



Annual review 2015

In 2015

Our core activity continued to be monitoring planning applications and commenting on local plans and policies. With help from our team of planning volunteers, which grew in number and effectiveness in 2015, we scrutinised 147 planning applications and commented on 26 of them. We were effective in 57% of the cases we were engaged with. Key cases included:

- We helped stop noisy wire saws being installed at Dale View Quarry near Stanton Moor
- We helped obtain refusal for five wind turbines at Griffe Grange on the border of the National Park (although this was appealed and the inquiry will be in 2016)
- We opposed inappropriate new housing at the Hartington cheese factory, where again there is an appeal pending.
- We supported the successful application for two hydro electric installations on the River Derwent in Chatsworth Park
- We submitted evidence to support a prohibition order (which would remove quarrying rights at Backdale Quarry

on Longstone Edge). We also opposed an application for permission to build new industrial units on the same site. As the year ended we objected to a number of important planning applications, including housing at Harpur Hill in Buxton, housing at the former Dyson factory at Stanington in Sheffield's green belt and the proposed M1 service station at Smithy Wood, where we worked closely with the Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust and the Woodland Trust.

Planning authorities in Barnsley, Doncaster, High Peak, Rotherham and Sheffield were all producing new local plans which we sought to influence, usually opposing unrealistic housing numbers which would damage countryside without meeting true housing needs.

2015 was an extraordinary year for legacies, resulting in a substantial increase in our reserves. This has enabled us to increase our capacity significantly: by directing more resources to our campaigning work and to developing our membership base and supporter income.

2015 ~ successes, issues and campaigns ~ 2015

Strategic Plan 2016-2020

2015 was the final year of our strategic plan and we worked on a new plan to cover the next five years. [Copies can be downloaded from our website or by contacting the office]. During this period to 2020, we envisage that threats to our countryside will increase if the government continues to believe that relaxing the planning system will favour growth, while continuing to cut resources for countryside protection. This means there will be many serious challenges for us to face, with fewer resources.

Much of our agenda will be driven by

- The pressure on local authorities to deliver high (and in our view, unsustainable) levels of house building
- Plans to pump prime the economies of northern cities with major infrastructural investment
- Increased devolution of decision-making (including for planning) to city regions and other forms of combined authorities



Transport

Potentially, the biggest issue to arise in 2015 was the government's announcement, as part of the Northern Powerhouse initiative, to investigate options for a tunnel beneath the Pennines to link Leeds,



Sheffield, Manchester and Liverpool. We were disappointed that the agreement was only

to look at a road tunnel and not a new rail tunnel. We believe that a new road tunnel under the Peak District would create more problems for local communities than it would solve: in particular, huge environmental damage to the countryside and increased congestion at either end of the tunnel. We will continue to oppose a road tunnel and press for the option of a new rail tunnel to be considered as part of a strategic approach to improving transport connections between northern cities.

In the meantime, objections to Network Rail's proposed new passing loop on the Hope Valley line between Hathersage and Bamford triggered a public inquiry. In principle we support a new passing loop, but objected because Network Rail's evidence to justify this major development was unsatisfactory. The current piecemeal approach to improving transport in the north is a matter of serious concern, and we continue to press for a more strategic approach.

Projects and events

We held a successful Magnificent Walk event in and around Edale in April, with most walkers choosing the longest walk on offer – the Edale Skyline. Every year, this event showcases the fabulous landscapes of the Peak District and raises valuable funds for our work. We also began to plan the new Peak District Boundary Walk, which should come to fruition in 2017.

Thanks to the generosity and hospitality of life members Sir Hugh and Lady Sykes we held a lunch for selected local business leaders. This gave our business membership scheme a boost, led to significant donations and helped raise awareness of what we do.

In 2015 we began to engage with the government's Northern Powerhouse initiative and to advocate the importance of the countryside for the economic future of the North of England by attracting investment and skilled people. As part of this we met MPs Patrick McLoughlin (also Secretary of State for Transport) and Paul Blomfield and the Deputy Leader of Sheffield City Council, Councillor Leigh Bramall.



Campaigns

Take Back the Tracks

There has been slow but steady progress for our Take Back the Tracks campaign: bans on off-roading were proposed at Washgates in the Staffordshire Peak District and Derby Lane near Monyash. Working closely with Stoney Middleton Parish Council, we continued to press Derbyshire County Council to close Jacob's Ladder near Stoney Middleton to offroaders. We were delighted that Staffordshire County Council reduced the speed limit in the tunnel to 20mph and strongly support their proposal for a 20mph speed limit on the section of the Manifold Way between Swainsley Tunnel to its junction with Manifold Valley Road and Leek Road.

