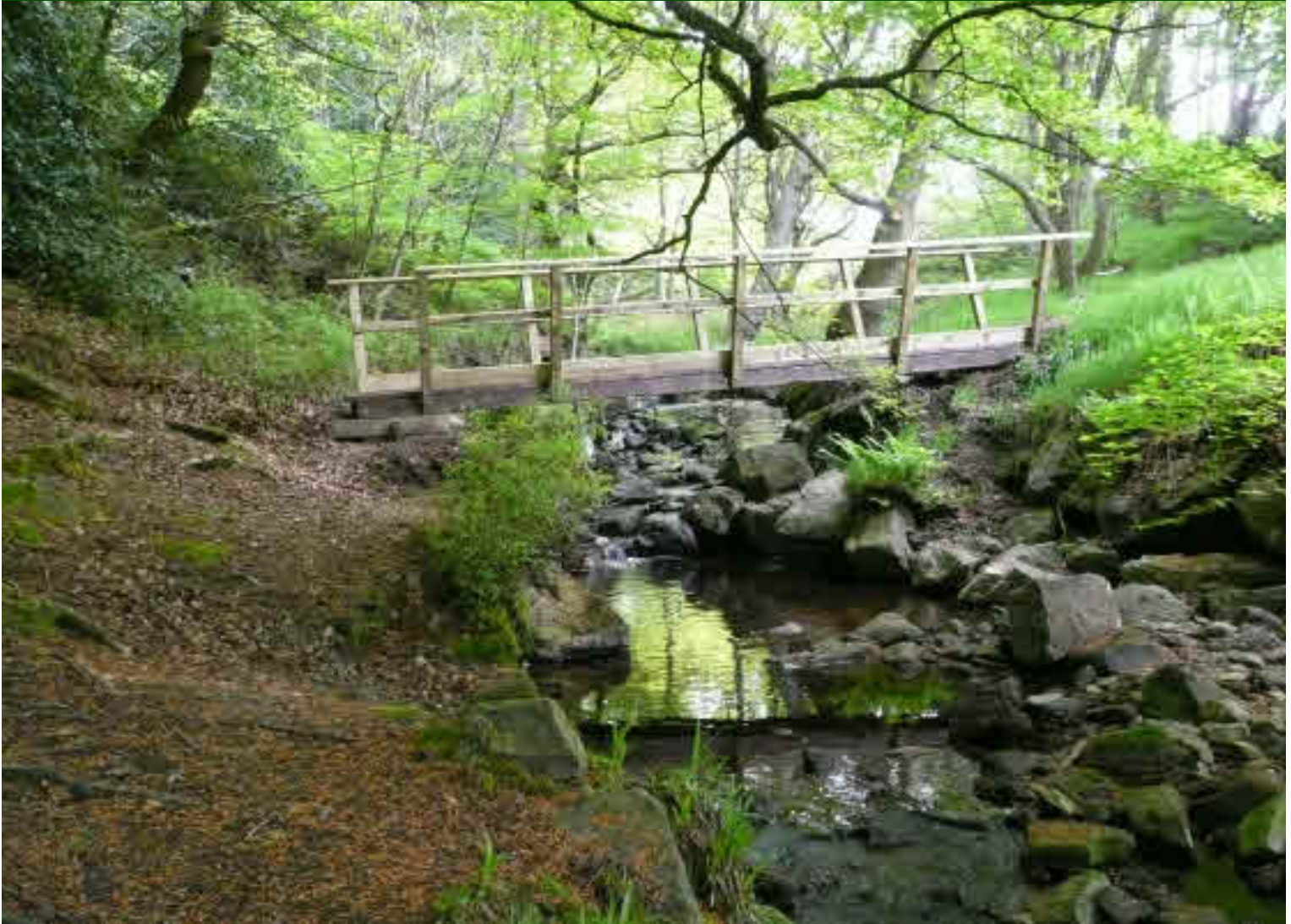




115 YEARS
HELPING WALKERS
PROTECTING FOOTPATHS

PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY



**ANNUAL REPORT &
ACCOUNTS HANDBOOK**

2008



Annual Report 2008

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Front Cover - The latest bridge funded by PNFS at Hey Wood, Kirklees

Back Cover - PNFS Walk at disused quarry at Brushes, Shaw. Taken during the 2008 South Pennines Walk & Ride Festival.

We are very grateful for the continuing support of our advertisers and request that you patronise them whenever possible.



THIS IS YOUR INVITATION
TO THE AGM OF THE PNFS

Sat April 25th

AT
BRITANNIA HOTEL, DIALSTONE LANE,
OFFERTON, STOCKPORT

AMPLE FREE CAR PARKING IS AVAILABLE
NUMBER 383 BUS FROM STOCKPORT OR MARPLE STATION STOPS OUTSIDE
SERVICE 192 BUSES FREQUENTLY AVAILABLE AT NEARBY A6

10:30 COFFEE, TEA, BISCUITS

11:00 AGM COMMENCES

12:30 HOT BUFFET LUNCH (NO CHARGE),
BAR FACILITIES

14:00 AGM CONTINUES

14:30 OPEN FORUM

15:30 MEETING CLOSES

To reserve your place at the AGM kindly inform
David Brown Email dcb.pnfs@googlemail.com or
Phone 01663 733236 as soon as possible
and no later than April 18th as we have to give one weeks
notice of the numbers to the Hotel

Thank you



President's Report

David Bratt

It is most gratifying, having moved from the active role as Chairman to the more passive position as your President, to see the continued good progress the Society is making under the skilled and committed leadership of Clarke and his impressive support team.

The two most heartening aspects to me are, firstly, the weathering of the storm on membership numbers following the necessary lift in subs. To see us still with over 1400 in total is an excellent outcome and means we can go into 2009 poised for further growth. It also shows we have a sound recruitment policy in that we do not rely on a single initiative to recruit but use a variety of approaches.

Secondly: our core activity, our key reason for existence, is the reactive and proactive efforts we make to defend, protect and enhance the right to walk our glorious footpath network peacefully, safely and enjoyably. To this end we have now in place a team of 4 Courts and Inquiries Officers, each covering individual areas, with the prime remit to get footpath faults and obstructions resolved. They are all tenacious individuals, committed to the cause, hardworking and, I can assure you, highly effective. And do they get results? They certainly do.

My role as President differs from that of my predecessor Derek Seddon, who did a fine job utilizing his myriad DIY and editorial skills to the benefit of our Taylor House property and communications respectively. I possess no DIY skills (statement endorsed by Elizabeth Bratt!) and would be a liability in this regard so I have found other furrows to plough. These include recruitment-focused activities such as organizing our presence at shows with our now well-established "sales" stand team, and delivering the illustrated lecture on the history and current work of the Society to various groups such as U3As, WIs and our affiliates.

I also run the longer-walks programme thanks to the enthusiastic support of a great group of leaders, and carry out so-called Flying Squad short-notice inspections at the request of the Assessors on proposed footpath diversions where we have no Inspector available. These have so far taken me to Bury, Dalton (W Lancs), Tarporley and Hankelow (S Ches) – with my recommendations ranging from 'actively support' to 'strongly object' to the various proposals.

