

SIGNPOST

Magazine of the
Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

Number 71 - Spring 2022



Congleton FP46

Photograph by David Bratt



Winter is passing! I saw my first clump of snowdrops, unexpectedly, on the Isle of Skye. By the end of February, we will have gained over two hours of additional daylight in Derbyshire, so the potential to get out and walk or inspect footpaths is increasing and is very welcome.

Spring always feels like a time of renewal and hope. This year, perhaps more than most, because we seem to have some hope that the pandemic, which has been such a feature of all our lives for the past two years, and for some has brought great sadness, is moving into a more manageable phase. The Trustees of Peak and Northern regularly discuss the possibility of having meetings in person. Taylor House can now be used a little more freely, please do let Dave Brown, Office Manager know if you plan to visit, so that he can ensure that numbers remain safe. Whilst legal restrictions have largely been lifted, we should remain vigilant and respect those who may be more vulnerable despite vaccination.

I am impressed that the society continues to do well, each month we hear about the rising number of members and the increase in volunteer footpath inspectors. We have sufficient resources to undertake more footpath, footbridge and stile improvements, so if you have ideas, do discuss with the area officers who are incredibly knowledgeable and supportive.

Our Annual General Meeting this year is scheduled to take place on Saturday, 7 May 2022. Do put this in your diary as it is a great chance to hear more about the societies work and what you can do to get involved. It is also the opportunity to vote for the appointment of Trustees and the various offices they hold, including for our president. This year I am delighted that we have attracted some brilliant additional members who have stepped forward to offer their services as Trustees. As we are an entirely voluntary society there is always plenty of work to be shared out.

You may recall that we arranged to spend a day in September discussing the Strategy for the Peak and Northern Footpath Society, but due to a resurgence in the pandemic we had to postpone. Hopefully we will be able to let you know quite soon about a proposed date in the summer, when we have a better chance of meeting in person. It is important that from time to time we can meet and agree together what our priorities should be over the next few years, the context in which we exist is constantly changing, though our fundamental purpose is a golden thread.

Our online talks programme continues, arranged by David Gosling. These are well worth watching, either live or later YouTube. Very informative and relevant to what we do and demonstrative of the depth of talent within the society.

Thank you for everything you do for PNFS, whether that is being a member, inspecting footpaths, putting up signposts, cleaning Taylor House, doing talks or a myriad of other vital roles.

Enjoy the outdoors.

Kathy Mclean, Chair

The Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

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Annual General Meeting

The AGM will be held at The Guildhall, Stockport on May 7th.

It will start at 11:00 with a buffet lunch 12:30. A talk by Keith Warrender about his new book on the Kinder mass trespass is planned for 13:30.

The meeting will close at 15:00.

Further details will be sent to members in April and will be posted on the website.

It is hoped that members will be able to join the meeting remotely if they prefer.

David Bratt

Long-standing members of the Society will know that David Bratt served as Chairman of PNFS during 2003-2008 and as President 2008-2020. When he took over as Chair, the retiring Chairman, Derek Seddon, remarked that the best he could say was that the Society 'survived'. But David transformed the Society - membership numbers increased, the organisation was streamlined, computerisation was initiated, more signposts and bridges were installed, and he began the walks programme.

During his time as President David provided consistent and enthusiastic support for the officers of the Society as well as organising the long walks programme. He also represented the Society at many events such as county fairs and funerals of distinguished members of the Society.

When David approached a landmark birthday, he decided it was time to step down and we have been without a President for just over a year. But it is with great pleasure that we can announce that David has had a change of mind and at the forthcoming AGM he will be nominated as our President once again. I am sure our membership will welcome him back to renew his role as President of the Society.

David Gosling, Trustee and Footpath Inspection Co-ordinator

Newsflash ~ 2026 Cut-off to be Repealed

Our Vice-President, Kate Ashbrook has advised us of some good news. She writes:

Defra has told the stakeholder working group (of which I am a member) that it is going to repeal the 2026 cut off for historic paths, which is amazing news. Defra realised it just didn't have the capacity to do all the work needed, and there were many unanswered questions. The repeal has been signed off by the Secretary of State and needs suitable legislation into which to insert it.

The downside is that it will expedite the right for landowners to apply for path changes, and get the necessary statutory instruments through parliament before the summer recess. This is an unpleasant piece of legislation which could have serious consequences for the path network, and assist arguments about moving paths on alleged grounds of privacy and security. We shall have to try to mitigate it. The stakeholder working group will discuss it further.

There were many good elements to the rights-of-way reform package which would speed up surveying authorities' ability to process definitive map modification applications, and make the process less controversial. We pressed Defra to isolate those and see if it could progress them.

Defra is not planning a formal statement about this but will send us a note in due course. Basically, very good news.

The statement from Defra is below.

We are writing to you today to inform you about important changes to the rights of way package of reforms. We have communicated these changes to the Stakeholder Working Group and will continue to work with them going forward.

The rights of way reforms package has been underway for many years and whilst much progress has been made for which we are grateful to the Stakeholder Working Group and others, the legislation required to implement these reform measures is not yet ready to be laid and considerable work remains to complete this work. Defra has therefore decided on a pragmatic approach to take the package forward. We have decided to progress the Right to Apply and Cost Recovery SIs only and to repeal the 2026 cut-off date. We feel that this strikes some balance across stakeholder concerns and interests, while recognising that it doesn't deliver on all the benefits originally envisaged.

We remain committed to seeking to make improvements to rights of way processes and procedures where possible and appropriate to do so and would welcome your continued advice and support with this endeavour.

PNFS Online Talks Programme 2022

Following the success of PNFS's initial programme of online talks, more have been planned. The format will be similar and you will be able to log in using a Zoom link. You will attend and have the opportunity to participate in the talk or discussion from your own home. They will start at 7.00 pm and last for approximately one hour, and will be on a Tuesday. A link to join each talk will be emailed to all PNFS members nearer the dates. Future talks will be publicised as soon as details become available.

26 April Jack Cornish	DON'T LOSE YOUR WAY Jack Cornish is responsible for the Ramblers' Don't Lose Your Way project which aims to claim unrecorded ways before the 2026 deadline. Jack will talk about how PNFS can collaborate with the Ramblers to achieve our common goals.
24 May David Gosling	KINDER TRESPASS This year is the 90th anniversary of the famous Kinder Trespass. In this talk David will get behind some of the myths about the Trespass and reveal that the story of winning access to Kinder was more complicated than the legend that has grown up around this single afternoon event.



Photograph by Ken Brockway. Words by the editor

Seen on the Footpaths

Sheffield's industrial past was built on foundations laid down in early medieval times, often by religious orders endowed with land and money by the landowning aristocracy worried about their immortal souls. The smelting of iron, and then later, steel depended on charcoal, before coke from coal mining became the preferred method. That meant woodlands where trees were managed for coppicing. The coppice, or cuttings from the trees, were stacked in a tent shape pile, then covered over with turf and a fire started inside. Starved of oxygen, the stack would smoulder for days, driving out the wood's impurities until nothing was left except the carbon or "charcoal". However, it needed careful watching and tending.

Charcoal burning (or wood coaling) was a skill handed down through families and the wood collier often camped out in the woods tending the stack. The charcoal burner would live in a home made hut whilst he tended the stack, making sure it didn't go out or catch alight and destroy the stack.

Ecclesall Woods, located in the valley of the river Sheaf in western Sheffield are not far from Beauchief Abbey which was visited by the PNFS Eastern walk I led a few weeks ago. Unfortunately for this charcoal burner, the temptation of the nearby Rising Sun public house about one mile away proved too much. In On 11 October 1786, after a night in the alehouse George Yardley returned to his hut and was found dead next day, burned to death. Maybe overcome by smoke whilst sleeping off the effects of a night on the ale?

