



Peak & Northern Footpaths Society

ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2005

HANDBOOK



ANNUAL REPORT 2005

CONTENTS

Officers & HQ details	Page 2
Annual General Meeting 2006	3
President & Environment Officer	4
Chairman's Report	6
Vice Chairman's Report	8
Courts & Inquiries	10
Consultations and Orders	12
Signposts (Administration)	14
Signposts (Maintenance)	15
Footpath Faults	17
Footpath Inspectors & Agents	18
Treasurer's Report	28
Independent Examiner's Report	34
Membership Secretary	35
Affiliated Society Names	45
Constitution	46
Pruning the Files	49
50 Years Ago	51

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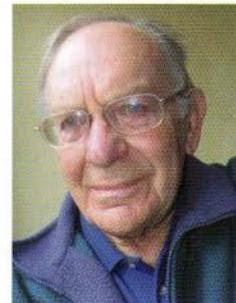
The cover photograph shows the combined work team that erected 3 SPs in record time concluding with the very special SP 300 in Tom Wood.

Featured are our SP Officer, 2 of our Inspectors, our Contractor, local landowners and an Installer.

PRESIDENT AND ENVIRONMENT OFFICER

Derek Seddon

Lately I have taken to standing back and watching in admiration at the transformation which has taken place in the PNFS. The Society has been revitalised by the ideas and efforts of our Chairman and his deputy. Few members outside Taylor House will realise how David Bratt leads from the front with a total commitment in all that goes on, be it planting signposts, negotiating the construction of bridges, joining in the Wednesday walks – leading some- to controlling meetings and overseeing our publications, Very little happens without his involvement.



Mondays have become so busy that we were able to achieve our long-held aim of making better use of Taylor House by spreading the work out through the week. We have an extra session of assessing now on Thursdays, while Peter and Barbara Crofts continue to upgrade our filing system on Tuesdays.

During the year we said a fond farewell to good and faithful servants Jim Wild, Ann Palmer and June Tweedie and welcomed into our midst Jerzy and Margaret Matuszewski, David Tattersall, Ted Wolfe, Paula Mead and Neil Collie all of whom are already an energetic part of the work force. Our Vice President John Houfe retired after 15 continuous years from the design and layout of the Annual Report, carried out with skill, accuracy and to time. We continued to use his original design when we moved the production of the Annual Report up a notch, printing on glossy paper which allowed the better reproduction of colour photographs. We hope that the result met with your approval. Remember, we are always glad to receive your comments, whether pro or anti, as we are with our improved 'Signpost' newsletter. Developments in printing technology enable us to be more ambitious with illustrations and we hope to extend (with your co-operation) the use of photographs throughout each issue. Please send us your digital prints, duly captioned, of footpath topics or interesting scenes and we'll try to make it truly your publication. This has been an educational experience for Peter Rhodes and myself, but Peter's rapid mastery of jigsawing text and pictures into the space available has made it all possible.

The Society's library, languishing untouched in the basement of Manchester Central Library for over 30 years, was brought back to Taylor House and carefully sorted and evaluated by Barbara Heathcott Wood. Some early volumes of the activities of the Sheffield Clarion Ramblers were eagerly accepted by their present committee and the rest were offered to Scarthin Books who gave us a fair price. All the works we parted with were well out of date or were out of our area in their coverage. Old maps were made available to members at the Half year meeting and there will be more to select (2 per member) at the AGM.

On the environment front, you will be aware that the Scout Moor wind farm, north of Bury, was given the go-ahead by the Secretary of State. Soon after there was a rapid deployment to the site of earth-moving equipment which has caused some disruption of the peat and the ancient 'Coal road'. This will have to be made good when the site is opened for business and we will keep a watchful eye on developments.

To end on a happier note, it was a great pleasure to applaud the completion of the phased roll out of our right of access to mapped access land.



In Longshaw Country Park Near Hathersage

**THE PNFS ILLUSTRATED TALK
“PRESERVING OUR FOOTPATH HERITAGE”**

Has been completely re-set, digitised and is shown
with a digital projector.

**NOW AVAILABLE FOR BOOKINGS
BY GROUPS AND SOCIETIES**

Please contact: Peter Rhodes at Taylor House or
16 Mountfield Road, Bramhall, Stockport

Tel: 0161 439 6448 e-mail: prhodes@supanet.com

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT *David Bratt*

I am very pleased to be able to report to you, our members, that your Society has made exceptional progress in 2005.

You will have seen regular updates of our activities in Signpost but they stand repeating not least because the Annual Report is our key archive.

In 2005 we have seen, in no particular order:-

- the issue of the new publicity/membership leaflet
- the implementation of the half-year members meeting
- our Signpost newsletter be updated and go into colour
- the Society slide show converted to digital format
- 3 substantial bridges be funded in Cheshire
- the Leslie Meadowcroft memorial bridge be dedicated
- 15 new or replacement signposts erected
- our web-site news regularly updated
- improved office facilities at Taylor House
- FP faults and obstructions getting priority attention
- our financial position remain very secure
- the replacement programme for tubular signs initiated
- a heartening supply of excellent volunteers come forward
- the establishment of the PNFS walks programme
- membership increase from 940 to 1042

It is the latter item that I would specifically like to dwell on. The membership figure is the definitive yardstick of the Society's progress as it directly reflects how we are perceived in what our PNFS is trying to accomplish and how well it is performing in the overarching reason for its existence—the robust defence of our precious footpath heritage.

The increasing membership we are experiencing is the most effective vote of confidence and show of support for all the hard and committed work that the volunteers put in both in the field and at Taylor House.

A substantial proportion of our membership will come up for renewal this April—not least because of the considerable number of annual category members we recruited in late 2004 and it is vital that if you are satisfied with what we do that you please rejoin—maybe even convert to 5 year membership to avoid the annual hassle!!



Given the good progress can we rest on our laurels?—of course not—there can be no complacency as there are still plenty of improvement opportunities as well as the retention of what has already been achieved.