Motorised joy riders racing through the tunnel at Swainsley on the Manifold Way have been making conditions intimidating and dangerous for other users. The Manifold Way is a visitor destination of national repute within the Peak District National Park and a wonderful resource for walkers, joggers, cyclists, horse riders and those with restricted mobility. The section from Swainsley south to Wetton Mill is part of the minor road network, surfaced with tarmac and with an unrestricted speed limit of 60mph. At the northern end it begins with a 100 metre tunnel which, despite lighting, is dark and gives a distorted sense of distance, and has no acceptable refuges within its length.

The tunnel attracts motorists and motorcyclists to attempt time trials through it and there have already been several serious accidents. Our intervention will now stop this abuse.



Organisation and people

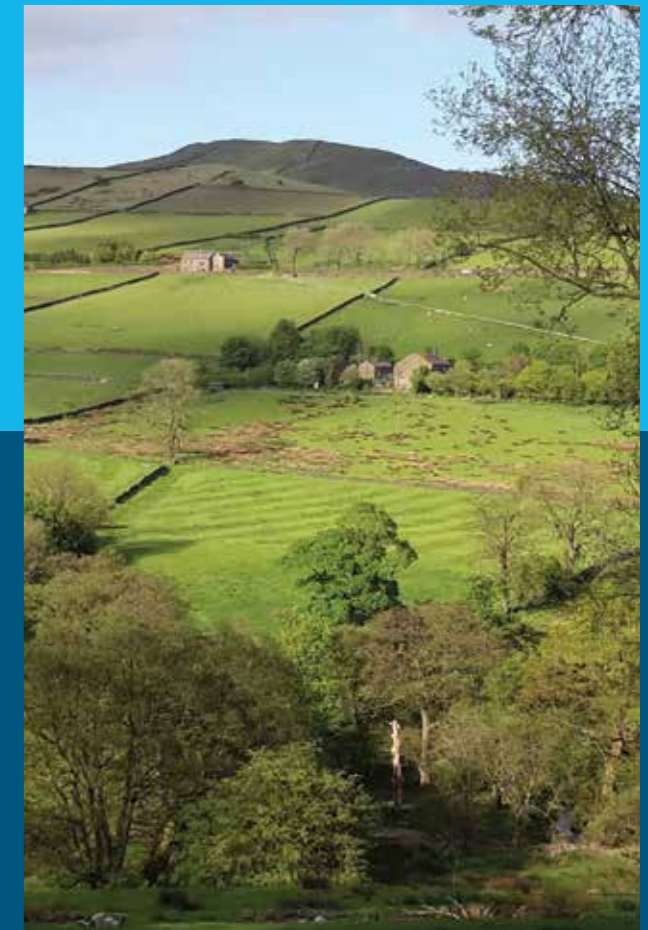
After seven years' sterling service as our President Julia Bradbury stepped down but we are delighted she will remain as a Vice President. Our new President Dame Fiona Reynolds, former Director General of the National Trust, is a formidable champion of countryside protection and a long-time friend of our CPRE South Yorkshire branch.



Undergrounding

Our campaign to remove electricity pylons from the National Park continued: National Grid announced their intention to underground high-voltage pylons and wires to the east of the Woodhead Tunnel at Dunford Bridge. The scheme is not as extensive as we wanted so we are still looking at options to improve the scheme.

During 2015 more than 5km of overhead power supply cables were removed as part of OFGEM's Undergrounding for Visual Amenity scheme, including cables at Barnside Lodge (Midhopestone), Brown Hills Lane (Redmires), the Wash (Chapel en le Frith), Tissington and Hurdlow. This year was also the start of a new 8-year phase of the scheme and we have been working closely with the PDNPA to identify more overhead cables for removal in the coming years.



Finance report

Overall 2015 was a year of considerable achievement, both in terms of protecting the countryside and in developing our capacity and capability. Thanks to all our volunteers who have helped make this possible.

