

# PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY

HELPING WALKERS & PROTECTING FOOTPATHS  
Since 1894



ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS

2013



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## Annual Report 2013

Trustees and volunteers at Taylor House	2
President's Report	4
Chairman's Report	5
Treasurer's Report	6
Independent Examiner's Report	7
Accounts 2013	8
PNFS Trustees	10
Courts & Inquiries Reports	11
Consultations & Orders Report	15
Faults & Inspectors Reports	16
Signpost Officer's Report	17
Bridge Project Report	18
Membership Secretary's Report	19
Area Officers/Inspectors/Agents Areas	22

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Registered Charity No. 212219

***Front Cover - Clarke Rogerson, Phil Featherstone (RA Stockport Group) and Ernest Namma Stockport MBC at the Gigg Brook handover ceremony***

***Back Cover - Gigg Brook circa 1920s and 2013***

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# Officers and other Taylor House Volunteers (as at 31st December 2013)

## **VICE PRESIDENTS**

Andrew Bennett  
David Bratt  
Norman Edwards  
Gilly Gostick  
Sir John Johnson  
**Eric Kime**  
*(RIP 1st March 2013)*  
Gwynneth Littleton  
Derek Seddon

## **PRESIDENT**

Clarke Rogerson  
42 Southgate  
Flixton  
Manchester M41 9EG  
0161 749 8412  
clarke.rogerson@gmail.com

## **CHAIRMAN**

### **(Resigned Jan 2014)**

John Broadbent  
19 Flaggwood Avenue  
Marple  
SK6 6HP  
0161 449 7251  
johnbroadbent@ntlworld.com

## **TREASURER**

Alistair Taylor  
18 Bredbury Green  
Romiley  
Stockport  
SK6 3DN  
0161 430 3356

## **TRUSTEES**

Rhoda Barnett  
John Broadbent  
Bill Buckley  
Paul Easthope  
John Harker  
Dave Morton  
Terry Norris  
Alistair Taylor

## **COURTS AND INQUIRIES OFFICERS**

Rhoda Barnett (Derbyshire)  
John Harker (Eastern)  
Terry Norris (Western)  
Harry Scott (Staffs)

## **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

Bill Buckley  
c/o Taylor House

## **SIGNPOST OFFICER**

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SK8 5EN  
0161 283 7824  
davidcmorton@ntlworld.com

## **OTHER SIGNPOST PERSONNEL**

Ted Wolfe

## **FOOTPATH FAULTS OFFICER**

Hilda Bowler

## **CONSULTATIONS AND ORDERS MANAGER**

Alan Hooley  
29 Buxton Lane  
Marple  
Stockport SK6 7QL  
0161 427 4772

## **ASSESSORS**

Brian Hamilton  
John Grimsey  
Wally Smith

## **FOOTBRIDGE ASSESSOR**

Neil Collie

## **OFFICE VOLUNTEERS**

Mike Barnes  
Suzanne Clarke  
Peter Goulden  
Andrew Harter  
Jerzy Matuszewski  
Peter Nicholson  
Brian Summerscales

## **HONORARY EXAMINER**

Liz Hudson

## **PEAK AND NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY**

Registered Charity No. 212219

Taylor House, 23 Turncroft Lane, Offerton, Stockport, SK1 4AB. 0161 480 3565

Email: [mail@peakandnorthern.org.uk](mailto:mail@peakandnorthern.org.uk) website: [www.peakandnorthern.org.uk](http://www.peakandnorthern.org.uk)

Invitation to members

# Annual General Meeting

Saturday April 12<sup>th</sup>

AT  
BRITANNIA HOTEL, DIALSTONE LANE,  
OFFERTON, STOCKPORT, SK2 6AG

AMPLE FREE CAR PARKING IS AVAILABLE  
NUMBER 383 BUS FROM STOCKPORT OR 384 FROM MARPLE STATION  
BOTH STOP NEAR THE HOTEL  
SERVICE 192 BUSES FREQUENTLY AVAILABLE AT NEARBY A6

10:30 Refreshments

11:00 Meeting Commences

12:30 HOT BUFFET LUNCH (Donations welcome)

13.30 Presentation  
Sue & Chris Woods, Peak District Green Lane Alliance  
*Problems caused by 'off-roading' in the Peak Park*

Kindly notify Paul Easthope by phone or text 07759 653354 or  
Email [mail@pnfs.org.uk](mailto:mail@pnfs.org.uk)

stating if lunch is required no later than April 4<sup>th</sup>.

To help defray meal costs, individual donations are invited for a  
minimum £8.50 per person

We Look Forward to seeing you

# President's Report



## **Clarke Rogerson**

As you will see from John Broadbent's report he has resigned due to ill-health. In the two years John has been with us he has done a tremendous job and it has been a real pleasure to work with him. On behalf of us all I'd like to thank him for a job well done and wish him a speedy return to good health.

