



Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

**ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2004
HANDBOOK**



ANNUAL REPORT 2004

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The cover photograph shows the Society funded footbridge in Tom Wood, Charlesworth erected in memory of Leslie G. Meadowcroft with Eric Kime testing the bridge.

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

PRESIDENT AND ENVIRONMENT SECRETARY

Derek Seddon

Derek Seddon continues his work as the Society's Environment Secretary and is now President as well.

I find it hard adequately to express the relief and gratitude I have felt in the past year with the gradual realisation that the Society was saved from extinction by the new management. David Bratt and Roy Spoors have proved such a wonderfully efficient combination. The transformation at Taylor House from a struggling small group of diehards overwhelmed by the sheer volume of work to the current bustling, confident team of enthusiasts is nothing short of astonishing. The re-vamped AGM followed by the notably successful Inspectors' Conference gave an indication of the change in circumstances.

I would like to record my grateful thanks to all those workers who stood by me through the difficulties of the last couple of years and kept the show going. Thanks also to my ever-reliable Vice Chairman Eric Kime and to John Houfe, far away in Kirkcudbrightshire who nevertheless kept the Society's interest at heart designing the layout and typography of last year's Annual Report as he has for the last 15 years. We will find it hard to replace his expertise now that he has decided to retire from the Society's service.

The PNFS slide lecture, in abeyance since the passing of Derek Taylor and Leslie Meadowcroft who held the script in their heads has been re-sorted and shown to two different Societies who both showed their appreciation by donations to our funds.

The Society's library of guide books, maps, and volumes on travel, which disappeared some 30 years ago into the basement of Manchester Central Library, has been located and brought back to Taylor House. Once it has been collated and logged onto the computer we will make it available for member browsing and will probably dispose of all material which refers to areas outside our remit, giving members first refusal at the AGM.

During the year we said goodbye to five long time workers at Taylor House – Geoff Daubeny, Cliff Law, Stan Lomas, Pat Milligan and Cliff Wilding, all much missed now they have retired due to ill health or moving away.

The Environmental side had both good and bad aspects. Wind Farms continue to be a source of disagreement between members, though we have an indication that more are against them than for. The proposal to site 26 turbine towers 100 meters high on Scout Moor above Bury raised most hackles, though the same developers (United Utilities) were active in a beauty spot in Staffordshire, an application which was refused. Shortly afterwards we learned that their green energy division was up for sale

– so the fate of Britain's hills and moorlands lies in the market place.

I attended the public inquiry into the Scout Moor scheme. The time the inquiry occupied (3 weeks) indicates its importance and one can only guess at the expense involved.. Both sides, United Utilities and the Local Authorities, had legal teams and it has to be said that the examination was fair and thorough. The Inspector will announce his decision in the early summer, but of course the Secretary of State has the last word. Our council-agreed policy is to consider each application on its impact on walking enjoyment.

On the plus side we welcomed the promised Right of Access in the North West. We now have the complete set of the new 1: 25,000 maps showing the newly-available territory in our area and very fine they are too. Our new-found freedom brings its problems. Access to leg-stretching acres of springy turf is very enticing, but of course we have to accept as part of the deal the trackless hillsides clothed in nettles, bracken, heather and brambles until the sufficiently adventurous have beaten a path through them.

There's plenty to keep us busy!

EILEEN DALEY

We are sorry to record the passing of Mrs. Daley, a Vice President for many years. Eileen gave strong support to her husband Philip when he was Secretary of the Society. In her home town of Marple, Stockport she is remembered for her work as a local councillor.



Kinder Reservoir

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

David Bratt

We can all take much comfort and satisfaction that for 2004 our PNFS enjoyed a year of progress. Was 2004 a defining year? - too early to call - as spirals run two ways and there can be no room for complacency - what has been achieved through the good works of so many has now to be built on so that we develop a culture of sustainable progress.

Our objective set at the AGM of growing our membership over three years from 800 to 1100 is already half way there in the first year and we should see the magic 1000 total in the first half of 2005. Thank you Supremo Ernest (Sutton) and Josie (Sutton) and Reg (Boot) for all your Administrative input. And far from least to June (Mabon) for immense, imaginative and fruitful Publicity and Press efforts.

The second objective of planting 200 new signs over five years was remarkably easy for your Chairman to declare but represents a massive workload for the much valued team of Fred (Ogden) - Admin, Bill (Johnson) - Constructor and Brian (Taylor) - Contracted Installer. In 2004 10 new signs were progressed from initial inspiration to final perspiration thanks to their efforts. Keith (Wykes) who started the year with dual signpost responsibilities now exclusively heads up the team for the maintenance of existing signs, a goodly proportion of which have suffered the ravages of time or in some instances accidents or vandalism.