So what do we need to be addressing in 2006?. Gaining new members via the roll out of the new leaflet is paramount—have you suggestions on where they should be displayed—if so kindly contact June Mabon who is in charge of their distribution. Equally Peter Rhodes' state of the art slide presentation will be crucial in spreading our message and enlisting those who like what we have to offer.

We still can afford and MUST spend more for the benefit of the walking public. My preference is for the provision of more bridges where FPs are halted or made dangerous by streams and gullies or the bridges in place are life expired. Have you any suggestions for the locations of such or have you other views on where we should invest for walker benefit?

Our telephone system at TH need reviewing changing to become more efficient and user friendly –such is the activity level on Mondays that one phone line is now inadequate.

The walks programme on the last Wednesday of every month—details in Signpost—is now off life support and established and will from time to time include walking a problem afflicted or disputed path.

We must also turn our minds this year to succession planning to identify and develop individuals for senior roles in the Society as they become vacant—to stay ahead of the game rather than to have to react to a crisis.

At year end our Treasurer Barry Starkie resigned his position after completing an excellent stint reforming the Society's financial methodology and deserves all our thanks. It is very gratifying to report in the new way of things that there has been a seamless transfer of responsibility to Acting Treasurer Alan Postill who will I am sure be elected a worthy Treasurer at the AGM.

As and if our PNFS grows we will at some time need to review the suitability of TH for ongoing operations but that is still a back burner item.

I hope to see you at the AGM which kindly note is at a new venue .We are moving out of Manchester to the Britannia Hotel at Dialstone Lane—off the A6 at Offerton, Stockport (meeting details included). It has plenty of car parking space as well as bus access –and we have negotiated a hot food buffet! Please do try and attend

I will soon have completed 2 years of office as your Chairman and I feel very proud and positive about the whole concept of the PNFS and its progress and its increased standing and wish to commend to you the super team of committed volunteers who make things happen. Raise a glass to them please for all they do as we raise a glass to you for so vitally giving us your support.



VICE CHAIRMAN *Roy Spoors*

Recently I was rummaging through a box of really old papers and photographs in Taylor House looking for suitable material to scan for our new presentation library. As I happily spent ten minutes, then an hour, then a couple of hours I was struck again, but more markedly, just what a proud history the PNFS has and what resolute and impressive characters we have had in the Society.

Just a couple of the many that I looked at were of Colonel Crook and a 'wanted poster' from the Kinder Scout trespasses.

Colonel Crook was a founding member of the PNFS in 1894 and he served in every role within the Society until his death in the 1930's. An imposing gentleman! He is certainly one of the best examples of just what our Society has always been about having been personally responsible for opening up Hayfield to Snake Inn path, the Doctor's Gate track and the paths around the Derwent Reservoirs. The 'wanted poster' reminded me of the deeply held beliefs and convictions of early walkers and although I am not advocating a spell in the 'Scrubs' I did find it very moving.

This set me really thinking about our roots, about over 100 years of history and what we have always stood for. Much of what we do today has not changed that much and would be immediately recognisable to Colonel Crook. In a couple of important areas though we are moving back to our real core values and it warms the cockles of my heart. I refer to campaigning and to using all of the powers available to us to 'bare our teeth' particularly on footpath obstructions; more of this later.

In the past year good progress has been maintained and I believe that the Society is now very close to having a firm foundation from which to continue our development. In summary, the highlights achieved are,

- new assessment systems implemented
- broadband installed
- more letters/comments being sent by email
- Inspectors/Agents consulted routinely
- new emphasis on determination of opposed orders
- PNFS policy statements published and then revised in December
- financial framework established to ensure long term stability



PNFS Members wanted



Col Crook Founder Member

From September I took responsibility for faults and obstructions so that now all footpath related matters can be coordinated by a single person. This coincided with the Society identifying the six worst performing Highway Authorities that we deal with and the serving of two batches of six 'Section 63' notices on them. So far we have had a 100% success rate with no recourse to the Magistrates Courts. I remember somebody telling me that Derek Taylor used to keep a league table of delinquent authorities and he used to name and shame them. Tempting but so far I have resisted.

This initial success has led to a change of policy and now the faults/obstruction systems will be changed to select appropriate obstructions at the time they are reported and serve 'Section 63' orders immediately. If this is what it takes to get obstructions cleared quickly then, in future, this is what we will do. However, the PNFS will continue to act responsibly in relation to the serving of notices and they will not be issued without careful evaluation.

Speaking of policies you may have read the series of articles in 'Signpost' on our policies, if not, they can be found on the website. We now have a full set of policy statements and they were reviewed and updated in December so there should be no doubt about what we stand for.

So what of the coming year? I think the most important thing to achieve is to continue to build on the progress made but to try and accelerate improvements in a number of areas. For this reason time will be spent on,

- **fully implementing the change of policy on extinguishments and diversions**
- **using email more and more**
- **finally issuing a new 'Inspector's Handbook'**
- **reviewing and updating the faults database**
- **improving the IT systems in Taylor House**
- **redesigning the website**
- **rolling programme to replace our copies of the definitive Maps**
- **serving more Section 63 orders and at least one Section 56 order**

I started this report with my personal experience of being made aware again of our proud history and I would like to end by returning to that theme. By being aware of the core values that we share by being part of the Society we can all do our bit to get the Society's voice heard more and more. We now have more members; more volunteers; are getting more things done. We are getting more effective but we can do more! We are all volunteers and everyone's contribution is valued so please help.

We are returning to campaigning, we are returning to getting our voice heard and we are getting Highway Authorities to do what we want so, my message for the future is,

THRIVING NOT SURVIVING

Thank you for your continued support; especially our Agents/Inspectors and volunteers.

