

# Trustees' Annual Report for the period

## from 01 January 2024 to 31 December 2024

### 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)
Kathy McLean	Chair
David Gosling	Vice Chair
Paul Easthope	Treasurer
David Brown	Secretary
David Morton	
Mel Bale	
Tim Lewis	
Simon Robinson	
Suzanne Longworth	(resigned)
Chad Wilkinson	

### 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	Redmayne-Bentley

## Structure, governance and management

### Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document	Constitution amended 16 November 2024
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 dropped slightly from 1418, to 1407 and we have 97 affiliated walking groups and parish councils.

As statutory consultees we have examined 210 public paths orders and dealt with 272 consultations, 8 objections and 65 other matters. These numbers are very similar to the previous years.

Our inspector numbers stand at 165, another slight reduction on last year as a number inactive inspectors have stood down. We now cover 47% of the total number of parishes in our region. 7,500 inspections were carried out and 2,550 faults were recorded. The inspectors inspect the footpaths in their parishes under the guidance our Area Officers.

The Path Checker App, which allows walkers, who do not wish to commit to being inspectors, to report faults through their smart phones, continues to be a valuable asset.

Path checkers reported 476 faults in total, which was similar to last year.

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.

7 new signposts have been erected throughout our area making a total of 582. The programme of inspecting and maintaining each signpost every three years remains on track, helped by the addition of a number of people to the signpost team. . Many signposts are funded by member's donations often in memory of deceased relatives.

We are continuing to fund improvements to the public rights of way network despite the reluctance of many Highway Authorities to take on addition commitments. And have spent £5,975 on these improvements. We are now approaching other organisations such as Wildlife Trusts, Walking Groups, National Park Authorities and Parish Councils.

## Financial review

### Brief statement of the Society's policy on reserves

Our balance sheet at year end 2024 was £459,457 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 £57,860 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 £140,408

This leaves a reserve of £190,535. We look to maintain our reserves at between £190,000 and £255,000.

### 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

### The society launched a 5 year strategy towards the end of 2024.

The strategy identified 13 Strategic Priorities. These included Increased Impact/Public Profile, Succession Planning, Growth and Fund Raising. Three sub-committees have been created to progress the strategy.

The strategy document can be viewed at [pnfs.org.uk/5ys](https://pnfs.org.uk/5ys).

## Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees.

Name Mel Bale

Position Membership Secretary and Trustee

Date 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mel Bale". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.



# Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

## Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period  
from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024

### 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 £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>				
Subscriptions	16,769		16,769	15,771
Affiliations	1,828		1,828	1,906
Legacies, bequests	3,840		3,840	6,000
Donations general	16,670		16,670	8,548
Donations signposts & footbridges		4,173	4,173	3,210
Gift Aid tax	5,513		5,513	5,052
Interest/Dividends	9,823		9,823	6,665
Miscellaneous	67		67	151
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>54,510</b>	<b>4,173</b>	<b>58,683</b>	<b>47,303</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales</b>				
Redmayne Bentley Investments bought			0	21,514
Transfer from Redmayne Bentley cash account to investments			0	1,062
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22,576</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>54,510</b>	<b>4,173</b>	<b>58,683</b>	<b>69,879</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>				
Taylor House running costs	3,482		3,482	3,512
Signpost & Footbridges	6,766	4,173	10,939	16,950
Travel & Subsistence	4,790		4,790	5,319
Printing, Copying, newsletter	5,719		5,719	6,230
Postage Telephone Stationery	4,230		4,230	4,131
Computer, Software & maintenance	4,906		4,906	4,906
Functions / Fundraising costs	945		945	1,022
Insurance	1,392		1,392	1,233
Subscriptions, Donations, Training	630		630	354
Footpath Improvements projects	5,975		5,975	19,373
Legal Professional & Secretarial	27		27	11,184
Badge purchases, bank charges & Sundries	55		55	94
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>38,917</b>	<b>4,173</b>	<b>43,090</b>	<b>74,308</b>
<b>P &amp; L SURPLUS</b>			<b>15,593</b>	<b>-27,005</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases</b>				
Redmayne Bentley Investments bought			0	21,514
Transferred from Redmayne Bentley cash account to Investments			0	1,062
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>22,576</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>38,917</b>	<b>4,173</b>	<b>43,090</b>	<b>96,884</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>15,593</b>		<b>15,593</b>	<b>-49,581</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>135,490</b>	<b>57,860</b>	<b>193,350</b>	<b>242,931</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>151,083</b>	<b>57,860</b>	<b>208,943</b>	<b>193,350</b>

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

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>			
	Savings accounts	127,049	60,310
	Current accounts & petty cash	21,584	0
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>148,633</b>	<b>60,310</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees			
Treasurer	Signature		Date of approval
Chair			

# Independent examiner's report on the accounts



**CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES**

Report

Section A

Independent Examiner's

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

On accounts for the year  
ended

31st. December 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

212219

Set out on pages

Twenty three.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2024.  
As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Independent  
examiner's statement

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

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

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

Signed:

*Alan A Clements*

Date:

*4th March 2025*

Name:

Alan A. Clements Rev'd

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

Fellow Association of Charity Independent Examiners

Address:

15 Carleton Road, Great Knowley, Chorley PR6 8TQ