

Trustees' annual report for the period

from 01 January 2020 to 31 December 2020

Reference and administrative details

Charity name	Peak and Northern Footpaths Society
Other names charity is known by	PNFS
Registered charity number	212219
Charity principal address	Taylor House 23 Turncroft Lane Stockport SK1 4AB

Names of the charity trustees who manage the society

Trustee name	Office (if any)
David Hurrell	Chairman (died September 18th)
Gavin Miller	Vice Chair (retired October 17th)
David Gosling	Acting Chair October 17 th to December 31st
Paul Easthope	Treasurer
David Brown	Secretary
David Morton	
Mel Bale	
Jenny Allen	

Names and addresses of advisors

Bank	Cooperative Bank, PO Box 250, Delf House, Southway, Skelmersdale WN8 6WT
Direct debits	CAF Bank, 25 Kings Hill, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA
Financial advisor	Our broker is now employed on execution only basis and we have formed a sub committee, including two retired people with investment experience, to decide on our investment strategy. We will make no changes to our investments until that committee has reported

Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document	Constitution adopted 04 April 2018
How the charity is constituted	Unincorporated association
Trustee selection method	Trustees are elected or reappointed at the AGM in April

Additional governance issues

The Society is a statutory consultee on all proposed changes to public rights of way in our area, which comprises the ceremonial counties of Lancashire (south of the River Kent), Cheshire, West Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire.

Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity as set out in its governing document

- a) Creating, preserving and improving 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 and other structures which improve access

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects

- Scrutinising proposals to modify the public right of way network in our area
- Arranging a programme of inspection for that network
- Taking legal action to deal with faults on that network
- Funding improvements to that network
- Erecting signposts
- Funding footbridges

Additional details of objectives and activities

We are grateful for the many hours volunteers have spent working, both inside and outside. Without these volunteers the Society would be unable to function.

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Our membership has increased from 1146 to 1284, an increase of 12%

As statutory consultees we have examined 95 public paths orders and dealt with 170 consultations, 8 public space protection orders, 4 objections and 279 other matters. Despite problems caused by the pandemic this is broadly similar to last year.

We have increased our Inspector numbers from 121 to 152 covering 646 parishes (up from 583 in 2019). They inspect the footpaths in their parishes under the guidance of 8 Area Officers and have discovered 7500 faults. Only 35% of these have been resolved, largely because financial cutbacks mean that local authorities rarely have the manpower to deal with them all.

But we do not hesitate to be robust about dangerous or persistent faults and our 6 Courts and Inquiries Officers (C&IOs) have been authorised on several occasions to serve notice (under s56 or s130A of the Highways Act) on highway authorities. We always precede serving the notice with sending a letter before action. This often prompts them to repair the fault without our needing recourse to serving the order.

The Society has been involved in a number of cases to claim paths on behalf of the walking public where the route is not recorded on the definitive map (DMMOs). This involves extensive work in collecting both verbal and historic evidence and in one case we have instructed counsel to present our case

14 new signposts have been erected throughout our area, but four have been stolen making a total of 536. The programme of inspecting and maintaining each signpost every three years remains on track, helped by the addition of a further 8 people to the signpost team. A few vandalised signposts have been repaired or replaced. Total expenditure £7775

Seven footbridges were funded by the Society at a cost of £29,528. We hand these over to the appropriate highway authority as we are unable to guarantee to maintain them in perpetuity. Highway authorities seem to be increasingly reluctant to take ownership of bridges.

We are continuing to fund improvements to the public rights of way network despite the reluctance of many Highway Authorities to take on additional commitments. We are now approaching other organisations such as Wildlife Trusts, Walking Groups and Park Authorities but the travel restrictions preclude site visits so little has been done this year.

Financial review

Brief statement of the Society's policy on reserves

Our balance sheet at year end 2020 was £476,458 held in a combination of cash, investments and fixed assets (our office building, computer equipment, furniture and fittings).