Another of our Trustees, Rhoda Barnett, will not be seeking re-election at the forthcoming AGM, she will however be continuing in her role as Courts & Inquiries Officer for Derbyshire. Again I'd like to thank Rhoda for the tremendous work she has done over the last four years as a Trustee.

In addition to the above, two other Trustees Terry Norris and Alistair Taylor have indicated that the 2014 AGM will be the last time that they will be seeking re-election. They have both done a tremendous job on behalf of the society and will have served 7 years and 6 years, respectively, by the time they step down in 2015.

This does of course mean that we are seeking new people to step forward to become trustees of the society. Being a trustee is a tremendously rewarding job and is an opportunity to make a real difference that are a benefit to all walkers.

Application for these positions is open to all members, the main qualities we will be looking for are a passion for footpaths, a strong desire to see that the society continues to thrive and an ability to work well as part of the team. Detailed knowledge of footpath law whilst desirable is not essential as new trustees will have a wealth of knowledge and experience to draw on from other members of the team. If you think being a trustee is for you or if you are a little uncertain and would like to know more please do get in touch either with one of the Trustees or myself. Arrangements will be made for you to meet the team and see them in action at meetings before you finally commit yourself.

You will see from the other reports that 2013 was another good year for PNFS with more signposts and bridges being installed and our accounts once again in the black. Some of the messages from the front line on faults and orders may be a little mixed, no doubt due, at least in part, to cuts in Highway Authority staffing and budgets, but the fact is without the good work of all our volunteers at PNFS things could very well be much worse.

Of course none of this good work, which benefits all walkers, could happen if it were not for the continued support of you our members. We hope that you will all continue to support the cause in 2014. Where appropriate renewal notices have been included with this annual report, if you don't already please consider paying by Direct Debit, gift aiding your subscription or receiving your newsletter by email, all of these things help save money and volunteer time. That's time and money that can be spent on the real work of preserving Rights of Way.

# Chairman's Report

## ***John Broadbent***

Unfortunately this will be my first and last Annual Report as I have had to give up the Chairman's role due to ill health. Whilst I am sorry to be leaving after such a relatively short period of time I am happy with what has been achieved over the past 2 years during my time as Vice Chairman and Chairman:-



- Delivery of New Constitution
- Increase in number of Trustees from 5 to 8
- Increase in Members from 1274 to 1345
- Increase in Footpath Inspectors from 79 to 97
- Increase in signposts from 336 to 380
- Improvements in Management design of PNFS
- Increase in number of experienced volunteers at Taylor House
- PNFS representation at 7 Country Shows during 2013
- Improvements in Membership processes
- Implementation of totally new IT in Taylor House laying the foundations for future development of PNFS.

In addition, plans are being developed in respect of :- Ongoing development of IT project, Inspector Development, Membership Development and Membership Renewal process.

Now that the new IT is operational there is an opportunity for the Society to make further expansion into the more outlying parts of our area of influence, so ensuring that we protect even more footpaths. The use of remote access to Taylor House systems, digital mapping etc will all help members living some distance from Taylor House to communicate more effectively.

In order to help bring this about we will need more volunteers. I know this is something that I always seem to be harping on about but it is a fact of life. My view is that the Society needs to be looking at new ways to attract volunteers and new members, perhaps using agencies that specialise in volunteer recruitment. I think this is particularly important in looking to recruit new Trustees to PNFS. Of course if there are existing members who would like to take on any of these roles I know that the Trustees would be delighted to hear from you.

The following reports summarise our work carried out during 2013. Good progress has been made in all areas and it is interesting to note in Alan Hooley's report that whilst the number of pre order consultations are down, the number of objections we have made has increased.

Problems are being encountered with many Highway Authorities having difficulties resolving faults reported to them due to staff cut backs in Rights of Way departments. This is slowing down the resolution of footpath faults and is an area of considerable concern to us. During 2014 your trustees will be looking closely at what PNFS can do to deal with this problem and will be reporting progress to you later in the year.

We are well placed to expand our activities. We have more footpath inspectors, more members, and an excellent team both at Taylor House and in the field. I would like to thank everyone for the support they have given me over the past two years and wish the PNFS volunteers and all members good walking and all the best for the future.

# Treasurer's Report

## ***Alistair Taylor***

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 the trustees decisions made in 2006

Again we managed to balance our receipts over expenditure leaving a small surplus of £425.

### **Receipts**

Overall receipts for 2013 were £48,604 compared to £31,317 for 2012. This was mainly due to legacies from the estates of Hilda Mayall and Vernon Hill of approx £12,000. Receipts increased from nearly all our other sources.

Subscriptions were down slightly to £11,120 We think this was due to the much larger numbers of new members recruited at country shows and lectures at the £5 single and £8.5 household amount. These replaced members leaving who had paid the full membership rates.

Our members and others gave generously in general donations, up over 40% to £8,338. Donations for signposts & footbridges increased to £4,559 compared with £3,184 last year.

Gift Aid receipts were up from £1,188 to £2,240.

