

# **Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum (RMNF)**

## **Legal & Administrative Information**

### **Status**

Our organisation is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Charity Commission Registered Number 1165601

### **Structure**

David Olusoga - Honorary President

Cecile Biant – Honorary Vice President

Andy Meek – Trustee & Chair

John Newcombe – Trustee & Treasurer

Alan Rawsterne - Trustee & Secretary

Frances Healey – Trustee

Nigel Morrell – Trustee

Reverend Morley Morgan - Trustee

Stuart Davies – Trustee

Councillor Peter Winkler

### **Registered Office**

Owd House

Fern Hill Lane

Rochdale OL12 6BW

### **Bankers**

The Co-operative Bank

P.O. Box 250

Delf House

Southway

Skelmersdale WN8 6WT

### **Independent Examiner**

This year we will not seek independent examination due to the low number of transactions. Please note, our accounts are open to anyone who has a legitimate reason to review them.

# Reports from Trustees and Officers of the Forum

## Structure, Governance and Management

Trustees manage the affairs of the CIO and may for that purpose exercise all the powers of the CIO. In exercising their powers and duties, charity Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charities Commission.

It is the duty of each Trustee:

- a) To exercise his or her powers and to perform his or her functions as a Trustee of the CIO in the way he or she decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the CIO; and
- b) To exercise, in the performance of those functions, such care and skill as is reasonable in the circumstances having regard in particular to:
  - i. any special knowledge or experience that he or she has or holds himself or herself out as having; and
  - ii. if he or she acts as a charity Trustee of the CIO in the course of a business or profession, to any special knowledge or experience that it is reasonable to expect of a person acting in the course of that kind of business or profession.

Members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

There are no paid employees of the CIO and the value of services provided by volunteers is not incorporated into financial reporting.

Including Trustees and Officers there are currently 42 members of the CIO with voting rights. This is one more than last year, and it is worth noting we have seen membership of the forum Facebook page grow to 1,100 members. We have also seen an increased number of people registering on the Forum website, which currently stands at 63, the majority of whom have no voting rights.

## Recruitment & Appointment of Trustees

Following on from our last Annual General Meeting and the boundary changes that moved our neighbourhood area in to the Norden Ward, we were pleased to welcome Councillor Peter Winkler as a trustee.

At every Annual General Meeting of the members of the CIO, one-third of the charity Trustees retire from office. If the number of charity Trustees is not three, or a multiple of three, then the number nearest to one-third shall retire from office, but if there is only one charity Trustee, he or she shall retire. The charity trustees to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment or reappointment.

Any vacancies so arising may be filled by the decision of the members at the Annual General Meeting and the members or the charity Trustees may at any time decide to appoint a new charity Trustee, whether in place of a charity Trustee who has retired or been removed, or as an additional charity Trustee, provided that the limit of 12 charity Trustees is not exceeded.

This year Frances Healey and Morley Morgan will resign as Trustees at the 2023 Annual General Meeting, and they both wish to be considered for re-election.

## Forum Objects

The CIO is established for the public benefit without distinction of ability, sex, sexual orientation, race or political, religious or other opinions for the following purposes in the Area of Benefit known as Rooley Moor, which shall hereinafter be referred to as the Neighbourhood.

The objects of the CIO are:

1. To promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the Area of Benefit.
2. To educate the public in the geography, history, natural history, culture and architecture of the Area of Benefit.
3. To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features or areas of historic or public interest in the Area of Benefit.

In furtherance of the above objects but not otherwise the Trustees shall have the power to establish a Neighbourhood Forum for the Area of Benefit to promote and or improve the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the area.

## Accounting Policy, Income & Funds Structure

Income arises from restricted funds (grants), unrestricted donations and recovered Gift Aid.

Expenditure is recognised when an invoice is received, or payment made.

There are no tangible fixed assets.

The Reserves Policy of Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum CIO is to hold reserves from unrestricted funds to cover our known annual liabilities (such as insurance, hire of meeting rooms, website costs, etc.). £400 has been proposed to cover these costs. The reserves policy will be reviewed at each Annual General Meeting.