At the AGM it was agreed All Member(Council) meetings would for a trial year be run on a quarterly basis. The three since the AGM have attracted 12-13 present of which 3 or 4 were Officers - the maximum rank and file member presence has been 2, with the balance Inspectors and Delegates. The figures were the same for Stockport or Manchester venues. The conclusion is inescapable - there is no call any longer for such meetings in this format. Derek (Seddon) and Peter (Rhodes) quarterly Signpost magazine gives all members a regular updating of Society matters and members I speak to clearly appreciate its communication value. I will accordingly table a proposition regarding Council Meetings at the AGM which the Officers have already endorsed in outline.

We have for some years operated a joint walks programme with Manchester RA on Wednesdays but we have become very much the junior partner with few PNFS attendees and an inability to service many of our allocated one-Wednesday-a-month walks with leaders. The RA will now go it alone.

All setbacks are of course opportunities for the taking.

We should surely be in the led-walks business and be strong enough to do it on our own account. Given our 150 or so new member influx and some know I know they lead (and very well too !!) we have decided to plan for a 10 mile or so walk on the last Wednesday of each month for a trial period from May to Oct incl. - led by PNFS leaders for PNFS members and their friends and our Affiliates. Public transport to be used if possible but

not mandatory. Will you offer to lead? - if so kindly call Jeff Lewis (0161 766 4683) - full walk details will appear in the April Signpost.

You will read in Roy Spoor's report of changes already occurring in the way Footpath Issues are being approached - the crusade is under way - all of this as necessarily identified at the most productive Inspectors/Agents Conference.

The progress towards the installation of a substantial bridge in Tom Wood, Charlesworth as a fitting memorial to our late President Leslie G Meadowcroft is at long last nearing a conclusion - Derbyshire CC have got there in the end via a tortuous trail/trial involving unhelpful adjoining landowners, helicopters, risk assessments, trees with too many residual leaves, snow, fog and gales. But the bridge is in place and being fitted out (late Jan) with a dedication to come in the more clement weather.

You may wonder what our ex Chairman and Vice Chairman have done since exiting the hot seats--headed off to the jungle to fade away?. No way, as Derek and Eric prowl Taylor House every Monday looking for literally any job that needs doing and they just get on with it. They are a pair of stars. Another star of the PNFS galaxy is Roy - we complement each other well - one of us is hard shell/soft centre - the other the reverse! And finally to Barry - one first class, sound-as-a-pound, Treasurer. In addition to his duties of Office he has appointed himself as frank Appraiser of the Chairman's failings. All very healthy!

For me, since becoming your Chairman, nine short months ago, life will never be the same again! - it's been a rollercoaster ride but thankfully with more ups than downs. I am very proud of the PNFS and what we achieve as a volunteer crew - all volunteers - please never forget that, all active in many other interests and pursuits, not least with family joys and responsibilities to enjoy and take care of.

So, fellow trustees, fellow Officers, agents, inspectors and assessors and each and every one of you who contributes so ably at Taylor House and beyond - one very big thank you which I know I can extend on behalf of all our so essential membership.

VICE CHAIRMAN

Roy Spoors

Roy's enthusiasm, commitment and capacity for hard work have inspired us all.

Surely it is not time for the Annual Report! It seems a very short time since the AGM when David Bratt and I made a number of commitments. So how have things gone? Most important of all is that the PNFS today is changing rapidly; there is a "buzz" not only at Taylor House but throughout the Society. If this can be maintained then the oldest surviving footpath society will survive for many more years. Our Society deserves not just to survive but to prosper and have a well respected voice that is listened to.

Apart from the Inspectors' Conference my time has been spent looking at the systems that we use for our assessment process. This has resulted in a "root and branch" review and the establishment of clear priorities for change and a phased implemental plan.

From the beginning of January 2005 new systems have been implemented and will result in:-

- replacement of manual mail book with a PC based "Access database"
- prioritisation and pre-selection of incoming mail so that time is expended on the important consultations and orders.
- all diversion and extinguishment consultations and orders in rural and semi rural areas will automatically be referred to Agents/Inspectors. In addition, selected urban consultations and orders will also be referred.
- a final assessment will then be made once the Agent/Inspectors' report has been sent to Taylor House.

These initial changes will take some weeks to settle in properly and constitute only Phase 1 of the new systems. They will be followed, as time and resource permits, with,

Phase 2 - gradually increasing the proportion of assessment communication that is conducted via e-mail. For those Agents/Inspectors who do not wish to use e-mail nothing will change.

Phase 3 - the new "Access database" will allow reports to be extracted so that Agents/Inspectors can see all items of mail that have been received for their parishes.

Phase 4 - some Agents/Inspectors already communicate directly with Authorities and many others would like to undertake this. Systems will be implemented to allow this but, again for those Agents/Inspectors who do not wish to do this, nothing will change.

If these new systems can be implemented successfully then there are some very real benefits for our Society,

- more frequent communication with and hopefully, better informed Agents/Inspectors.
- more consistency in the responses that are made to Authorities.
- better recording and efficient handling of more mail items.
- development of more local relationships with ROW Officers in Authorities.