His memorial can be seen on a public footpath that connects two public bridleways that run off Abbey Lane. The marker was paid for by some friends including one who listed his occupation as "beesomemaker" (making brooms from the leftovers of the coppicing), and the landlord of the Rising Sun public house (a guilty conscience maybe?). That public footpath almost certainly came into being through walkers trying to find the memorial to the tragedy. A public right of way coming into existence as a consequence of an industrial accident? How many public paths are there around like that?

John Harker, Area Officer Sheffield





Bennerley Viaduct

The front cover picture on the previous edition of Signpost was taken during a private tour from Bennerley viaduct. The viaduct is now open for anyone to visit at any time - see www.bennerleyviaduct.org.uk.

After work by contractors, funding from many sources and hours of volunteer labour Bennerley viaduct was opened as a walking and cycling path high in the air over the Erewash valley. From Derbyshire, Ilkeston FP81, which is the towpath of the Erewash canal, a ramp offers free and easy access for all. The viaduct once used by the Great Northern rail line between Nottingham and Derby is one of only two remaining in the UK constructed of wrought iron. The route crosses over the Erewash valley rail line then Ilkeston FP11. It provided the vantage point, during an official private tour, for Signpost's cover picture. Next crossing is the river and this being the county boundary the remaining section of viaduct is in Nottinghamshire. At the Awsworth, east end, steps have been created and a link is available to Awsworth FP10 and BW17 which follow the course of the abandoned Nottingham canal. The high level path is not the only link but it's certainly the most spectacular, assuming you have a head for heights.

Ken Brockway, Footpath Inspector



Have we got your email address?

The many benefits of being a PNFS member include receiving a copy of *Waymark* four times a year and attending the online talks organised by the PNFS (see elsewhere in this magazine).

To take advantage of these, the PNFS needs your email address. If you are not already receiving any communications by email from the Society, contact Mel Bale, Membership Secretary on membership@pnfs.org.uk.

Natural England Launches New Countryside Code for Land Managers

With more people enjoying the outdoors than ever before, Natural England has recently set out new guidance for land managers to help them ensure that visitors to the countryside can enjoy it in a responsible way. Published under the Countryside Code, the update provides recommendations to land managers on making rights of way accessible, creating safer environments and installing clear signage to help the public respect, protect and enjoy the countryside.



The remaining gate on the Brailsford path (left)

Recently installed quality stile where there was a gap but the definitive statement records a gate (right)

The new guidance advises farmers and land managers on how to make land more accessible, for example by adding self-closing gates instead of stiles where possible and using better signage, and how to report anti-social behaviour, fly-tipping, littering, livestock worrying and other offences correctly. These changes will allow more people to access nature safely whilst also supporting land managers and helping to avoid damage to property, livestock and wider anti-social behaviour.

Great news. I recommend you take a look at the code at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/natural-england-launches-new-countryside-code-for-land-managers>

It also shows that PNFS is ahead of the game by funding new gates. Being the pessimist that I am, I draw attention to issues of concern in Derbyshire. Now I'm no lover of those tiny gates issued by DCC which often provide another barrier at a squeeze stile but even these gates which fail to comply with BS5709 are better than some of the rubbish stiles made with poor second hand material that farmers appear to think would pass a Health and Safety risk assessment.

DERBYSHIRE NORTHERN DISTRICT		- 3 -		PARISH OF BRAILSFORD.		
Ref. No. of Path.	1/25000 O.S. Map. Ref. No.	Status and Description of Route	Nature of Surface	Approx. Length Miles	Approx. Width	Remarks.
18.	22/24	Footpath from Culland Lane South west of Poole Head (250500) in South easterly direction crossing No.2 to road North of Upper Burrows Farm (255401).	Grass	.300		2 Field Gates. 1 Stile.
19.	22/23	Footpath from road North of Burrows House (262396) in South westerly direction crossing No.22 and continuing South westwards and westwards thence North westwards to Culland Lane North of Culland Manor Farm (247593).	Grass	1.045		6 Field Gates. 1 Stile.

Extract of Brailsford Definitive Statement

I've recently reported a location where a Derbyshire gate has been replaced with a stile and while walking in Brailsford I discovered three new stiles installed where there were gaps when I last used the path. Yes, they are quality stiles that I have praised elsewhere but a stile where there was a gap is a very retrograde step and fails or perhaps preempts the new code. So I looked at the definitive statement for this Brailsford path and it includes reference to six field gates and one stile along the one mile of path. We now have three stiles and one gate fixed the the inevitable binder twine.

Yes, PNFS should be supporting long term improvements to the path network, replacing stiles with gates but that's not the end of it. To protect our investment and provide a long term guarantee that gates will remain, we need to submit a Definitive Map (and Statement) Modification Order application to ensure that the gates we are funding are properly recorded and cannot in the fullness of time be replaced by stiles which may currently be the limitations recorded in the statement as conclusive evidence.

Ken Brockway, Footpath Inspector



New Footpath/Cycleway Bolsover District

I have received notification of a planning application from Bolsover District Council (BDC). It concerns the construction of a new footpath/cycletrack from the village of Doe Lea south-east of Chesterfield, to Stainsby, a hamlet on the edge of Hardwick Park (the Park surrounds Hardwick Hall owned by the National Trust). It will allow easier access to/from Hardwick Hall/Park for walkers by public transport, as Doe Lea village is on a bus route from Chesterfield, whereas the Hall & Park are not accessible by public transport.

Although there is an element of upgrading of existing definitive footpath to shared use (Ault Hucknall FP20, and Heath and Holmewood FP5), I feel that the improvements in width, the surfacing and new more user friendly bridge over the river Doe Lea, outweigh any issues about sharing with cyclists. The only thing I'm unsure of at the moment is whether the legal proceedings will simply be a Cycletracks Act Order to upgrade the definitive footpaths to cycletrack, or if it will be the usual permissive access for the cyclists and leaving it as a public footpath. The project is a joint one between BDC and Sustrans, the sustainable transport charity who have opened the Bennerley Viaduct further south in Derbyshire which I mentioned to the Courts and Inquiries Committee. I shall find out if the proposal will involve a Cycletracks Act 1984 Order to legally upgrade the affected definitive footpaths.

John Harker, Area Officer Bolsover and NE Derbyshire Districts

Signpost Report



Since November the total number of signposts has risen from 547 to 550.

New Signposts December-February

16 December: John Hodgson and Merrick Iszatt of Matlock erected the three new signs:

S624 at GR SK 37546 62782, Stretton Hall Farm, on Clay Cross FP7 and BW8

S626 at GR SK 37624 62804, as above BW8

S627 at GR SK 37657 62736, as above FP6

Maintenance and Preparation: December-February

- a) Wedged posts on S233 (top of Dimpus Clough, Hayfield; 285 E. of Kinder Reservoir; 154 at Keepers Cottage, Pott Shrigley
- b) Inspected/cleaned 5, 23, 33, 273, 369, 486/7/9, 512, P001, 102, 462, 31, 149, 251, 293/4/5/6, 302/9, 313, 379, 415, 539, 574/7, 34, 43, 95, 314, 154, 542, 611, 246, 145, 383, 270, 237, 10, 50/1, 261, 291, 400/1/2, 413, 425/6, 416, 492/7/8, 582
- c) Retrieved 361/2 from Anglers Country Park, Wakefield, 293 from Hartington and 78 from Eyam for reposting; both plates from 120 at Gun Farm, Mellor for SB&PC
- d) Made site visits for prospective sign
- e) Tried to clean graffiti off commemorative plaque on Bottoms Path, Flixton

