

For everyone who loves the Peak District

# Peakland guardian

Summer 2015



Also protecting the landscapes of South Yorkshire

**CP  
RE** South Yorkshire  
Campaign to Protect Rural England



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**Friends of the Peak District** is an independent charity working to protect and enhance the unique landscapes of the Peak District for future generations. Friends of the Peak District represents the Campaign to Protect Rural England in the Peak District, and is the national park society for the Peak District.

**CPRE South Yorkshire** - Our aim is to promote the beauty, tranquility and diversity of South Yorkshire's countryside for everyone to enjoy now and in the future. We campaign for green spaces unspoilt by development, environmentally friendly farming and forestry, and thriving villages and attractive towns, connected by excellent public transport.

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"I write this at the beginning of the holiday season in glorious spring weather. The Peak District has been full of visitors enjoying our wonderful countryside.

I hope that you will support the work that we do to protect and enhance the countryside of the Peak District and South Yorkshire. It is impossible to attach numbers to the benefits that the countryside gives us. At a time when the attentions of politicians are focused on economic growth the threats to the countryside are growing rather than diminishing, through inappropriate development and roadbuilding.

We do a great deal of positive work, including pressing the powers that be to keep motor vehicles off our precious green lanes and seeking to have ugly

power lines put underground. We press the planning authorities to ensure that much needed new housing is built on brownfield sites rather than by eating up the countryside.

This year we will be supporting the National Park Authority's efforts to end damaging quarrying for all time on Longstone Edge in the heart of the Peak District.

Please support us by joining, if you are not already a member, or by making a donation.

Above all, enjoy the countryside."

John Lambert, Chair

*Morning light on Winnats Pass*



# CHIPPING AWAY

Quarry issues continue to keep us busy. We are now part of a new initiative to enhance dialogue and understanding in respect of quarrying around Stanton Moor.

The Stanton Moor Minerals Liaison Group was set up last year under the auspices of the National Park Authority but with an independent chair, Professor Tony Crookes, a planner and former pro-vice chancellor at Sheffield University. The group brings together community representatives, the quarry owners, local landowners, the Friends of the Peak District and the Park's mineral planning team.

Despite the challenges of ongoing planning controversies, such as an appeal against the refusal of wire saws at Dale View Quarry and the debate over the future of Stanton Moor Quarry, the group's meetings have provided a useful forum for increased understanding of what have been, and continue to be, very thorny issues.

It now looks like we may see a resolution to quarrying at the eastern end of Longstone Edge by the end of the year. The postponed public inquiry, which was awaiting a result from a similar inquiry in Oxfordshire, is now back on the cards. In our view, the Oxfordshire decision does not appear to be a damaging precedent to our original case and we have now called on the Planning Inspectorate to re-schedule the inquiry without delay.

## Trans-Pennine tarmac



Woodhead Station Approaches -  
Photo: G.G. Haythornthwaite



The government's massive road programme received further impetus with the publication of the Road Investment Strategy in December. Funding is now firmly committed to an upgrade of the A628 trunk route with a bypass of Mottram; the Glossop spur linking that bypass to the A57; crawler lanes on the east bound carriageway near Woodhead Reservoir; and dualling of the A61 in South Yorkshire.

The Friends fully support the need to relieve local communities alongside the A628 trunk road of the negative impacts of traffic but the government's proposed upgrade would remove the traffic bottleneck through Mottram, unleashing suppressed demand and attract drivers from other routes. Ultimately it would just push congestion nearer to city centres. Unlike our proposed alternative solution, more tarmac will do nothing for the poor air quality along the route and will make environmental conditions much worse for communities such as Tintwistle and Langsett.

The special landscapes of the Peak District National Park would be harmed not only by road

widening and the clutter of signs and technology, but also by a flood of traffic which would drive yet more upgrades. With a new planning regime for major infrastructure projects and with national transport policy wholly supportive of road building at any cost, this proposed upgrade threatens to sail through to construction without any obstacles.

Unless of course the idea of a road tunnel between the M67 in Manchester and the M1 in South Yorkshire comes to fruition? A fast all-weather route has long been the aspiration of local politicians, who are keen to connect local economies more reliably and efficiently, and get rid of road closures due to snow and high winds.

Recently the Department for Transport unveiled its plans to investigate the feasibility of a trans-Pennine road tunnel. Burying a road might reduce traffic impacts on the national park but it would dump large volumes of traffic in our cities, bringing air pollution, road collisions and even more congestion.

To us this was a missed opportunity for an urgently needed fast new trans-Pennine rail link, as is recognised in 'One North: A proposition for an interconnected North' published by the Northern Powerhouse of Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle and Sheffield. So we were delighted to learn that a rail element has now been added to the feasibility study of the tunnel. It would offer a future with less traffic, less carbon and safer travel for everyone. Isn't that really what we want?



# Take back the tracks

Having permanently banned motorbikes and other 4x4 motorised vehicles from the iconic routes of Long Causeway, Chapelgate and The Roych, the National Park Authority capped the achievement with a fourth traffic regulation order on Leys Lane.

Walkers and horse riders using the lovely narrow Leys Lane, which descends from Chertpit Lane into Great Longstone, had been intimidated and inhibited from enjoying it by speeding drivers. As a byway open to all traffic motorised users had every right to use the lane but a number showed no concern for any other users.

Traffic had escalated with motorbike numbers doubling and 4x4 vehicles increasing by half over the last three years. This had led to surface rutting, damage to flower-rich verges and dry-stone walls, and cutting back of overhanging vegetation. Great Longstone village set up its own campaign 'Rocking the Boat' to reclaim the lane for peaceful journeys.