Only on request from Clarke do I now play any part in the day-to-day running of the Society (and that's how it should be) but I continue as a Trustee to participate in discussions and decision taking on items involving major spending and also constitutional matters.

All in all, a varied bag which I do enjoy doing. My thanks as ever to all those who so diligently and enthusiastically work for the Society and its great mission, and to each and every one of you as members for demonstrating by supporting us that you care for footpaths, which contribute significantly to the mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing of everyone who enjoys walking them.



SIR MARTIN DOUGHTY, 1949 - 2009

With sadness, we have to announce the death on 4th March 2009 of Sir Martin Doughty, Peak and Northern Footpaths Society Vice President.

Following on from his career as a Derbyshire politician, Sir Martin was a keen environmentalist and champion of walkers, as chairman of English Nature and subsequently Natural England.

A full obituary will be included in the Signpost newsletter.





Chairman's Report

Clarke Rogerson

According to the media 2008 was not a good year, with financial institutions failing and the country in recession. So it is with great pleasure that I bring the good news that "the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society is THRIVING". I took this as the theme for the half-year meeting and the final outcome in all areas is even better than we had expected.

So when all else appears to crumble around us, why is PNFS doing so well? The answer is simple: our recipe for success is the sheer hard work and dedication of our small army of volunteers, mixed with a modicum of prudence. No bonuses for the staff, no company cars, no fancy salaries; perhaps there is a lesson there for others.

David has already alluded to our membership numbers, so close to the record of the year before. Had it not been for the appalling weather resulting in the cancellation of the Lancashire Show, I think we can confidently say the record would have been broken.

Membership numbers are important and give a good indication of the health of the Society, but it is "creating and preserving open spaces, public access rights and rights of way" that is the *raison d'être* for our charitable status. I am sure, as you read each of the officer's reports, you will agree that we fulfil our charitable aims on behalf of all who choose walking as the healthy way to get from A to B.

I will leave the officers to tell their own stories and concentrate on some of the more mundane matters that are necessary to the health of the Society:

Taylor House celebrated 10 years as the Society's base of operations in December 2008. As befits a landmark anniversary, the building has been treated to some TLC in the form of maintenance and improvement works. Safety checks have been carried out; smoke and carbon monoxide detectors have been fitted; the filing area has been secured as far as possible; and the list goes on.

Our walk programme grows in strength and this year was supplemented by 11 walks during the South Pennines Walk and Ride Festival.

The Society's historical archives are in the process of being digitized, and early annual reports can now be found on our website. Sound recordings are being processed by the North West Sound Archive at Clitheroe. Once this work is complete, we plan to hold all this material in archival conditions at Manchester Library.

I've already mentioned prudence; during the year every aspect of our spending has come under the spotlight and is yielding savings. Postage costs have fallen as we increase the use of email as a preferred method of communication. We have carried out a full review of our insurance policies, which has highlighted some duplication and other opportunities for savings. We have reviewed our phone and broadband requirements, and plan changes that should yield considerable savings next year. All in all, I anticipate a year-on-year saving in the region of £2,000 as a result of the review, although this will not be fully evident until next year's accounts are prepared.



Chairman's Report (continued)



On the subject of finance, you will note a deficit in our balance sheet this year. This is not an area for concern, as we have healthy reserves to see us through such lean years. It does, however, highlight the importance of donations and legacies to the Society and the need for the increase in subscriptions agreed at the last AGM. Whilst we have no plans for a further increase in subscriptions, I would encourage all members to consider making a small donation when you renew your membership. For any members reviewing their wills, perhaps you would consider including the Society in your bequests.

This year was Alan Postill's final year as Treasurer after 4 years in the post. Alan has guided us through a difficult time, when Charity Commission (CC) regulation has required us to make many changes to the way we work. I am sure you will all join me in thanking Alan for his excellent stewardship of our finances. Alan will not be leaving us and will stand for a new post of Compliance Officer, ensuring that we meet CC requirements in the coming year.

Alistair Taylor, who stepped in as Assistant Treasurer, will be standing as Alan's replacement and I hope you will join me in giving Alistair your support at the AGM.

Prior to the AGM 2007, Dave Brown had offered to fill the shoes of Derek Seddon (Editor) and Peter Rhodes (Publisher) to produce our newsletter, a role which he has filled admirably. During the year Dave also offered to act as temporary Vice Chair (VC), and his appointment was approved by the officers. Dave has taken on a number of important projects that would otherwise have sat on the back burner, and I have no hesitation in nominating him for the post of VC at this year's AGM.

All our volunteers are important and their support, in my first year as Chairman, has been fantastic. I'd like to mention a few by name, who have taken on new roles and projects, and whose work would otherwise go unrecorded:

Geoff Errington – webmaster

Brian Summerscales – electrical checks, wiring upgrades and other odd jobs

David Tattersall – office management

David Williams – insurance review

David Williamson – archival review and digitization.

2008 has been a good year. With your continued support and early renewal of subscriptions, 2009 promises to be a very interesting year in the continued struggle to preserve our footpath heritage. I look forward to meeting you at the AGM, so please don't delay in letting Dave Brown know if you will be attending.



Vice Chair's Report

Dave Brown

Last year when the Chairman interpreted my offer to "give him a bit of help at Taylor House" as a suggestion that I should take on the vacant post of Vice Chairman I was reluctant to accept because I have a full-time demanding job.

Having already taken on editing the newsletter, I felt I would be unable to give the job the attention it deserved. However he eventually persuaded me that it would be an opportunity to try the job for when I had more time available. Also it would take some of the load off him.

Since then I have identified a number of opportunities to improve the computing and communications areas, reducing spending and improving efficiency at Taylor House.

Unfortunately I have not had time to implement these changes due to work commitments. The good news is that I will be retiring in April and if elected as Vice Chairman I will be able to devote the proper amount of time and energy to these tasks.

I will, in any case, continue to produce and improve the newsletter based on the feedback from you our readers.



Preparing the 2007 Annual Report for posting.

Rhoda Barnett

2008 saw a reorganisation of the Society's work in Derbyshire. I took over as Courts and Inquiries Officer from John Harker, and the Area Officer role was divided between myself and John. I am now the Area Officer for the districts of Derbyshire Dales and South Derbyshire and the separate unitary authority of Derby City. John continues to cover the remaining districts/boroughs of High Peak, Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire, Bolsover, Erewash and Amber Valley.



With regard to individual path cases, there have been some notable successes. The Society objected to a Definitive Map Modification Order published by Derbyshire County Council to remove a section of Footpath 12 in the parish of Hathersage from the definitive map. The grounds for this were that the path was included on the definitive map by mistake, i.e. it was not a public right of way. The evidence produced by the landowner was, the Society believed, lacking in the necessary strength that the law demands. We were delighted that the inspector, appointed to deal with the case by written representations, agreed with our arguments and did not confirm the Order. Now we are hopeful that a solution will be found by a legal diversion onto an agreed route away from the properties concerned.