One of the other outcomes from the Inspectors' Conference was a detailed review of both the Assessors' Handbook and the Inspectors' Handbook. It was clear that both needed urgent revision and update so, this exercise was started in November. Expect during 2005 the issue of a PNFS Handbook that will incorporate the Assessors' Handbook, the Inspectors' Handbook and a section on policy statements.

Most people are now aware that Peter Crofts has changed his responsibilities and he and his wife Barbara are in Taylor House on a Tuesday. This was a change that Peter had been thinking about for a while and has resulted in Alan Hooley stepping in to be responsible for the Assessment Section. Peter is highly regarded by everyone who comes into contact with him and his friendly and helpful contribution will be sorely missed.

The Society owes Peter and Barbara a debt of gratitude for their dedication, commitment and hard work over many years. Thank you.

Finally, sometimes we forget that we are all volunteers and I would like to thank our people in Taylor House, our Agents/Inspectors and our members for their continued support.



Roy Spoors speaking at the PNFS Inspectors' Conference, Styal Mill, November 2004

CONSULTATIONS AND ORDERS

Peter Crofts

The Society is consulted by highway authorities and others about proposed changes affecting public rights of way. The Assessor Team at Taylor House works on Mondays to respond to these consultations. Peter has been the experienced leader of this team for some years.

This year has seen wholesale changes in the team of Assessors who meet every Monday morning to decide what action the Society should take on each of the week's proposals affecting footpaths and bridleways in the Society's area (except Staffordshire which is devolved to Harry Scott, our indefatigable Agent in that county). All the Assessors who were active when I joined the team in 1999 have now retired after periods of up to and exceeding twenty years. Several of them also served the Society as Inspectors and/or signpost erectors. After the retirement of Percy Hutchinson and the move of Charles Peers to Northumbria in 2003, we lost during a few weeks last summer, Stan Lomas who initiated the system for recording incoming mail and was always the earliest to arrive on Monday mornings so as to have letters ready for assessment; and then in quick succession Pat Milligan, Cliff Wilding and Cliff Law. It is a pleasure to acknowledge the sterling work which all these members performed, particularly as several of them had severe health problems in recent years. For a month or two we were hard-pressed with no more than four Assessors (and often less), but the recent arrival of four very competent recruits has greatly improved our strength.

We receive about forty letters each week from Highway Authorities about proposed changes to the footpath network. A few Authorities send planning applications which may affect footpaths, and 78 standard planning letters were sent in reply, asking that any planning permission granted should include a clause forbidding changes to paths without Diversion Orders. There were, as usual, many proposals for minor changes to urban paths: all were carefully examined but most were of a trivial or non-contentious nature (e.g. allegating or redevelopment of town areas) and were not commented on.

At the end of the protracted legal processes involved, often going back for several years, there were 226 changes to the footpaths network by Confirmed Orders. Of these 139 were diversions (or simultaneous closures and creations if the ends of old and new paths did not coincide), 48 creations, 30 closures (17 of urban non-definitive paths), and 9 regrading of footpaths as bridleways

The vital work of recording all these changes on our definitive maps and sending a copy of each Confirmed Order to the appropriate Inspector was again carried out by Jim Wild who has done this conscientiously for many years.

Assessors recognise the vital importance of referring to Inspectors every proposal to which they might object but, so as not to overload them, have tried not to send those

which seemed to be non-controversial. The fact that less than a quarter of objections needed to be confirmed after Inspector's reports were received suggested that little, if anything, of importance was being missed, but the recent Inspectors' Conference showed a demand for more proposals to be referred.

It was therefore decided that, from the beginning of 2005, instead of three Assessors advising on each proposal and each outgoing letter being typed, pairs of (or possibly single) Assessors will send out letters using preprinted forms with handwritten details. At the same time, Inspectors will also be sent copies of marginal proposals which they can either discard or comment on as they wish. The extent to which they make comments will provide useful guidance as to which proposals should be referred to them in future.

For most of the last four years I have been responsible, with help from other experienced Assessors, for composing and often typing letters to Inspectors and Highway Authorities, as well as to various organisations and members of the public who have sought our advice on footpath matters. The above changes will reduce much of this time-consuming activity and I am happily transferring my efforts to other aspects of the Society's work.



Climbing up to Dovestone Tor, Derwent

COURTS AND INQUIRIES REPORT

Roy Spoors

An onerous job but Roy takes it in his stride.

Quite a busy twelve months which is summarised as three Local Public Inquiries; three Magistrates Court hearings; 12 Path inspections by the 'Flying Squad'; three letters to assist tardy path obstructions; two written representations.

Taking them in order the three Local Public Inquiries that the Society appeared at were Dukinfield 27 (recalled), Stalybridge 54/57 and Barnoldswick 14. Dukinfield 27 was recalled at the end of January into the Extinguishment Order for this well used and important link. Eventually the Inspector reported and agreed with the Society by declining to confirm the order.

The end of June saw the long awaited Local Public Inquiry into the Diversion Orders for Stalybridge 54/57. Just 48 hours before the Inquiry the OMA withdrew the order following late negotiations with the developer. It was a great pity that such flexibility and effort could not have been expended at a much earlier point; it would have saved a lot of people from a lot of wasted trouble!