COURTS AND INQUIRIES REPORT *Roy Spoors*

The last twelve months have seen considerable changes in the setting of priorities for the determination of orders that the Society opposes. In the recent past we have attended about three local Public Inquiries each year; generally with successful outcomes though with some notable disappointments as well. This has led to a change of approach and we now seek to determine opposed orders first of all by negotiation, then by offers of 'written submissions' and then only finally by local Public Inquiry. Even then before the final commitment is made to attend a PI we ensure that a number of criteria are met; assessment to ensure that we have a strong case; consistency of approach throughout the process; evidence to be given at the PI, preferably by our local Inspector; local people who are not just opposing but, will attend the PI in person.

Considerable success has been achieved with this new approach which may be summarised as one PI won; five negotiated settlements; two 'written submissions' being considered. The effort and resource released as a result has meant additionally, one appearance at a Magistrates Court and the serving of twelve section 63 legal notices have been completed.

The local Public Inquiry that was won covered Bradford West 312, a proposed Extinguishment Order. Our local representative Paul Clarke did an excellent job over a number of years gathering evidence and preparing the case for opposition. Both the RA and OSS initially objected and then withdrew their objections leaving PNFS as the sole 'prescribed organisation' leading the opposition and helping the local residents at the PI.

Of the five negotiated outcomes where PNFS opposed orders a couple are worth mentioning. First of all, one week after our success on Bradford West 312 we were contacted by Bradford MBC to re-open negotiations on Bingley 74, it might have been a coincidence! As a result of some very positive further negotiations we were able to withdraw our objection. Basically, Bingley 74 is an ancient bridleway (probably a sunken route) for which a Diversion Order was being sought around a private cottage. Unfortunately the route had also been obstructed, illegal notices put up and a series of Temporary Closure Orders issued for a stone bridge near to the cottage. The negotiated settlement allowed for all of the obstructions, illegal notices and TCO's to be cleared but also, for rights on foot to continue over the original line as well as over the diverted bridleway line.



Locked Gate and Illegal Notice



Stone Footbridge with TCO

Secondly, Shirley Northcott did some good work on Whittingham 13, 15 where a proposed Diversion Order was to produce a long, rectangular diversion to allow a paddock/garden to be extended. Over many months we maintained our objection as the rectangular diversion became smaller and smaller. In the end we achieved a minor change of line that was really an improvement over the original line and we withdrew our objection. This was only possible because Shirley inspected these proposals 'on the ground' and provided invaluable input to the negotiations.

Thirdly, on Whitworth 86 a proposed Diversion Order was looked at by Barry Starkie. In this case it turned out that the line of Whitworth 86 had been built over many years previously by a conservatory and garden wall. This order was a feeble attempt by Lancashire CC to regularise previous mistakes and accept the position that exists 'on the ground' rather than look at any other alternatives. The PNFS maintained its objection and then offered 'written submissions'. This was taken up and is currently being determined by The Planning Inspectorate.

Without doubt the biggest change of approach for PNFS last year was the serving of twelve 'Section 63' notices on five different Highway Authorities in order to get serious obstructions removed from the footpath network. We all know that getting obstructions removed has always been time consuming and can often take several years to achieve. With a number of Highway Authorities in our area it had been proving to be just impossible to get any action or communication at all. So in October, six notices were served on what we considered to be the worst performing Highway Authorities and miraculously all six obstructions were removed within the 30 day notice period.Flushed with this initial success a further six notices were served in December and they are currently in their 30 day notice period.

It should be reported that Terry Norris, Harry Scott, John Harker and Andy Overton led the way on 'Section 63' by either serving or threatening to serve a number of notices in their own names before PNFS got round to serving any notices. Well done gentlemen.

However, the success of this approach did lead to a change of systems and PNFS policy regarding obstructions so that, in future, they will be used more extensively. A word of caution though, we are selecting very carefully only those obstructions that are clearly within the provisions defined in Section 63 so that there is never any doubt or dispute about the action that the Highway Authority is required to take. This approach is likely to continue for the foreseeable future though it is unlikely to constrain the number of opportunities that we have to serve these very useful notices.

One very interesting and encouraging by-product of having served these twelve notices has been that three of the worst performing Highway Authorities have made overtures to us along the lines of 'how can we work together on this?'. We will monitor this very closely and time will tell whether any of the leopards really do manage to change any of their spots!

For 2006 it will largely be more of the same with plenty of time being given for these new approaches to settle in properly. Hopefully the progress achieved can be accelerated though it will be planned very carefully first and inevitably will be limited by the resource available.

Finally, a real thank you to our Agents/Inspectors who have done essential work 'on the ground' and also, to those of our Members who have either provided assistance or, reported faults/obstructions on the footpath network.

CONSULTATIONS AND ORDERS

Alan Hooley

There have been some personnel changes in 2005, not least being the departure of Peter Crofts from the leadership of the Section to pastures new within the Society. I succeeded Peter and I acknowledge with gratitude the instruction and help he has given to me whilst I got my mind round the duties of the post. Peter has been the manager of the Section for four years and an assessor for two years before that. I am glad to say that his expertise remains available to me, to the assessors and to the Society as a whole.



A number of assessors were recruited during the year and Harold Fore retired from the Section to conduct the review and updating of the Society's library of Definitive Maps. I extend my thanks to Harold for his work in his time as an assessor. We now have seven assessors, and the number on duty on Monday mornings has produced some overcrowding in the office. It was therefore decided to split the team into two, with a group attending on Thursday mornings. Thus assessors are now available on two mornings per week.

During the year 237 letters were received from local authorities and developers consulting the Society about proposals to modify the path network. Some were unexceptionable and needed no comment, but those that appeared to raise arguable issues were referred to the relevant inspector.

There were 189 confirmed Orders received, of which 143 were diversions, 31 extinguishments and 15 creations. There were 85 notifications of planning applications that affected a right of way of some type. In each case the authority was asked to ensure that no diversion or extinguishment should take place unless it is necessary, and where such an order is made, a suitable alternative way is provided.

Local planning authorities who advise us of planning applications are in a minority. Not all local authorities' staff fully understand the role of the Society. We are consulted on some planning applications where the development applied for does not impinge on the path network. Again one authority advises us of proposals to extinguish purely private rights of way. I suppose they work on the belt and braces principle. I should be happier if I could be sure that every issue that every issue that does concern the Society is reported early enough to take action should it be needed.