## Achievements & Performance

This year's financial transactions are not significant, but we've not been dormant, we've been exploring several opportunities to help us deliver our charitable objectives.

**Off road vehicles** - Operation Dragster continues as a combined initiative between Greater Manchester Police, Lancashire Police, United Utilities, and many local volunteers. We are grateful to all involved; although it's disappointing to note increasing numbers of illegal motorised vehicles are targeting the moorland in and around our area. The objective of Operation Dragster is to reduce the growing volume of illegal off-road activity in and around our area that is so badly damaging the moorland, attracting fly tipping and other types of antisocial behaviour, and on some occasions putting legitimate users of the moorland at risk through reckless behaviour and / or threats of violence.

Various stakeholders with an interest in protecting the moorland formed an "Off-road Mitigation Group" to identify opportunities that might support Operation Dragster and law enforcement. It is disappointing to report one of the former stakeholders continues to retrospectively find fault with various installations along Edenfield Road that are intended to support law enforcement activities without hindering equestrian activities. A new equestrian group, the "Norden, Bamford and Heywood Bridleways Association" (NBHBA) engaged with the British Horse Society (BHS) to evaluate and agree equestrian safety requirements and retrospective submit a Section 38 application to the Secretary of State to seek permission for the Edenfield Road fence to remain in place. We await the outcome of the S38 application,

which if approved will require the implementation of BHS recommendations. If the application fails, the fence will have to be removed.

**Moorland Restoration** - Our commitment to preserving our upland moorlands from onerous development and aggressive misuse is constant, ongoing, and worthwhile. The forum trustees have sought assurance from the Planning Offices at Rochdale and Rossendale that they will acknowledge and engage with the peatland protection scheme and afford the areas of Scout and Rooley Moors special protection. Throughout this year several of the forum trustees met with members of the Lancashire Peat Partnership (LPP) to evaluate the possibility of restoring an area of Rooley Moor known as “Red Pits”. This involved researching the rights of common for common land unit number CL163, which has approximately 29 properties registered with rights of common that can be exercised. The summary of all these rights include:

Sheep	Head of cattle	Horses	Geese
6,977	365	33	25

We determined CL163 has an area of 368 hectares of which Red Pits is a 47-hectare area (12%) located at the northern tip of CL163, north of Ding Quarry and adjacent to the northern border with Lancashire. This area is also designated, “Drinking Water Safeguard Zone (Surface Water)”.

We then had to review the Peatland Code and Wilder Carbon incentives to estimate the potential financial yield for the sequestration of Carbon through peat.

After discussions with members of the **West Pennine Commoners Association** we concluded rewetting moorland could possibly have a detrimental effect on sheep grazing. The Wilder Carbon incentive is likely to provide the best financial outcome. However, it seems the financial yield of the Red Pits area from the sale of carbon credits is likely to be too small to satisfy the landowner and those commoners who might trade their “Rights of Common” for financial recompense. We have decided to hold any further investigation into this matter in abeyance to see how carbon funding develops.

**Planning** - The trustees resolutely support the forum's primary objective, to promote high standards of planning and architecture in or affecting the Neighbourhood Area. We remain committed to preserving Green Belt and Common Land in and around the Neighbourhood Area, which includes the habitations and surrounding landscapes.

The trustees have carefully considered the role of local planning and how Planning Officers work with and on behalf the local communities they are tasked to serve. The forum continues to be actively engaged in specific areas of direct concern and monitor weekly planning applications that are lodged with the Council.

We have asked for our forum to be included as a consultee in the development of Rochdale Councils “Local Plan” and we have decided NOT to seek Rochdale Councils re-designation of the neighbourhood area and forum given our concerns regarding the relevance of neighbourhood planning to the planning process.