Investment income increased again this year to £8,251 from £6,444. This was helped by an extra payment from the Co Op bank on taking up the new bonds issued on their restructuring.

### **Payments**

Payment's were higher this year at £48,179. Mainly due to a £11,550 investment in new computers for Taylor House.

Taylor House running costs were down appreciably to £3,567, no new boiler to pay for this year.

Signpost & footbridge expenditure increased to £8,505 from £6,076. This was due to financing two small footbridges.

Posting and printing cost were up from £7,164 to £10,136 this was due to increased communications with our membership. We printed and distributed an extra newsletter and our new constitution.

Function costs were higher at £2,596 due to increased cost of our AGM and Half Yearly Meeting. The stands at country shows also cost more than last year

Professional fees were higher at £3,524 due to "Silverdale 14" solicitors fees

We also incurred a cost of £767 in rebuilding the Thomas Boulger memorial. Details in Signpost 45

### **Balance Sheet**

You may be aware that we have an investment in Co Op bonds. During the year the Co Op bank had a serious financial crisis that nearly lead to bankruptcy. As a result we have been issued new bonds at a lower value. Our government bonds also fell in value. However our other investments increased. Overall we are down £4,512 on what the society has invested over the years. There is optimism that the Co Op bonds will now recover in price.





# Independent Examiner's Report

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Peak and Northern Footpaths Society**

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 December 2013, which are set out on form CC16a.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's report**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

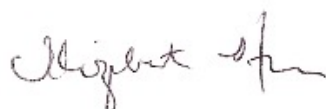
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Elizabeth Hudson ACA  
Bradley Fold, Woodford Lane, Newton, Macclesfield SK10 4LH  
19<sup>th</sup> February 2014

# 2013 Accounts



Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

No 212219

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	01/01/2013	To	31/12/2013
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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 £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Legacies bequests	12,140	-	-	12,140	1,000
Donations general	8,338	-	-	8,338	5,843
Donations signposts	-	4,059	-	4,059	3,184
Donations footbridges	-	500	-	500	-
Gift Aid tax	2,240	-	-	2,240	1,188
Interest/Dividends	8,251	-	-	8,251	6,444
Subscriptions	11,120	-	-	11,120	11,959
Affiliations	1,570	-	-	1,570	1571
Miscellaneous	386	-	-	386	128
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>44,045</b>	<b>4,559</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>48,604</b>	<b>31,317</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>44,045</b>	<b>4,559</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>48,604</b>	<b>31,317</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Taylor House running costs	3,567	-	-	3,567	5,334
Signpost & Footbridges	-	8,505	-	8,505	6,076
Travel & Subsistence	5,103	-	-	5,103	5,575
Printing Copying including newsletter	4,865	-	-	4,865	4,180
Postage Telephone Stationary	5,271	-	-	5,271	2,984
Computer Software	436	-	-	436	659
Functions	2,596	-	-	2,596	1,669
Insurance	1,579	-	-	1,579	1,517
Subscriptions & Donations	415	-	-	415	262
Legal Professional & Secretarial	3,524	-	-	3,524	2,267
Misc Boulger memorial	767	-	-	767	-
Sundries	-	-	-	-	146
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>28,124</b>	<b>8,505</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>36,629</b>	<b>30,669</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
Loan stock purchase	-	-	-	-	38,490
Computer Hardware	11,550	-	-	11,550	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>11,550</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11,550</b>	<b>38,490</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>39,674</b>	<b>8,505</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>48,179</b>	<b>69,159</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>4,371</b>	<b>- 3,946</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>- 37,842</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>77,597</b>	<b>5,023</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>82,620</b>	<b>120,462</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>81,968</b>	<b>1,077</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>83,045</b>	<b>82,620</b>

## 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 £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Cash bank accounts	81,908	1,077	-
	Petty cash	60		-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>81,968</b>	<b>1,077</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>	Details			
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Government stocks			39,847
	Loan stock			61,593
	Equities			1,496
				-
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Taylor House building		60,153	
	Computer Equipment		14,050	
	Furniture fittings & other equipment		4,351	
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	<i>WAS Taylor</i>	Alistair Taylor	24/2/2014	
	<i>W A Buckley</i>	BILL BUCKLEY	24/02/2014	