Further successes have led to a number of longstanding obstructed paths being restored to public use. These included Footpath 17 in Chinley, blocked by a barbed wire fence, and Footpaths 9 and 43 in Killamarsh, blocked by barbed wire fencing and a hedge. In the case of these two latter paths, the Society had to resort to proceedings under section 130A of the Highways Act 1980 to make the County Council take action. In the case of path 43, our local inspector first reported the obstructions in 1993! 15 years is far too long for a path to remain obstructed and is indicative of underlying flaws in the way the County Council tackles serious obstructions on paths that they perceive to be of low value.

In the case of Footpath 50 in Eckington, the Society had to serve notice of an intention to proceed to the magistrates' court for an order to be made, because no action seemed to be forthcoming. I am glad to report that, at the year's end, the County Council has finally acted and served notice on Network Rail to remove the fence or install a stile by 23 January 2009. Photographs of the two Killamarsh paths are on the Society's website, as will be photographs of the Eckington path as soon as it is walkable.

Other noteworthy successes have been achieved as this report is being written. We have received news that another two obstructed paths in the Peak District, blocked for many years and the subject of repeated complaints, have been or are about to be reopened; these are Footpath 30 in Taddington and Footpath 39 in Outseats near Hathersage.

The saga of Taddington 30 and Outseats 39 is a long one and has led to a robust exchange of correspondence between our Chairman and the Senior PROW Officer at County Hall. This has led to a decision within the Society to seek to campaign for changes in the Council's method of dealing with enforcement issues. As the year ended we were organising a conference of user groups in Derbyshire to be held at Taylor House in early 2009. Its outcome and consequences will be reported in the next Annual Report, but this Society feels it is imperative that the County Council adopts more



Courts & Inquiries Reports (continued)

robust, transparent and accountable policies for dealing with a wide range of issues, including its methods for dealing with user groups like ours.

Once again, the Society is mindful that a lot of unsung work goes on in the field by our inspectors in the county: dealing with day-to-day problems and walking the network of paths to find and report problems; checking their resolution; and responding to requests for opinions on proposed path alterations. Inspectors come and go, but new ones are needed especially now for parts of High Peak, Derbyshire Dales and all the eastern and southern areas. Can you adopt a parish or three if you walk in Derbyshire? Contact Hilda Bowler please.



***Two styles of stile
one friendly one not so friendly***



Courts & Inquiries Reports (continued)



John Harker

Being C&IO for 11 different highway authorities would seem to be, at least on paper, a labour of Hercules. Fortunately the workload from all these authorities varies widely. Nothing much ever seems to happen in Wakefield, Leeds, Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield to cause the Society any headaches.

Having said that, I can report that as the year ended matters were warming up in Rotherham. Attempts are being made to close a section of Aston-cum-Aughton 6 in urban Swallownest on anti-social behaviour grounds. We have seen this proposal off once before, but a second effort is starting, which may ultimately see us involved in a public inquiry if an Order is published. We



came close to serving notices on Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC) for the nearby Aston-cum-Aughton 5, which has been flooded and unusable for 18 months. Only a flurry of emails between RMBC and the landowner Network Rail has persuaded us, temporarily, to stay our hand. On a positive note, we have suggested two common-sense diversions in Rotherham on Aston-cum-Aughton 14 and Whiston 1, the first of which is at Path Order stage.

In Tameside, we are on the verge of a public inquiry as a result of a Path Diversion Order for Longdendale 76 and 77 and Chisworth 24. This path straddles the river Etherow boundary with Derbyshire, and Tameside MBC have made an Order on behalf of both authorities. The Order is widely perceived to be an attempt by TMBC to avoid having to repair a bridge on no.77 which magistrates have told them to repair by July 2009. The Society has a newly appointed inspector for Tameside, so I am expecting an increased workload in this area as we know there are many outstanding faults and obstructions unresolved.

In Manchester, Salford, Trafford and Stockport the vast majority of consultations are of the gating order variety, which has not, so far anyway, generated any work of the courts-and-inquiries type. This is largely because an objection to a gating order by a Society like ours cannot of itself force a public inquiry. This is a flaw in the legislation, which the Society has addressed by joining a coalition of user groups nationally. This is led by the Ramblers' Association and includes ourselves and the Open Spaces Society amongst others. Its aim is to persuade the government to amend legislation so that objections have to be heard by an independent inspector.



Courts & Inquiries Reports (continued)

Terry Norris

I have represented the Society at three public inquiries and one hearing. The matters at issue were two diversions in Cheshire, one application to delete a path in Calderdale, and one to add a path to the definitive map in Cheshire.

The first diversion case concerned Cuddington 16, where the Society opposed the order as the new route would result in the loss of a fine view and an open path. The diversion moved the path to the edge of the field where it would be enclosed. This would enable a bridleway to be created with the agreement of the land owner. The Inspector found in favour of the Council on the basis that the diversion provided significant road safety benefits to walkers as the exit point was onto a much less busy road than the original path. Whilst regretting the outcome I take some comfort from the Inspector's finding that the fact that the diversion allowed for the creation of the bridleway was not a material consideration in his decision. This limits the precedent effect of this decision.

The second diversion case concerned Tattenhall 26, where the Council had proposed an excellent diversion of great benefit to walkers as it brought back into use an important part of the network. The proposal was supported by the Society and other user groups. Also, several new bridges and stiles had been provided on paths linking to the diversion. The Council could not confirm the diversion because of the objection of one individual. In our view this objection was manifestly ill founded and so we joined with Mid-Cheshire Footpath Society in supporting the Council at a hearing before an Inspector. We were not surprised to hear that the Inspector had confirmed the order.

The public inquiry into Calderdale Council's application to delete a path in Brighouse was in effect an appeal against the Inspector's rejection of the original order on the basis on new evidence. This included testimony from witnesses who had lived in the area before the definitive map was created. The fact they did not know of the path's existence was not sufficient for the Inspector to change her original decision.

The most important inquiry of 2008 concerned an application by a Society member, Harry Hadfield, to add Leek Old Road to the definitive map. This was originally part of the Leek to Macclesfield turnpike but was replaced by the construction of what is now part of the A523. Walkers have used Leek Old Road for many years until their right to do so was challenged by the land owner. Cheshire County Council presented the case, which was based on both historical and user evidence. A number of Society members gave evidence that they had used the path without hindrance over long periods. Bill Brown, a former Society inspector, had done a sterling job in rounding up the user witnesses as well as giving evidence himself. The inspector confirmed the order on the basis of the user evidence, showing use as of right for the requisite period of 20 years before the challenge by the land owner.

The Society issued a section 130A order on St Helens Council in respect of a locked gate across footpath 210. This path provides a route from a housing estate to an open area surrounding a lake, where a youth had recently drowned. Local residents were adamant that the gate should remain locked to prevent their children obtaining access to the lake. This resulted in pressure on the council officers to collude in this illegal obstruction of the path and to sign an unofficial diversion of the path. Following pressure from the Society and the local RA and the serving of a s.130A notice, the locks on the gate were removed by the Council, and a more satisfactory diversion proposed.