Prospects

628 at Stretton Hall Farm, Clay Cross

630 at Alton, Ashover

631 at Winter Hill summit

632 at Ault Hucknall

633/4 at North Wingfield

635 on Sett Valley Trail, New Mills

636 at Loftrans Farm, Paythorne, Lancs

637 at Okeover

700/1 at Mearley, Lancs

704 at Ashbourne

712 at Diggle

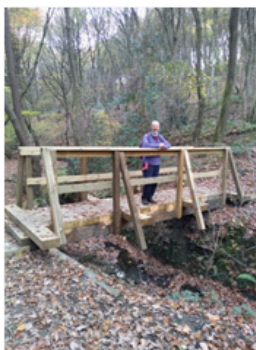
783 at Downham

784 at Bashall Eaves



David Morton, Signpost Officer

New Footbridge in Sheffield



During the ongoing pandemic, local green spaces saw some of the biggest increases in use, as people had to keep local in their exercise. For my partner and I this included Shirtcliff Wood laying between the Sheffield suburbs of Handsworth and Woodhouse. This wood had the Shirtcliff Brook running through it, a tributary of the river Rother.

On one of our walks, I noticed an odd thing. A flight of wooden steps leading down the south slope to the edge of the brook, then ... nothing. No footbridge to get across a steep sided and deep gully through which the shallow brook ran. The steps can be seen in the background of the first photo.

I made enquiries of Sheffield Council as the steps were not on a definitive path of any kind. The Council is also the landowner, so I focused on the Parks & Countryside Unit who has responsibility for the wood's management. The answer I received eventually was that the bridge which had stood there had become derelict and had been removed. A Highways Act section 56 "out of repair" letter wouldn't work here. The bridge was not part of a publicly maintainable highway. I resigned myself to having to come up with another solution, or forget about it. There are other bridges crossing the brook up and down from this location. No big deal I consoled myself with.

Several months passed until my partner and I revisited the valley. To my surprise a footbridge has appeared. I almost missed it, thinking it was one of the other bridges, but then I realised that the others are metal and concrete bridges, not wooden like this one. Did the dreaded reputation of PNFS lead to a hurried emergency meeting and decision to smash the 'piggy bank' to fund a bridge? Or was the whole thing just serendipity. A coincidence as the bridge was scheduled to be installed anyway? If I find out, I'll let you know.

The pre-Great War photo is of a bridge lower down the brook with the public footpath from Handsworth village, across the fields, coming down the steps in the photo to the bridge, then up more steps into Woodhouse village.

Bottom image - Copyright Sheffield Libraries - Image No s11998 from Picture Sheffield John Harker, ex Area Officer High Peak Borough

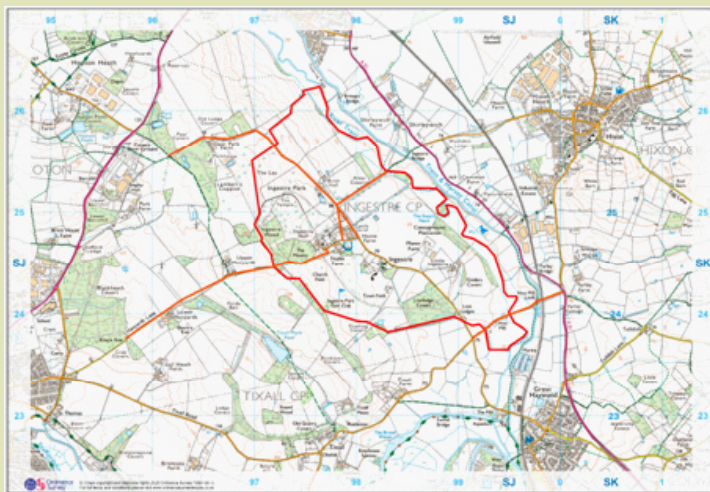


The Pathless Parish: Pathless No More

A short distance eastward from the county town of Stafford lies the small parish of Ingestre (rhymes with industry). With fewer than 200 residents, and only a single point of access off a minor road, you'd be forgiven for not noticing its quiet existence. At the centre of the parish lies Ingestre Hall – an imposing Jacobean structure and the former seat of the Earls Talbot and Shrewsbury, now in use as the only dedicated residential arts centre for school groups in the country.

The hall is surrounded by beautiful parklands and former hunting grounds bordering the Trent along its north-eastern boundary. Though it sounds idyllic, if you were to take a look at Staffordshire's online PROW map, you will be saddened to discover the only public access into the parish is along the short road from the parish's south-eastern extremity to the parish church which there reaches a dead-end. There are shown on the map no footpaths, bridleways, or other public access rights.

Keep looking closer however, and you will see a few strange anomalies. FP21 in the neighbouring parish of Hixon, for example, leads to the boundary with Ingestre where it meets an abrupt end in the middle of a bridge over the Trent (leaving some ambiguity about responsibilities for the bridge's maintenance). Across the other side of the parish, a similar fate awaits Tixal FP0.1630(b). It would appear that at the time of the parish surveys for the creation of the definitive map, the surveyors 'forgot' to record any paths for Ingestre.



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This strange anomaly is however set to end. Thanks in large part to the research of Stafford residents and a member of the Ramblers, Martin Reay, the record is soon to be corrected. Over the last few months, Staffordshire's Countryside and Rights of Way Panel have considered the historical evidence and agreed to make orders restoring no fewer than five bridleways (shown in the image with orange lines) to the definitive map. Members of the public can now be reassured that their use of these ancient routes, dedicated for Public benefit by Lord Talbot in 1801, will be protected in perpetuity.

Chad Wilkinson, Trustee

Inspector Spotlight: Shirley Addy

This month the focus is on one of our busiest inspectors - Shirley Addy. Shirley became an inspector in November 2015 and since that time she has made 1,589 footpath inspections (and still counting) in 38 parishes in the Ribble Valley. Shirley is approaching 1,000 kilometres of walking devoted to inspecting footpaths. She is also a Courts and Inquiries Officer and editor of this magazine. In this spotlight she recounts how she became an enthusiast for PNFS and footpath inspections.



This year sees the thirtieth anniversary of my discovery of walking. Until then I had really hated walking: I recall the sheer boredom of walking home after infant school and the later dread of walking the pavements and commons every Sunday afternoon whilst I was at boarding school. Further, I could not understand why women would wear such big brown boots which jarred with my teenage sense of fashion!

In July 1992 my sister Julie suggested that I go with her on a 7 mile walk around Parlick organised by the local CHA group. On that Sunday walk I realised that walking was more than just putting one foot in front of the other on the pavement. It was about climbing the hills, enjoying the varied paths, and, you know, I was not bored. In short, the walk was an adventure. In the weeks that followed, a friend took me across Striding Edge, I treated myself to a few walking guides and maps so I was able to walk by myself, and attended guided walks in the Lake District. I also joined the LDWA and entered many challenge walks of 20-29 miles. As a direct result of my obsession with walking, I started dating a works colleague who also enjoyed walking and eventually married him!

Since then, walking has remained as a very important part of my life. For a few years I was a voluntary ranger for Lancashire County Council's now-defunct Countryside Service Volunteer Ranger Service, and I undertook their Advanced Navigation Skills course. In October 2015, during a stay in Alstonefield, I walked from Gypsy Bank to Hartington and saw PNFS's signpost 493. I had previously passed one or two other PNFS's signposts in the West Pennines but, for some reason, on this occasion we paused for a couple of minutes - long enough for me to get interested in the PNFS.

