research and build the applications to save them.

A major problem with the Ramblers' approach is that the use of the F.P. and B.R. notation by the OS surveyors only identified routes which had the appearance of being used by walkers and horse riders, not whether the public had the right to use them, or only private individuals had that right. So just because a path was labelled F.P. did not mean that it was certainly a public right of way. How many of the nearly 50,000 miles of "missing" paths really are public rights of way? To find out will need a great deal of research into historic documents, since it is only by looking at the evidence provided by all available documents that the true status of the paths can be determined. The Ramblers have recognised that many paths will not have adequate evidence to add them to the definitive maps, so they have decided to focus their research on those which would add value to the rights of way network for the public.

A few dedicated PNFS members have been researching Lost Ways in our area for several years, helped by the Courts and Inquiries Officers. We are making slow but good progress. The Ramblers nationwide scheme is much more ambitious, and deserves our support. I am sure that if any PNFS members have the time to help the Ramblers, they would be very welcome - email DLYW@ramblers.zendesk.com. Or it would be much appreciated if you could offer to help PNFS email mail@pnfs.org.uk

Rhoda Barnett, Courts and Inquiries Officer, Derbyshire



Book Review: Never Leave the Dog Behind

By Helen Mort, published by Vertebrate Publishing

Helen Mort is a poet and a novelist. She is also a climber and runner. Her latest book is a fine example of the skills that are needed to excel in all these challenging areas. It celebrates the companionship that many people get from behind out in our wonderful landscapes with what has come to be known as man's (and woman's) best friend. The book is a personal memoir and an exploration of other people's experiences with their dogs whilst out walking, running and even climbing.

The author tells of how as a child she had several violent encounters with dogs and subsequently came to fear them. It was only when she moved to live alone in the Lake District that she overcame those fears when she took in a whippet she named as Bell. The dog became her constant companion around the local towns and villages and when she was out running on the fells as well. I was surprised and moved by how openly and honestly she writes about her thoughts and experiences.

Helen is a well-regarded poet and her skilled use of language pervades the book. Her love of other poets also features strongly. Norman Macaig, John Burnside and Anthony Hecht amongst others are quoted, they all share her love of landscape in its many manifestations.

The book provides the author the opportunity to meet a range of people and to talk to them about their relationship with their dogs. Chris Bonnington appears early in the book and tells her the story about finding that his own dog, Bodie, had somehow managed to follow him and his son up Gillercombe Buttress on Green Gable. The two men had to carry out a precarious act of mountain rescue to get Bodie back to safety. The tables are turned in a subsequent chapter when Helen meets up with Paul Besley, another writer, who is also a member of his local Mountain Rescue team. For the last few years, Paul has been training his dog Scout to be a rescue dog, one that is skilled in finding 'bodies' who need to be saved in the wilds of the hills. He talks passionately about his relationship with Scout. Helen describes them as 'Two craftsmen, each

reading the other and responding... I wonder what is must be like to be Scout, free and tethered out on the moor, brought back by invisible thread.' It is fitting that the dog that appears on the cover is in fact Scout.

This short book is filled with interesting characters, both human and canine and like all the best books leads the reader off into unexpected and interesting directions. There is a very helpful set of Notes and Bibliography at the end of the book.

Whether you have a dog as a companion or not, I'm sure that most of our readers will enjoy this book.

Mel Bale, Trustee, Membership Secretary and Webmaster



Answers to Quiz Part 2 in issue 65

Lancashire FP14: Lune Aqueduct Lancaster

Cheshire East FP56: High Peak School Disley

Lancashire West FPs 37, 38 and 41: Ashhurst's Beacon, Dalton

Merseyside noticeboard: Aintree racecourse

Derbyshire FP42: Whatstandwell station, Crich

Bradford FP58: Silsden, Addingham, High Moor Doubler Stone

Sheffield 456 Before and Afterwards

Here are photographs showing this footpath in the Darnall area of Sheffield, not far from where I live.



The second and third photos show this footpath as I found it on 1 October. The footpath runs from the cul de sac end of Barley Wood Road between industrial units. Its a useful link, despite its less than salubrious surroundings. It connects to other footpaths leading into more pleasant open countryside along the Sheffield-Rotherham border at Tinsley Park golf course.

Perhaps its just a coincidence that the unit to the left of the footpath is a vehicle breakers yard, the unit to the right had recently had a number of trees pruned along the boundary fence. Having squeezed past the pile of cuttings, I continued my walk after taking photos and sending them to Sheffield Council PROW Unit.

The first photo is the footpath when I walked it again last Friday. Tyres gone, and cuttings removed thanks to the Council's prompt action. Flytipping blights our society and the cost to residents through council tax grows at a time when local authorities are stretched to breaking point as it is in the current national crisis.

John Harker, Area Officer Sheffield

The Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

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Sign of the times

Photograph by Ken Brockway, member



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