Courts & Inquiries Reports (continued)



In addition to the above advocacy work, I have advised inspectors and members of the Society on a range of problems, including misleading signs and illegal use of a footpath by horse riders. My knowledge of the 'Blue Book' and of rights-of-way law has increased considerably over the year, as has my knowledge of the trains and buses of Lancashire, Cheshire and Greater Manchester.

There are now four Courts and Inquiries Officers, whereas previously the job was done by one person, who combined the role with that of Vice President, an impossible task. The four of us meet monthly with the Chairman as a Legal Policy Committee. Here, assisted by Adrian Littleton, the Society's Legal Officer, we discuss all matters relating to the Society and rights-of-way law, and make decisions on serving notices with respect to paths that are obstructed or out of repair. This is a huge improvement on the previous system of leaving matters to one individual, but we would still like some more Courts and Inquiries officers so the areas being covered by the present incumbents could be reduced and a better service provided to inspectors and other members.

Harry W Scott

It has been a quiet year in Staffordshire for footpath diversion consultations and the making of orders. I received from Staffordshire County Council and the District Councils 17 footpath diversion consultations, which is less than half the number I have normally received in previous years. All were resolved by negotiation. A total of 26 orders were received, again many fewer than previous years. I continue to monitor and comment on planning applications that affect the footpath network in Staffordshire. I am pleased to report that obstructions have been removed from the following public rights of way during 2008, footpaths that are now open for public use: Norbury 29, Gnosall 3, Ipstones 83, Leigh 43, Draycott 26 and Forsbrook 01649.



Mid and South Staffordshire is mainly arable farming area. A new crop has appeared in the last few years: elephant grass. Elephant grass, which grows to 10 feet tall, is a bio fuel used in the generation of electricity. Willow is also grown as a fuel. These crops are affecting a number of public rights of way in Mid and South Staffordshire. I am currently trying to get elephant grass removed from footpath 3 Gnosall Parish in the Stafford Borough.



Consultations & Orders Report

Alan Hooley

First I must acknowledge the quality of the work of the Assessment Team. For yet another year there have been no personnel changes. This continuity is a big help in maintaining the smooth operation of the section.

I also acknowledge the quality of the work of the inspectors. Their reports continue to be constructive, cogent and perceptive. OMAs (Order-making authorities) usually respond positively to the points made by the Society's inspectors. In most cases suggestions are accepted – if they are not, OMAs normally supply a well-reasoned argument in support of their decision.



When *New Ways of Working* began, the Section ceased to keep statistics, on the ground that measuring only part of the workload was of limited value. Our view has now changed, as we felt that some information about the number and type of Orders was better than none. Recording began again at Taylor House on 1 April 2008. In the 9 months ended 31 December 2008 we received 101 Diversion Orders, 96 Extinguishment Orders (some of them temporary), 12 Creation Orders, 17 Modification Orders (additions) and 1 Modification Order (deletion). Some authorities consult us as routine practice on planning applications that affect the footpath network. There have been 56 such consultations. We have received 78 confirmed Orders. The largest category in terms of numbers has been alleygating – 312. There have been 151 pre-order consultations of all types.

We now count the number of objections we lodge, both to Orders and consultations. There have been 8 such objections. There was just one case where the inspector asked for an objection but his request was not approved. The final decision on whether to make an objection rests with the Society's officers, and the view of the relevant Courts and Inquiries Officer carries much weight.

I am not sure why the objection ratio is so low. Perhaps 2008 was an unusual year. I should like to think that the Society's policies are now so well known that OMAs tailor their proposals to meet the points they know we shall make. Is that truly the situation, or am I thinking wishfully?

OMAs notify the Society of alleygating schemes. There are very few instances where we have anything to say. Our influence is limited as we cannot, by objecting, compel the holding of a public inquiry. In any event the schemes usually have the support of local residents, and if the emergency services do not object the case for an Order is very strong.

Increasingly, companies and individuals consult us about diversions and closures before the OMA has formulated any proposal. The Society's role as statutory consultee is confined to action by OMAs. We are not bound to respond to anyone else. Hitherto we have taken the view that it could be unreasonable to ask an inspector to do a site inspection for a proposal that may never see the light of day. We have now changed that approach. We see advantages in making our views known before the applicant spends serious money. The earlier the stage in the process, the better our chances of getting what we want.

I am happy to say we are keeping the paper archive intact. Its value was demonstrated when an OMA could not trace in their files an Order made over 20 years ago. We were able to supply a copy by return.

Faults & Inspectors Report



Hilda Bowler - Footpath Faults

During 2008 the number of footpath faults reported totalled 1,303, of which 136 were cleared during the year. In addition, 445 previously reported faults were also cleared.

Of the faults reported in 2008, obstructions of some kind – electric fences across or beside the path, fences, walls, streams – accounted for 520.

There were 394 reports of missing or damaged signposts, and 246 reports of broken or difficult stiles.



Waymarking was needed according to 83 reports, and there were 57 reports of cropping and ploughing where the footpath had not been reinstated.

I would like to thank all Inspectors for their hard work for the Society, and for the clear reports which are sent or copied to Taylor House. David Tattersall and Brian Summerscales continue their sterling work inputting data onto the database and looking up footpath numbers – my thanks to them both.

Hilda Bowler - Inspectors

I would like to say a big 'thank you' to all our Inspectors, both to those who have resigned during the year for various reasons – Emma Bowen, Pat and Gurnos Jones, Peter Williams and Mike Gregg – and to those who are still with us. The work our Inspectors do is vital for the Society.

I would also like to welcome our newer Inspectors – Anthony Brackenbury, Graham and Barbara Baldry, John Gascoyne, Brian Naylor, Harold Thompson and John Rowcroft – and trust they have not been put off by the wet and muddy footpaths during the more-than-average rainfall in 2008.

We have gained an Area Officer – Rhoda Barnett has taken on this role for Derby City, Derbyshire Dales and South Derbyshire. This brings our total of Area Officers up to 5 – we would welcome more!

We currently have 80 Inspectors and Agents, but again, more would be welcome, especially in our outlying areas. If you feel you would like to volunteer, or to find out more about an Inspector's role, do contact Taylor House. We would very much like to hear from you.



Signpost Officer's Report

Dave Morton

I've thoroughly enjoyed my second year as Signpost Officer, due in part to the great variety of tasks involved and places visited in our expanding signpost empire. Bill Johnson, Ted Wolfe, John Hodgson and Brian Morrison have continued to help, they have been supplemented by Barry Moorhouse and John Humpherson.

As of 31 December 2008 we'd erected 15 new signposts with four more waiting in the garage and five destined for Anglers Country Park, Wakefield. We've also reposted or refixed 14 plates and crossplates, but my greatest pleasure this year has come from unearthing several old and lost signposts and re-instating them



Thanks to our Courts and Inquiries Officers, we've had marked success in placing signposts in such faraway places as the Weaver Hills west of Ashbourne (3), the Wirral (1), Marsden (3) and Wakefield (6). These will be further south, west and east than ever before. However, that means we'll need members who live in or near to those areas to help with minor maintenance.