Soon afterwards I looked at PNFS's website and after some browsing, I discovered that the Society has voluntary footpath inspectors and that there were none for the Ribble Valley. I jumped at that and contacted David Gosling asking if I could become inspector for the entire Ribble Valley borough! It was another great moment of my life when I was appointed.

Since November 2015, I have inspected 38 out of 49 parishes, with seven receiving a second inspection. I enjoy the challenge of checking so many paths that I have never walked upon before. Sometimes I complete my inspections of parishes in successive visits, but it doesn't always work that way as I like to have a change in another parish before returning to finish an earlier one. I try to inspect twice a week: most times I travel light and make my visits a long half-day, but where the paths are further and

more remote, I take a packed lunch with me. I adopt a pragmatic view when I report faults. There's no point in getting frustrated or let down if you don't see them rectified next time you walk that way, but I truly believe in my efforts in walking every footpath and bridleway in the Ribble Valley and reporting faults. I am keeping the lesser-used paths alive - and someone has to report the faults to the Lancashire County Council. So far I have reported well over five hundred faults!

The role can be as easy or involved as you wish, so if you are stuck in a rut with your walking, go for it and discover the joys of hitherto unknown paths. Try one parish first to see how you get on. There's also the satisfaction of giving something back by helping the PNFS in its great quest to get our public rights of way sorted.

The Ribble Valley, where I live, is full of wonderful and varied countryside but there are times when I have been disappointed by some parishes that have so many dilapidated stiles. Sadly there are a couple of parishes that I could say were definitely not walker-friendly. Three years ago, I invested in a pair of Aigle's walking wellingtons to cope with very muddy and flooded paths which made my Altbergs and gaiters a trial to clean. I always use a Garmin GPS which has a built-in camera that records the grid references of each photograph, which is a tremendous boon when reporting faults.

A few years ago, David Morton asked me if I could check a couple of RA's signposts at White Coppice, which are maintained by PNFS. I obliged and since then I have now got a growing list of signposts to check or touch up every two years. Occasionally, after inspecting footpaths on my patch, I propose a suitable location for a PNFS signpost.

One of the great strengths of the PNFS is that its officers listen to members and it is dynamic enough to try new things and keep abreast of modern technology, such as the Footpath Inspection Database and regular online meetings. Another asset of the Society is that it has so many dedicated officers and members who are not only committed to carrying out its aims but are also very supportive to others.

I have made several suggestions over the years and it's gratifying to say that most of them have been acted upon. These include metal PNFS badges, film covering for the front windows at Taylor House, and initiating *Waymark* e-newsletter. One could say the PNFS was made for me.

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

Safeguarding at PNFS

As a society we are all responsible to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our members, volunteers, and the public with whom we interact. To ensure we have robust procedures in place to deal with any concerns, the Trustees have recently updated the safeguarding policy which can now be found on the PNFS website - <http://pnfs.org.uk/about-us/constitution.htm>. We encourage everyone to read and become familiar with the contents of this policy, especially before undertaking any work on behalf of the society with children or vulnerable adults.

Chad Wilkinson, Trustee

PNFS Signposts and the Mower Family of New Mills and Newtown (Disley)

Our signposts are interesting things. In the course of inspecting and maintaining them, I became interested in the identity of “R. Mower, New Mills”, whose name appears on the back of our ten best-looking cast-iron plates and one or two cross-plates from the period 1905-1915. A further dozen from that period have disappeared in the course of a hundred years and two world wars. “Who was he?” I wondered.

I'd also come across the name “Thomas Mower” in the earliest minutes of the Society's meetings at The Athenaeum, Manchester in 1894-5, where he was listed as our first and only “Footpaths Inspector”. Thomas was one of our founder members. My predecessor Bill Johnson of Longdendale had also been curious and had obtained the 1901 Census data on the Mowers and one of Thomas's letters from 1908, which he kindly passed on to me.

Some time ago, after a wet morning above Hayfield replacing signpost 29 (one of Rowland's), I beat a retreat to the local history section of New Mills Carnegie Library to look at Kelly's Directories of Derbyshire, etc, which gave Thomas's occupation in 1895 and described him as “of Newtown, Cheshire”. I then visited 45 Market Street, the Mowers' home in 1901, but rebuilt as a shop in 1913, en route to the Local Heritage Centre, whose Dr Derek Brumhead I spoke to in the evening. I later phoned the library again and was able to speak to Margaret, who together with Katherine, was their acknowledged local history expert.

So far I've discovered that Thomas was born at Chapel-en-le-Frith in 1840 and that by 1901 he was the Relieving and Vaccinations Officer of the Hayfield Union (which covered New Mills and the workhouse at Ollersett). So he was one of the “Victorian new middle class”. He had a wife Emily, aged 55, born in Huddersfield. They had three daughters and two sons.

* By the 1870s England's “new middle class” were in the vanguard of birth control as a means of passing on their advantages to their children through the costly process of educating them. The younger son, was Rowland, our “R. Mower”, who in 1901 was 20 and a “Mechanical Engineer's Clerk”. Rowland later became his father's assistant at PNFS, as shown in our Year Books. From 1906 he was redesigning our iron signpost plates and casting his name on the back of them.

By 30 December 1908, Thomas had moved and was writing a letter from Torr Street to M. Moon at King Street, Manchester, re that year's four new signposts (ie 33-36), vandalism to 21 in the Edale Valley, severe erosion on the Snake Path (approx 300 hikers had used it on the Bank Holiday and the PNFS had hired men to repair it) and a school-display of seven maps showing the Walshaw Dene footpath (Hebden to Haworth), etc. Thomas died on 13 November 1915, age 75, but in the 1911 Census his wife is listed as “Head of Household” and Thomas is not listed. I wonder where he was.

Rowland remained elusive, mainly because by 1911 the family had moved to the Cheshire side of Newtown, so their records are in Chester, not in Matlock. At first I tried to find out about his foundry. According to Derek and Margaret, there were only four foundries in New Mills. Longson's made grids and manhole covers; Higginbotham's made lampposts, Hawthorn's, where my great uncle John Lowe worked

in the early 1900s, before emigrating to St Paul, Minnesota, made a range of engineering products and we think that the fourth was called Armfield's. Rowland presumably designed the plates, then either got them made at one of these foundries or a smaller one, possibly his own, but I could not trace it.

He had disappeared from our Year Books by 1913, so I wondered if, like so many young men, he had died in World War I. He was not listed at the library among the New Mills War Dead, nor was there any record of his marrying in England and Wales in the period up to 1920. Most of the boys and men who survived the Great War and the Influenza Epidemic would have been married soon after, given the great shortage of men. I wondered if the lack of a marriage or death record for Rowland might be due to some transcriber misreading and misrecording his name, but I was looking in the wrong place, ie. the records for Newtown, Derbyshire, instead of Newtown, Disley, Cheshire.

Rowland was a member of PNFS in 1909 and 1910, but not 1911, reappeared in 1912, absent in 1913, but back again in 1915 for S046 and finally as our Footpaths Inspector in 1920. Between 1906 and 1915 he made twenty three of our smartest signposts incorporating several architectural features. In 1921 he was replaced by a key figure, Harold Wild, who intended to visit "Mr Mower to see if he had any plant", which I take to mean digging tools, etc. Rowland was born in February or March 1881. By the time of the 1911 Census aged 30, he was living at 278, Buxton Road, Newtown, Disley, a double-fronted house in a terrace of mill workers houses. I called on his former neighbour at number 280. Then in his eighties, he assured me that as a boy he had known Rowland, who had lived until the 1950s in the house next door and had had a daughter. Rowland's occupation was listed in 1911 as "Motor Engineer". Prior to this, Derek Brumhead of New Mills had advised me of a Buxton newspaper photo taken at Buxton of a Dreadnought** 3 speed, 9HP car, made by a Mr Rowland Mower of New Mills. However, Rowland's house allegedly became that of the manager of the Bleach Works opposite, so I wonder when Rowland switched from motor engineer to mill manager.