# PNFS Trustees



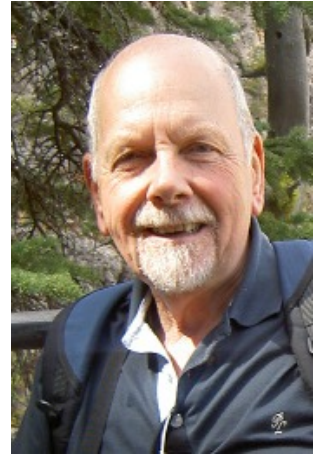
*Rhoda Barnett*



*John Broadbent*



*Bill Buckley*



*Paul Easthope*



*John Harker*



*Dave Morton*



*Terry Norris*



*Alistair Taylor*

## ***Rhoda Barnett***

Much of my time this year has been taken up with trying to protect walkers rights when diversion of paths have been proposed in the interests of landowners. The legislation allows changes to the routes of paths to be made solely to benefit the owners of the land over which the paths run, but the changes must not be "substantially less convenient" for walkers and the effect on the enjoyment of walkers is a material consideration. Both Derbyshire County Council and the Peak District National Park Authority tend to consult the Society about proposals which they do not seem to have considered properly from the walkers perspective. For example, the proposed diversion of Footpaths 11 and 12 Hatton, in the south of Derbyshire, ignored the need for a new bridge over the roadside ditch and took the diverted route through a horse paddock - not very pleasant for walkers. Proposed diversions in Church Broughton, Kniveton, Swadlincote and Mercaston were tortuous and included unnecessary gates. Usually I have been able to convince the respective authorities to improve the new routes, but it is worrying that they were proposed in the first place. Suggested extinguishments of paths also posed problems - one was to stop up part of the towpath of the former Derby Canal at Swarkestone, which had become blocked by the Boat Club; if the path were open, this would be an enjoyable, interesting, historical route. Not being able to use a path is not a legal ground for extinguishing it. I have not heard from the council since I responded to the consultation last April, so hopefully they are having second thoughts and are instead considering taking action to remove the obstructions. This might well turn out to be a suitable case for the Society to serve a legal notice on the council to secure the opening up of the path.

However it is not all doom and gloom - after continual pressure from myself and the Society's Inspector, the Peak Park Authority has at last managed to come up with an acceptable, though not perfect, diversion for Footpath 10 Hassop, long blocked by quarrying. The county council has succeeded in making a sensible diversion order for a path in Castle Gresley, which was blocked by new houses when the district council gave planning permission, and then tried to make a defective order.

Work to resolve obstructions to paths by fences, broken stiles etc has continued, as has the assessment of the effect of planning applications on rights of way - nearly 40 this year. In particular the number of applications for wind turbines has increased; generally they are to be sited sufficiently far away from the path for the effect to be minimal. However, one which was proposed very near a path where the outstanding view of moorland would have been completely spoiled, I did oppose, and this appears to have been abandoned.

There were also proposals for major housing developments in the south of Derbyshire, in connection with which I have sought improvements in paths crossing or near the sites - no indication yet that my suggestions will be implemented, but well worth trying. I am sure that we will get many more such consultations in the next few years, with the new presumption that "sustainable" development should be allowed.

# Courts & Inquiries Reports (continued)

## *John Harker*

In Stockport, 2013 was a mixed year. Positive progress with Bredbury & Romiley Footpath 91 at Far Benfield saw a PNFS-funded bridge erected across Gigg Brook dedicated to the memory of the late Adrian Littleton. Funding from Stockport MBC and a contribution from the Ramblers' has enabled an unwalkable path to be rescued from oblivion. However, other problems have taken the shine off this achievement somewhat. Legal proceedings had to be initiated over the obstructions on Cheadle & Gatley Footpath 38. The landowner alleges that this section was closed over 20 years ago under a road bypass scheme. Evidence in our files contradicts this and we have supplied the evidence to Stockport MBC. We are assisting a member of an affiliated club who has initiated legal proceedings against Stockport MBC over the obstruction of Marple Footpath 18 at Pistol 'Farm' on the Derbyshire border. The case has reached the magistrates' court and is ongoing as we speak. On a more positive note, we have assisted a resident of Woodley with a claim for a public footpath and an application for a Definitive Map Modification Order has been submitted in the Society's name to Stockport MBC.

In South Yorkshire, we had to initiate legal proceedings in Rotherham and Barnsley and threaten to do so in Sheffield to make any progress on cases of obstruction. However, I'm pleased to report that as the year ended, Wath upon Dearne Footpath 11 and Whiston Footpath 10 both in Rotherham are well on the way to being resolved and Ecclesfield Footpath 62 in Sheffield is now walkable. In Barnsley Great Houghton Bridleway 13/Little Houghton Bridleway 3 was eventually resolved successfully but the ongoing problems with Dunford Bridleway 1, obstructed and out of repair, are proving problematic. A site meeting last September of all interested parties seemed to reach agreement on a diversion as being the solution. This has not happened, and as 2013 closed, it looks increasingly likely that we are heading for the magistrates' court under sections 56 and 130A of the Highways Act 1980. In Doncaster, we were approached by a resident of Finningley to assist with a claim for a public footpath which crossed the border into Nottinghamshire. An application for a Definitive Map Modification Order in the Society's name has now been submitted to Notts. County Council.

Wakefield and Leeds don't usually take up much time, but last year saw obstructions on two footpaths occupy me. Footpath 33 runs across the race course in Pontefract. It is blocked by the rails of the course and the course owners refuse to act. Wakefield MDC is loathe to act as the course brings visitors and money into a depressed area. A dilemma for Wakefield MDC perhaps, but where does our duty lie? It must be to the footpath user surely? Great and Little Preston Footpath 15 in Leeds was more clear cut. Overgrown and obstructed by security fencing, Leeds Council promised action over this winter outside the breeding season.