New Signposts erected in 2008 :

332 Holymoorside	PNFS (suggested by Chesterfield RA)
335 Delamere	In memory of Jim Morris (Ches.Tally Ho)
336 Mellor	In memory of Jim Wild
337 Sheen	Gordon Roberts' 70th birthday
338 Longnor	In memory of Lawrence & Eileen Gorman
340 Cown Edge	In memory of Carolyn Burden (Neve)
341 Cown Edge	In memory of L and E Gorman (YHA)
343 Bankend	}
344 Gow Hole	}Donated by Sir Martin Doughty Vice President
345 Shaw Farm	}
346 Whitle	PNFS
347 Litton	PNFS
348 Upper Booth	PNFS
349 Upper Booth	In memory of Margaret Comar
350 Upper Booth	In memory of Alice Joyce Hilton

I'd like to say a hearty 'thanks' to all the team and invite any of you who can help us to maintain our 272 'silent ambassadors' to get in touch with me. Paint and brushes will be provided!

Other Signpost Matters



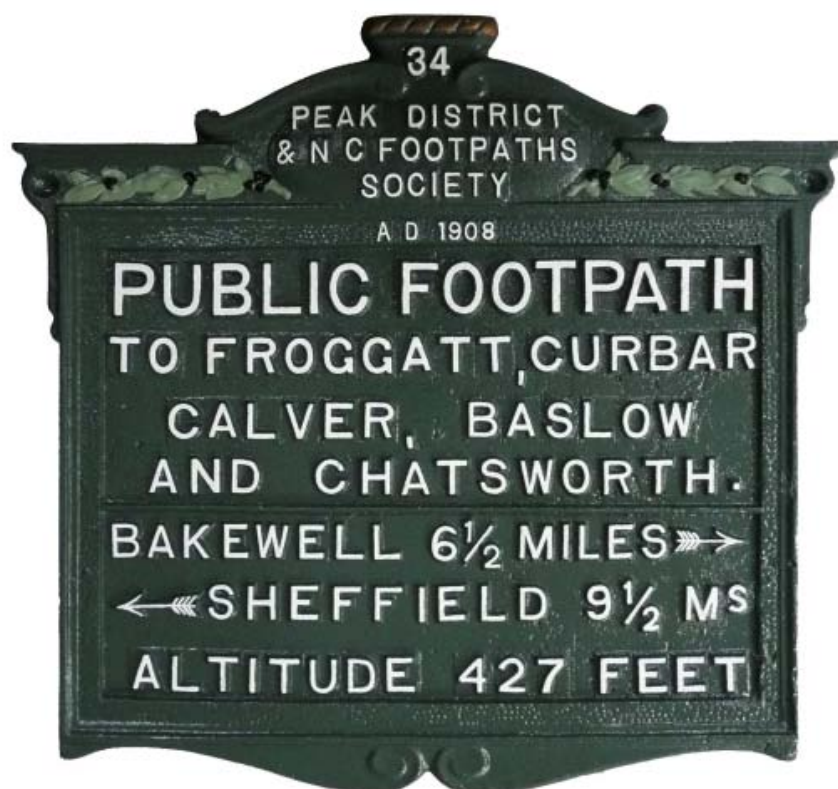
Ted Wolfe

Well it doesn't seem like 5 minutes, but another very busy year has gone by. Despite a period of illness things have been moving on apace, particularly due to the enthusiasm and hard work of Dave Morton. There have been a number of highlights during the year, in particular the planting of our most easterly SP, No. 332, which was installed at Chanderfield just east of Chesterfield.



There was also a very hard but satisfying day when three signs, SPs348-49-50, equalling my personal record, went in at Highfield Farm, Upper Booth. As I say every year, our area of coverage is growing at a steady rate. I must also once again pay thanks to our contractor John Hodgson, who is very enthusiastic and reliable and is doing a fantastic job. The signpost work is never ending, and there is always work to be done on maintenance, particularly with cleaning and re-painting. So whenever any of you are out on your rambles, particularly our inspectors, please keep your eyes open. If you see any problems with our signs, report to Taylor House, or if it isn't too big a job have a go yourself. To finish with, I will give a quick summary of the work carried out in 2008.

Inspection, clean ,re-paint, minor repair	210
Posts re-planted	13
New posts	16





Bridge Projects

Neil Collie

The year started well with the handing over of a new footbridge at Hey Wood, near Slaithwaite in Kirklees (B24, Grid Ref SE080128). Kirklees Council used volunteers to clear an overgrown footpath and the Public Rights of Way Rangers constructed a new footbridge over the stream. Funding of the footbridge was crucial to getting this footpath back into use. The path opened up access to a very attractive area of woodland.

Since then, your Committee has approved funding for the following footbridges. In each case we have agreed a package of improvements to the adjacent footpaths funded by the Highway Authority..



- Sun Wood, near Shelf, Calderdale (B25, Grid Ref SE 128277)
- Two bridges north of East Morton on Keighley Footpath 275 (B26, SE101435 & B27, SE101436)
- A bridge northwest of Oakworth on Keighley Footpath 29 (B28, SE 004405)
- Brampton Footpath 15, above Linacre Reservoirs, Derbyshire (B29, SK 317727)

All these projects have fallen foul of the bad weather or have access problems. None have been completed to date. However, I hope to be able to report the successful completion of these works soon.

In line with our policy of promoting the areas which are some distance from Taylor House, we are currently looking at proposals in the County of Lancashire, Oldham, Kirklees, and Wakefield.