Perhaps when I am too old for signposting, I will see if later censuses and the records in Chester hold any answers. My interest in the Mowers remains undimmed, as their biographies illuminate a fascinating period in the economic and social history of New Mills and England, which inter alia saw the emergence of hiking in the Peak District, hostility from the land-grabbing class and their servants and the rise of both the socialist Clarion Ramblers Groups and the Peak District and Northern Counties Footpaths Preservation Society, which continues in that fight with the Country Landowners Association to this day, as the PNFS.

If only I could find photos of Thomas and Rowland or their close relatives. One of Rowland's sisters' occupations was listed as "photographer". In 1901 his sister Daisy was a mistress at New Mills High School, probably in Wirksmoor House**. She married Joseph Kay at Taxal in 1913. His sister Alice Emily married James Thomas Marsh Watts in 1908 at a Registry Office and his sister Mary Louise married Thomas Barnes in 1903 at Chapel en le Frith. Now I wonder what became of Rowland's daughter . . .

*Joseph Banks (1954) : "Prosperity and parenthood: a study of family planning among the Victorian middle classes", Routledge and Kegan Paul

** New Mills Local History Society (NMLHS, 2021) – search the images

David Morton, Signpost Officer

An American in PNFS

I'm wild about public footpaths. I always have been. Seeing a sign pointing toward a hidden track, inviting you to follow it, is so exciting. So when my partner gifted me a membership to the Peak and Northern Footpath Society this past Christmas, I was overjoyed.

I know *Signpost* readers share my enthusiasm, but when I talk to a lot of Brits about my passion for footpaths, I'm sometimes met with funny looks. Some take them for granted. But in the US, it's a totally different landscape for walkers. You can't just step out your door and trek across someone's field. That's private property and is taken pretty seriously.

If you want to do any countryside walking in the States, your options are pretty limited to A) walking on roads or B) driving to a piece of land that has been set aside by the government for that purpose, like a national park.

Option A can be dull, not to mention dangerous. In the rural area where I grew up there was a small nature reserve not far from my house as the crow flies (just across a farmer's field), but actually getting there meant walking down a long monotonous road, then another, then another, adding two miles on to the excursion.

Option B has its own set of drawbacks. I have had some incredible experiences on American hikes - got the chance to walk a bit of the Appalachian Trail in 2019. But the logistics were complicated and just getting to the trailhead meant a 90-minute drive there and back.

As such, walking is just not a part of American culture the way it is here. You never see a sign on an inn that says "Ramblers Welcome." You can't go online and easily find a dozen different local walks to do if you find yourself with a free afternoon. "Land of the Free" has never meant a right to roam.

When people ask me what I love about living in Leeds, the landscape is always one of the first things I mention. Americans hold a stereotypical idea that Ireland is where you go to find lush green rolling hills and charming stone fences. Yorkshire's idyllic terrain is a bit of a kept secret, and I don't mind that. It gives me a chance to wow visitors by hopping on a train and being up Otley Chevin or Ilkley Moor a half hour later.

No matter how long I live in Britain, I'll never take public footpaths for granted. Following a walk across fields, through woods, and over stiles always feels like a treasure hunt to me. You have to look for little clues to make sure you're on the right track (literally). Sometimes you wonder if you've gone off-course, and then you spot that arrow painted on a fencepost or catch sight of a sign or marker up ahead. It brings great satisfaction of adventure and accomplishment.

I'm excited to be a member of this group and start playing a part in protecting this priceless asset. I hope to cross paths with you soon.

Emily Axel, Member



Minshull Vernon Footsteps



On a visit to Leek indoor market I spotted a lady behind a stall on which stood two piles of books. I was drawn to take a closer look by the title of both, 'The Great English Walk'. I bought the two additions at a knockdown price and started planning to follow the guides. Cheptow to Hathersage and Hathersage to Berwick upon Tweed 618 miles.

It took me two years 2010-11 to complete in sections and as always I recorded any faults along the way and passed them to the appropriate highway authority. Sad to say that Staffordshire received the most complaints from me and I doubt if any of the issues have been resolved to this day. Entering Cheshire East it was apparent that much new work had been carried out although large arable fields were still obstructed by crops, often maize.

The walk passes through Church Minshull where it was forced to use the minor road which has a bridge over river and canal to reach Cross Lane. The guide indicated this was a narrow busy road and care was needed. I had an overnight stop here so while in the area investigated an alternative safer route and spotted Minshull Vernon paths 4 and 16 which cross each other at Hoolgrave canal bridge. I found at that time there was no link between the two footpaths.

Now I'm involved with Slow Ways walking routes linking towns and cities across Britain. The Slow Way from Winsford to Crewe has also been forced to make use of this narrow section of road to link safe footpath. With no PNFS inspector in the parish I emailed Cheshire East and got the following reply:

"You'll be pleased to know that the concept of linking the public footpath over the bridge with the towpath under the bridge was recognised as an aspiration locally, and as a result, the Canal and River Trust worked with volunteers to create a formal access. I'm sure you'll be pleased to see this improvement made for the benefit of both local and long distance walkers and thank you for your interest in the area. Genni Butler, Acting Public Rights of Way Manager, Cheshire East Council."

Ken Brockway (busybody) (best known as footpath inspector)

Eckington FP133



The parish of Eckington used to be entirely in Derbyshire. Since Sheffield expanded its reach 50 years ago, to enable new housing estates to be built on green field sites, parts of north-east Derbyshire have been swallowed up by boundary changes. This included, amongst others, part of Eckington parish. Although still numbered as Eckington parish paths, Sheffield City Council is responsible for the highway network including PROWs. Eventually, the various bits of Definitive Maps will be consolidated legally into one, and the paths all renumbered.

This footpath, on the outskirts of Mosborough village, has a small bridge over a stream which is itself shallow but it runs in a deep gully with steep sides. The photos taken by local PNFS inspector Bill Parke show the erosion that has caused a partial collapse of the abutment in the foreground of the photos. Bill reported this to the Highway Authority Sheffield City Council (SCC) in June last year. A second site visit in November last year showed no progress, so Bill asked me as Area Officer for Sheffield to intervene.

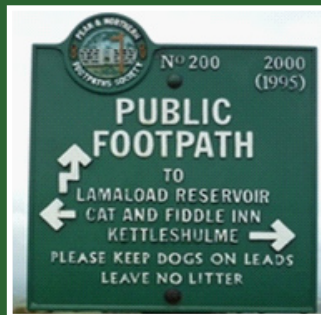
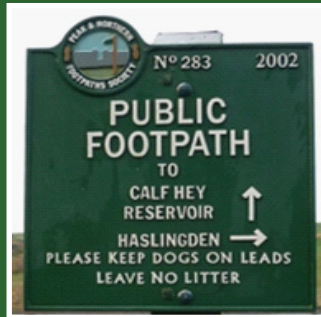
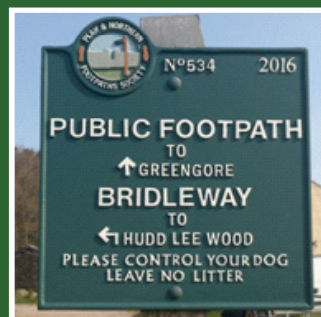
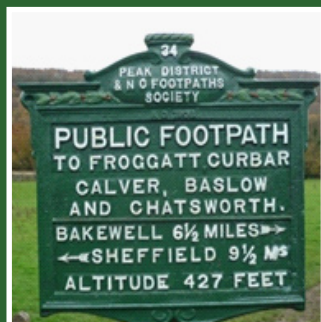
Thankfully, the response I received from the Principal PROW Officer was positive and I took the third photo myself on 27 January 2022. The awkward stiles that used to exist either end of the bridge have also been dealt with at my request by being removed entirely. It helps that SCC have appointed two new PROW Officers who started work last November, so we are beginning to see the fruits of that restoration of staff numbers.