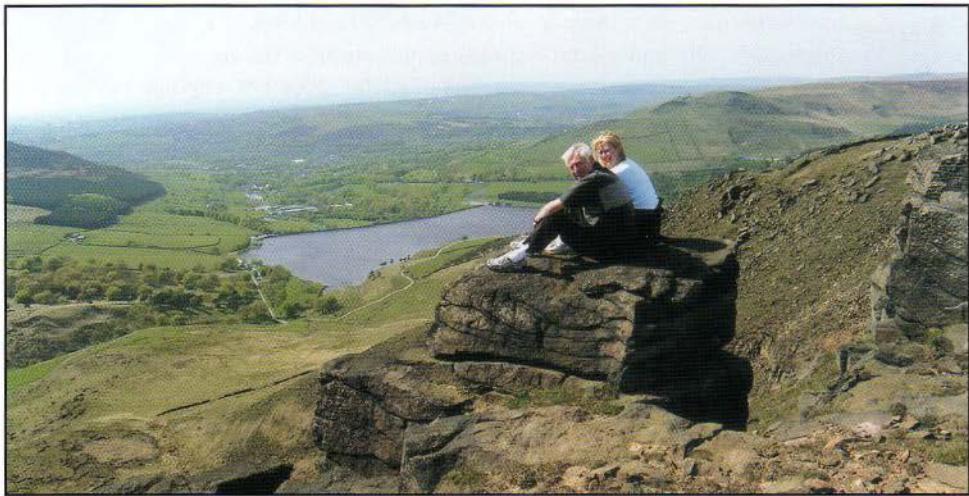
In 2005 a modified system for referring proposals to inspectors was introduced. The object of the change was to provide a finer filter through which proposals and orders are passed. It is plain from experience that it is not always possible to grasp the full implications of a proposed change from documentation supplied by a local authority. A proposal that appears innocuous may conceal an issue about which the local inspector has firm views. The modified system means more proposals will be referred to inspectors, with a consequent increase in workload. The inspectors as a body have said that they do not mind this, and that they see it as a reasonable price to pay for a more effective check.

There are more policy changes on the horizon. There has been identified a trend amongst some local authorities not to state their reasons for concluding that the statutory tests are satisfied before making an Order. They content themselves with a bald statement of the statutory grounds e.g. that a diversion is in the interests of the landowner and that it will not make the path substantially less convenient to the public, making no mention of the facts upon which they base those conclusions. This tack makes the local authority's job easier, in that they do not have to go through the required thought processes. If a landowner asks for a diversion order, it appears that the request is just nodded through, apparently on the assumption that if there is a perceived problem the Society will identify it. This is not the function of the Society – the council must explain its reasons for its action and the Society will examine them and object if they are found wanting. One might argue that a failure to explain the grounds for depriving the public of rights they have hitherto enjoyed is a breach of the human rights of those who wish to exercise those rights. Cases have been built on flimsier grounds!

In future therefore, the Society will expect a statement of reasons for the Council's decision to make the order, and if no reasons are stated an objection will be made on that ground, unless the reasons are patently obvious from the circumstances. We shall still object of course when there is a statement of reasons and we think the reasons do not add up.

We must be careful how we pursue this policy – we do not want the Society to acquire a reputation for objecting to everything in sight 'on principle' for that would tarnish our reputation as a responsible body providing constructive criticism. Nonetheless it is a justifiable stance to put a local authority to proof of the validity of its case. This policy should eventually result in reducing the workload of the inspectors and the assessors.

Finally, I am grateful to the inspectors, the assessors and everyone else for the understanding and good humour with which they have tolerated my errors and omissions whilst I am on the learning curve. As my education is not yet complete more tolerance will yet be called for.



Above Dovestones Reservoir, Saddleworth Moor.



SIGNPOST ADMINISTRATION *Fred Ogden*

Another busy year which has been made more difficult by my not being always able to obtain permission from landowners for the erection of a few potential signposts. A number of sites have been suggested but varying problems have been encountered and progress with those is rather slow. I have a few requests on hold and I will undertake to make progress as soon as I am able.

I have also been dealing with both Cheshire and Staffordshire County Councils regarding the provision of footbridges. These are obviously far more expensive than signposts but if any member wishes to consider this form of memorial, please contact me.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the muscle men who actually erect the new signs—rarely an easy task and sometimes involving the carrying of heavy loads uphill over rough moorland—the signs themselves, the excavation tools and cement mix and aggregate. The beefy boys are contractor Brian Taylor with members Ted Wolfe and Jerzy Matuszewski and such others as I can rope in from time to time using either persuasion or the other!

SIGNPOSTS ERECTED 2005

No	Position	Donor
297	Charlesworth	Glossop & Longendale Soc.
298	Hartington	PNFS
299	Charlesworth	PNFS
300	Charlesworth	PNFS
301	Lyme Handley	J&M Matuszewski
303	Belmont	Norwest Fellwalking Club
304	Belmont	In memory of Andrew Burton
305	Belmont	PNFS
306	Belmont	PNFS
307	Manifold Way	Manchester CHA

TO BE ERECTED

302	Quarnford	Tally Ho Club
308	Marsden	PNFS
309	Quarnford	Manchester RA
310	Baslow	In memory of Harold and Marjorie Hetherington
311	Baslow	In memory of Mr Booth
312	Mellor	In memory of Norman Lee

SIGNPOST MAINTENANCE *Keith Wykes*



Our Duties

We maintain some existing 300 structures including regular signs, 43 Tubular Posts/Fingerposts, 7 Mileposts, 11 Memorial Footbridges, 2 Plaques and 3 Topographs/Indicators, with some 60 structures no longer physically in existence.

The Team and responsibilities

Last years team is now increased by additional volunteers :-

Brian Morrison who featured in a recent Signpost edition
as painting SP's with his bicycle as transport!