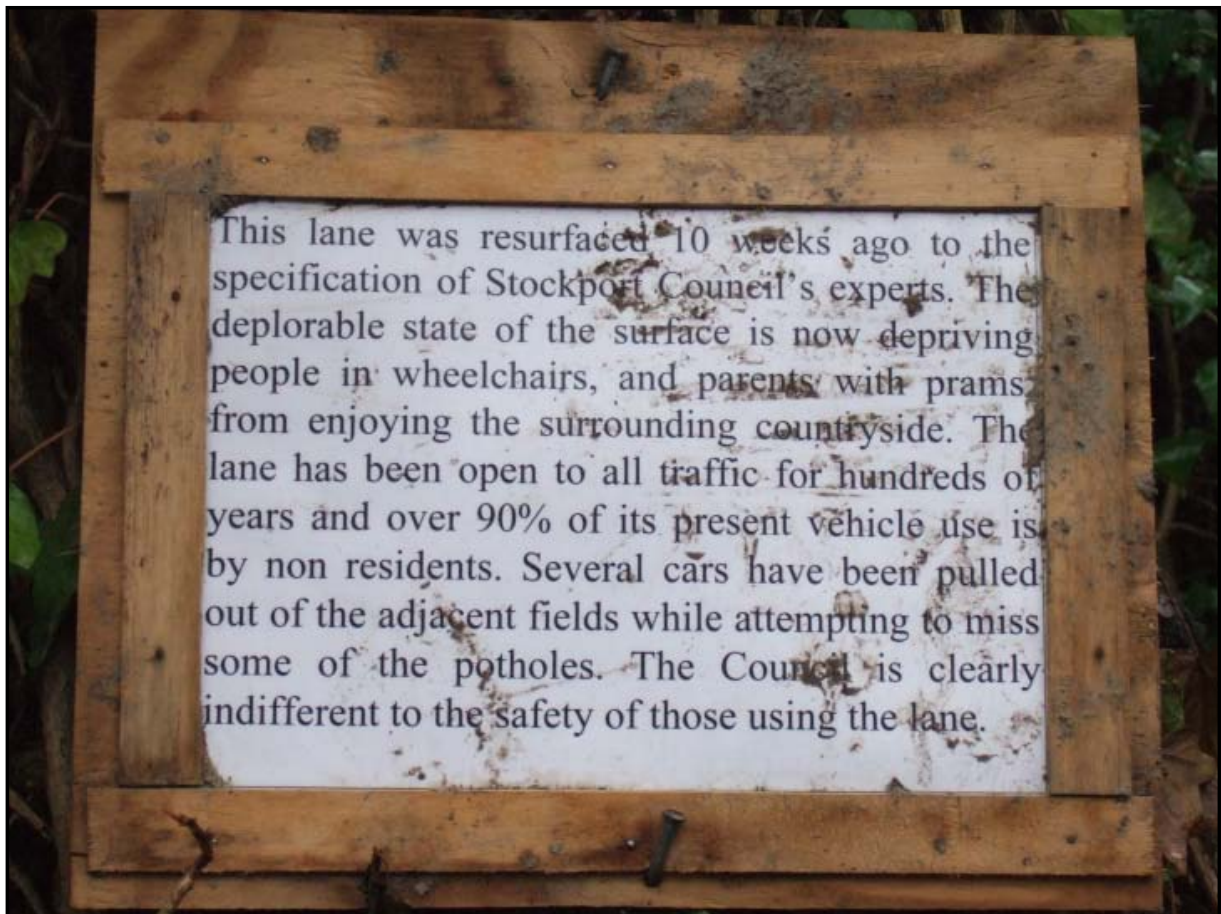
Hey Wood Bridge under construction

Illustrated Lectures

Our Illustrated lectures continue to be popular. This year the role of presenter was shared between: David Bratt, Peter Rhodes and Clarke Rogerson.

If you are a member of a walking club or other local interest group we would be happy to come along to deliver the lecture, contact David Bratt (01925 762472) to book a date.

Mid Cheshire FPS (Affiliate)
Blackbrook Conservation Society (Affiliate)
National Trust Peak District Centre
Prestbury PROBUS
New Mills U3A
Gawsworth WI
Buxton Rambling Club (Affiliate)
West Lancs Footpath Group (Affiliate)
Windle WI
Stockport Ramblers (Affiliate)
Ramblers Bolton Group (Affiliate)



Sign seen on a walk in the Stockport area



2008 Accounts



Charity Name Peak and Northern Footpaths Society	No. (if any) 212219
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Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date 01/01/2008	To	Period end date 31/12/2008
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Section A Receipts and payments



	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Legacies, bequests donations (General)	2,254	-	-	2,254	40,035
Donations (signposts)	-	2,291	-	2,291	2,179
Donations (Footbridges)	-	-	-	-	1,200
Gift aid Tax	715	-	-	715	117
Interest/ dividends	10,774	-	-	10,774	9,299
Subscriptions/ Affiliations	8,946	-	-	8,946	7,823
Miscellaneous	350	-	-	350	331
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	23,039	2,291	-	25,330	60,984
A2 Asset and investment sales, etc.					
	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	23,039.00	2,291	-	25,330	60,984
A3 Payments					
Taylor House Running costs	6,607	-	-	6,607	4,799
Signposts and Footbridges	-	6,936	-	6,936	12,235
Travel & Subsistence	5,959	-	-	5,959	3,712
Printing and Coping (Including Newsletter)	6,769	-	-	6,769	7,280
Postage/ Telephone/ Stationary	4,163	-	-	4,163	2,082
Functions	3,162	-	-	3,162	2,391
Insurances	1,166	-	-	1,166	2,065
Subscriptions/ Donations	228	-	-	228	1,145
Legal/ Professional/ Secretarial	1,475	-	-	1,475	695
Sundries	397	-	-	397	564
Sub total	29,926	6,936	-	36,862	36,968
A4 Asset and investment purchases, etc.					
	952	-	-	952	-
Total payments	30,878	6,936	-	37,814	36,968
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 7,839	- 4,645	-	- 12,484	24,016
A5 Transfers between funds	- 24,700	24,700	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	119,552	12,861	-	132,413	108,397
Cash funds this year end	87,013	32,916	-	119,929	132,413



Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash Investments	85,552	32,916	-
	Bank and Petty cash	1,461	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	87,013	32,916	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	Government Stocks	105001	-	-
	Equities	655	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
		Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Taylor House (Building)	60153	-	-
	Computer Equipment	9817	-	-
	Furniture fittings & Equipment	3983	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
		Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	Alan Postill	16-03-09
	Clarke Rogerson	16-03-09



Treasurer's Report

Alan Postill

Notes on Income & Expenditure 2008

Accounting Basis

These accounts have been prepared using the "receipts and payments" method rather than the "accruals" method as used up to 2006. This is in accordance with Charity Commission guidance and trustee decisions made in 2006.

The year saw a deficit of income over expenditure of £12484, as against a surplus in 2007 amounting to £24016.



Income

Last year we benefited from legacy income totalling £36901 from the estates of GHB Ward and John F Shaw. This year we have received no legacy income.

A sum of £18000 (50% of the total) was set aside from the GHB Ward legacy in 2007 to fund a suitable memorial to his memory. This money has not yet been spent although the trustees have committed £6000 to Hunshelf Parish Council for spending in 2009.

Donations to the Society have reduced (£4545 in 2008 against £6513 in 2007). Members may recall that a request for donations was made prior to the 2006 AGM which significantly benefited the General fund during 2007.

Total income from investments has increased from £9299 in 2007 to £10774 in 2008 in spite of the difficult economic climate.

This year Subscriptions & Affiliations show an increase (£8946 against £7823 in 2007).

It is still true to say that, in spite of the increase in subscriptions in 2008, total income from subscriptions covers only approximately half our basic running costs (Taylor House costs, travel, insurance, postage and stationary). We remain dependant on the generosity of our members and friends for donations and bequests. **However the Society has no plans to increase subscription in the immediate future.**

Expenditure

The Expenditure figures reflect the continued high level in our activities. Total expenditure has remained substantially the same compared to 2007.

Travel costs (£5959 against £3712 in 2007) show a substantial increase from last year indicating increased activity and also, perhaps, that volunteers are at last claiming their travelling expenses.

Treasurer's Report (Continued)



Printing costs including "Signpost" newsletter are down at £6769 against £7280 in the previous year.

Included in the above costs are "Signpost" newsletter costs which have increased from £3321 to £3828 reflecting increased costs passed on from the printer (including increased postage costs).

The figures for Postages, telephones and stationery etc. are not strictly comparable due to recategorisation into more meaningful groupings.