In Derbyshire, we supported the National Park Authority's attempts to impose permanent Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) on Chapel Gate in Edale and The Roych (Old Hayfield Road) to prevent use by motorised vehicles. Other successes involve the reopening of Pinxton Footpath 15 in Bolsover District and Ilkeston Footpath 4 in Erewash. However, the downside is a missing bridge on Hope Woodlands Footpath 6 in the Ashop valley and an out of repair bridge on Charlesworth Bridleway 43 better known as Doctor's Gate. Lack of money is not a defence that Derbyshire CC can use if these cases escalate to magistrates' court.

Finally, I attended a recent meeting with officers at Sheffield Council. The rights of way budget is facing 30% cuts over the next three years. In Barnsley, the rights of way staff had to apply for half the number of current jobs. Trained officers are being lost and our job can only get harder, but yet never more important.

# Courts & Inquiries Reports (continued)

## ***Terry Norris***

The most cheering event of 2013 was the making of a Definitive Map Modification Order by Lancashire County Council recognising the path at Silverdale in front of Browns Houses behind the sea wall as claimed by the Society. This Order was made following a direction from the Secretary of State allowing an appeal from the initial refusal of the Council to make the Order despite being recommended to do so by the officers. Since the original refusal there has been a change in political control of the Council, so the matter came before a newly constituted committee with only one member of the former committee present. The councillors unanimously accepted the officers' recommendation that in the event of objections being received and not withdrawn the Order be sent to the Secretary of State and promoted to confirmation, if necessary at a public inquiry. This means that the Society will not have to bear the considerable cost of fighting the case, if as is almost certain, the order is opposed by the owners of Browns Houses. We shall of course support the Council in promoting the case.

In contrast the most depressing aspect of the year was Councils continuing to expend large amounts of scarce public resources in promoting Gating Orders, whilst devoting little or no funds to keeping public footpaths in good repair and removing obstructions. These orders are not restricted to closing off back alleys in inner city estates but are being used to gate definitive footpaths providing access to recreational routes across public open spaces and along rivers and canals. The worst examples have been in the Chadderton area of Oldham, where paths which provided very convenient and well used ways of accessing the River Roch and the canal have been closed under pressure from residents suffering burglaries. The alternative routes are much longer and along roads bearing considerable amounts of traffic. The procedure for making these orders is essentially undemocratic, with the Council acting as judge and jury. Opposition from the Society and the local RA group proved of no avail. Tameside Council have also processed a number of gating orders on paths which provided convenient walking routes to schools and bus stops, despite considerable opposition from some local residents and ourselves.

Myself and another member of the Society, Malcolm Banks, have completed a condition survey of the state of the Bolton Rotary Way, a 50 mile recreational route following the boundaries of Bolton Borough. We found a number of problems, including faulty stiles, flooded areas, some overgrown sections and an absence of way marks in some parts making the route difficult to follow. The response of Bolton Rotary to the report has been distinctly underwhelming, despite the intention of those who originally set up the route that it should be "a centennial project of lasting community benefit". In contrast, the Bolton Council Public Rights of Way officer has responded promptly and efficiently, so that a number of the problems has been remedied and others will be addressed in the near future. The booklet containing the above quote is out of print and there appear to be no plans to update its content, despite our report containing an amended text, taking account of all the changes since the route's inception in 2005.

# Courts & Inquiries Reports (continued)

## ***Harry W Scott***

As I write my report in January 2014 and look back over 2013 a great deal has been achieved, although there have been disappointments. I received a total of 120 planning applications from Staffordshire County Council and the District Councils, all of which have been investigated where they directly affect a footpath. I had a large number of planning applications for the retention of Poly Tunnels for the growing of soft fruit, mostly strawberries and I spent a few weeks in the summer walking in Mid Staffordshire looking at the affect that Poly Tunnels have had on the footpath network, mainly damage by heavy machines and flooding from rainwater runoff. I only received 16 footpath diversion consultations during 2013, which is considerably less than previous years. Only two have been objected too. Footpath 10 Sheen Parish in the Staffordshire Moorlands, which goes through Pool Farm, which is no longer a working farm. The landowner does not wish to have walkers passing his front door. The diversion is devious and less convenient so we have objected and we wait for the order to be made. The other objection is to footpath 32 Barton under Needwood East Staffordshire in the quarry at Tucklesholme. Both Aggregate Industries and the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust wish to dictate where walkers can walk post extraction, so we are currently in negotiations for an improved route. We have had more orders to divert footpaths from the District Councils during 2013. Unfortunately the standard of order making is very poor and it has been necessary to object to drafting errors. At the beginning of 2013 Staffordshire County Council decided to start contracting out council services, disappointingly this includes Countryside Services and the Rights of Way Office. Stoke on Trent continues to be a black hole, with only one Rights of Way Officer for the City many issues remain outstanding. However in spite of this a few more footpaths were added to the definitive map for Stoke in 2013.



