

# **NENTHEAD MINES CONSERVATION SOCIETY**

Charitable Incorporated Organisation Number 1166281

Nenthead Mines, Nenthead, Alston, Cumbria, CA9 3PD

## **TRUSTEES REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENT**

**APRIL 2022 TO MARCH 2023**

### **CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES**

The objects of the CIO are to advance the education of the public about mining, quarrying and smelting at Nenthead and in the North Pennines by:

1. Researching, restoring, maintaining, owning and exploring the historic and natural features relating to mining, quarrying and smelting at Nenthead and adjacent mining areas.
2. Encouraging and advocating the conservation of the remains of the mining, quarrying and smelting industries; and conservation of the geological features and natural environment, both above and below ground level.
3. Undertaking archaeology projects.
4. Recording and archiving information.
5. Sharing available information with the public.

### **GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT**

#### Trustees 31 March 2023

Nick Green, David Gough, Andy Hopkirk, Anne Hopkirk, Karl Houseley, Peter Jackson, Allan Richardson, Rosemary Vidler

#### Other trustees co-opted during the year

None

#### Operation

The Charity was registered on 30<sup>th</sup> March 2016 as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation using the Charities Commission model document. The governing document is published on the Society's website and is available from the principal office at Nenthead.

The members present at the meeting appoint trustees at the Annual General meeting of the Society by election. The trustees may also appoint other Trustees during the year but their appointment is only valid until the next Annual General Meeting.

Trustees have held monthly online video conference meetings during this year. Convenors of working groups who are not trustees are invited to attend the monthly meetings in a non-voting capacity.

Trustees established a number of delegated Working Groups to handle the detail of regular operations. Their objective by this is to involve more people in discussions thereby promoting informed and timely decision-making, and allowing trustees' meetings to be focussed on strategic decision-making. The groups are:

- Collections Working Group
- Conservation Working Group
- Fundraising Working Group (new June 2022)
- Infrastructure Working Group
- Member Experience Working Group
- Schools Liaison Working Group (new June 2022)
- Site Working Group
- Visitor Working Group

A Membership Committee reviews and decides applications for full or associate membership. Trustee Anne Hopkirk is the Membership Secretary.

A Coal Authority Sub-Committee of the Board of Trustees has been established to provide a formal point of contact for liaison with The Coal Authority as it consults and considers options for its mine water treatment scheme at Nenthead Mines. Trustee Karl Houseley has chaired this committee.

The Treasurer maintains the accounts of the Charity and, in partnership with the Trustees, accepts and makes payments. Trustee David Gough is Treasurer.

The Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charities Commission.

The Trustees produce and review management policies to guide their decision making. The new/amended policies in this reporting period:

- The trustees resolved to set a rate of £30/hour for Barracks room hire.
- The trustees resolved to appoint Butler & Gee Accountants as the Society's independent accounts checking firm.
- The trustees adopted a policy for electrical, gas or pressurised system work on site.
- Trustees voted to keep and maintain a defibrillator on site.
- Policy relating to the proposed mine water treatment scheme - see the separate section below.

# ACHIEVING THE CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES OF THE SOCIETY

## REPORTS FROM THE WORKING GROUPS

### **Collections Working Group (Convenor Sheila Barker)**

This group manages the Society's collections of artefacts, minerals, maps and plans, photographs and documents.

All these have been catalogued and packed in suitable materials. They are stored in various locations around the site.

Our aim is to scan the documents, maps, plans and photographs so members can have easy access to them via the website.

## **Conservation Working Group (Convenor Rosemary Vidler)**

This group covers all aspects of complying with and maintaining the Scheduled and SSSI designations of the site, including archaeological, nature (flora and fauna), and geological areas of specialist interest.

This year we have been looking at the Scheduled Ancient Monument consent process and how submissions by other working groups are recorded and reported. The Section 17 reporting process, also in our remit, is ongoing.

This group advises the work of the Collections Working Group. We also liaise with other working groups for work to be carried out, e.g. filling in potholes (Volunteers Working Group).

The High Level Stewardship scheme has been agreed for a further five years but, due to policy changes, no longer covers woodlands, i.e. Dowgang Hush. To enable us to carry out any future conservation work in the Hush or in other woodland areas, a Woodland Management Plan has been submitted to the Forestry Commission, who have oversight of this. We are waiting for a response to this.

A future project is the excavating of the area around Stagg Wheel pit and it is hoped that members will come and help with this.