The fall in insurance costs is due to the premises insurance costs (£976) being transferred to Taylor House running costs.

Subscriptions and donations are in line with last year once the "one off" donation to the Green Lanes Protection Group is taken into account.

The cost of Functions (£3162 against £2391 in 2007) is made up from the AGM in April, the Taylor House Volunteers Conference in August, the Inspectors Conference October and the Half Year Meeting in held in November. The Royal Lancashire and Bakewell Show booking fees are also included in this total.

Signpost and Footbridge expenditure (£6936 in total) shows a significant decrease in 2008. Signpost expenditure has remained constant at £6020 (£6016 in 2007) but footbridge expenditure has fallen to £916 (£6219 in 2007). This is due to the long lead time to install a new bridge. The Society has current commitments of approximately £9000 to fund new bridges during 2009.

Value of Investments at Year End

Assets

Fixed Assets: Taylor House is valued on an "at cost" basis as in previous years.

Long Term Investments: (£105656 from £100170 in 2007) show increases in valuations in Government Stocks (£105001 compared to £97953 in 2007) and decreases in Equities (£655 compared to £ £2217 in 2007).

Short Term Investments: The bulk of our cash (totalling £65095) is now held on immediate access, interest bearing accounts with CAF Bank, a subsidiary of Charities Aid Foundation. A further £53169 is held with Birmingham Midshires Building Society.

Current Assets: Bank balance current account at year end totalled £1408 plus £52 in postage stamps.



Photos from walks led by PNFS during the South Pennines Walk and Ride Festival



Treasurer's Report (Continued)



Reserves Policy

In line with Charity Commission Guidelines the Trustees have agreed a Reserves Policy. The reserves policy calls for reserves between £175000 and 225000. The Society's Reserves for 2008 are calculated as follows:

Cash Funds	£119929
Long Term Investments value	£105656
Less Committed Funds (GHB Ward Memorial)	£18000
Total Reserves	£207585

Alan Postill
Treasurer
March 2009



Roman Bridge - Marple



View of Knowl Hill, Rochdale obscured by giant turbines



Culceth 75 a pond of the past resolved by PNFS action

Independent Examiner's Report



Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	Charity Name PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY		
On accounts for the year ended	31st DECEMBER 2008	Charity no (if any)	212219
	Set out on pages CC 16 a 1 & 2 <small>(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)</small>		

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act), as amended by s.28 of the Charities Act 2006) and that an independent examination is needed. It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 43 of the Act, as amended),
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, as amended), and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement


My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention ~~(other than that disclosed below*)~~

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:
 - proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
 - accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or
2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.

Signed:  Date: 17th March 2009

Name: ELIZABETH HUDSON

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):

A.C.A.

Address: BRADLEY FOLD, WOODFORD LANE, NEWTON,
MACCLESFIELD, CHESHIRE SK10 4LH



Membership Secretary's Report

Reg Boot

2008 was another good year for the Society, in fact better than expected. When we increased the membership subscriptions we expected a drop in membership, perhaps as much as ten percent. In fact we have finished the year with more or less the same number of members as we started with. This is an encouraging sign of the members' commitment to the Society.



Last year we recruited a lot of new members by attending shows, in particular the Cheshire Show, and such attendance is seen as one of our most important ways of getting new members. In 2008 our major recruitment event was to be attending the Lancashire Show. Unfortunately the show was cancelled because of bad weather. Despite this we still managed to recruit 269 new members, mainly from two smaller shows, Bakewell and Hayfield, and from giving talks to local societies.

Every year a number of our members do not renew their membership so we do need to recruit actively if we are to maintain and increase our membership and influence. One of the best recruiting methods is by personal recommendation so we would appreciate any efforts by existing members to bring the work of the Society to the attention of their friends and acquaintances. Any ideas from members on how we could improve our recruiting and on the operation of the Society in general would be most welcome.

The following table shows the progress in membership over the last few years.

Members	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Annual	396	487	617	754	747
Ten Year	318	275	281	300	302
Five Year	209	256	299	350	351
Honorary Life	15	18	18	17	17
Junior	2	6	2	5	2
Total	940	1042	1217	1426	1419
Affiliates	79	77	77	81	79



Affiliated Society

Abbotsfield Fellwalkers of Flixton
Alderley Edge, Wilmslow & District FP Society
Altrincham & District Rambling Club
Ashover Footpath & Bridleway Committee
Ashton-u-Lyne & District Walking Club
Barlborough Parish Council
Barnsley Mountaineering Club
Blackbrook Conservation Society
Bolton CHA Rambling Club
Buxton Rambling Club
CAE - Rambling Club
CHA Manchester Rambling Club
CHA Mansfield
CHA Nottingham Rambling Club
CHA Oldham & District Rambling Club
CHA Sheffield Rambling & Social Club
Cheadle Hulme & Bramhall Natural
History Society
Cheshire Tally Ho Hare & Hounds Club
Club AZ Walkers
Congleton Ramblers and P+++! Artists
Crescent Ramblers Northwich
Denby Dale Parish Walking Group
Derby Nomad Ramblers
Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society
Derbyshire Pennine Club
Disley Footpaths Society
Eccles Rambling and Social Club
Eyam Village Society
Friends of Springfield Park
Hanliensian Rambling Club
Heatons Reddish U3A
HF Bolton Group
HF Bury Group
HF Nottingham Group
HF Warrington Rambling Club
Hunshel Parish Council
Ladybrook Valley District Scout Club
Leek & District FP Preservation & Rambling
Group
Littleborough Civic Trust
Longdendale & Glossopdale FP Preservation
Society
Macclesfield Rambling Club
Manchester Associates Rambling Club
Manchester Field Club
Manchester Rambling Club
Marple District Rambling Club
Marple Naturalists
Mid Cheshire Footpath Society
New Mills and District U3A
Northwestern Naturalists Union
Pennine Wayfarers Rambling Club
Plumley with Toft & Bexton Parish Council
Poynton Rambling Club
RA Bolton Group
RA Congleton Group
RA Doncaster
RA East Cheshire Area
RA Manchester & High Peak Area
RA Oldham Group
RA Sheffield Group
RA South Yorks & NE Derbyshire Area
RA Stockport Group
Rochdale CHA Rambling Club
Rock and Heather Club
Romiley Ladies Group
Rotherham Rambling Club
Sale U3A Walking Club
Sheffield Clarion Ramblers
Sheffield Co-op Party Rambling Club
Sheffield U3A Walking Goup 'A'
Shirland & Higham Parish Council
Stockport & District Federation of TWGs
Stockport East Area Bridleways Association
Stockport Field Club
Stockport Rambling & Social Club
Stockport Walkers
Sutton-in-Ashfield Rambling Club
The Scramblers Rambling Club
The Strollers
West Lancashire Footpath Group



Constitution Reg Charity No. 212219

NAME, OBJECTS AND NATURE

1. We are called 'Peak & Northern Footpaths Society'. Our objects are:-

- a) Creating and preserving open spaces, public access rights and rights of way (other than for mechanically propelled vehicles); particularly in Cheshire, Derbyshire, Lancashire and Staffordshire, the former Metropolitan Counties of Greater Manchester, Merseyside, South and West Yorkshire and in Blackburn & Darwen, Blackpool, Derby, Halton, Stoke-on-Trent and Warrington.
- b) Preventing the abuse of such rights.
- c) Monitoring, supporting and opposing proposals and orders for the creation, closure, diversion and regrading of public rights of way.
- d) Erecting and maintaining direction posts, signs, footbridges and commemorative structures.
- e) All objects conducive to the foregoing.