This year all who campaigned for the lane to be closed to traffic were rewarded by a traffic regulation order to permanently ban cars and bikes. The impact of such action on the three other lanes has been profound with drastic reduction in their use by motor vehicles. There is every reason to expect the same impact on Leys Lane which will become a tranquil walk or ride instead of a race track. Hoorah!

## Access for all?

As we celebrate the tenth anniversary of formal open access in the Peak District, the question of who can go where and what the acceptable impacts of access are is becoming a very controversial issue.

Our Take Back the Tracks campaign which started in 2009 on the back of members' and public concern over increasing damage to green lanes by off-road vehicles and trailbikes, has been a game changer in getting the National Park Authority (NPA) to take the problem more seriously. But it's not just motorised use that causes problems of erosion or conflict between users. Horses, mountain bikes and the sheer pressure of huge numbers of walkers who enjoy the national park, all leave their 'footprint'.

This came to a head recently when the highway authority for most of the Peak – Derbyshire County Council (DCC) – decided unilaterally to make repairs to a section of the iconic Chapelgate byway running down from Rushup Edge to the road between Castleton and Chapel-en-le-Frith. Here, erosion over the centuries has worn the track into a sunken holloway of great character, with sections of slabby bedrock and rocky steps. DCC judged these to represent unacceptable conditions for the majority of users and started

engineering works to smooth the track out (see above). Cue outrage from the mountain biking community and concern regarding the lack of sensitivity to the wild, moorland environment from the National Park Authority and us at the Friends. Happily DCC stepped back and have now consulted widely with user groups to try to find a more acceptable solution.

A key issue that arose from discussions around DCC's plans was accessibility for the less able. Clearly not everyone can (or wants to) take up the challenge of rugged, rocky paths, whether on bike, horse or foot. But conversely, should all paths, bridleways and byways be made fully accessible, especially in rugged, wilder areas such as national parks? Even national groups such as the Disabled Ramblers (see [www.disabledramblers.co.uk](http://www.disabledramblers.co.uk)) say 'no' and put the main force of their lobbying into removing obstacles, such as stiles and gates, from otherwise accessible routes.

Nearer to home, local charity Accessible Derbyshire (see [www.accessiblederbyshire.org](http://www.accessiblederbyshire.org)), recently launched their 'Big Push' campaign to make the Peak District the most accessible national park, encouraging everyone to do their bit for accessible leisure and tourism. This is a hugely deserving initiative and we're proud that some of our corporate members, such as Hoe Grange Holidays, are pioneering more accessible tourism in the Peak.



# Undergrounding for Woodhead pylons?

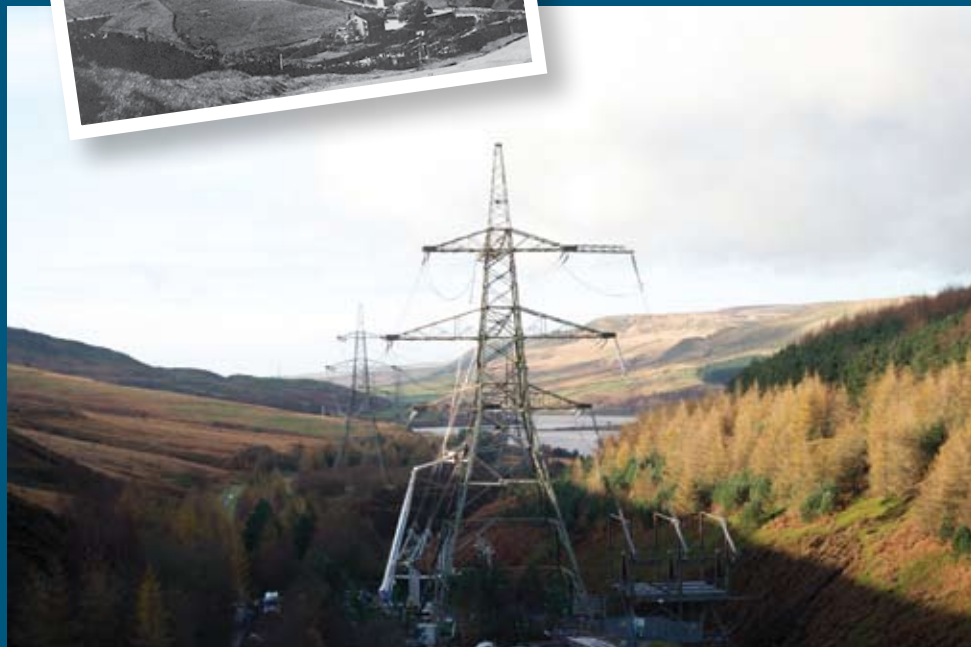
## Visual Impact Provision Fund

After six years of urging National Grid to underground the Woodhead wires, we have inched a little nearer to their potential burial. There is a £500 million fund available for addressing the eyesores of high voltage lines in national parks and AONBs (areas of outstanding natural beauty). After a thorough assessment through a transparent process, the Woodhead line has been shortlisted as having the second worst landscape impact from its pylons - after the Tamar Valley - and therefore a strong candidate for funding to improve its appearance. We are delighted!

There are a number of hurdles to overcome for all of the eight shortlisted schemes including how

much damage would be done to internationally important wildlife sites if the undergrounding works were to take place. However, the sections of the Peak District line deemed the worst - between Dunford Bridge and the eastern edge of the national park near the A616, and between the Woodhead Tunnels and Tintwistle - may avoid such impact, particularly where the route lies along the trans-Pennine Trail.

The cost of removing the pylons and burying this 8km stretch would be between £10 and £24 million per km, depending on terrain. Clearly undergrounding does not come cheap and new style T-pylons or improved screening by vegetation could be used instead. So although we are a step nearer to our goal, the practicalities of what can be done on the ground may limit overall success.