November saw the Local Public Inquiry into the Extinguishment Order for Barnoldswick 14. This was a sorry tale of neglect by Pendle B.C. and Lancs C.C. who both singularly failed to protect this footpath during development works. The developer had planning approval for a series of houses that left the footpath unaffected. However, unilaterally the developer extended gardens, erected a series of garden fences and sold the properties before Pendle B.C. realised that Barnoldswick 14 had been illegally obstructed. Instead of taking immediate remedial action they promptly granted retrospective planning approval and then made the Extinguishment Order. The Society strongly objected to this and despite long arguments at the Inquiry the Inspector confirmed the order! Ah well, you can't win them all!

The two forays with Magistrates Courts were interesting for different reasons. The first was a written representation to Halton Magistrates Court that a S/16 HA 1980 Extinguishment Order was inappropriate because Halton BC were citing criminal activity and anti social behaviour. These may be valid reasons but, the correct route is S118 of the HA 1980. The Magistrates Court agreed with the Society and refused to confirm the order. The second is on going and is Stockport M.B.C.'s efforts to extinguish Stringer Street and Stringer Street Steps. So far there has been one hearing, two postponements and currently a scheduled three day hearing for February 2005.

The 'Flying Squad' has completed twelve path inspections, either in parishes where the Society does not have an Inspector or, where the Inspectors were too busy or away.

Assistance was also provided with three footpath obstructions. The first in Marple was incorrect signing, an obstructed line and a permissive path. Stockport M.B.C. completed the required work and then denied that there had ever been a problem!

In the second case a replacement footpath for what used to be Leigh 178 was illegally blocked and closed by a 2m fence. The Society's archive proved essential in persuading Wigan Council to take action against Moss Estates. This they did and the footpath is now available for use again. Finally in Bollington a footpath blocked by electric gates belonging to a private house was reported to Cheshire CC. To their credit Cheshire CC not only had the gates removed but installed a new stile and repaired steps nearby. The improvements were only achieved with the help of Cheshire Police who attended to keep the landowner at bay!

The Society has also provided written submissions regarding the Alderley Edge A34 bypass and the restoration of Dingle Bank Quarry. Both situations are on going.

Finally, Terry Norris has instigated some of the first s63 orders and during the coming year the Society will carefully expand over use of this new legislation to assist further with the clearance of footpath obstructions.

Glossary

s - section; HA - Highways Act 1980; OMA - Order Making Authority; BC - Borough Council.



Millennium Bridge in New Mills

MATTERS FROM THE MINUTES

This selection of memorable minutes is taken from the records of Officers and and Council meetings throughout the year.

JANUARY

- Volunteers needed for waymarking the Cown Edge Way.
- Future of Council Meetings needs consideration.
- "Join Us" plastic address plaques obtained for signposts.

FEBRUARY

- Prospect of Inspectors' conference later in year.
- Candidate for Treasurer vacancy has come forward.

MARCH

- Site found for possible footbridge as Leslie Meadowcroft memorial.
- Membership falling, non-renewals a concern.

APRIL

- Very successful AGM, good attendance and member participation. New Chairman, Vice and Treasurer take over.
- Conference fixed for November.

MAY

- Publicity sought in local press and walking magazines.
- "Join Us" plaques now appearing on signposts.
- Volunteers needed for planting posts.

JUNE

- New 1/25,000 OS maps to be purchased
- Membership fall not remedied, late payers need reminders.
- Some County Councils erecting own signposts, making ours redundant.

JULY

- Major update of computers needed plus purchase of high speed colour copier.
- Leslie Meadowcroft memorial will be footbridge in Tom Wood.
- Society's accounts now computerised.

AUGUST

- Society's objection to Scout Moor wind farm involves much work.
- New Handbook for Assessors and Inspectors to be prepared.
- Parish Councils to be told of benefits of the Society.

SEPTEMBER

- Following comments of lack of communication, minutes of Officers' meetings to go to all Inspectors.
- Membership campaign showing results.
- Maintenance of signposts is a big manpower problem.
- Investments and bank accounts rationalised.

OCTOBER

- Attendance at Council Meetings still poor. Not interesting enough?
- All insurances to be reviewed.
- Archive books and files received from Manchester Central Library.
- Enjoyable visit to foundry where the large signpost plates are cast.

NOVEMBER

- Very successful Conference attended by 80% of our Inspectors. Lessons to be learned for the future.
- Membership reaches 900, target 1,100 over 3 years.
- Scout Moor wind farm inquiry attended and objections lodged.

DECEMBER

- Some key workers at Taylor House change roles.
- First version of Society Handbook to be issued in New Year
- Leslie Meadowcroft footbridge will be installed by helicopter in January.
- Expenditure on Conference, update of computers and other initiatives brings deficit of £3-4,000 for 2004 but overall finances are sound.