- Bill McGuinness who has undertaken to maintain, by way of painting, SP's within his locality beginning with SP50 Mickleden Edge, Bradfield CP GR SK1917098600
- Geoff Errington who intends keeping an eye open for potential sites for new posts in the Belper, Upper Derwent, Kinder and Bleaklow areas.
- Clarke Rogerson who is inspecting those sites which appear not to have been inspected for 10 years or more.
- David Morton, who is answering last years call for a volunteer(s) to mark up the SP team's set of Explorer Series Access Land Maps with accurate SP information.
- Harold Fore who is getting to grips with our GPS!
- Brian Summerscales continues to assist in confirming or otherwise our "Missing" Signposts as "Not Located"

Equipment and Facilities

We have various items available at Taylor House for use in connection with signpost maintenance viz:-

- Cordless rechargeable battery operated drill
- Paints, wire brushes, creosote, mortar
- Digital camera for recording signs before and after treatment
- GPS for precise location of signs
- JUPs (Join Us) plaques for affixing to signs

SIGNPOST MAINTENANCE *Keith Wykes Continued*

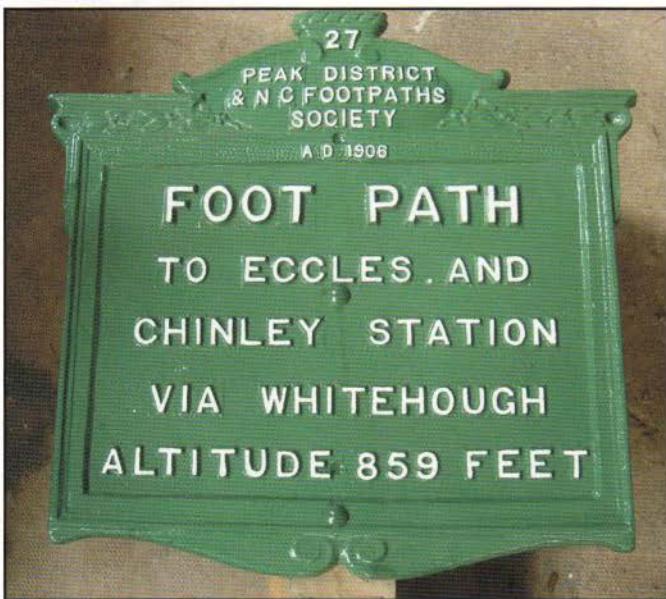
2005 Work Completed: (brackets = totals to date)

- 108 Inspections; 84 reported as OK - 45(153) JUP's affixed - 38(132) GPS accurate Grid Reference locations obtained - 15(39) confirmations as "Missing - Not Located": these confirmations then come before Fred Ogden's eye as potential replacement plantings - SP27, a 1906 splendid SP, Eccles Road, GR SK 0463380976, Chapel en le Frith re-erected following refurbishment; Frank Wetton, our SPIInsp. went out in the morning to espy, prior to maintenance on site, & returned later to find it removed; inadvertently by Derbyshire CC contractors who are reimbursing us for cost of repairs and replanting!-SP59, Mossy Lea, Charlesworth, GR SK0606594670 replanted - SP154 Sth of Keepers Cottage, Pott Shrigley GR SJ9549480512 replaced - SP155 Nth of Keeper's Cottage, Pott Shrigley GR SJ955 0880630 replaced - SP's 105, 1 ml S of Cat & Fiddle Inn, Macclesfield Forest & Wildboarclough; 244, Upper Derwent and 123, Near Townend Cottage, Ilam are being refurbished and repainted offsite.

N.b.69(127) not inspected for 5 years; 72(42) for 10 years; 26(37) for 20 years

2006 Aims:() = 2004 figures

- To maintain 53(50) structures reported as requiring maintenance: we urgently need volunteer maintainers to step forward - to visit those 32 (35) sites identified as requiring a site visit - to inspect those 151 sites where the status of the SP's is unknown - accurately GPS locate those 14 (16) sites where no GR is recorded - to secure a Website available SP database (c/fwd from 2004)
- continue to revamp the manual records -



Signpost 27



FOOTPATH FAULTS *Hilda Bowler*

During 2005 a further 315 faults were added to the 'FAULTS' database and letters sent to the relevant highway authority with details of the problems.

232 faults have been resolved and moved to the 'Cleared' database.

During the year, Inspectors have been checking on 'old' faults, i.e. those reported before 2004. 195 'old', i.e. pre'2004, reported faults were cleared, and 103 were rechecked by Inspectors and remain on the 'FAULTS' database.

There are currently 1232 records of outstanding problems, of which 402 (33%) are problems with missing signposts.

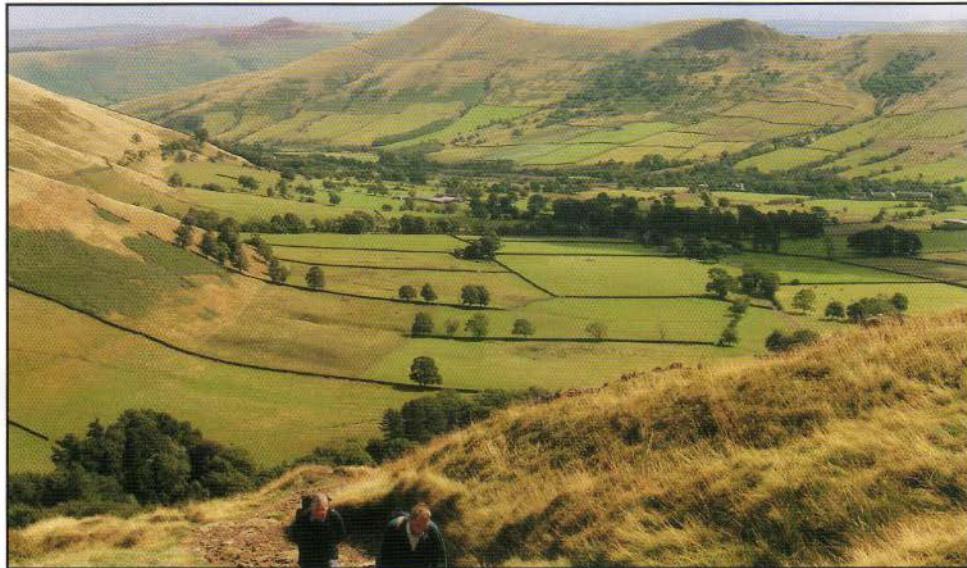
In addition some Inspectors deal directly with the Highway Authorities, sending details to Taylor House to keep our records up-to-date.