## **Fundraising Working Group**

This group was established following the AGM 2022 and discussion with interested members immediately after.

The group determined it would be loosely organised and task-oriented, only convening and working as needed for specific projects or other targeted funding requirements.

The Society has been fortunate in the reporting period to have found grant support for its projects needs via DEFRA's Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme. As such, the group has not been asked to take on any tasks in this reporting period.

## **Infrastructure Working Group (Convenor Andy Hopkirk)**

The Infrastructure Working Group has met fortnightly in the current reporting period and:

- Continued to develop and manage the Society's banking and finance processes.
- Managed and operated the Society's online membership administration service.
- Managed and administered all the Society's routine administrative needs - for example, expenditures on utility services, insurance and such like - that are not handled through one of the other Working Groups.
- Continued to develop and manage the online Google Workspace through which the Society does its business online and electronically.
- With the practical support of the Site Working Group, established a new broadband WiFi infrastructure across the Smelling Mill buildings complex.
- Continued to manage and promote the bunkhouse facility in the Assay House.

## **Member Experience Working Group (Convenor - vacant position)**

The group has been unable to progress its remit in the reporting period.

## **Schools Liaison Working Group (Convenor Sue Fowler)**

This group was established following the AGM 2022 and discussion with interested members immediately after.

The group has been unable to progress its remit in the reporting period.

## **Site Working Group (Convenor Allan Richardson)**

The group meets monthly online to discuss current and future activities, and at other times *ad hoc*. Activities vary from those we can just get on with, to those which require permission from Historic England or Natural England. The scope varies from minor repairs or maintenance to major building repairs using outside contractors, such as the rebuilding of the various roofs over Brewery Shaft.

English Heritage has been very helpful, both in turning round our Scheduled Monument Consents on a timely basis and being a source of advice, though regretfully not of money. There is always maintenance work and repairs to be carried out, though not as much as one might have expected on an old industrial site where everything was built cheaply as it was not expected to last.

The volunteers have worked hard over the past year, being kept in line by our volunteer Project Manager, Anne Hopkirk, who compared it to herding cats. Thanks go to all those who have helped over the past year, I look forward to working with you again over the next year.

There is always room for more volunteers with the Site Working Group.

## **Visitor Working Group (Convenor Joyce Jackson)**

The group continues to manage the visitor experience by publicising and promoting visits to the site and coordinating members to help with the events. Over the last year there have been:

- 14 public Open Days and approximately 550 people have been on Carrs mine trips.
- As part of the Open Day experience we have introduced Geo trips which are a walk and a Carrs mine tour, both with a geological focus.
- 8 group visits, ranging from school groups, U3A groups, private groups and universities. This was a further 120 people learning about the site, both overground and underground.

The working group is also developing a geology trail to support our Geo trips and other geology focussed group visits.

To support all of the above we have a group of 15 - 20 members who help on site and bring their skills, knowledge and enthusiasm.

## **PROJECTS WITH EXTERNAL FUNDING**

### Geology Steps - £15,734

The project started with a grant of £15,734 in December 2021 from the DEFRA Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.

The project's objective was to improve visitor access to/from the riverbed of the River Nent and adjacent geological features.

The new stone steps by the Smelting Mill and new steel installations at Carrs Mine exit were finally completed in this reporting period in March 2023.

#### Brewery Shaft Buildings Conservation Stage 1 - £4,824

The project started with a grant of £4,824 in April 2022 from the DEFRA Farming in Protected Landscapes programme.

The project's objective was to prepare and submit a comprehensive Stage 2 project proposal detailing the works and the permissions and funding packages necessary to execute a full project.

The Stage 1 project was completed and a Stage 2 proposal duly submitted in February 2023.

#### Brewery Shaft Buildings Conservation Stage 2 - £75,579 + £932

In March 2023, the Stage 2 proposal that was the outcome of the Stage 1 project was successful and a grant of £75,579 was made from the DEFRA Farming in Protected Landscapes programme to execute the project.

The Society also benefited from a donation of £932 from the winding up of the Friends of the North Pennines which the trustees put up as match funding for this project.

It is anticipated that the appointed contractors will begin the works in earnest in June 2023 to be completed over the summer. There will be no visitor access to the buildings while the work is in progress.

## **RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

### **North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership**

The Society is a member of the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Partnership (AONB).