Members on a visit to Leander's Foundry, Dove Holes, where our signpost plates are made

**SIGNPOST
ADMINISTRATION**
Fred Ogden

Fred Ogden, our Signpost Officer (Administration), deals with negotiations with landowners and sponsors over the siting of new signposts. Fred describes what has been achieved in 2004 in the way of new signpost planting.

NEW SIGNPOSTS ERECTED

<i>No</i>	<i>Grid Ref</i>	<i>Site</i>	<i>Dedication</i>
269	SJ984766	Jenkin Chapel	IMO Doris Morris
290	SK015989	Tintwistle	IMO Bill McGuiness
291	SK281992	Hunshelf	IMO Ted Spence, Sheffield RA
292	SK040950	Glossop	IMO Walter Agutter, Glossop & Longdendale Society
293	SK126604	Hartington	PNFS
294	SK121610	Hartington	PNFS
295	SK121609	Hartington	PNFS
296	SK107592	Hulme End	PNFS
23	SK048850	Peep o' Day	IMO Elsie McNeeny
			The original post from 1906 disappeared and has now been replaced in the same location with the Society's present style plate

SIGNPOSTS TO BE ERECTED

297	SJ998927	Charlesworth, Glossop & Longdendale Society, 30th Anniversary
298	SK132603	Hartington
299	SJ998931	Charlesworth
300	SJ998932	Charlesworth
301	SJ959832	Lyme Handley

The Society is currently looking at other sites including Doncaster, Yealand Conyers, Longridge, Sheldon and Holymoorside

Will any member who feels that a location could do with a signpost please contact me so that the matter can be duly investigated.

SIGNPOST MAINTENANCE

Keith Wykes

Introduction

The term Signposts (SP's) includes Fingerposts, Memorial Footbridges, Mileposts and Toposcopes.

1. The Team and Responsibilities

All undertake SP Inspection responsibilities and in addition assist in various other ways.

Reg Boot, Assist. SPO (IT)	Barrie and Janet Clark	Frank Wetton
Bill Johnson	Robert Fysh	Brian Summerscales
Fred Ogden, SPO(Admin)	June Mabon	Ian Ray
Derek Seddon	Gordon Taylor	Graham Sencicle
Keith Wykes, SPO (M)	Ms Patricia Thomas	
Hilda and Peter Bowler	David Walker	

2. Equipment and Facilities

Loan Equipment:

available upon application to Keith Wykes, SPO (M), Tel: 01625 582380 or Taylor House 0161 480 3565 (Mon, Tue or answerphone).

Equipment

- Cordless rechargeable battery operated drill
- Digital camera
- Global positioning system (GPS)
- 'Join Us' publicity plaques (JUP)

Facilities

- Workshop facilities
- Maintenance equipment
- Paints, creosote, mortars and wire brushes

3. 2004 Work Completed

- 123 Inspections, • 108 JUP's affixed, • 94 GPS accurate Grid Reference locations obtained, • 24 Confirmations as 'Missing - Not Located' being potential New Plantings, • 15 approx in various states of maintenance eg white/green painted, replanted to the vertical, • SP14 Nether Booth, Edale Valley re-erected, • SP137 Agden House, Agden Lane reported missing; replaced by CCC, • SP200 near Shining Tor summit replaced/repaired, • SP265 Hollingworth Hall, Stalybridge, recovered to TH, replanted on new WP, • Signpost Inspection Report template compiled, • Memory Map Navigator computer system developed to assist in the Planned Maintenance programme, • NB: 127 not inspected for 5 years; 72 for 10 years, 37 for 20 years.

4. 2005 Aims

- To maintain 50 structures reported as requiring maintenance, • To replace some Fingerposts with the Society's distinctive SP Plate (on WP), • To visit those 35 sites identified as requiring a visit, • Accurately GPS locate those 16 SP's where no Grid Reference is recorded, • Erect Toposcope on Nab Head, Bollington (GRSJ 940788) In Memory of Miss Mary Chambers deceased, • Confirm as 'Not Located' or otherwise the 39 SP's reported as missing, being potential New Plantings, • To secure a Website available SP database, • To encourage existing Inspectors to become SP Inspectors for their (and other?) Parishes, • To mark up each of 2 sets of Explorer Series Access Land Maps with accurate SP information, • Revamp the manual records.

FOOTPATH FAULTS

Peter Rhodes

During 2004 another 274 faults were added to the 'FAULTS' database and letters sent to the relevant local authority with details of the problems.. In response 138 faults have been removed and added to the 'Cleared' database.

Currently there are 1150 records of outstanding problems of which 450 (39%) are problems with missing signposts.

In addition to the above, a number of Inspectors deal with the local authority directly and send copies of correspondence to Taylor House for filing, thereby keeping the records up-to-date.



Heavy going in the Trough of Bowland

INSPECTING - THE WAY FORWARD

Bob Dumbarton

2004 has been an eventful year for the Society and I have no doubt that the benefits accumulating from the past twelve months, will be appreciated by all concerned with the Peak and Northern. Changes in the position of Chairman, Vice Chairman and Treasurer, the Inspectors' bi-annual Conference, further improvements to our filing and mapping systems, the implementation of an Inspector

"Flying Squad", a larger signpost team to enable more maintenance and greater numbers of PNFS signposts, all illustrate the steps forward that have been undertaken.