Jerzy Matuszewski has taken over from Peter Rhodes the moving of cleared faults from the 'FAULTS' database to the 'Cleared' database. He is also looking at faults which have been on the database for some time but which are still unresolved.

My thanks to Inspectors for their hard work over the year, and for their clear and detailed fault reports, which facilitate our work at Taylor House.

Inspectors

During the year, 9 new inspectors have been recruited, but we have lost 7, due to age, change of circumstances, etc. We now have 68 Inspectors, but would welcome more, especially for more outlying areas.



Edale from Grindsbrook



TREASURER'S REPORT

Barry Starkie

PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY INCOME & EXPENDITURE TO 31 DEC 2005

Alan Postill

Assistant Treasurer



INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
	2005	2005	2004
Legacies	£11,382	£2,283	
Donations	General	£839	£942
	Signposts	£1,519	£1,285
Gift Aid	Reclaimed	£2,037	£1,346
		£1,155	
Advertising		£238	£238
Sundry		£163	£288
Sale of old books		£630	
	total	£17,963	£5,891
Interest		£3,758	£2,420
Dividends		£3,913	£5,208
	total	£7,671	£7,628
Subscriptions			
Annual		£1,945	£1,973
5 Year Transfers		£1,366	£1,099
10 Year Transfers		£1,090	£1,116
Affiliations		£1,055	£1,1005
	total	£5,456	£5,288
TOTAL INCOME	£31,090	£18,807	
Excess Expenditure	£2,899		
Taylor House			
Running costs		£2,800	£1,663
Depreciation		£1,763	£974
Travel & Subsistence		£2,940	£4,521
Printing/Copying (Inc Annual Report)		£2,474	£982
Newsletter & Distribution		£1,475	£1,417
Secretarial Fees		£298	
Postages		£1,112	£1,076
Telephone		£811	£712
Stationery/Maps & Office Supplies		£1,493	1,129
Insurances		£1,564	£1,420
Functions		£1,088	£1,210
Sundry		£53	£362
Subscriptions		£133	£140
Signpost Expenses		£3,819	£3,100
Provisions (Tax Refunds)			£3,000
Donations		£2,115	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£23,938		£21,706
Excess Income		£7,152	
			£31,090

NOTES ON INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2005

The annual surplus of income over expenditure is shown as £7152, as against excess spending over income in 2004 amounting to £2899.

The year's income has benefited from legacies totalling £11382 from the estates of two deceased members, Elsie Bryan and Bill Howard. Their kindness transforms this year's finances and without them a very different picture would be painted.

The year also shows an increase in income from donations to the Society, (£2358 in 2005 against £2200 in 2004) and again our members' generosity is sincerely appreciated. Gift Aid income is represented by £2037 claimed and received to cover tax years to April 05 whilst £1155 is to be claimed at the end of the current fiscal year.

Total income from investments is relatively unchanged but the increase in interest income and decrease in dividend income reflect the move from shares to lower risk interest bearing accounts over the past two years.

Subscriptions & Affiliations show a modest increase (£5456 against £5288) and, of course, membership fees remain unchanged. It should be noted however that total income from subscriptions covers less than a quarter of what the Society needs to cover annual running costs. Therefore if it is to continue to prosper, at some future date the question of increased subscription fees will need to be addressed.

Excluding income from legacies, which tend to distort the annual figures, we see overall that income in 2005 totalled £19708 whilst in 2004 it was £16524.

The expenditure figures reflect the continued increases being seen in our all round activities, although some logistical problems have slowed down spending in areas previously planned.

Increased running costs at Taylor House (£2800 from £1663) reflect the installation and usage and maintenance of new IT systems. The main increase being almost £1000 for Broadband. Similarly, having bought new computers etc in late 2004 the annual depreciation figures increase from £974 to £1763.

Travel costs (£2940 against £4521 in 2004) have actually reduced. Although there have been fewer meetings and no Inspectors Conference in 2005, I can only assume that members are supporting our work by choosing not to claim.

Printing costs (up to £2474 against £982 in the previous year) are largely accounted for by an extra £1000 for the new style Annual Report and £600 for the new style Membership leaflets brought into use in December 2005.

“Signpost” newsletter, postages, telephones, stationery, insurances, subscriptions are all very much in line with last year. Secretarial services (£298) have been bought for recording of minutes at Officers meetings since September. The cost of Functions (£1088 against £1210 in 2004) is made up from the AGM in April and the open meeting in October whilst last year's included the Inspectors Conference.

Signpost Expenses (£3819 in 2005 against £3100 in 2004) are the direct costs of new and replacement signposts and repair work done for us, and the donation of £2115 was made to Cheshire County Council for the provision of 3 footbridges.

NOTES ON INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2005 *Continued*

Overall, the Society's total expenditure figure of £23938 in 2005 against £21706 in 2004 reflects our continued activity, especially at Taylor House.

Capital Expenditure in the year has been to finance a new laptop at Taylor House (£1000), a digital projector (£750) and a second digital camera (£120) for the signpost team.

Fund Notes are

These Funds are shown separately but inter-fund transfers in the year have been:-

Signpost Fund: Specific Donations to this fund and spending from it are shown separately as £1519 and £3819 respectively. Spending in this area is increasing but not as quickly as was originally envisaged due to logistical problems in locating and agreeing sites for the proposed new signposts.