**Prickshaw and Broadley Fold Conservation Area.** The **Spring Mill** development has become a lost cause with no progress being made with Rossendale Council or the developer regarding the concerns raised about the potential adverse effects of this development. Unfortunately, the impact of this development on the neighbouring nature reserve and conservation area will soon be realised and any serious consequences of development on inadequately

remediated contaminated land may not become apparent for many years. Our lessons learned from the Spring Mill experience are that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) seemingly have no responsibility for the Health and Safety of residents who are put at risk by the developments they approve. LPAs rely on self-regulation and other inadequately resourced agencies (HSE, EA, Police, Fire, Ambulance, NHS etc.) to deal with these matters. It is also disappointing to note that residents bordering new developments are expected to put up with any inconvenience caused (dust, noise, site traffic, out of hours operations, etc.), whilst still being required to pay Council tax. We respectfully suggest the local and national planning function is not fit for purpose, the forum trustees have found little evidence to refute this opinion and struggle to see how Neighbourhood Planning in its current form can have any positive impact on planning issues.

**Turner Brothers Asbestos (TBA)** – The TBA site needs to be made safe. Currently there are no planning applications for the TBA site. In its current undisturbed state, the TBA site presents a reduced public health risk. However, buildings on the site are deteriorating and there are issues with riverbank erosion releasing asbestos into the environment. In a worst-case scenario, any asbestos released from the TBA site could be carried as air bourn particles across our area, the effect of which on residents might only be realised many years later.

We're seeking assurance should a planning application be approved that the appropriate agencies are on site to ensure compliance to process and to ensure everything is done to reduce risk. If something were to go wrong, we'd expect those agencies to secure an immediate response to any disaster recovery scenario.

To support a 'safety first' approach in dealing with the TBA site, we continue to suggested to our MP's and Councillors that:

- Land at the TBA site to be registered as contaminated (to ensure the application of appropriate legislation)
- A Health Impact Assessment to be included as part of an Environmental Impact Assessment (to scale the potential risk).
- The site is made secure to protect the public (reference videos on social media site, riverbank erosion exposing asbestos, etc.)
- The remediators / developers to have a company structure that clearly defines corporate responsibility that can't disappear (to provide accountability into the future), and
- The provision of adequate Public Liability Insurance that takes account of the time taken for asbestos related diseases to manifest themselves (in the event of anyone developing an asbestos related illness at any time in the future that can be attributed to the remediation / development of TBA) .

We've also suggested a 'Working Party' chaired by an influential person (such as a local MP) that includes all the relevant people from the various agencies / organisations (Council, EA, HSE, NHS, Police, Fire, Ambulance, Residents, etc.) should be created to form a forum where issues of concern can be discussed. Effectively, and 'Inquiry' before rather than after an incident.

We still await feedback from our suggestions and will let you know when we know more.

**Greater Manchester Clean Air Zone** - We await with interest the new proposals intended to take this initiative forward.

**Catley Lane Head Conservation Area** - We continue to pursue the following initiatives:

- Reinstatement of a bus service to the village,
- Traffic calming measures either side of the village and
- CCTV to reduce antisocial behaviour.

**Social media** - We usually ask organisations and the public not to advertise but given the current situation with high energy costs and the potential financial hardships that people might suffer the forum trustees are happy to allow content that will help people and local businesses.

**We continue to work with other organisations** – Unfortunately, **South Pennines Park** have announced they will be closing at the beginning of 2024. After reviewing the organisation's position and the shifting landscape they operate in their Board felt they could not continue.

Our forum continues to work with **Mid Pennine Arts** to deliver the closing stages of the Spodden Vally Revealed (SVR) project for those elements that are within the RMNF neighbourhood area. Together with the **West Pennine Commoners Association** we looked at opportunities to promote the Limers Gate Trail and Healey Dell, which we have not been able to take this forward.

We are pleased to be members of **Macc**, a charity whose purpose is quite simply the city of Manchester. They encourage, support, and help to develop voluntary, community and social enterprise (VCSE) organisations to allow local people to have a real influence over the places and communities in which they live. We also continue with our membership of the **Lancashire Local History Federation**, the official co-ordinating body for local history in the County Palatine of Lancaster.