*Pictures by David Hurrell of gates on the newly created right of way near Ewden valley near Stocksbridge*



# Consultation & Orders Report

## ***Alan Hooley***

We had no personnel changes in 2013. I acknowledge with thanks the work of the assessors, and also of the inspectors, whose reports provide the basic material for our negotiations with the order making authorities. (OMAs.)

The years saw a further decline in the workload, continuing the trend of the recent past. I assume that the reduction in public spending is the main cause of the decline. The fall in numbers of orders was small (3.6%), but the smallness of the reduction was almost certainly due to the fact that there were a substantial number of orders in the pipeline at the time the staff reductions began to bite. A more accurate projection derives from the number of pre-order consultations - down 17%. The full implications for the footpath network of this reduction in local authority activity have yet to be seen. The increase in the 'Other' category is not significant, as the statistics are drawn from the incoming post log and 'Other' records every letter we receive.

I am unable to identify the reason for the rise in the number of objections from 5 to 22. I do not think we have become more argumentative. Some objections are technical eg the order fails to specify something the regulations require it to specify, such as the width of a new section of path. Some are holding objections, lodged to stop time running against us, to give sufficient time to consider a proposal. An objection becomes substantive when the Society decides to take the issue to a public inquiry, if need be.

One reason may be that with the reduction in staff the OMAs have less time to think out the options thoroughly, and less than satisfactory solutions are proposed in order to save time. Another reason may be the pressure on building land, tempting developers to use every square inch for their development rather than for a footpath. There have been a number of instances of a proposal to divert a rural path on to the footways of the roads of the new development – a practice that is frowned upon. Certainly these pressures will make more difficult the task of maintaining and improving the footpath network.

Statistics: Received at Taylor House (2012 figures in brackets): 329 orders of all types (341), 256 pre-order consultations (309) 55 alley-gating orders (78), and 251 other matters (214). We lodged 22 objections (5).

To these figures must be added everything dealt with the Area Officers, to give the full extent of the workload.

# Faults & Inspectors Reports

## ***Hilda Bowler***

### **Footpath Faults**

During the year a total of 852 faults were reported, almost half of which were obstructions of some kind, with a small number of ploughing and cropping faults, and the remainder divided almost equally between damaged and broken stiles and signage problems.

At the end of December, there were 4890 outstanding faults on the database, many of the faults reported before 2013. We would appreciate inspectors carrying out 'follow-up' inspections as it is possible some of these will have been cleared.

I would like to thank Sue Clarke and Andrew Harter for their hard work in inputting fault details onto the database, and Brian Summerscales for his sterling work in finding footpath numbers - their help is much appreciated.

### **Inspectors**

It has been a busy year, with over 20 new inspectors (some yet to be found areas), and we welcome them and hope they will enjoy their time inspecting footpaths and not find too many off-putting experiences.

Nine inspectors have resigned for various reasons, and we would like to extend our thanks to them for the invaluable work they have done for the Society, and wish them well. We hope they will enjoy a well-earned rest!

This busy year has taken its toll of me, I am afraid, and the time has come for me to pass on the recruitment and training of Inspectors to someone with more time and energy than I have at present. I have enjoyed meeting potential new Inspectors and introducing them to how the Society's Inspectors work, and have been constantly surprised that they have not been put off by the hectic Monday mornings when they have come in to Taylor House. I would like to thank them, and all Inspectors for the support and encouragement I have received. I also thank David Gosling for taking on this role.

I will continue to deal with the fault reports, so Inspectors should continue to copy all these to Taylor House ([faults@peakandnorthern.org.uk](mailto:faults@peakandnorthern.org.uk)) as previously - the only change will be that I can deal with them more quickly. I will also help Sue and Andrew with the database (if needed) - their help has been invaluable, as also has Brian's in finding footpath numbers.

## **David Morton**

This year we added **19** new signposts, but lost 2 (see below) for a total of **380** in situ. Most were financed by donations – now **£300** to cover rising costs. Part of a legacy was used to put 9 signposts\* well outside the Peak District, where it is hoped that they will act as “silent ambassadors”. All can be viewed and located via the PNFS website home page and its “Signposts” button (top right of page) and then “Signpost Gallery” and “Open style 1, 2, 3 or 4” buttons. Personally I like Style 2 best for its use of OS mapping via Streetmap.