## Hartington *a victory for co-ordinated community co-operation*

We shared Hartington's disbelief when the national park's planning officers recommended approval of the latest proposal to redevelop the Dairycrest site in their village, which included just four affordable houses. Thankfully, we were also able to share in their celebrations when the committee members went against the officers and turned the scheme down.

Everyone accepts that the derelict site to the west of Hartington needs to be cleaned up, and that some new houses will be involved. However, the only reason for approving the current proposals would be what 'Yes, Prime Minister' famously described as politician's logic: 'Something must be done; this is something, therefore it must be done'. Indeed, one committee member did put forward that very argument. By contrast, most members were clear that Hartington deserved better, and that it was worth holding out for a solution more suited to the character and needs of the village.

We were really impressed by the local community's approach to this case. They are not NIMBYs: they want new development and eloquently expressed their desire to see more

young families move into Hartington, and breathe fresh life into the village. They don't want what they have been offered: an executive enclave, a 'gated community without the gates'. They co-ordinated their objections to the scheme, turned out in force to the planning committee, and struck a chord with the members. It was a brilliant case study in how to influence local decision-making.

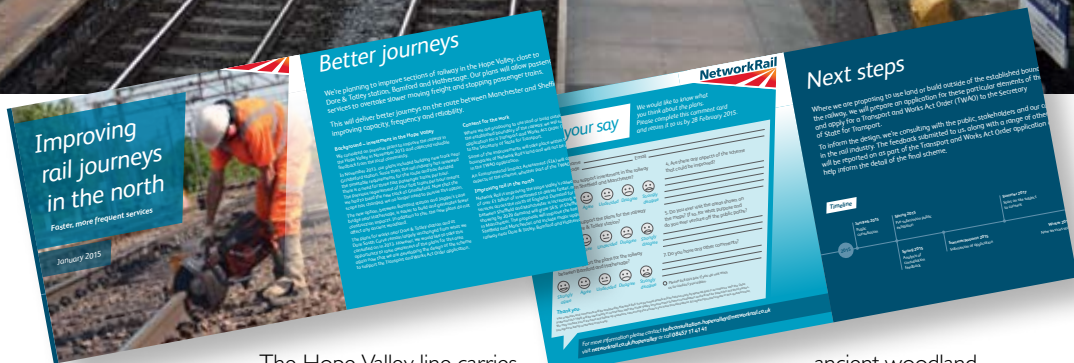
The proposals were refused permission because they are wrong for the scale and needs of the village, and also because they show no attempt to provide for sustainability considerations such as zero-energy buildings. We commend both the members and the officers for establishing a principled position on the need for any new development to be sustainable as well as sensitive.

The sticky question is what happens next. The developer may try and push ahead with the scheme by appealing against the decision, but having already lost one appeal on the site a few years ago, we hope they've lost their appetite for an adversarial stance. It would be much better for the developer to listen to what the community wants, and work with them to make it acceptable in planning terms, and financially viable. As the committee members and the local community poured out of the meeting there seemed to be some optimism that more dialogue and co-operation might be the way forward... but the developer has to agree to that too.





# Hope Valley rail loop



The Hope Valley line carries passengers between Sheffield and Manchester through some of the most beautiful parts of the Peak District National Park and offers a huge opportunity to reduce cross Peak District commuting, and cut car traffic into the Park. However the line is reaching capacity and services desperately need improving. The proposed Hope Valley passing loop and doubling of the track at Dore would allow an hourly stopping service to be added to the two fast trains and one limited stop train.

We objected to Network Rail's original plan for a loop at Grindleford because it would have damaged the Longshaw estate and destroyed

ancient woodland.

However, the loop has to be as near as possible to the mainline connection at Dore so that slower freight trains don't impede the fast trains, and the line needs to be straight, well screened and not subject to flooding.

Network Rail's latest proposal for a passing loop between Bamford station and Jagers Lane, Hathersage, fulfils all of these criteria, and so appears the best option, although we await the Environmental Impact Assessment before making more detailed comments. But as more trains, particularly those carrying freight, will increase the noise in the valley we will be seeking longer term improvement to the route through electrification.

## Too **close** for comfort

Although we are strongly supportive of small scale renewable energy generation in the Peak District, we are clear that the national park – and some areas close to the park – are too sensitive and special for industrial scale wind generation. So, following an application for a five turbine wind farm at Griffie Grange, just to the south of Bonsall Moor, we joined forces with the National Trust and CPRE Derbyshire to issue a joint press release opposing the development. We were in good company – the National Park Authority, the Ramblers, the Peak & Northern Footpaths Society plus most of the local parish councils were also strongly against planning permission being granted.

Our principal concern was the impact on the nearby landscape of Bonsall Moor which is criss-crossed by very popular paths, including the national trail of the Limestone Way. The turbines, together with another seven already built or planned to the south, near Carsington Water, would be readily visible over a large part of the south Peak limestone plateau. This would have a strongly negative impact on tourism, a key economic sector for the Peak District, including the Derbyshire Dales. Finally, the turbines would cause significant impacts on the hamlet of Ible, blighting local amenity to an unacceptable degree.

National Trust's general manager for the Peak District Jon Stewart commented "We believe that wind has a role in meeting the country's low carbon energy and energy security needs. However, we have a duty to protect beautiful places and believe that any wind energy proposals should be located, designed and on a scale that



Bushy Heath Farm turbine

avoids compromising them. We do not believe these tests have been passed at Griffie Grange."

The showdown came at a special planning committee of Derbyshire Dales District Council where, with many others, we addressed the elected councillors and asked them to refuse the application. Despite worries that their decision could be appealed, with all the resource implications for a cash-strapped local authority that follow, the councillors turned the application down by a margin of 11-4. We are relieved for the time being but fully expect that we will be arguing the points again at a public inquiry sometime later this year. Unless national planning policy is further relaxed by the next government, we remain confident that there are strong planning grounds for an inspector to dismiss an appeal.