John Harker, Area Officer Sheffield



PNFS Signposts Point The Way

Selection of arrows used on PNFS signposts from PNFS's website, compiled by Shirley M Addy



DMMO Investigations

As I write this it's appropriate to pass on my best wishes to you for the new year. 2022 already and only four years remain to protect those unrecorded footpaths. Now you may have heard that there is a call for the deadline to be extended but do you have the ear of your MP or the Prime Minister like the large landowners offering a quiet word at that function or in the club? So we've already had twenty one years; how long do you need?



In Derbyshire I've been doing research on unrecorded paths since 2018 so I feel able to offer a bit of analysis of the outcome but with the warning that nothing is simply black and white. I've been concentrating on gaps in the network - attempting to have recorded paths we already use, while there may not be a severe risk of losing them, if we do it will have a serious impact on the walked network of paths.

Forty-five percent of unrecorded gaps investigated have, in my opinion, been the result of a failure to properly record roads on the List of Streets. It may be that the parish claims made the wrong assumption as to the end of adopted highway on the linking road but these claims were then checked by the County Council where all the necessary records should have been to hand. Even routes on handover records of 1929 are now missing from the List of Streets or perhaps it happened when the list was converted to a mapped record? Of our applications so far reviewed by Derbyshire County Council and approved for an order, sixty percent have been for unrecorded roads that link to recorded footpaths.



You may be pleased to hear that 22% I would record as lost although most are open and in use, but their loss wouldn't create a break in the network. A few of these were footpaths but again many were tracks, green lanes, call them what you will. These tracks have a presence in the landscape, how could anyone consider them lost? But they are unrecorded.

Ten percent of completed work has shown a failure at the preparation stage of the definitive map, be it by the parish or later stages. This issue is of increasing



concern with some still unresolved. There was so much scope for error. A parish council was asked to survey their paths, some took no action and the surveyor came from outside the district. If the claimed path was on the OS base map it had a chance of success but when OS didn't show it the surveyor had to draw it in and that's when things went wrong. Even with a note in the survey schedule stating the path needed a detailed survey, the draft line on the survey map often became the definitive which we are stuck with to this day. The next error occurred when the highway authority had to transfer information from the survey maps six inch to one mile to the draft definitive map at two and a half inch to one mile. How could this show the minor twists and turns of the surveyed path especially when it was not shown by OS on the base maps? Let's hope that these drafting errors and the unrecorded walked paths they have created do not get extinguished in 2026.

Another issue, although not as common as expected, is the issue of boundaries. Surveys were done by parish so one may claim a path but the neighbour doesn't. These may be picked up when the districts took a look but then district boundaries create the same problem which should receive special attention when it comes to the county. Worse still are the county boundaries where there was no one to check and we have some of these to resolve. We have made one application for a Nottinghamshire path that is unrecorded in Derbyshire but close to Hardwick Hall we have the opposite situation. In South Derbyshire the last few yards of a path is unrecorded in Staffordshire a county that resolutely ignores Secretary of State directives to process applications.

It came as rather a surprise to find a small sample of paths that were recorded in the definitive statement but were not shown on the definitive map. Hands up those of you who consult the definitive statement when planning a walk?

Photographs show Alabaster Lane Cromford (top), Mill Lane Dronfield (middle) and a track at Brand Side Hartington Upper Quarter (bottom) all unrecorded

Ken Brockway, Footpath Inspector

Cattle Incidents Follow-up

In response to a Freedom of Information request, PNFS has been able to determine the number of accidents involving cattle and members of the public (as opposed to farmers and farm workers). This data is derived from incidents registered by the Health and Safety Executive. which we suspect grossly under-estimates the actual number of incidents..

HSE says that over a five year period (2015-20), out of the total of 195 cattle incidents, 131 (67%) involved a member of the public. There were 4 fatalities, 79 major injuries and 48 concerns..

There has been one recent successful prosecution of a farmer, Christopher Paul Sharpe, of Ivescar Farm, Chapel le Dale, Carnforth, Lancashire. He pleaded guilty to breaching Section 3 (2) of the Health & Safety at Work etc Act 1974. He received a prison sentence of 12 weeks, suspended for 12 months, and was fined a total of £878 and was ordered to pay £7820.30 in costs.

PNFS is working closely with The Ramblers to make it easier to report cattle related incidents involving walkers.

David Gosling, Trustee and Footpath Inspector Co-ordinator



**THE WEST YORKSHIRE
WOODS**


Part II: The Aire Valley

a hand-drawn guide to walking and
exploring the woodlands around
Leeds, Bradford and beyond

by Christopher Doddard

The author has had a lifelong love of maps and even as a young boy he drew maps. He rightly holds Ordnance Survey maps in high esteem but he does point out that they can sometimes let you down. A public footpath can be shown where there may be little sign of it on the ground, whereas a well establish path, albeit not a 'right of way' is often completely omitted. Christopher's maps try to address these issues, he uses separate symbols for good and faint paths. He even has different ones for common tree species!

The order of the maps and walks trace the River Aire upstream from the RSPB reserve of Fairburn Ings near Castleton to Holden Gill at Silsden, thus spanning the entire width of West Yorkshire from east to west. The walk distances range from 6 to 10 miles. As well as being an accomplished cartographer, the author has a passion for local and natural history which is reflected everywhere in the book through his drawings, descriptions and standalone articles. The book also contains a woodland glossary, a comprehensive index and even a list of lost woods. It is a mine of information, who for example knew that 'twitter' means 'unevenly spun thread'?



companion have inspired me to explore the area. The perfect time to make a start would be early spring, just as the trees in the writer's beloved woods begin to come into leaf again.

Mel Bale, Trustee, Membership Secretary and Webmaster

PNFS Signposts

Members are welcome to suggest locations for new PNFS signposts by emailing David Morton at signposts@pnfs.org.uk. Please take account of these considerations before doing so.

We always need

- The landowner's consent and a grid reference

We like the Signposts to be

- At a junction of footpaths and/or bridleways in good walking country.
- Accessible for installation and future maintenance.
- In parishes and areas which have few or no existing PNFS signs as "silent ambassadors".
- Close to a wall or fence, if in a field used by horses or cattle.
- In the shelter of trees, which often reduces the need for maintenance.
- In locations where walkers are likely to get lost.

We like to avoid

- Locations near busy roads - especially roads treated with salt in the winter, unless we can site them at a safe distance from the road.
- Locations adjacent to an existing Highway Authority or Peak District National Park footpath sign.
- Locations where theft or vandalism are known problems.
- Those National Trust (NT) estates, which ban our Join Us and/or memorial plaques, unless we have a donor and trustees willing to accept that restriction. An extreme example is S526 above Alport Castle on the NT's High Peak estate, which was donated by their "Friends of the NT", approved by the manager, but later judged by him to be "obtrusive", stripped of its Join Us plaque and cut down without consultation to a height of 30 inches; low enough in its high moorland setting to be obscured by heavy snowfall. It stands a short distance from the area where two memorials commemorate three Rover Scouts, who got lost on Bleaklow and died of exposure during the Four Inns Race.