### **New in 2013**

- 435 at Quarters Farm, Bradwell
- 436 at 437 near Common Barn Farm, Rainow
- 438\* at Sprotborough, Doncaster
- 439 above Sheffield Rd, Chapel en le Frith, IMO John Bailey of Chapel R.A.
- 440 just N of Breckhead, Chinley, IMO Denis Shaw of New Mills R.A.
- 441 N of Breckhead, Chinley, IMO Penny Jones
- 442 NE of Breckhead, Chinley, IMO Sam Hackney
- 443\* at Inn Farm, Weston Underwood, Kedleston, Derby
- 444 at Rushup Hall, Chapel en le Frith, IMO Hilda Sanders
- 445\* at Holly Grange Farm, Lea, Matlock
- 446\* at Spout House Lane, Huncoat, Accrington for Huncoat Community Forum
- 447\* at Brockholes Nature Reserve, Preston for Shirley Northcott
- 448 at Hay Lee Farm, Combs
- 449 at Hay Lee Farm, Combs
- 450\* at Caldby Hill, W. Kirby, Wirral West. IMO of Ian and Eileen Hewitson
- 451\* at Pettypool Wood, Sandiway, Northwich
- 452\* at Pettypool Wood, Sandiway, Northwich
- 455\* at Whitendale, Dunsop Bridge, Bowland

### **Lost in 2013**

- 375 by Besom Hill Reservoir, Shaw, Oldham; no consent for a replacement
- 227 at Ash Farm, Ollerton, Knutsford; stolen; replacement ordered Jan 2014

### **Major Repairs**

- 266 at Platt Wood Farm, Lyme Park, repainted and reposted
- 103 at Sparbent, A54 near Danebower, refurbished and repositioned
- 156 at Clough House, Wildboardclough, new plate and new MP to Mildred Robertson
- 143 on top edge of Macc Forest near Shutlingsloe, refurbished, reposted, repositioned
- Ramblers Assoc.** signs 1 and 2 on Anglezarke Moor, rediscovered and refurbished with help from Bill Buckley and the R.A.(Manchester and Peak District)
- Sheffield Co-op R.C.** sign at Mortimer Road, Bradfield, refurbished

All signposts have been inspected within the last four years.

My thanks to all our donors and Dave Brown for his help with maintenance and inspection and to Ted W., John H., Bill Buckley, Tony Brackenbury, Roy Chetham Michael Granger and PDNP Ranger Martin Winder for their help in 2013.

# Bridge Report

## ***Neil Collie***

The year 2013 has seen three major projects for the Society come to fruition. All have been in the planning stages for at least a year if not more.

Firstly, a handover event was held on 7 May 2013 near Bolton when a cheque for £1,971 was presented to the Council as a donation towards the cost of a boardwalk and two small bridges on Turton Bradshaw North Footpath 9 which is near the popular Jumbles Reservoir. This donation was matched by Bolton Council who arranged to complete additional bridge works, a section of the path to be stabilised and for extensive overgrowth to be cut back.

The second event was on 3 December 2013 when our Chairman presented a cheque for £1,720 to Councillor Christine Mills of Doncaster Council for the cost of materials for a new bridge in Sandall Beat Woods. In exchange Doncaster Council has dedicated a new public footpath leading to the bridge– the 589<sup>th</sup> right of way in the Borough! This act secures, for all time, a public footpath along a popular access into the woodland. The footbridge is across a drainage channel and is wide enough for use by both wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

Thirdly, during the summer major works were carried out by Stockport MBC's contractor, G Cox & Co, to re-open Bredbury & Romiley Footpath 91 and to build a new footbridge across Gigg Brook. This historic path has already been the subject of articles in the Summer 2012 edition of Signpost.. It is only through the perseverance of John Harker and others on the Stockport Walking Forum that a partnership was established to share costs and to improve this path which had been completely un-walkable for many years. This society offered to pay the cost of £7,380 for the footbridge which will be dedicated to the memory of Adrian Littleton, one of our long-standing and dedicated Officers who died early in 2012. A handover event was held on 31 January 2014.

In contrast, little progress has been made during the year, on the two possible projects in Derbyshire at Chinley and Grindleford. Both require some funding contribution from the County Council which has not been forthcoming to date.



*Bridge handover at Turton near Bolton*

# Membership Secretary's Report

## **Bill Buckley**

Last year we reported that the membership of the society had stabilised at a total figure of around 1270 members after declining from an all-time peak in 2009. It is pleasing to report that against a background of rising household costs, 2013 saw a reversal of the downward trend, an indication of the strong loyalty and commitment of our members to the society's aims. Regrettably though, this year some members have informed us that they were unable to justify continuing in membership due to adverse personal financial circumstances, and this has added to the usual level of turnover resulting from members moving out of the region, incapacity or death.

In 2013 more members opted to receive communications and copies of the Signpost newsletter by email. This is continuing to help the Society minimise the high postage costs and release more precious financial resources to fulfil our main objective - footpath preservation. Likewise the payment of membership subscriptions and donations by direct debit, which has the added bonus of reducing our annual clerical workload. In all cases it is important that we have all the correct information on file at Taylor House, so if any members change their address, bank or email address it is vital that we get to know as soon as possible. Inevitably problems do arise from time to time and we ask that in such cases members phone us at Taylor House to investigate and correct any issues relating to their membership or communication difficulties.

We are grateful to the many members of the society who volunteered to give of their time to help recruit new members at shows, evening meetings and at weekends throughout the year.