The AONB manages and administers the DEFRA Farming in Protected Landscapes programme, within which the Society has been successful in competitive grant competitions (see above).

We are represented on the AONB's Partnership, Geopark Advisory Group and Historic Environment Working Group by Trustee Peter Jackson.

#### Report from NMCS participation in the NPAONB's Geopark Advisory Group

The North Pennines underwent its latest periodic review of the UNESCO Global Geopark designation in summer 2022. This was successful and the next revalidation of the designation is not until 2026. The evaluators made a positive comment about the NMCS contributions to the work of the Geopark. Trustee Peter Jackson attended during the evaluators visit in July 2022.

#### Report from NMCS participation in the NPAONB's Historic Environment Working Group (HEWG)

The HEWG met several times during the year. The HEWG is involved with the Land of Lead and Silver project (LOLAS) for which there is a separate report below. Otherwise, the HEWG has not been involved in any discussions about the mining landscapes.

## Report from NMCS participation in the NPAONB's Land of Lead and Silver Project Advisory Group (LOLAS)

Funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and Historic England, the *Land of Lead and Silver* is a 16-month project development activity (ending August 2023) that will lead into a final proposal to the same funding bodies for a follow-on four-year project.

The project focuses on lead mining heritage of the North Pennines, and on the skills required to record, conserve, maintain and interpret this heritage for future generations.

The project includes a capital programme of works for heritage at risk, work to engage new audiences, training for volunteers and capacity building for the voluntary sector. It is possible that some of the buildings at Nenthead may be included in the project.

Trustee Peter Jackson was a member of the interview panel for the recruitment of the project manager in July 2022 and is a member of the Advisory Group that supports the project manager.

### **Historic England and Natural England**

The majority of the Nenthead Mines site is designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The site also contains one Site of Special Scientific Interest and our site boundary contacts another. As a consequence of these circumstances, we must obtain legal consents from one or both of Historic England and Natural England for many operations on site.

In the reporting period, we have sought and obtained:

- 16 new Scheduled Monument Consents from Historic England
- 2 new Site of Special Scientific Interest consents from Natural England.

### **Potential mine water treatment scheme at Nenthead Mines**

The Coal Authority (CA) along with the Environment Agency (EA) have continued to undertake work on a water treatment scheme (the Scheme) aimed at reducing mine water pollution in the River Nent. The Scheme is mainly targeting the removal of dissolved metals arising from the Rampgill Mine and Capelcleugh Mine entrances. The CA, through its external consultation process, has now placed an indicative design for the Scheme in the public domain although a decision on whether to proceed further, i.e. the planning process etc., has not yet been announced by the CA.

NMCS is the registered landholder of the Nenthead Mine Complex and is responsible for the management of the site as a whole. As would be expected of any landholder NMCS has had regular contact with the CA in order to understand the implications of the proposed Scheme should it proceed.

The NMCS Trustees' view continues to be that the heritage and legal status of the mines should be protected and that access to the mines and the Nenthead site for leisure purposes should not be obstructed.

Although no final decision has been made by NMCS the Trustees are willing, subject to ultimately reaching a satisfactory agreement, to allow the Scheme to proceed on the NMCS landholding.

### **Health and Safety Executive**

The operation of Carrs Mine requires that we comply with the law including the Mines Regulations 2014. We have maintained our working relationship with a Principal Mines Inspector of the HSE. We have appointed a volunteer Deputy Mine Manager (Member Colin Hindle) to support the volunteer Mine Manager (Trustee Peter Jackson).

## **Approved Mine Routes for Adventure Groups**

We were members of a scheme that managed and financed an engineer's report for certain routes into Smallcleugh and Rampgill Levels to allow their use by commercial Adventure Groups. Due to a review in progress by the Health and Safety Executive, the scheme has not operated during this year and no expenditure has been required.

## **UK Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre**

The British Geological Survey visited Carrs Mine in November 2022 as part of their field work for a report on the *Potential for Critical Raw Material Prospectivity in the UK*. The report was published by BGS - UK Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre in April 2023.

## **Nenthead Community Projects**

This group was established in order to support or lead community projects for the benefit of the Nenthead community. We have supported the work of the Group in establishing a memorial garden at the entrance to the village car park.

## **Others**

We have continued our annual memberships of the **Cumbria Local History Federation** and the **National Association of Mining History Organisations**.

We maintained our annual membership of the **Alston Moor Business Association** until its demise in October 2022.