# Stop the cuts

Any doubts that the public do not value our national parks have been well and truly shot down by the 80,000 people who signed the 38 degrees petition to the Prime Minister asking him to stop cutting national parks' funding. Our national partner Campaign for National Parks worked with 38 degrees to ensure this success. It is a firm foundation from which to build further support and influence politicians.

However the first question anyone will ask is why should national parks be spared from austerity measures? In this recession everyone is being cut back, so why not them?

We only have to look at our cherished Peak District to answer: its inspirational landscapes are fundamental to the wellbeing of everyone who lives on its doorstep. They refresh weary urban spirits and offer freedoms and personal challenges to those seeking adventure. The national park also shows us how to live, work and play in a sustainable partnership with the natural world on which we all depend for our survival. Neglect these landscapes and what they offer will disappear. It may not happen overnight but slowly and surely, degradation will set in as resources are depleted.

Like other national parks the Peak District has not escaped cuts in government funding. Over the last five years it has been cut by 35% and faces a 1.7% cut this year with threats of more to come. But with other national parks it has been upbeat about addressing this, developing a sponsorship deal with Airwick to produce a range of national park fragrances and setting up a fundraising trust.

Behind the scenes though, there have been some fundamental losses. Since 2010 the Peak District has lost 40 jobs and cut back education, volunteering, rights of way and ranger services. Difficult decisions to increase carpark charges and introduce charging for pre-application planning advice could lead to negative impacts on the park. At the same time the traditional public sector partners such as county councils, the Forestry Commission and Natural England are also being cut, meaning even less funding for the park.

Any further loss of funding and jobs could mean that the park will not have the resources to carry out anything other than statutory planning work. National parks cost each person in the UK less than a £1 per person per year. Surely cheap at the price? So please Prime Minister – stop the cuts!



## Farewell and welcome!



An era closed in December last year with the departure of Jim Dixon as chief executive of the Peak District National Park Authority. We worked closely with Jim throughout his tenure and knew that he understood, even when we disagreed, that our role as a 'critical friend' was important and recognised. We wish him well with his new roles, writing for The Times and helping advise a range of regional public sector bodies.

We now welcome Sarah Fowler as the new chief exec. She has huge environmental experience, initially with the wildlife trusts and RSPB, and latterly with the Environment Agency. She's already establishing a reputation as personable and keen to get out and about to know her new patch. At a time when resources are diminishing, both for the public and charity sectors, we look forward to exploring options for more partnership working with her and the national park which we both exist to protect.

## Stick up for Stanage!

A new sticker scheme has been introduced to raise funds for conservation and recreation at Stanage.

Visitors to Stanage-North Lees, near Hathersage, are being encouraged to contribute money to help look after its internationally important landscape.

The new contribution scheme has been set up to help pay for access improvements, bird conservation, woodland management works and visitor information.

In return for a contribution of £15, people will receive a sticker to display in their car for 12 months free parking at Stanage car parks, and they will be entitled to a discount at the campsite.

Owned by the Peak District National Park, the 542 hectare estate is only eight miles from Sheffield city centre, yet it includes the iconic gritstone cliffs of Stanage Edge and is home to ring ouzel (the mountain blackbird) and internationally important moorland.

Rebekah Newman, Stanage-North Lees manager, said: "Stanage is a unique and inspirational

place that people love to return to time and again for outdoor recreation and relaxation.

"We know that people are keen to help care for and protect it. The sticker scheme enables them to do that by making a modest annual contribution."

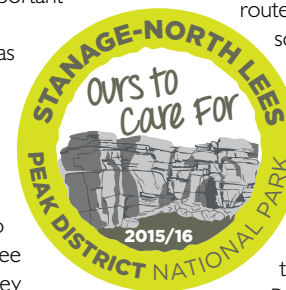
As well as footpaths and access land, Stanage has 1700 recognised climbing and bouldering routes and classic cycling routes. The sticker scheme has been welcomed by the British Mountaineering Council and Ride Sheffield.

We are supporting the scheme and think it's a great way for everyone who loves Stanage to give a little bit back to such a special place and get some great benefits too.

People can obtain stickers from Stanage-North Lees campsite, Castleton visitor centre, and the Outside shop in Hathersage (cash only).

Stanage stickers are also available by phoning 01629 816200 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm), emailing [parking.permits@peakdistrict.gov.uk](mailto:parking.permits@peakdistrict.gov.uk) or online at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/shop/](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/shop/)

More information about Stanage-North Lees is at [www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/stanage-northlees](http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/stanage-northlees)





# Events

## Cotton Grass Theatre presents “The Unknown Land”

by Caroline Small

**Friday 13 November at Hathersage Memorial Hall**

**In aid of Friends of the Peak District**

The Unknown Land is a compelling tale of extreme survival from a time before radio communication and specialised polar equipment; the human tale behind the politics of the age; the tale of one man's journey to the ends of the earth and deep inside his own mind. This is an original play for one actor and many characters. Performed by ex-RSC actor, David Frederickson, and professional folk singer, Keith Kendrick, and inspired by the deeds of 19th century Arctic explorers, Inuit mythology and the fatal attraction of the polar regions.