<b>Members</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>
Annual	834	739	674	823	1021
Ten Year	299	292	266	226	179
Five Year	378	351	275	187	117
Honorary Life	22	32	33	32	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>1536</b>	<b>1414</b>	<b>1274</b>	<b>1268</b>	<b>1345</b>
Affiliates	87	84	75	81	84

### **Special Note from the Treasurer**

Direct Debits CAF ( Charity Aid Foundation) bank who collect our direct debits on your behalf have made changes to the way direct debits are collected. You will no longer see on your statements and online bank details any mention of Peak & Northern Footpaths Society. Instead you will see "Charity Donation" with FRS followed by a six figure number. Collection dates have been changed to the 1st & 15th of the month, so you will probably see your payment collection date move. We now have 348 direct debit payers contributing over half our subscriptions. So please think about changing to paying your subscriptions & donations by direct debit, and if you are a tax payer signing up for Gift Aid.

Forms available at <http://www.peakandnorthern.org.uk>

# Membership

## Honorary Members

Vice Presidents are elected in recognition of outstanding services to the society and they enjoy all the benefits of honorary membership.

Members of 20 or more years standing, aged at least 65 are entitled, on application, to honorary life membership

### **VICE PRESIDENTS**

Andrew Bennet  
David Bratt  
Norman Edwards  
Gilly Gostick  
Sir John Johnson  
Gwynneth Littleton  
Derek Seddon

### **Honorary members**

Mr & Mrs Brandreth  
Mr & Mrs J Burling  
Mr B Clark  
Mr & Mrs P C Crofts  
Mr A M Davies  
Mr M H Deakin  
Mr & Mrs F R M Fysh  
Mrs M M Haigh  
Mrs J Head  
Mr & Mrs D Hilliker  
Mr & Mrs A Howcroft  
Mrs S Hulme  
Mr & Mrs J C Law  
Mrs K Mayall  
Mr T L Norris  
Mr J Ogden  
Mr & Mrs W Peters  
Mr J Robinson  
Mr F Travis  
Mr & Mrs F Whitehead  
Mr S Wraith

## Affiliated Society

Abbotsfield Fellwalkers of Flixton  
Alderley Edge, Wilmslow & District FP Society  
Altrincham & District Rambling Club  
Anchor Ramblers  
Anderton Parish Council  
Ashover Footpath & Bridleway Committee  
Ashton-u-Lyne & District Walking Club  
Barnsley Mountaineering Club  
Blackbrook Conservation Society  
Blackrod Town Council  
Buxton Rambling Club  
CAE - Rambling Club  
CHA Bolton Rambling Club  
CHA Manchester Rambling Club  
CHA Nottingham Rambling Club  
CHA Rochdale Rambling Club  
CHA Sheffield Rambling Club  
Cheshire Tally Ho Hare & Hounds Club  
Clayton Parish Council  
Club AZ Walkers  
Crescent Ramblers Northwich  
Denby Dale Parish Walking Group  
Denton Local History Society  
Derby Nomad Ramblers  
Disley Footpaths Society  
Eccles Rambling and Social Club  
Eyam Village Society  
Hanliensian Rambling Club  
Heatons Reddish U3A  
HF Bolton Group  
HF Bury Group  
HF Nottingham Group  
HF Warrington Rambling Club  
High Peak Hikers  
Holymoorside & Walton Parish Council  
Hunshelf Parish Council  
Leek & District FP Preservation & Rambling Group  
Littleborough Civic Trust  
Longdendale & Glossopdale FP Preservation Society  
Macclesfield & District Field Club  
Macclesfield Rambling Club  
Manchester & District Retired Teachers Association.  
Manchester Associates Rambling Club  
Manchester Field Club  
Manchester Rambling Club  
Marple District Rambling Club  
Mid Cheshire Footpath Society  
New Mills Radical Ramblers  
North Turton Parish Council  
Northenden Walkers  
Northwestern Naturalists Union  
Penistone Town Council  
Pennine Wayfarers Rambling Club  
Poynton Rambling Club  
RA Congleton Group  
RA Doncaster Group  
RA East Cheshire Area  
RA Greater Manchester & High Peak Area  
RA Merseyside & West Cheshire Area  
RA New Mills & District Group  
RA North & Mid Cheshire Area  
RA Nottinghamshire Area  
RA Oldham Group  
RA S Yorks & NE Derbyshire Area  
RA Stockport Group  
Rock and Heather Club  
Romiley Ladies Group  
Rucksack Club  
Sale U3A Walking Group  
Sheffield Clarion Ramblers  
Sheffield Co-op Party Rambling Club  
Sheffield U3A Walking Group 'A'  
Shirland & Higham Parish Council  
Stockport Field Club  
Stockport Rambling & Social Club  
Stockport Walkers  
Sutton-in-Ashfield Rambling Club  
The Good Companions Rambling Club  
The Strollers  
Trafford Walkers  
Warrington Field Club  
Warrington U3A Walking Group  
West Lancashire Footpath Group  
Woodsetts Parish Council  
Wrightington Parish Council

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