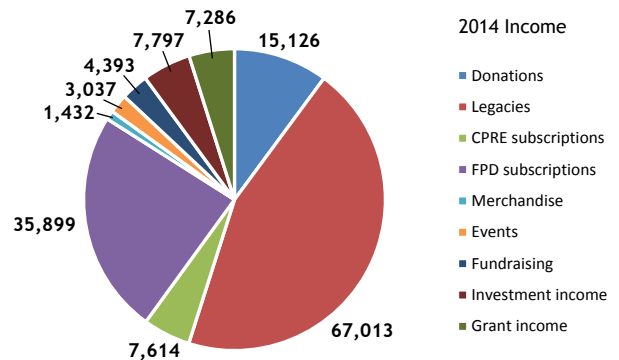
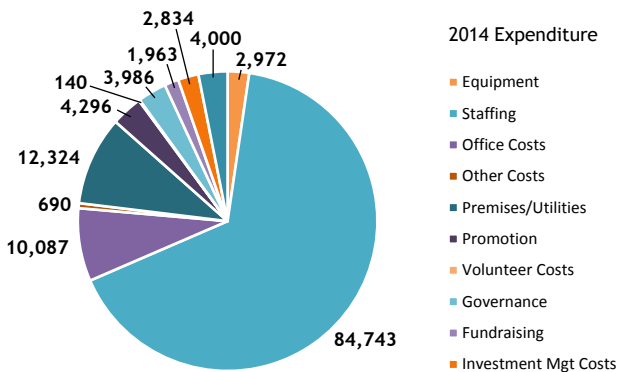
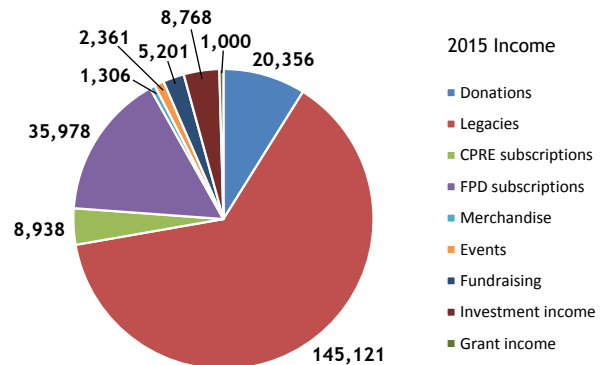
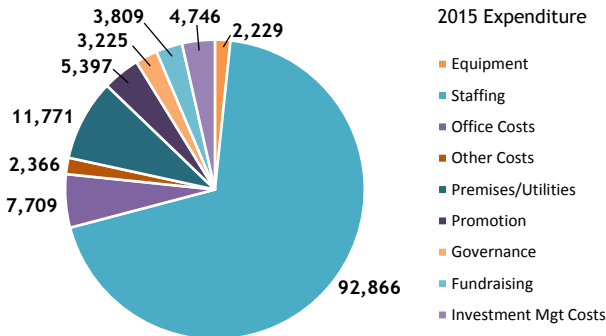
As at 31 May 2016, our membership numbers were:

- Friends of the Peak District 684 memberships
- CPRE South Yorkshire 401 memberships

Our total income for the financial period was £229,028 compared with total expenditure of £134,118. As a result, the net movement in funds before investments for the period was a surplus of £94,910. However we also had a reduction in the value of investments of £2,979 making a total surplus for the year of £91,931. A major reason for this surplus was that during the year we received a number of generous legacies.



	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2015 £	Total 2014 £
INCOME				
Donations	20,174	182	20,356	15,126
Legacies	145,121	-	145,121	67,013
CPRE subscriptions	8,938	-	8,938	7,614
FOPD subscriptions	-	35,978	35,978	35,899
Merchandising income	901	405	1,306	1,432
Events income	2,097	264	2,361	3,037
Fundraising income	5,201	-	5,201	4,393
Investment income	8,768	-	8,768	7,797
Grant income	-	1,000	1,000	7,286
Total income	191,200	37,829	229,029	149,597
EXPENDITURE				
Costs of generating funds	14,150	6,413	20,563	15,975
Charitable activities	69,982	40,348	110,330	108,074
Governance costs	3,225	-	3,225	3,986
Total expenditure	87,357	46,761	134,118	128,035
Net (outgoing)/incoming resources before investments	103,843	-8,932	94,911	21,562
Investment gains/(losses)	-2,979	-	-2,979	4,240
Total funds brought forward	293,012	60,387	353,399	327,597
Total funds carried forward	393,876	51,455	445,331	353,399



Staff: Director – Andy Tickle; Administration and finance officer – Susan Belt; Fundraising and marketing co-ordinator – Julie Gough; Consultant planning officer – Andrew Wood

Trustees: Chair - John Lambert. Vice chair - Pat Coleman; Honorary Treasurer – Isabel Hartland; John Anfield; John Hoare; Robert Hunter; Faith Johnson; Andy Topley; Yvonne Witter.

President: Dame Fiona Reynolds (from June 2015). Vice Presidents: Julia Bradbury; Simon Groom; Anne Robinson; Jack Burling; John Tarn

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