*“A terrific performance by David Frederickson in a really fascinating play full of wit and love that I didn't expect from the title and subject matter. If it's not the most unexpectedly joyous night out I'll have this year it'll do to be going on with.”* (Rony Robinson, BBC Radio Sheffield)

*“The text moves from humorous accounts on-board the expedition vessel, and anecdotes from Samuel's childhood, to startlingly beautiful moments of language, from a description of belugas passing beneath the ship, to the Inuit interpretation of the Northern Lights as ‘a thousand torches... lighting the feet of the dead as they cross the bridge to the heavens.’ Keith Kendrick's musical interludes give the piece true wallop - haunting English folk songs are beautifully delivered”.* (Buxton Fringe review by Collette Talbot 2013)

Tickets on sale on the Friends website: [www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk) or by phoning 0114 279 2655

## Looking for an interesting local speaker?

We have a team of speakers, one of whom can come and give a fascinating talk and presentation about our work in the Peak District at your meeting. We can usually do daytimes or evenings, we charge just £40 and our talks can be tailored to last between 30 minutes and an hour.

To find out more please contact Julie Gough or download a booking form from the website.

## Bradwell Open Gardens

**Saturday 8 August 2015**

Bradwell Open Gardens was a great success in 2014, and will be open again this year. Explore the delightful Peak District village and its network of lanes; visit private gardens, chat to the gardeners, have a cup of tea (or even a Pimms), rest and enjoy the views. Details of ticket sales will be posted on the website: [www.bradwellopengardens.org.uk](http://www.bradwellopengardens.org.uk). Proceeds from the ticket sales are shared between St Barnabas Church and the Methodist Church. This event is part of Bradwell Well Dressing week so there will be several wells to visit and exhibitions in the church and chapel.

Refreshments will be available at some of the gardens and at the church and Methodist schoolroom.



## The small village of Bamford in the Hope Valley is a hive of activity

There are regular events at The Anglers Rest (Bamford's community-owned pub/café/Post Office): an everyone-join-in folk night on the first Monday of each month; a challenging quiz every Wednesday and regular live music gigs; plus home-cooked meals, lunches and snacks every day in The Rest café. The farmers' market takes place on the third Saturday of the month and is either in the pub car park

or in Bamford Institute opposite if the weather isn't behaving itself.

Also watch out for the Bamford Community Arts & Crafts events; the 2015 programme includes everyone's favourites, the Houghton Weavers performing at the Institute in May, the marvellous Dark Horses (Keith Donnelly and Flossie Malaviale) in October and a November ceilidh, with Whiskey in the Jar.

## Wells dressings in the Peak District

The true origins of well dressings are lost but according to many sources, it developed from a pagan custom of making sacrifice to the gods to ensure a supply of fresh water. Like many folk traditions, it was later adopted by the Christian Church as a way of giving thanks to God for the gift of water. It took on a special significance in 17th century Derbyshire as various villages, gave thanks for their deliverance from the plague which had decimated nearby Eyam.

In the early days, the dressing of wells would have taken the form of simple arrangements of flowers and other natural materials. In this form it takes place today in many parts of the world. The unique Derbyshire tradition of elaborate pictures made for the most part of individual flower petals pressed onto clay covered boards seems to date from Victorian times, when there were many movements afoot to revive and enhance old folk traditions.

Between May and September well dressings celebrate everything from biblical scenes to special anniversaries. Below is a list of just a few Peak District well dressings in 2015. For the full list see: [www.visitpeakdistrict.com/events](http://www.visitpeakdistrict.com/events)

**Middleton by Youlgrave:** Sat 23 - Fri 29 May

**Monyash:** Sat 23 May - Mon 1 Jun

**Tideswell:** Fri 19 - Sun 21 Jun

**Litton:** Sat 20 - Sun 28 Jun

**Youlgrave:** Sat 20 - Thu 25 Jun

**Tintwistle:** Fri 26 Jun - Fri 3 Jul

**Bakewell:** Sat 27 Jun - Sun 5 Jul

**Whaley Bridge:** Sun 28 Jun - Sun 5 Jul

**Dore:** Sat 4 - Sat 11 Jul

**Over Haddon:** Sat 4 - Sun 12 Jul

**Buxton:** Sun 5 - Mon 13 Jul

**Hathersage:** Sun 5 - Sat 11 Jul

**Hayfield:** Sat 11 - Sun 19 Jul

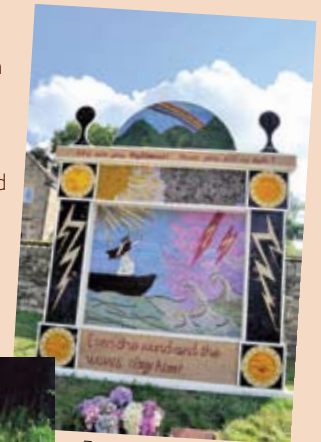
**Pilsley:** Thu 16 - Thu 23 Jul

**Great Longstone:** Sat 18 - Sat 25 Jul

**Stoney Middleton:** Sat 25 Jul - Mon 3 Aug

**Eyam:** Sat 29 Aug - Sat 12 Sep

**Foolow:** Sat 29 Aug - Sun 6 Sep



Eyam well dressing

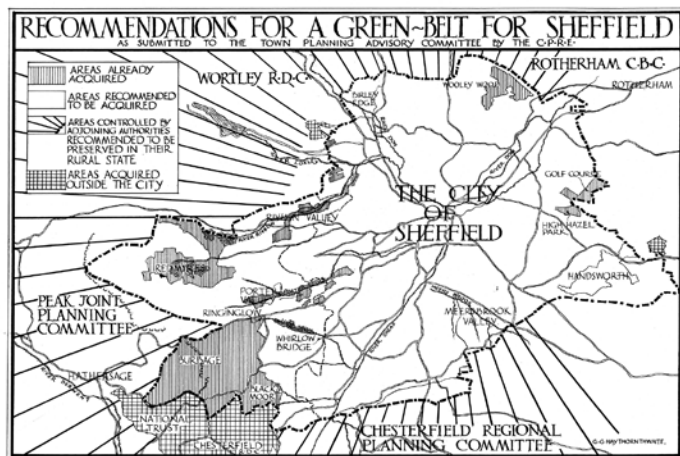


Stony Middleton well dressing  
©Frank Kent



©Judie Smith Brownie





belt is simply a victim of inflated targets. The trouble is that when landowners see the prospect of building houses on their bit of the green belt, the land acquires the 'hope value' that big money is to be made from it, and they lobby hard to persuade local authorities to release it for development.