**Lancashire and Greater Manchester Local Lists** – Our nominations for the Cotton Famine Road and the Royal Ordinance Factory, Healey Hall have still not been processed for inclusion.

We continue to make our heritage trail leaflets freely available throughout the borough so people can take exercise and enjoy the wide-open spaces of the surrounding moorland.

**Cotton Famine Road Project** - We are working with **History in Action CIC** and Mick Martin, writer for stage, television and radio, to commission a community arts project that will meet our education object. The aim is to help create and undertake a community arts project for Rochdale honouring the men and women who sacrificed everything for principle on The Cotton Famine Road during the Lancashire Cotton Famine (1861–65).

## **Governance**

**Policies and Procedures** – We have reviewed and maintained our Safeguarding policy and procedure.

**Public Liability Insurance (PLI)** - Has been renewed to allow forum meetings, activities, and events to continue.

**Health & Safety** - There are no issues to report.

**Trustee training** – Alan Rawsterne has attended a trustee training session with Macc.

**Grants & funding** – A small donation has been received due to the closure of Amazon Smile.

## Can you help?

- **Heritage Open Day's (HOD)** – The Trustees would like to explore how we can involve the area in future HOD events.
- **Want to be a RMNF Trustee?** - We are looking for new Trustees to join RMNF - Trustees are responsible for controlling the charity's management and administration. They are responsible for ensuring our charity's income and property is used only for the purposes set out in our governing document and for no other purpose. Trustees have a responsibility to act reasonably and prudently in all matters relating to the charity and they have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the charity.

Please contact the Forum Secretary (email: [info@RMNF.org.uk](mailto:info@RMNF.org.uk)) if you have any ideas you would like to share or if you would like to get more involved.

# Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Accounts

Year End: 31-Aug-23

	2022/23 Restricted	2022/23 Restricted	2022/23 Restricted	2022/23 Unrestricted	2022/23 Total
	Adj	DQAG	ORMM		
	£	£	£	£	£
Opening Balance B/F from Summary 2021-22	-1	1382	1512	408	3301
					0
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>					0
Gift Aid	0	0	0	0	0
Grants	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	0	0	0	0	0
Donations In	0	0	0	18	18
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>					
Consultant Costs	0	0	0	0	0
Training	0	0	0	0	0
Room Hire	0	0	0	0	0
Website	0	-114	0	0	-114
Insurance	0	0	0	0	0
Donations Out	0	0	0	0	0
Printing & Stationery	0	0	0	0	0
Projects	0	0	0	0	0
In Bloom	0	0	0	0	0
Misc Expenses	0	0	0	-44	-44
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-114</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-44</b>	<b>-158</b>
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>-1</b>	<b>1,268</b>	<b>1,512</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>3,161</b>



## Reconciliation of Accounts 2022/23 To Bank Statement

	Paypal	Co-Op	Total
Opening Balance 01/09/22	£0	£3,301	£3,301
Receipts Reported	£0	£18	£18
Expenditure Reported	£0	-£158	-£158
<b>Closing Balance 31/8/23 Reported</b>	<b>£0</b>	<b>£3,161</b>	<b>£3,161</b>
Balance at Bank 31/8/23	0	3,161	3,161

Date	Bank Reference	Customer Reference	Transaction Descriptic	Amount (£)	Running Balance (£)
09/01/2023	MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRI	LANCASHIRE LOCAL H	Standing Order	-8.00	£3,293
24/01/2023	22751	CAMPAIGN TO PROTEC	Direct Debit	-60.00	£3,233
10/03/2023	REFUND MEMBERSHIP	CAMPAIGN TO PROTEC	Faster Payment	24.00	£3,257
24/04/2023	4587734585639390	AMAZON EUROPE CORE	BACS Credit	5.00	£3,262
19/05/2023	4575355439644580	AMAZON EUROPE CORE	BACS Credit	13.41	£3,275
22/05/2023	Invoice 00310	MIMICA LIMITED	Standing Order	-114.00	£3,161