And the effect on our Inspectors and Agents?

Probably the largest number of changes will emanate from the Conference, which was only the second of its kind and was held at Styal Mill on 3rd November. 55 Inspectors attended and based on Satisfaction Survey, the vast majority felt that their attendance was worthwhile. Apart from a number of good speaker sessions, the main aim was to achieve involvement and feedback from the Inspectors present. In order to do this, a case study was undertaken, which was based on a review of the Inspectors' Handbook. This 'manual' was last issued in 1993 and although still valid, is much in need of an update. The case study provided a variety of amendments and ideas and these will be input to the review, which will be undertaken at the start of 2005.

An afternoon workshop was also held and this asked for views on a number of topics ("What type of Society should we aim to be?", "More responsibilities for Inspectors", "Improved support for Inspectors", "Signposts", "Common Access Land"). As with the Handbook review, a lot of discussion went into this session and the Inspectors provided ideas, which will provide food for thought at the forthcoming Officers Meetings.

The Inspector "Flying Squad" may sound somewhat melodramatic, but describes very well the activities of a number of our inspectors who have volunteered to assist the Society in Parishes outside their own area of responsibility. These parishes do not have an Inspector or Agent allocated to them and therefore in the past when a diversion or closure order was received, a decision was made based on reference to the definitive map alone. Clearly this was not satisfactory, and therefore the Officers accepted the idea for a Flying Squad and (currently) eleven Inspectors ensure that these orders are examined on the ground. At this time, flashing blue lights and two-tone sirens have not been issued!

Recruitment for Inspectors and Agents continues and more bodies are needed, particularly for our outlying districts. So if you would like to incorporate some inspecting with your walking (and it is not an onerous job) or you know of someone who would like to assist the Society in the field, please contact me at Taylor House. During 2004, 8 new inspectors have been recruited but we have also lost 6 due to age, illness etc. That leaves our current numbers at 66.

Many thanks again to all Inspectors and Agents for their work over the past year – keep up the good work.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Barry Starkie

PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT TO 31 DEC 2004

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
	2004		2003
Legacies	£2,283	£39,888	Taylor House
Donations General	£942	£2,981	Running costs
Signposts	£1,258		Depreciation
Gift Aid &			Travel &
Tax Reclaimed	£882	£1,346	Subsistence
Advertising	£238	£382	Printing/Copying
Sundry	£288	£117	(Inc Annual Report)
	<i>total</i>	£5,891	£44,714
Interest	£2,420		Newsletter &
		£6,336	Distribution
Dividends	£5,208		Postage
	<i>total</i>	£7,628	£6,336
Subscriptions			Telephone
Annual	£1,973	£1,529	Stationery/Maps/
5 Year Transfers	£1,099	£957	Office Supplies
10 Year Transfers	£1,116	£1,121	Insurances
Affiliations	£1,100	£1,145	Functions
	<i>total</i>	£5,288	£4,752
TOTAL			
INCOME	£18,807	£55,802	
Excess Expenditure	£2,899		
			TOTAL EXPENDITURE
			£21,706
			£21,706
			£13,776

NOTES ON INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2004

The actual excess of expenditure over income shows as £2,899, as against a surplus of £41,522 in 2003.

However in 2003 we benefited from a substantial legacy of almost £40,000, which was finalised in 2004 with receipt of a final payment of £2,283.

There has been a reduction in income from donations to the Society, (£2,200 in 2004 against £2,981 in 2003) and in Gift Aid & Tax due back (£882 in 2004 against £1,346 in 2003) but income from Investments is up from £6,336 to £7,628.

Most pleasing of all on the income side must be the subscriptions (£5,288 against £4,752) which with no increase in our membership rates reflects the increased numbers of new members gained in the year.

- Excluding income from legacies, which tend to distort the annual figures, we see overall that income in 2004 totalled £16,524 whilst in 2003 it was £15,914.

The expenditure figures reflect the rejuvenation being seen in our all round activities and the start of a programme of spending in line with the decisions taken at the last AGM.

Increased costs at Taylor House for postage, stationery and telephones all reflect the increased work. More information is being sent out, there has to be material to support this and there is substantially more communication both by phone and e-mail. Also, a number of new maps have already been bought and brought into Taylor House

Travel costs (£4,521 in 2004 up from £2,759) reflect the increased activity by officers and inspectors and agents. Sites for new signposts are being investigated long before any come to fruition and valuable location and maintenance work has been carried out on existing ones. Assessors at Taylor House are asking inspectors' opinions on more propositions received which leads to more travel.

The *Signpost* magazine and distribution costs show an increase from £995 in 2003 to £1,417 in 2004.

The new line of "Functions" reflects the cost of the Inspectors' Conference in October at £750 and 2003 AGM at £450 and small charges for room hire for Council Meetings.