Defence Fund remains at 10% of total funds and transfers have been made to maintain this. There has been no expenditure against this fund in 2005.

The HE Wild Footbridge Fund has been closed, and the other two Memorial Funds remain unchanged. Whilst the Leslie Meadowcroft Footbridge is complete, the county authority have still to let us know the actual cost. Progress on the Mary Chambers Memorial has again been hampered by logistical problems.

General Fund (after transfers to Signpost & Defence Funds) and benefiting from the surplus income and increased investments valuations shows at £205,618 (from £188719 at 31.12.2004)



The Flagged Path over Black Hill, The Peak District.

PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY

BALANCE SHEET 31 DEC 2005

31-Dec-05 31.Dec 2004

FIXED ASSETS

Freehold Property at Cost	£60,153	£60,153
Furniture/Fittings/Equipment.	£1,026	£1,259
Computer Equipment	£4,285	£3,673

INVESTMENTS

(Long Term)

Government Stock	£102,368	£93,966
UK Equities	£4,347	£3,968

(Short Term)

Hampshire Trust 12m Notice	£14,309	£13,621
Alliance & Leicester 12m Bond	£30,000	
CafCash Deposit Account	£49,010	£65,629
CafCash High Interest Cheque	£4,066	£10,601
Skipton BS	£100	£100
Leeds & Holbeck BS	£100	£100
Petty Cash/Postages	£140	£162

DEBTORS

£1,905 £920

Assets total £271,809 £254,152

LIABILITIES

Creditors	£22	£29
5 Year Members Susp	£3,047	£2,421
10 Year Members Susp	£6,140	£5,025

Liabilities total £9,209 £7,475

Assets less Liabilities £262,600 £246,677

Funds

General	£205,618	£188,729
Def	£26,260	£24,666
Signpost	£26,722	£29,022
LGMeadowcroft	£2,000	£2,000
HE Wild		£250
Mary Chambers	£2,000	£2,000

Total Funds £262,600 £246,667

BALANCE SHEET NOTES

ASSETS

Fixed Assets

The valuation of £65464 net of depreciation against £65085 last year reflects the new computer equipment purchased less depreciation to date. Taylor House remains at a "cost" basis.

Long Term Investments (£106715 from £97934 in 2004) show increases in valuations in Government Stocks and Equities although the actual investments remained unchanged throughout the year.

Short Term Investments show £14309 remaining on 12 month notice accounts with Hampshire Trust and a £30,000 12 month bond invested with Alliance & Leicester in June 2005. The bulk of the remainder of our cash (totalling £53076) is now held on immediate access, interest bearing accounts with CAF Bank, a subsidiary of Charities Aid Foundation.

Debtors at the year end are the total of £750 interest accrued on the Alliance & Leicester Bond and £1155 accrued 2005/06 Gift Aid.

Total assets at the Year End amount to £271809 against £254152 at the end of 2004.

LIABILITIES

Creditors at £22 is the one month General Rates payment on Taylor House still to be paid.

5 and 10 Year Membership Suspense Accounts totalling £9187 (against £7446 at the end of 2004) show more members taking advantage of the discounts available by committing to longer than annual membership.

ASSETS £271809 less LIABILITIES £9209 leaves FUNDS totalling £262600 (£246667 in 2004)

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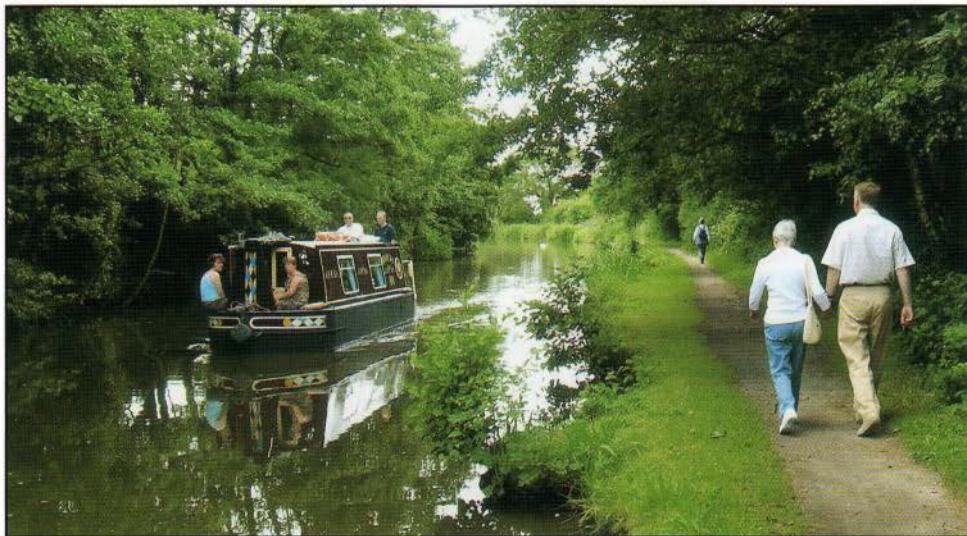
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PEAK & NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FUNDS AT 31 DEC 2005

FUNDS	Opening	From I&E	Donations	Expenditure	Transfers	Year End
GENERAL Increased Valuations to Investments	£188,729	£7,152			£250 £706 £8,781	
See Income/Exp 2005						£205,618
DEFENCE	£24,666				£1,594	£26,260
SIGNPOST	£29,022		£1,519	£3819		£26,722
Memorial Funds			(see Income/ Exp 2005)			
LG Meadowcroft Footbridge	£2,000					£2,000
HE Wild Footbridge	£250				-£250	closed
M Chambers Toposcope	£2,000					£2,000
Totals	£246,667	£7,152	£1,519	£3,819	£10,831	£262,600



The Canal near Bollington, Macclesfield, Cheshire.

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 2005.

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.

Elizabeth Hudson
Elizabeth Hudson ACA
Bradley Fold, Woodford Lane, Newton, Macclesfield
3rd February 2006

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.)