Personally, I have always been passionate about the relationship between cities, nature and landscape. We protect the countryside from suburbanization most effectively by making cities great, sustainable places

to live and work. I'm especially fascinated by the fringe areas that are neither town nor country, with their mishmash of allotments, stables, cemeteries, pumping stations, sports pitches, railway sidings, a few workshops, maybe an incongruously-placed pub or chapel. I'm not alone in my obsession: architectural writer Jonathan Meades has written about the 'entropic beauty' of unplanned bits of land that evolve through a mix of neglect and appropriation into something worth treasuring; and in Tim Bradford's wonderfully eccentric Groundwater Diaries, these are the places where streams and rivers escape their urban culverts and become the water features of parks, havens for wildlife, and the gaps through which footpaths and cycle paths can connect the urban and the rural in surprising ways.

Green belts are hugely successful and popular for their track record in preventing one settlement merging into the next; if you doubt this, go to most other countries, where their absence has allowed an almost endless streak of buildings along any main road. But planning's approach to the countryside is very bad at nurturing environmental quality. Ringfenced, designated assets like ancient woodlands indirectly encourage the trashing of anything outside them, while green belts have

always lacked mechanisms to increase the quality, diversity and accessibility of open land within them. This in turn, has fuelled the argument that they are nothing more than barriers, girdles that constrain towns, rather than environmental and cultural resources in their own right.

To my mind, it's this half-finished, narrow conception of green belts that makes the Barnsley Green Belt Review such depressing reading. It sets much store by how 'strong' a boundary exists between built form and countryside, as delineated by its green belt. If the edge is clearly marked, by a road, river or distinct land form, this is deemed to be a strong, defensible boundary that the green belt can emphasise. If, on the other hand, the edge is disjointed, characterised by unkempt hedgerows, allotments, a gentle shift across an escarpment from one landscape into another, this is seen as a weak boundary, prone to being breached, and therefore not worthy of retaining its green belt designation.

This mindset is potentially catastrophic. If a 'strong' boundary is the defining characteristic of

the green belt, then the graduated patchwork of transitional lands will be squeezed to nothing, and we'll be left with a binary, either-or landscape: there'll either be housing, or an absence of it. There'll be nowhere for entropic beauty to evolve, and there'll be no surprises.

Planning shouldn't just regulate, it should intervene - to make places better where they are lacking, to create spaces for the imaginative instead of the generic, and to anticipate restorative opportunities where transition, experiment and natural processes can thrive. If green belts are to be rethought, then that should be the starting point. At the most fundamental level, planning needs to intervene in the market for land, to suppress the profit motive in some places and create incentives for innovative development in others, and guard zealously against homogenisation. That's pretty much the opposite of what it is doing at present - to the detriment both of city and of country, and that's why we need to champion a much more vigorous, more imaginative planning system.

## Green belts: defending unplanned spaces

By Andrew Wood, Planning Officer

Green belts across the country are being plundered to make space for development, despite government assertions to the contrary. In our area, Green Belts in High Peak, Sheffield, Barnsley and North-East Derbyshire are an important buffer between built-up areas and the Peak District National Park, and they are all under review.

The biggest problem is that green belts are being reviewed for the wrong reasons. The planning system as a whole has accepted the notion that a shortage of land supply for housing can trigger a review of green belt, but local authorities are being pushed by both developers and government to pursue inflated housebuilding targets that they cannot possibly achieve. In the Local Plan consultations we have worked on recently, the difference between the planned target and the number of houses actually likely to be built matches quite closely the amount of green belt release that is proposed; in other words the green



Barnsley's green belt



# Landscapes for everyone: creating a better future

CPRE has been leading the development of 'Landscapes for everyone: creating a better future'. It is a shared vision of why our unique British landscapes should be better valued for the benefit of current and future generations and what government action is needed to achieve this.



The vision is supported by 33 organisations including the National Trust, the Campaign for National Parks, the Ramblers, the John Muir Trust, the Open Spaces Society, the British Mountaineering Council and the Landscape Institute. With ongoing speculative development in and around sensitive areas, this varied group believes it is vital for future government policy and funding to reflect the extraordinary value of landscapes.

Our landscapes are hugely important to the nation's health and wellbeing, making a significant contribution to the economy through tourism and farming and by providing attractive places for people to live, work and play. They are also nature's home, providing habitats for many threatened species and vital environmental services such as carbon storage and alleviating flooding.

With increasing pressure for housing, transport and other infrastructure, it is more important than ever that government policy, funding and legislation recognise the enormous contribution that distinctive, beautiful, characterful and cared for landscapes make to the nation.

We must ensure that areas which have been designated for the national value of their landscapes, including national parks and AONBs, continue to be protected from inappropriate

development. We should also maintain other critically important planning policies, such as green belts, which have been very effective in preventing inappropriate development in other areas of the countryside.