Within this figure we have restricted funds of £61,010 and fixed assets of £60,654. We maintain a contingency fund of £10,000 for repairs to the aging office building and have ring-fenced legacy funds of £142,927

This leaves a reserve of £201,867 We look to maintain our reserves at between £169,000 and £224,500. These figures are reviewed annually and increased in line with RPI.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

None

Further financial review details

Our main sources of income are subscriptions (gift aided where possible); dividends from investments; donations; and legacies. Since donations and legacies are sporadic and not guaranteed, we strive, successfully, to meet our day-to-day running costs from subscriptions and dividends and use other income to fund our programmes.

Since we are an unincorporated charity, we have vested title to our office building with the Official Custodian for Charities. The building is valued in the accounts at its purchase price rather than its current market value.

.

Other optional information

Future plans

Future planning is inhibited by the current lock down

We are attempting to widen the demographic of the Society, which is currently dominated by retired people. We are attempting to reach out to universities, Duke of Edinburgh award groups and other younger people.

We continue to recruit Path Checkers who are encouraged to use modern smart-phones to report faults when they see them, but who are not, unlike Inspectors, actively encouraged to seek out faults

We will continue instigating DMMOs and anticipate taking some of the current applications to public inquiry.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees.

Name David C Brown
Position Honorary Secretary
Date 09 March 2021






Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

No 212219

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/01/2020 to

31/12/2020

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts				
Subscriptions	14,482		14,482	13,422
Affiliations	1,637		1,637	2,115
Legacies, bequests	30,000		30,000	20,808
Donations general	8,685		8,685	7,647
Donations signposts & footbridges		5,354	5,354	4,539
Gift Aid tax	5,210		5,210	4,097
Interest/Dividends	10,570		10,570	11,232
Miscellaneous	64		64	183
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	70,648	5,354	76,002	64,043
A2 Asset and investment sales				
Government stock redemption			0	19,000
			0	0
Sub total	0	0	0	19,000
Total receipts	70,648	5,354	76,002	83,043
A3 Payments				
Taylor House running costs	7,497		7,497	6,027
Signpost & Footbridges	31,949	5,354	37,303	11,060
Travel & Subsistence	3,937		3,937	5,761
Printing, Copying, newsletter	5,892		5,892	6,465
Postage Telephone Stationary	3,891		3,891	2,989
Computer, Software & maintenance	3,117		3,117	2,870
Functions / Fundraising costs	55		55	1,020
Insurance	1,303		1,303	1,424
Subscriptions, Donations, Training	425		425	244
Improvements, Commemorative	0		0	4,512
Legal Professional & Secretarial	999		999	2,383
Sundries	91		91	212
Sub total	59,156	5,354	64,510	44,967
P & L SURPLUS			11,492	19,076
A4 Asset and investment purchases				
Investment Trusts			0	30,039
			0	
Sub total	0	0	0	30,039
Total payments	59,156	5,354	64,510	75,006
Net of receipts/(payments)	11,492	0	11,492	8,037
A5 Transfers between funds	0	0	0	0
A6 Cash funds last year end	175,720	61,010	236,730	228,693
Cash funds this year end	187,212	61,010	248,222	236,730

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Savings accounts	179,545	61,010
	Current accounts & petty cash	7,667	0
	Total cash funds	187,212	61,010
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK

	Details	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	Government stocks		
	Corporate bonds		70,248
	Equities		29,323
	Inv.trusts,pref shares,ETF funds		68,012
	TOTAL	0	167,583

	Details	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Taylor House building	60,153	
	Computer Equipment	13,458	
	Furniture fittings & other	4,351	
	P A sound system	1,509	

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

Signature	Print name	Date of approval
	P Easthope	
	D C Brown	

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

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Peak and Northern Footpaths Society (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2020..

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity'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 Charity 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 this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Elizabeth Hudson ACA
30 Howey Lane, Congleton CW12 4AE
19th March 2021