# **ENCOURAGING AND DEVELOPING MEMBERSHIP AND VOLUNTEERING**

The Society had 143 members + associates on 31 March 2023. (A total of 144 at the same time last year).

We introduced a new membership software package last year, called MemberMojo. It is specifically designed for small organisations, and at an annual cost of £75 is more than £200 a year cheaper than the previous system. It also greatly simplifies the entire process and is easy to maintain.

During the course of the last year, the British Caving Association clarified the position of the two levels of insurance that they offer. As a result of this, the number of active members dropped from 125 on 31 March 2022 to 120 now, while the number of associates rose from 18 to 23.

The overall figures hide the fact that we regularly finish the renewal cycle with approximately 120 members and over the remaining months we gain about 25 new members - i.e. about 21% of our members do not renew their membership.

The Members Experience Working Group has been unable to progress its remit in the reporting period. This is a concern, not least in terms of developing and retaining new members as well as existing.

We have introduced an occasional Newsletter to members during this year which aims to keep members informed about volunteering opportunities. There were 45 issues of the Newsletter during this year.

Most of the work on the Nenthead Mines site in the reporting period was carried out by volunteers organised through the various working groups. Volunteers contributed a recorded 6,725 hours in calendar year 2022, equating to an effort-in-kind value of some £192,920 using the Heritage Lottery Fund's volunteer time-to-£ value conversion scale. Volunteers do not receive any payment for time and travelling costs.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

### BUDGETS AND RESERVE POLICIES

The trustees' reserves policy states:

*"NMCS aims to maintain sufficient reserves to finance 12 months routine operating expenditure and an appropriate long-term programme of maintenance of the Nenthead Mines site."*

For the new financial year 2023-24, the trustees formally earmarked an amount of £7,700 as the Reserve and instituted formal budgets for the Working Groups and other planned project expenditures in the year.

### FINANCIAL REPORT 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT			
YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2023		2022/23	
<b>INCOME</b>	Open Days' takings	£ 6,249.24	Carrs Mine trip donations, refreshments
	Private Visit takings	£ 2,184.04	Carrs Mine trip donations, refreshments
	Assay House Fees	£ 2,196.00	Overnight stays in Assay House
	Membership Fees	£ 1,505.65	Membership & Associate fees
	BCA Insurance	£ 1,236.50	Members insurance collected on behalf BCA
	Donations	£ 1,224.31	Donations.except that shown in other income
	Gift Aid	£ 395.98	From membership fees.
	Books and Maps	264.38	
	Other Income	£ 15,188.37	One-offs -2 x £4,455.60 High Level Stewardship, Nenthead Hydro £1,705.95, Grants £3,638.00, Special donation £933.22 for Brewery Shaft
	Total Income	£ 30,444.47	
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	Maintenance	£ 7,001.94	All maintenance
	Broadband Installation	£ 937.12	
	Geology Steps	£ 9,001.48	Purchase 2021-2022 paid 2022-23
	Fire Insurance	£ 1,894.22	
	Insurance	£ 113.00	BCA insurance for the site
	Members Insurance	£ 1,236.50	Collected by NMCS but paid to BCA
	Utilities	£ 4,786.72	Gas, Electricity, Mobile Phone, Broadband
	Workshop	£2,935.19	Repairs and heating
	Purchases re the late Chris Buckingham donations	£111.66	



	Office expenses	£180.00	Archive boxes and general stationary
	Marketing	£ 370.00	Leaflets and Posters
	Open Day expenses	£ 266.33	
	Website	£ 179.98	Hosting & Functionality costs - annual
	Other expenses	£ 1,978.75	AGM, Book purchases, Subscriptions.
	Total Expenditure	£ 30,992.89	
<b>DEFICIT FOR THE YEAR</b>		-£ 548.42	Signed off by typed signature: David Gough, Treasurer 21st April 2023

Report approved by the Trustees, 9th May 2023.

Report signed off by typed signature:

Andy Hopkirk (trustee), for the trustees on 9th May 2023.

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Nenthead Mines Conservation Society.**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Nenthead Mines Conservation Society (the Society) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As charity trustees of the Society you are responsible for the preparation of accounts in accordance with the requirements of Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Society's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

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

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Society as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in the report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: *Chris Butler*  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
Name: Mr Chris Butler  
F.M.A.A.T.  
Address: Butler & Gee Accountants  
7 Newgate  
Barnard Castle  
Co Durham  
DL12 8NQ