The vision calls on all political parties to recognise the importance of landscape by committing to:

- Better landscapes for people
- Better planning for landscapes
- Better places for nature

Shaun Spiers, CPRE chief executive, comments: *"For far too long, England's landscapes have been undervalued given the understandable focus on economic recovery. But beautiful landscapes and a strong economy go together. CPRE believes that government at all levels needs to do more to ensure our diverse landscapes survive and thrive, and to support local communities in safeguarding them. We are calling on all political parties to commit to the calls to action in Landscapes for Everyone."*

Julian Woolford, chief executive, Campaign for National Parks, comments: *"National parks are 'living landscapes' making a significant contribution to the economy through tourism, farming and other related businesses as well as containing breath-taking scenery, rare wildlife and cultural heritage."*

## High Peak Local Plan

At the beginning of 2015, Friends planning officer, Andrew Wood, spent an intense three weeks participating in the High Peak Local Plan Examination. Here's an extract from his website blog...

A Local Plan Examination is a very technical process, analysing numbers and the wording of policies to see how well, or badly, they reflect our interests. The house-builders make no bones about their motives to extract more development land, whilst environmental and community groups make counter-arguments, and the local authority sits like a rabbit in the headlights, defending the years of work that have gone into trying to find the right compromise between competing demands.

In recent years this 'theatre' has taken on a new and depressing dimension, where central government looms large, and the main requirement of the plan above all else, is compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the number of new houses to be planned for.

The developers then dig away at the aspects of the plan which they believe constrain their freedoms to build what they want, where they want. In most of the sessions, Friends of the Peak District is the only voice arguing that more specific constraints are needed, that affordable housing should take priority over market housing, and that the character and function of settlements and the countryside are at least as important as the need for housing.

As often happens at these events, the most interesting conversations take place off the record. For example, *"the government doesn't actually care about increasing housebuilding or tackling the housing crisis, it just wants to give the impression of doing..."*

Planning is in crisis: central government has arbitrarily blamed the planning system for the shortage of housing, and local authorities are in the firing line. *"One thing we all agree on,"* one

developer representative said to me in the wings during a tea-break, *"is that the National Planning Policy Framework isn't working."*

I now understand the official meaning of the term 'localism'. It means that a local authority is at liberty to steer its own course on any subject for which there is no government policy; whereas if there is a government policy then the local authority cannot diverge from it.

For example, if High Peak wanted to set higher standards for the design and efficiency of new housing than are set out in the building regulations, it probably couldn't. If a community wants to produce a neighbourhood plan, it can do so as long as none of its policies clash with national policy.

And what about climate change? What would a climate change policy for the High Peak look like if it was really informed by its unique geography and the 'evidence' of local opinion? I suspect it wouldn't be the currently proposed plan which tries to persuade new developments to bolt in a few mechanics like renewable energy and sustainable drainage. I think, instead, it would take each settlement, each landscape, each transport route, each sector of employment, each public service and each river and ask, *"What needs to change to genuinely reduce carbon emissions and respond to a changing climate? How do we know the local community agrees with this analysis? And what can the Local Plan do to help make those changes?"*

That would be a very different type of Local Plan, but it would be genuinely local.





## Let the Peak District countryside be part of your legacy

"The English countryside is an exceptional creation - immensely old, full of surprises and nearly always pleasing to look at. For me, the countryside represents so much of what makes life worth living but how much of it will be left for future generations to enjoy?" Bill Bryson

Without gifts left in wills, many of the charities we know wouldn't even exist. Charitable legacies are the foundation for many good causes in the UK and are vital for continuing their work.

This is the case for us too. For almost 90 years Friends of the Peak District has worked to care for and protect the national park, so that millions of people can continue to enjoy and benefit from it. Our charity relies entirely on voluntary donations.

Over the last two years, we have been privileged to receive legacies totalling nearly £90,000. This money is crucial in supporting our core work of planning vigilance and sustaining the organisation in the long term. These recent legacies have allowed us to pay for an extra day per week of our

planning officer's time and plan a pilot face-to-face recruitment programme, aimed at growing our membership in the coming years.

We also still owe a huge debt of gratitude to Gerald and Ethel Haythornthwaite – not only to their lifetimes' work – but also the assets they left to the charity, part of which still sustain us today through our invested reserves. Without them and many other benefactors, we would not be able to continue fighting for the wonderful landscapes which have inspired so many of us through our lives.

Legacies do not have to be large gifts. No matter what the amount, your gift will be used to help protect the beautiful Peak District for tomorrow's children to enjoy.

As we are a registered charity, any type of legacy you leave us is entirely free of inheritance tax.

Leaving a legacy to the Friends of the Peak District is very straightforward and your solicitor will be best placed to advise you on this. You just need to provide them with our charity number, which is: 1094975. To find a local solicitor who can help you make your will, visit the Law Society's "Find a Solicitor" website and use the quick search option "Wills and probate".

Your will gives you the opportunity to benefit the people and places you love the most. We hope you will consider leaving a gift to Friends of the Peak District.

If you have any questions please contact Julie Gough on 0114 279 2655 or email [julie@friendsofthepeak.org.uk](mailto:julie@friendsofthepeak.org.uk)

## Magnificent Walk 2015 - Edale Skyline

Thanks to everyone who took part on 25 April for making it a such great and enjoyable day. Where shall we go next year?



## Come to our 2015 AGM and talk. All welcome!

You are cordially invited to our 2015 AGM to be held at our offices (Victoria Hall, 37 Stafford Rd, Sheffield S2 2SF) at 6.30pm on Wednesday 24 June. At 7.30pm - after the formal business (see the agenda below) and refreshments - we welcome the Chair of the Peak District National Park Authority, Councillor Lesley Roberts, who will talk about the challenges facing the Peak District, followed by award winning author and journalist (The Guardian's Country Diarist for the Peak), Ed Douglas, who will be talking about writing about the Peak. Non-members should arrive at 7.15pm

Please let us know if you plan to attend the AGM by contacting Susan Belt on 0114 275 1649 or [susan@cprepeakandysorks.org.uk](mailto:susan@cprepeakandysorks.org.uk). Full papers will be on our website [www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk](http://www.friendsofthepeak.org.uk) from early June or ask Susan if you would like a hard copy mailing out. If you wish to put a motion from the floor, please notify us by 12 May; if you make an independent nomination for a new Board member, please notify us by 26 May.