Awkward Stile Removal



Changing an awkward stile can have widespread beneficial changes.

Whilst taking my exercise during the first lockdown, I had a chance conversation with the publican of the Duke of York, Pomeroy. Unfortunately this was outside and the pub was of course shut! I had just ascended from the High Peak Trail which involved an awkward stile accessed with difficulty uphill. Her reaction was that its presence prevented many people accessing the pub because push chairs etc could not get over it. I promised to mention it to my contact at the Peak Park as it would certainly benefit from improvement.

Visiting a year later, I found that, not only had the stile been replaced by a gate but a ramp up the awkward grass bank. When I reached the pub, her husband was removing the Halloween pumpkins from outside the pub, so I enquired if the changes had made a difference. "The best thing we ever did" was the response. Many more folk using the High Peak trail now access the pub for refreshment, including local residents who can now easily reach the pub without walking along the A515 (definitely not recommended!). However, the really interesting revelation was that they now see, and benefit from, many more walkers who are coming up from Flagg (some 1.5 miles away), undertaking routes that they had previously avoided.

One awkward stile replaced with a ramp and gate has rewritten access to this beautiful part of the Peak District. It really makes the task of inspecting worthwhile and a big thank you to the team from the Peak Park for making the change.

A small change but big benefits for walkers and all because of a chance encounter!
Derek Bodey, Footpath Inspector

Parish Notes ~ Morecambe and Heysham, Slyne-with-Hest and Bolton-le-Sands

I grew up in Morecambe. I'm not strictly 'sandgrown'un' as I was not born there but did reside from five years old during my formative years. When I realised that PNFS had several parishes around Morecambe, Hest Bank and Bolton-le-Sands with no inspector, the last few entries on the FID dating back to 2013, I took them on, my parents still live in the family home. The centre of Morecambe emanates a rather unloved air, but if you look carefully, there are some real gems to be found amongst the dreariness, I will try and highlight a few.

In the Parish of Morecambe and Heysham Footpath 2 was one of my early inspections, it runs behind the house I grew up in and I remember very well the fun we had climbing over the wall into the path until the wall was raised in a vain attempt to deter youthful apple scrumpers! It remains much as I recall it but sadly there were some issues to report, with fallen trees and overgrowth (see photo).



Morecambe FP 2

A mile away from FP2 is another path behind houses, FP8. This runs near my primary school and skirts 'Torrisholme Barrow' which was a well known gathering point in my youth, on the slopes of which there was a derelict house said to be 'haunted'. We deviated from FP 8 to visit the Trig point on the top of the small hill, from where, on a good clear day you can see for miles around. It is actually a drumlin and the barrow, at the top of the hill is a neolithic or Bronze age bowl barrow, thought to have been used for burial. It may also have been used by early invaders as a meeting place or 'moot'. Anyway, it was very mysterious to primary children.



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Ordnance Survey. Media 018/22

Back to FP 2 and taking this path north east from the village of Bare, you can cross a road onto FP 1 and then onto Slyne-with- Hest Footpaths 5a and 5 allowing you to walk all the way from Morecambe to Hest Bank, the next village north along the coastal path. Again, this is a path I used to take frequently to meet friends in Hest Bank. There were familiar and unfamiliar sections but overall, it was largely intact. Passing through fields and open land I was delighted to see four beautiful curlews fly overhead. Signage requires some attention, but it takes you to the lovely Lancaster canal, 41 miles of

waterway linking Preston with Kendal. I have memories of walking along the towpath but also visiting cousins who lived in one of the old houses close by near to the family home of my great grandmother who owned the 'Old Canal House' which remains, near the bridge over the canal in Hest Bank, with its walls lapped by the canal water!

Now firmly in the parish of Slyne with Hest FP 3a leads from the canal to Marine Drive (the coastal road) and a leaning sign (*photo*).

FP 4 continues on the sea side of the road and then takes you to a bridge over the railway line and one of the undisputed delights of Morecambe, a splendid view of the Cumbrian mountains. They are a constant but ever-changing vision, snow topped on clear winter days, brooding towards evening and a backdrop to the stunning sunsets for which Morecambe Bay has been famous (do you remember the TV film 'Sunset over the Bay'?).



*FP 3a
Slyne-with-Hest*

*Lake District
Hills from
Morecambe
promenade*



*Dilapidated Trig on
Torrisholme Barrow*



Once on the shoreline a left turn takes you back towards Morecambe, but another wonder is passing perfect viewing spots to watch the incredible birds. Oystercatchers gather in huge groups, huddling onto the rocks or 'groynes' which act as flood defences when the tide is in. But I have seen curlews, dunlin, knot, shelduck, wigeon, various gulls and more in the past few weeks. There are many more paths for me to walk and inspect between Heysham and Bolton-le- Sands and I hope you can see that it is well worth us looking after these as there are some real rewards for walking around this part of west Lancashire.

Kathy McLean, Chair

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 like to contribute are encouraged to contact Mel Bale at webmaster@pnfs.org.uk.



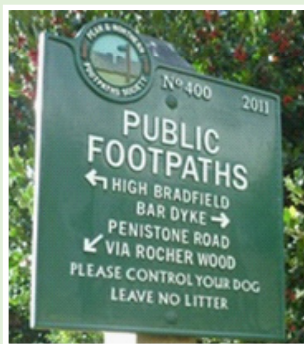
Early evening sun through clouds

A History of PNFS signposts - Part Three



I think I became Signpost Officer in 2007, taking over from Keith Wykes, Fred Ogden and Bill Johnson, who job-shared. Between 1998 and 2007 Bill had put together some 60 signposts, but as he grew older he needed help from Fred and Keith. Since 2008, one of my main aims has been to spread the signs further afield, in the hope of attracting new members. The work has taken me to some lovely places. Among my favourite spots are the two at Lowgill 385 and 387 on the north side of Bowland near High Bentham, the 11 signs in the Forest of Bowland, the 14 at Ashover and of course our northernmost S605 at Browns Houses, Silverdale

on the long-disputed Silverdale 14 coastal path. Among local signs, 562 at Far Benfield stands out as signalling the end of a dispute, which began in 1921 and wasn't settled till 2013 when bridge 28 (*see photograph*) was built across Gigg Brook. It carries a memorial plaque to Adrian Littleton our former legal adviser. The Far Benfield path saw several mass trespasses well before the Kinder Trespass of 1932. They were more respectably described as "public demonstrations" and the driving force was the Hyde Society for the Protection of Footpaths rather than the Young Communists League, but according to the Manchester Guardian over 200 people turned out in June 1925. They were unsuccessful.



Speaking of mass trespasses, another noteworthy memorial signpost is S400 in memory of GHB "Bert" Ward of Owlter Bar, Sheffield. I had to get a larger memorial plaque made for him, to do him justice.

I also greatly enjoyed rediscovering then refurbishing the two signposts on the White Coppice side of Anglezarke Moor, which the RA had financed through their Frank Lockerby Footpath Fund, which had fallen into disuse RA1 and 2.