Signpost Expenses (£3,100 in 2004 against £2,477 in 2003) are the direct costs of new and replacement signposts and repair work done by us, and, of course we will expect to see this increase year by year as the signpost programme comes to fruition.

A figure of £3,000 is included in expenditure as "provisions for non payment of tax refund". This is purely to reflect the bulk of tax previously shown as being due back to us but not actually received. When claims are made then hopefully they will be met but at this stage I felt it prudent to allow for the fact that they may not be.

Overall, the increased activity of the Society is seen in the total expenditure figure of £21,706 in 2004 against £13,776 in 2003.

Capital Expenditure in the year has largely been to finance the new computer equipment at a cost of almost £3,000.

PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY

BALANCE SHEET 31 DEC 2004

	31.DEC.2004	31.DEC.2003
FIXED ASSETS		
Freehold Property at Cost	£60,153	£60,153
Furniture, Fittings, Equipment	£1,259	£1,704
Computer Equipment	£3,673	£1,201
INVESTMENTS		
(long term)		
Government Stock	£93,966	£89,090
UK Equities	£3,968	£28,195
(short term)		
Hampshire Trust 12m Notice	£13,621	£36,784
CafCash Deposit Account	£65,629	
CafCash High Interest Cheque	£10,601	£29,850
Skipton BS	£100	£100
Leeds & Holbeck BS	£100	£100
Royal Bank Scot		£211
Petty Cash/Postage	£162	£216
DEBTORS less Provisions	£910	£3,954
Assets total	£254,142	£251,558
LIABILITIES		
Creditors	£29	£190
5 Year Member Susp	£2,421	£2,132
10 Year Members Susp	££5,025	£4,645
Liabilities total	£7,475	£6,967
Assets less Liabilities	£246,667	£244,591
Funds		
General	£188,729	£218,399
Def	£24,666	£24,459
Signpost	£29,022	£857
LGMeadowcroft	£2,000	£626
HE Wild	£250	£250
Mary Chambers	£2,000	
Total Funds	£246,667	£244,591

BALANCE SHEET NOTES

ASSETS

Fixed Assets

At a value of £65,085 net of depreciation against £63,058 last year reflects the new computer equipment purchased less depreciation to date.

• **Long Term Investments** show an increased valuation in Government Stock although the actual stocks remained unchanged throughout the year.

• In February 2004 we increased our holding of preference shares in Hampshire Trust to £48,010 but in August the entire holding was realised to achieve a more balanced spread and to hold cash funds to cover planned activities.

• Remaining equities are relatively small holdings in shares in Barclay's plc and Invensys plc.

• **Short Term Investments**, show £13,621 remaining on 12 month's notice accounts with Hampshire Trust but the bulk of our cash (totalling £76,230) is now held on interest bearing accounts with CAF Bank, a subsidiary of Charities Aid Foundation. Our bank accounts with Royal Bank of Scotland were closed during the year and the working bank account and a deposit account are both now at CAF Bank.

• **Debtors** at the year end are what we are now showing as a possibly reduced figure due back as Tax Refund. (£3,910 less provision of £3,000 leaves £910).

Total assets at the Year End amount to £2,54142 against £25,1558 at the end of 2003.

LIABILITIES

Creditors at £29 is the one month General Rates payment on Taylor House still to be paid.

5 and 10 Year Membership Suspense Accounts totalling £7,446 (against £6,777 at the end of 2003) show more members taking advantage of the discounts available by committing to longer than annual membership.

ASSETS £254,142 less LIABILITIES £7,475 leaves FUNDS totalling £246,667 (£244,591 in 2003).

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PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FUNDS AT 31 DEC 2004

FUNDS	Opening	From I&E	Donations	Expenditure	Transfers	Year End
GENERAL Increased Valuations to Investments See Income/Exp 2004	£218,399	-£2,899			-£33,521 £4,908 £1,842	£188,729
DEFENCE	£24,459				£207	£24,666
SIGNPOST	£864		£1,258	£3,100	£30,000	£29,022
			(see Income/ Exp 2004)			
Memorial Funds						
LG Meadowcroft Footbridge	£626		£60		£1,314	£2,000
HE Wild Footbridge	£250					£250
M Chambers Toposcope					£2,000	£2,000
Totals	£244,598	-£2,899	£1,318	£3,100	£6,750	£246,667

FUND NOTES

- These funds are shown separately but inter-fund transfers in the year have been:
- £30,000 from General Fund to Signpost Fund to cover spending on 200 new signposts at an average cost of £150 each. Specific Donations to this fund and spending from it are shown separately as £1,258 and £3,100 respectively. Spending in this area is increasing in line with our objectives.
- Defence Fund remains at 10% of of total funds and transfers have been made to maintain this. There has been no expenditure against this fund in 2004.
- Memorial Funds have benefited by transfers to them with both the LG Meadowcroft Footbridge Fund and the Mary Chambers Toposcope Fund now standing at £2,000 each. Both funds are expected to close in 2005 as the costs of these structures are met.
- HE Wild Footbridge Fund remains unchanged.