1.2 We pursue our objects via negotiation: but when appropriate, engage in legal proceedings, including public inquiries and mediation.

1.3 We are an equal opportunities Society.

PROVISION OF TRUSTEE INDEMNITY INSURANCE

1.4 The trustees shall have the power to provide trustee indemnity insurance for themselves out of our income.

TRUSTEES NOT TO HAVE A PERSONAL INTEREST

1.5 Subject to the provisions of clause 1.4 (provision of trustee indemnity insurance clause) and except with the prior written approval of the Charity Commissioners no trustee may:

- a) receive any benefit in money or in kind from us; or
- b) have a financial interest in the supply of goods or services to us; or
- c) acquire or hold any interest in property belonging to us (otherwise than as our trustee) or receive remuneration from us or be interested (otherwise than as our trustee) in any contract entered into by trustees.

DEFINITIONS

2. In this Constitution –

'AGM' means Annual General Meeting;

'EGM' means Extraordinary General Meeting;

'GM' means General Meeting' and includes an AGM and an EGM;

an 'Officer' is a person who is appointed to a specific office including the presidency but not a vice-presidency.

'we' and 'us' mean the Society;

'our' means the Society's.

OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

3a) Each Officer and each Trustee (who must also be an Officer) shall be appointed at a G M or (if the appointment is between GMs) by other Officers.



- b) at each AGM all existing Officers and Trustees willing to continue in post shall be subject to re-election.
- c) The Trustees may invest our funds as they see fit and may borrow, charge our assets and own the freehold or leasehold of land and buildings. At all times they must exercise overall control of our management but in so far as is compatible with their legal duties as trustees they shall implement the wishes of the generality of our members.
- d) The Officers may change the duties of existing Officer posts from time to time, re-name such posts and create new ones: but there shall never be more than 15 Officers.
- e) Subject to Clause 3 (c, our business which is not conducted in G M shall be conducted by the Officers. They may determine the rules for conducting their business and may delegate their powers to any committee and co-opt (for a specified period) anyone to serve thereon. The quorum for an Officers' meeting shall be 3 Officers.
- f) If a resolution is passed by the Officers or a G M, but the majority of the Trustees decide that its implementation may create greater liabilities than our funds can prudently bear, the Trustees may within 28 days annul this resolution via a written veto, signed by each of its supporters and explaining its reasons. This veto shall be reported to the next meeting of the body which passed the resolution.
- g) The Treasurer shall be consulted about any decision to invest or spend our funds (except on an ordinary outgoing) unless he/she cannot be consulted and the item is urgent; when the President or Chairman shall be consulted.
- h) Tenure of an office shall cease upon the holder's resignation or permanent incapacity to perform most of his/her work; or when an AGM does not confirm further tenure; or on the expiry of a written termination notice given by two thirds of the fellow Officers.

MEMBERSHIP AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

- 4a) Subscriptions shall be due within 1 month of each A G M, at the rate set at an AGM.
- b) Notice of Officers' recommendations for
 - i) any proposed rate changes and
 - ii) variations in the number, specification and/or title of subscription classes shall be included in the notice of the A G M: which may vote to accept or reject them but may not amend or delete any of them.
- c) Joint members (two), shall each be entitled to full voting rights at G Ms.
- d). Individual members of 20 or more years standing, aged at least 65 years, shall be entitled (on application) to honorary life membership.
- e) The A G M may elect, for life, Vice Presidents; who shall enjoy honorary membership.
- f) A body having an interest in our work which pays us an affiliation subscription may nominate one delegate and two other persons to us, who shall be deemed to be members.
- g) All members may attend GMs and shall receive our Annual Report and other publications.
- h) A member may be expelled by our Officers if in the opinion of a majority of them his/her actions have been seriously detrimental to us. Prior to resolving to expel, these Officers shall give the member written notice of the alleged actions and detriments and a copy of this Clause 4 h) plus a reasonable opportunity to prepare and state his/her response. Within one month of expulsion that member may appeal by giving written notice of appeal to an Officer .The appeal will be heard by a panel consisting of one Vice President and 4 members (none of whom shall be an Officer) chosen by that Vice-president. The appellant shall be reinstated if the majority of the panel votes to allow the appeal.



Constitution Reg Charity No. 212219

DATA STORAGE

5 We may hold on computers personal information about members; solely for the maintenance of our membership records and conduct of our activities. We may not divulge such information outside the Society.

GENERAL MEETINGS

6a) An AGM shall be held in the first six months of each year and shall consider and (if approved) adopt the Annual Report and Accounts for the past year and transact any other business that may arise. Ten members shall form a quorum.

(b) Each GM shall be convened by written notice, given by the Chairman or an Officer deputising for him or her. This notice shall be dispatched to each member at the last known address, at least 10 days before the Meeting and stating the business of the GM. Ten members shall form a quorum.

c) Subject to Clause 6 e), approval of a motion put to a GM requires a simple majority of votes cast. A tie may be resolved by the Chairman of the meeting casting a second vote. A member attending a GM may propose a motion about an issue which is not mentioned in the notice of the GM. If the Chairman of the GM decides that the issue is not urgent and may also be of controversial interest to the generality of members this Chairman may defer the motion to the next GM.

d) An E G M shall be held upon the requisition of ten members, sent to the Secretary or other Officer, specifying the reason for the meeting, or upon a resolution of an Officers' meeting.

e) A motion for the alteration of this constitution requires the approval of at least two thirds of the members present and voting at an E G M. If the motion is proposed pursuant to a Clause 6(d) requisition the Secretary must receive this motion at least six weeks before the EGM where it is to be discussed.

f) No alteration to Clause 1 (Objects), Clause 8 (Dissolution) or this Clause 6f) shall take effect without the approval in writing of the Charity Commissioners or other authority having charitable jurisdiction. No alteration may be made which would deprive us of the legal status of charity. No amendment enabling the provision of any form of trustee benefit shall be made without the prior written approval of the Charity Commission.

AFFILIATION

7 We may affiliate to such other societies, constituted for like objects, as may be decided at a G M. In pursuing our objects we may act alone or in collaboration with other parties.

DISSOLUTION

8a) We may be dissolved by a resolution passed by a two-thirds majority of those present and voting at an E G M convened for that purpose, of which at least 6 weeks notice shall have been given to the Secretary.

b) Assets remaining after satisfaction of our liabilities shall not be distributed among our members but shall be given to such other charitable institution(s) with objects similar to some of ours as we shall decide: but should this be impracticable, then to other charitable purposes.



Readycorn Dean Reservoir Winter and Summer