In thinking about my one or two disappointments over the

last 14 years I was reminded that we still have one or two opponents, who should be our allies. The National Trust continues to oppose commemorative plaques of any kind on new signposts. The NT's Peak Estate even refused to make an exception in the case of 516 at Birchin Hatt above Alport Castle; a sign



which had been proposed and paid for by its own volunteers and duly approved by the Peak Estate manager. To add insult to injury, having first very helpfully erected it for us,



they cut the post down to 30" in height to make it less obtrusive and removed our "join us" plaque, all without consultation. It stands a mile or so southeast of the spot where three Rover Scouts, having lost their bearings in a snowstorm on Bleaklow, died of hypothermia in March 1964 in the annual Four Inns Race. It was a tragedy, which finally led to the creation of today's Mountain Rescue Service. The main point of our putting a sign at Birch Hat was, in

the event of severe weather; to point walkers to relative safety downhill in the Derwent Valley. Now, thanks to the supine response of the NT to a complaint by the owner of one of the farms 180m below, that our sign spoiled the skyline for him, there is a good chance that in the event of blizzard conditions our sign will be invisible, just when it is most needed. Two monuments to the three Rover scouts who died - Michael, John and Gordon - can be found a mile or so up Alport Dale, below Grindlesgrain Tor.

According to an active member of Glossop MRT, his team are still regularly called out to walkers missing a sharp turn on the PW at Bleaklow and being rescued from the same wilderness of the upper Alport Valley. He proposed that we place a PNFS sign on the PW at Bleaklow. Consent was refused by PDNP, perhaps acting on behalf of the NT, in spite of the MRT member's direct request.

On the other hand, the most active member of our Signpost Team, Steve Brown, who was out this morning repainting F7 and S3 at Stony Ford is an NT Volunteer and we get great help from Paul Wetton, Head Ranger for the PDNP at Fairholmes.

I wish I could share these gripes with Richard Pankhurst, Bert Ward and Harold Wild. I'm sure they'd remind me that worse things happen at sea.

David Morton, Signpost Officer



Walks for PNFS Members

IT IS VITAL that attendees check all train times and pnfs.org.uk for any updates

SHORTER WALKS - All on Wednesdays

John Fisher, Co-ordinator, johnfisher560@btinternet.com, 01625 439298 or 07432 825624

13 April David Gosling 07841 647275	Marple circular, 8 miles. Walk devised to pass maximum number (20) of PNFS signposts. Train from Manchester Piccadilly 10:19. Walk starts Marple station 10:45
11 May Dave Rigby 01484 846412	Slaithwaite circular, 7 miles. Train from Manchester Piccadilly 09:58. Walk starts Slaithwaite station 10:35
8 June Peter Burns 01744 893432	Shorter walk, 5 miles, start at the Tyldesley Interchange on the Leigh Guided Busway. Bus V1 or V2 from Manchester City Centre, eg Princess St 10:18 or 10:28. Walk starts Tyldesley Interchange 11:05. Returning from Holden Road on same route - if paying, book return to there
13 July David & Beth Bratt 01925 762472; 07401 789400	Delamere Forest. Train details to follow on website and in next <i>Signpost/Waymark</i>
10 August John Fisher 01625 439298; 07432 825624	Buxton circular, 7 miles, based on the Buxton 'Ring of Trees' walk. Train details to follow on website and in next <i>Signpost/Waymark</i>
14 September	Contact John Fisher if you would like to lead this walk
12 October	Contact John Fisher if you would like to lead this walk
9 November	Contact John Fisher if you would like to lead this walk
14 December	Contact John Fisher if you would like to lead this walk

LONGER WALKS - All on Wednesdays

Ken Smith, Co-ordinator, kensmith4rj@icloud.com, 07918 154959

30 March John Harker 07929 051978	Linear walk 11 miles, starting at Hathersage, finishing at Grindlford Station. Train 10:14 from Sheffield, 09:42 from Manchester Piccadilly. We will visit an Iron Age hillfort, an abandoned turnpike road and a housing estate that featured in the early history of PNFS.
27 April David Bratt 07401 789400	Disley Circular Walk 9 miles 1500ft ascent. Manchester Piccadilly 10:08. Walk starts at Disley Railway Station 10:35
25 May David Gosling 07841 647275	Adlington to Poynton via Nab Hill, 10.5 miles. From Adlington Station 10:10 am (09:44 from Manchester Piccadilly). Return from Poynton Station approx 16:00
29 June Gavin Miller 07951 746323	Cat and Fiddle, Three Shire Heads, Macclesfield, 11 miles, 1400 ft. 09:35 from Manchester Piccadilly (09:44 from Stockport) to Macclesfield for 10:15 bus 58 to Cat and Fiddle
27 July Ross Myddelton 07941 547378	Silverdale, Leighton Moss, Jenny Brown's Point, FP14, 11 miles. Train 08:48 Piccadilly. Arrives Silverdale 10:29. Book Arnside return. Walk starts at Silverdale Station 10:30
31 August Dave Rigby 07527 582143	Slaithwaite hilly circular walk to Marsden and back, 5 hours. Manchester Piccadilly 09:58. Arrives Slaithwaite 10:33. Walk starts at 10:35

28 September Ken Smith 07918 154959	Marsden to Greenfield via Pule Hill, 10 miles, 1433 ft. Manchester Piccadilly 09:58, arrives Marsden 10:29. Walk starts at 10:30
26 October Martin Riley 07908 081959	See website for details
30 November	Contact Ken Smith if you would like to lead this walk
14 December	Contact Ken Smith if you would like to lead this walk
EAST SIDE WALKS - All on Tuesdays Ken Brockway, Co-ordinator, great.english.walk@gmail.com, 01773 287225 *Would anyone wishing to lead an east side walk please email Ken	
19 April John Harker 07929 051978	Circular 10 miles exploring the fringes of Sheffield including Moss Valley for spring woodland flowers. 09:30 bus 50a New Beetwell Street (Stop B3) or Sheffield Interchange Platform B bus 50. Walk starts 10.20 from <u>Mosborough Queen St/High</u>
17 May *Leader required	Bennerley Viaduct – Iron Giant 11 miles. Train 09:54 Chesterfield. Walk starts Ilkeston station 10:20
14 June *Leader required	Baslow - Bakewell linear via Monsall Head 10 miles ascent 1600 ft. Bus 170 New Beetwell Street (Stop B12) 10:00 or Sheffield Interchange 218 09:40 Walk starts 10:35 Baslow bus stop, car park adjacent
19 July *Leader required	Barnsley – Elsecar linear 12 miles. Train 09:55 Chesterfield via Sheffield 10.13. Walks starts Barnsley station 10:40, return from Elsecar
16 August *Leader required	Rowsley DVHW 11 miles. Bus 170 New Beetwell Street (Stop B12) 10:00 Walks starts Robin Hood 10.30 (from Sheffield tel. leader) Finish Baslow
20 September Barbara Milton 07511 576874	North Chesterfield Way 9 miles linear. Bus 43 09:44 Cavendish Street (T2) to Farwater Lane, Dronfield. Walk starts 10:30 Dronfield Sports Centre SK 35009 78372



Slight Improvement

Spotted today an interesting stile construction on Trusley FP15 in South Derbyshire. Note the fence rail passes through the block to keep it in place. It still leaves a step over of 600 mm which exceeds the recommendation of BS5709. Reported August 2021 “Locked gate at SK 25500 35821. This may once have been a gate but now it’s a rusty metal fence fixed across the line of the footpath”. So it’s a slight improvement!

Ken Brockway, Footpath Inspector

PNFS Walks



LONGER WALK led by Udo Pope in January 2022. New Mills to Marple via Lantern Pike and Crown Edge 12.1 miles long and ascent 2200 feet. Nine members attended this walk.

Photographs by Ken Smith - High Peak, New Mills (left), High Peak, Rowarth - lunch time (right)



Testing a new fangled stile. If only they were all as good as this, South Wingfield FP45 on the November 2021 **EAST SIDE WALK**.

David Bratt's walk for the **COMBINED SHORT AND LONGER WALK** in mid December 2022 on the high point for the day, the Cloud. It marked the end of his stint as longer walk coordinator

