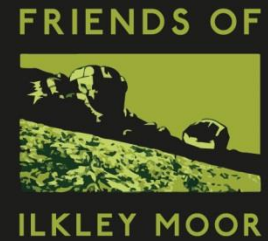


NEWSLETTER



On being useful

We have long taken pride in the fact that FoIM is probably the biggest and best supported 'Friends' organisation in the area. Quite how this came about is something of a mystery to me, but it does mean that we are well provided with equipment and with highly experienced volunteers.



I have been keen (and your committee agrees) that we should try to be as helpful as possible to other organisations in the area who have broadly sympathetic aims. This is not to the exclusion of our activities on the Moor, but in addition to those activities.

Thus, in the recent past we have helped the Bandstand Committee to repair a broken bench at the bandstand. As we have two sets of good quality display

boards, we have been happy to lend that to Climate Action Ilkley and to the Ilkley Clean River Group when they have had events. We are very well provided with litter picking equipment, so we have been happy to lend it to the Grammar School when they have had a litter picking event.

On a larger scale, our volunteers are well used to making steps, so we are happy that they will be making steps at a nature reserve in Addingham. Richard Perham, our Bradford Countryside Services Officer who leads our work parties, is very supportive of our helping out elsewhere when we can. And we should not forget that our litter picking group is the most active such group and picks litter throughout the town and the surrounding area as well as on the Moor.

We hope that our members will agree that our privileged position in being well supported means that we should try to be as useful as possible within the general area and not simply insist that we will only do things related directly to the Moor. The Moor obviously comes first, but helping other organisations in the area is also something we take pride in.

Steps to the Stanza Stone

There are two 'stanza stones' on Ilkley Moor. One, on the top of the Moor, just off the paved path that runs from the Dick Hudson's path to Whetstone Gate is relatively easy to find.

The other, carved into a rock in Backstone beck has, until recently been fairly well hidden and has required something of a scramble to access. This has now been remedied. There are good new steps that should make it much easier for anyone wanting to go and see it. Once again, our volunteers have proved their skills and their hard work.



Litter picking

Our litter pickers (as with our Tuesday volunteers) are now represented on our committee, which means that we get regular updates on their activities. So, last month they collected 39 bags of litter. One in particular (our group organiser Jolyon) managed to pick up no less than 190 cigarette butts around the bench at the junction of Keighley Old Road and Wells Road, and 40 more from the adjacent trees across the road. I think such sterling efforts by our group and by Jolyon in particular deserve especial commendation. Ilkley is now distinctly less littered than other comparable towns.



Now we know that we cannot take all the credit for litter picking in Ilkley. There are other dedicated people who pick litter who are not in our group, but the unique feature of our litter picking group is (apart from its large size) the way members motivate each other, so we take some pride that FoIM has

played a very substantial part in reducing Ilkley's litter.

Events Programme

Our events programme for 2023 has now finished. It's been an excellent year where twelve events took place and only one was thwarted by the weather. Our thanks go to our Project Manager, Tracy Gray for all her hard work in organising these events. We should also thank the team leaders who led some of the subject specific walks – particular thanks go to Alex Gibson, Gavin Edwards, Andrew Milne and David Whitehead. We are lucky to have Tracy and individuals who are keen to share their particular knowledge of the Moor with others.



Bradford & South Pennines Nature Recovery Project

Natural England are launching 25 'Nature Recovery Projects'. The one that concerns us is the South Pennines Nature Recovery Project. This was launched with some pomp in July by luminaries such as Tony Juniper (CEO Natural England), Trudy Harrison MP (Minister for Nature) and Tracy Brabin (W Yorks Mayor). During the course of this launch it was pointed out that in the whole of the South Pennines area (which stretches from the Peak District to Ilkley Moor) there was not a single National Nature Reserve.



There was a subsequent meeting in early October to explore the possibility of a National Nature Reserve in the Bradford area. Naturally, if any such proposal comes to fruition then Ilkley Moor must be considered the foremost contender. But National Nature Reserves do not have to be one specific location or even two or more contiguous sites. There are precedents for a number

of non-contiguous sites in a specific locality being declared a National Nature Reserve.

Bradford has substantial open spaces (Ilkley Moor, Haworth Moor, St Ives, Harden Moor, Bingley Moor etc) that could be included in a new National Nature Reserve.

A new National Nature Reserve would have to make a significant contribution to nature recovery in the area, and/or safeguard or recover nationally important biodiversity and geodiversity. It should provide opportunities for conservation and environmental science and should encourage people to experience, engage with and enjoy nature in a variety of ways.

Your committee will continue to press for Ilkley Moor in particular to achieve this national recognition and the potential funding and other benefits that could flow from this.

Owen Wells

Chair, FoIM November 23