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

I report on the accounts of the Society for the year ended 31st December 2004.

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 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 43 (3) (a) of the 1993 Act);
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43(7) (b) of the 1993 Act);
- 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 Commissioners. 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 I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

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 41 of the 1993 Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 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.

(signed)

Elizabeth Hudson ACA
Bradley Fold, Woodford Lane, Newton, Macclesfield
5th February 2005

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Ernest Sutton

Ernest looks after the year long task of keeping in touch with members, collecting membership fees, welcoming new members and maintaining membership statistics for the Society.

For most of the Annual Reports which I have been compiling since I took over this position; I have had to begin by saying that it is the one task which causes me much upset, simply because it has been necessary to report another decrease in our numbers. This year, I am most pleased that my 'depression' has been replaced by one of relief, to say the least.

This change has come about through different factors, the distribution through the Newsletter of the Membership leaflet, the fact that so, many of our Members assisted with the circulation of this leaflet through local libraries, shops and at various locations in the countryside, and by no means least, the energy and enthusiasm of so many people, led to such a large extent by our Chairman

I have felt for some time that when giving vote of thanks, and naming people, there is a great risk of causing offence by omitting someone who was worthy of mention. Nevertheless, I do feel that our Chairman deserves special mention for his enthusiastic encouragement of all concerned. At the same time I do feel most strongly that our past Chairman and Vice Chairman should be given recognition that they deserve for their efforts in helping our Society through what was a most difficult period. A mention too of the many worthy helpers we have both at Taylor House and 'in the fields'. Everything that they do certainly helps me in my job and furthers the causes of the Society.

On a more sombre note, I regret we have lost during the year, one Honorary Life Member and five other Members who have passed away. They will be sadly missed.

In conclusion, but with great sincerity, please let me say how much I, along with my fellow officers, do appreciate the interest and support which is given by all our individual members and the representatives of our Affiliated Societies.

Members	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Annual	298	306	316	275	396
Ten Year	468	428	388	353	318
Five Year	146	180	177	193	209
Honorary Life	14	14	15	15	15
Junior	3	3	2	2	2
Total	929	931	898	838	940
Affiliates	85	84	81	83	79

AFFILIATED SOCIETY NAMES		
Alderley Edge, Wilmslow & District FP Society	Eyam Village Society	RA New Mills Group
Altrincham & District Rambling Club	Geriatrics Group	RA North & Mid Cheshire Area
Ashton-u-Lyne & District Walking Club	Hanliensian Rambling Club	RA Oldham Group
Barlborough Parish Council	Heatons Reddish U3A	RA Sheffield Group
Barnsley Mountaineering Club	HF Bolton Group	RA South Yorks & NE Derbyshire Area
Bayhorse Homewatch & Residents Assoc	HF Bury Group	RA Stockport Group
Blackbrook Conservation Society	HF Nottingham Group	Rochdale CHA Ramblers
Bolton CHA Rambling Club	HF Warrington Rambling Club	Romiley Townswomen's Guild Walking Group
Buxton Field Club	Ladybrook Valley District Scout Club	Rucksack Club
Buxton Rambling Club	Leek & District FP Preservation & Rambling Group	Sale U3A Walking Club
CAE - Rambling Club	Littleborough Civic Trust	Sheffield Clarion Ramblers
CHA Manchester Rambling Club	Longdendale & Glossopdale FP Preservation Society	Sheffield Co-op Party Rambling Club
CHA Mansfield Rambling Club	Macclesfield & District Field Club	Sheffield U3A Walking Group 'A'
CHA Nottingham Rambling Club	Macclesfield Rambling Club	Shirland & Higham Parish Council
CHA Oldham & District Rambling Club	Manchester & District Retired Teachers Assn	Stockport & District Federation of TWGs
CHA Sheffield (B Section) Rambling & Social Club	Manchester Associates Rambling Club	Stockport East Area Bridleways Association
Cheadle Hulme & Bramhall Natural History Society	Manchester Field Club	Stockport Field Club
Cheshire Tally Ho Hare & Hounds Club	Manchester Pedestrian Club	Stockport Rambling & Social Club
Club AZ Walkers	Manchester Rambling Club	Stockport Walkers Sutton-in-Ashfield Rambling Club
Crescent Ramblers Northwich	Marple District Rambling Club	The Mellor Society
Derby Nomad Ramblers	Marple Naturalists	The Moorsiders (Urmston) R/Group
Derbyshire Footpaths Preservation Society	Mid Cheshire Footpath Society	The Scramblers Rambling Club
Derbyshire Pennine Club	Northwestern Naturalists Union	The Strollers
Eccles Rambling and Social Club	Pennine Wayfarers Rambling Club	The Wayfarers Rambling Club
	Poynton Rambling Club	West Lancashire Footpath Group
	RA Bolton Group	YHA Central Region
	RA Congleton Group	
	RA East Cheshire Area	
	RA Manchester Area	