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I am able to report for the second year running an increase in our Membership figures. We have welcomed no fewer than one hundred and two Annual, Five-year and Ten-year new friends into our Society including those recruited at slide presentations and talks. That is the good side. Unfortunately, we have lost by non-renewal thirty-four and on an even more sombre note fourteen who have passed away, among them one Vice President and quite a number of long-serving members. Once again, please allow me to say how much I, along with my fellow Officers, do appreciate the interest and support which is given by our individual Members and the representatives of our Affiliated Societies.



Members	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Annual	298	306	316	275	487
Ten Year	428	388	353	318	275
Five Year	180	177	193	209	256
Honorary Life	14	15	15	15	18
Junior	3	2	2	2	6
Total	931	898	838	940	1042
Affiliates	84	81	83	79	77

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PRUNING THE FILES

Peter Crofts

The Society's footpath files are an invaluable resource which Assessors, in particular, need to consult frequently and rapidly. To this end they must contain all the information needed on numbered and un-numbered footpaths in the whole of our area but should also be uncluttered by out-of-date and redundant material.

Definitive paths are usually given numbers by the Highway Authority and, if so, are indexed by us using abbreviations for Highway Authority and Civil Parish followed by path number. Thus, for example, footpath number 200 in Marple (Civil Parish) in Stockport (Highway Authority) is indexed as SK-MAR-200. Un-numbered paths (which may be definitive or not) are indexed by Highway Authority and Civil Parish plus their four-figure National Grid reference and usually followed (particularly for short paths in urban areas) by NE, NW, SE, OR SW to locate the path within a 500 metre square.

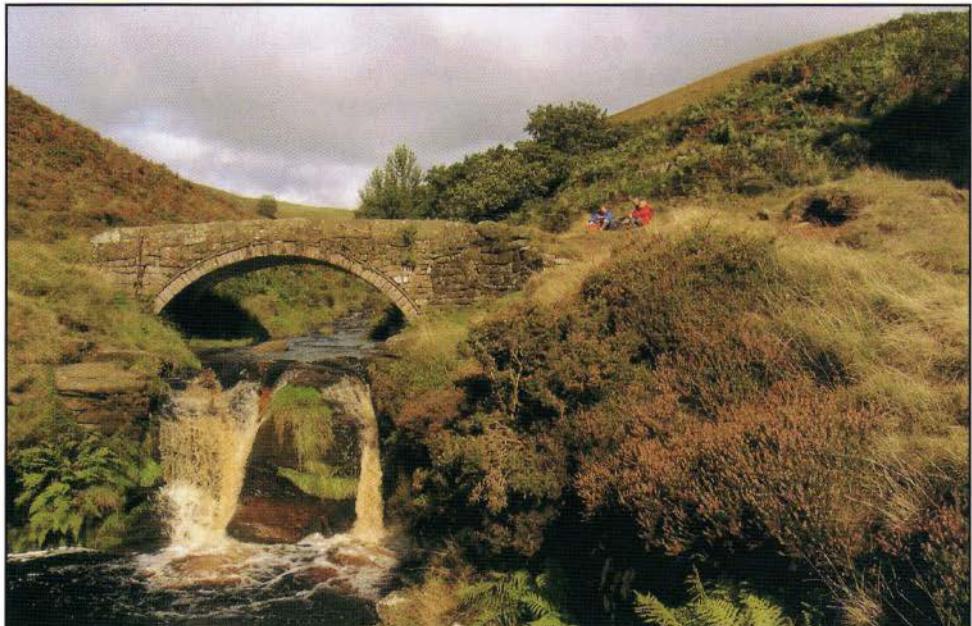
Before the operations of the Society were centred in Nelson Street, records of correspondence were kept by successive Secretaries in their homes. This persisted for files on footpath faults which were maintained by Derek Taylor. However, in Nelson Street, files for creations, diversions and closures were indexed chronologically with the result that references to individual paths were scattered throughout the system. After we moved to Taylor House, and Derek Taylor's untimely death, Adrian Littleton took on the Herculean task of merging the contents of the two filing systems into the present one, described above.

All references to a path are now kept together and stored in folders, each of which contains papers for perhaps thirty paths. A typical Parish may require three or four folders for its numbered definitive paths and perhaps two folders for its un-numbered ones. However, new material is continually being added with the result that folders get bigger and more tightly packed on the shelves and are difficult to remove and replace. Pruning then becomes necessary.

Although all documents coming in are filed initially, many are overtaken by further developments and then become redundant. For example, a proposal to divert a path is normally the subject of an informal consultation. We may enter an objection whilst it is referred to our Inspector for his or her comments and several letters may pass between us and the Highway Authority before a mutually satisfactory agreement is reached. The next step is a letter from the Highway Authority informing us of their intention to make an Order. In the comparatively few cases where agreement has not been reached we may then object formally to the Order which, if both we and the Authority persist in disagreeing, will lead to a Public Inquiry. More usually the next step is the making of an Order, followed by a letter of intent to confirm it, and finally a notice that it has been confirmed, either by the Highway Authority (if it is unopposed) or by the Secretary of State. Unless there has been an Inquiry, in which case we would retain the Inspector's report, we only need to keep the confirmed Order. Reports, on paper, of footpath faults may also be discarded when the fault has been remedied (although, since this aspect of the Society's work is computerised, records might be retained there).

Unnecessary documents could be pruned whenever an Order is confirmed or a fault has been corrected but it is best if pruning is confined to experienced file-users who can work through the whole system when overcrowding becomes intolerable. Adrian Littleton began such an operation a couple of years ago and since I ceased to be responsible for coordinating the work of our Assessors and the resulting correspondence, my wife and I have been coming in on Tuesdays to assist him. Since Adrian started at the beginning of the alphabet, I am working backwards from the end and hope that we shall meet some time this year.

Barbara is relabelling non-definitive files using the National Grid system instead of the arbitrary and unsearchable numbers which were initially allocated to them.



Three Shire Heads, near Flash.

AFFILIATED SOCIETY NAMES

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

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