### AGM 2015 Agenda

1. Welcome, introduction and apologies
2. Minutes of the 2014 AGM of CPRE Peak District and South Yorkshire
3. Presentation of the 2014 annual report and annual accounts
4. Appointment of auditors for 2015: we propose that VAS Community Accountancy Service be re-appointed to independently examine the accounts
5. Election of Chair, Vice-Chair and Trustees:
  - a. that John Lambert and Pat Coleman be elected as Chair and Vice-chair, respectively;
  - b. that Yvonne Ritter be re-elected as a trustee;
  - c. that Andy Topley and Faith Johnson be elected as trustees.
6. Election of President: Dame Fiona Reynolds
7. Pre-notified items: to be submitted by 12 May
8. Any other business



**Councillor Lesley Roberts** (centre front) is the first woman and first Parish Council member to chair the PDNPA. She was appointed in 2014. She hails from Leekfrith in the Staffordshire Moorlands area of the Peak.



**Ed Douglas** is one of Britain's best outdoor journalists and an acclaimed author. His books include *Chomolungma Sings the Blues*, the biographies of Sherpa Tenzing and the modern British climbers, Ron Fawcett and Ben Moon. He is currently writing a book about Kinder Scout. © Vertebrate Publishing



## The Peak District is everyone's business

We know that each year 22 million visitors enjoy Britain's oldest national park as a source of inspiration, relaxation and recreation. Thousands of local businesses rely on the beauty of the Peak District, a hugely valuable asset, for their livelihood. At the Friends of the Peak District, we strive to protect the landscape and the sustainable communities who live in it.

Friends of the Peak District is proud to be a member of Business Peak District. Alongside other businesses we agree that we:

- Stand by the vision that the Peak District will be a distinctive, high quality rural environment with an enterprising, growing and sustainable economy,
- Have a passion for the Peak District, its unique landscapes, character and experiences,
- Care for the Peak District environment and its surrounding areas,
- Celebrate the Peak District in our everyday activities.

If you know or own a business who agrees with us, please ask them to support our work. We need

the support of friends, members, partners and sponsors to carry out our work successfully. We rely on partnerships with those who live and work in this area to help us achieve our vision of a living, working Peak District.

### As a Corporate Friend - for a minimum of £50 you will receive:

- 20% discount on adverts in Peakland Guardian
- Use of Friends' logo for a link on your website
- Web profile (250 words + image) on the Friends website – with a link to your website
- Two membership magazines, Peakland Guardian, per year
- Leaflets for display (as many as you require)
- Additional copies of Peakland Guardian for your guests (on request)

### As a Corporate Partner – for a minimum of £500 you will receive all of the above plus:

- One full page advert in Peakland Guardian per year (could be 2x half pages)
- A members' offer in the monthly e-newsletter, once per year

## Peak Pound Partnership

With the support of businesses, the Peak Pound Partnership scheme helps to raise funds for our work protecting and enhancing the Peak District landscape and supporting rural communities.

The Peak Pound Partnership encourages visitors to the Peak District to add an extra £1 to their bill, as a donation to support Friends of the Peak District which means that businesses and their customers are helping to look after the Peak District.

There's no cost to your business and no minimum payment so it's easy to support the scheme in the way that suits best...

**Opt out:** add £1 to your customer's bill, with the option to 'opt out' of the payment, by ticking a box.

**Opt in:** create a tick box on your website asking your customers if they would like to add £1 to their bill as a donation.

**Collection boxes:** we have lots of collection boxes and you're very welcome to have one to display on your premises.

**Charity products:** if you have the right premises, you could sell Friends of the Peak District postcards and fridge magnets.

**Sponsored products:** sponsor a specific product, for example one option on your menu, and donate £1 to us for every one you sell.

To make signing up to the Peak Pound Partnership as easy as possible for you, we can send you the relevant text for your invoices or bills so that your customers can tick a confirmation of their £1 donation. We can also provide you with a special logo so that you can promote your support of Friends of the Peak District, the local environment and the Peak Pound Partnership to your customers and potential customers on your website.

Contact Julie at [julie@friendsofthepeak.org.uk](mailto:julie@friendsofthepeak.org.uk) or call 0114 266 5822



## Yes - I would like to be a Friend of the Peak District



Membership type (please tick)	Minimum annual amount
Annual individual	£27 <input type="checkbox"/>
Annual joint	£42 <input type="checkbox"/>
Silver Guardian	£100 <input type="checkbox"/>
Gold Guardian	£250 <input type="checkbox"/>
Life membership (under 60)	£600 <input type="checkbox"/>
Life membership (60+)	£350 <input type="checkbox"/>
Gift membership	Y/N <input type="checkbox"/>

**Your details** Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

### If the membership is a gift, please provide the details of the member

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Tel \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please make cheques payable to Friends of the Peak District and send to us at 37 Stafford Road, Sheffield, S2 2SF. Or pay by direct debit

### Instructions to your bank or building society to pay by direct debit

I would like to pay £ \_\_\_\_\_ to Friends of the Peak District Monthly ☐ Annually ☐

Name of account holder(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Bank/Building Society account \_\_\_\_\_ Sort code \_\_\_\_\_

### Name and postal address of your bank or building society

To: the manager \_\_\_\_\_ Bank / Building Society

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode: \_\_\_\_\_

Originator's Identification Number:

Reference number:



### Instruction to your bank or building society

Please pay Friends of the Peak District from the account detailed in this instruction, subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Friends of the Peak District and, if so, details will be passed on electronically to my Bank/Building Society

Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_





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