PEAK AND NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY

HELPING WALKERS AND PROTECTING FOOTPATHS SINCE 1894



Signpost S636 ~ photograph by Shirley M Addy

ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2025

Invitation to Members

PNFS Annual General Meeting

Saturday, 16 May 2026
at
Central Hall, Oldham Street
Manchester M1 1JQ
Collier Room, First Floor

10:00 am	Tea and coffee available on arrival
10:30 am	Welcome and AGM
11:30 am	Tea/coffee break
11.45 am	Open Forum/Questions
12.00 noon	Guest Speakers: CPRE Chairs, Richard Hawkes and Nick Thompson, who will talk about the existing Greater Manchester Ringway and the prospective Liverpool City Region Ringway. PNFS is supporting both projects
13:00 pm	Lunch: tea/coffee and water are provided. Please bring your own packed lunch Alternatively, there are several outlets nearby
14:00 pm	Meeting closes

Agenda

1a Minutes of the previous meeting

To be agreed and matters arising discussed

2 Reports and accounts

To receive and consider:

- the accounts
- the Annual Report
- the report of the independent examiner for the year ended 2024

3 To appoint an Independent Examiner
This must be proposed and seconded from the floor.

4 Chair's report - including progress on strategy

5 Election of members to the managing committee who will be the charity trustees

- To re-elect Kathy McLean as Chair
- To elect Martin Pugh as Treasurer
- To re-elect Dave Brown
- To re-elect Mel Bale
- To re-elect David Morton
- To re-elect Chad Wilkinson
- To re-elect Tim Lewis
- To re-elect Paul Easthope
- To elect Bruce Westwood

5 To re-elect David Bratt as President

6 **To agree to affiliate to**

- the Open Spaces Society,
- the Ramblers,
- CPRE
- Peak District Green Lanes Alliance

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PEAK AND NORTHERN FOOTPATHS SOCIETY

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Annual Review

Kathy McLean, PNFS Chair



I am writing this annual report during one of the wettest winters I can remember, so it is good to reflect on the warm and dry summer which we enjoyed last year. It was another busy year for the Peak and Northern Footpaths Society. We continued to make progress with our strategic aims, thanks to everyone's hard work. However, in order to be sustainable and continue to meet our objects we must keep going and progress all aspects of the strategy.

During the year we appointed two new Trustees, Bruce Westwood and Martin Pugh, and had one resignation, Simon Robinson, bringing the total number of Trustees to ten. In November 2025 Martin Pugh took over the role of Treasurer from Paul Easthope. We continue to review the skills required of our Trustees and in particular, how we can increase diversity.

In line with our strategy, we have developed the governance of the society and now have a number of subgroups of the Management Meeting. These include groups focused on finance, membership and assets. Our Courts and Inquiries Committee, which has been in place for many years, continues to work hard when there are unresolved footpath issues, whether these are footpaths out of repair, obstructed or diverted. The small number of highly experienced Courts and Inquiries Officers use the law when necessary to bring about improvements, get public rights of way reopened or modified. Martin Hampar reported to the half year meeting on a particular example of a success at a public inquiry.

We were disappointed that 2025 was not our strongest year for the creation of signposts or making improvements in footpaths or bridges. It was sad news when we learned that Signpost 1, our very first signpost erected in 1905, was stolen. We have budgets for both signposts and improvements and are hoping that we can be more successful in 2026.

Our walks programme has continued, thank you to walk leaders for designing and leading both short and long walks. These are an opportunity to meet other members and have been a feature of PNFS for many years. A newer innovation this

year has been the introduction of some group inspections, a chance to join with other volunteers to cover a parish which has perhaps not had an inspector recently.

When new footpath inspectors join as a volunteer I send a letter of welcome, in addition to the paperwork shared by our Footpath Inspector Co-ordinator, Simon Worrall. It is always great to see new inspectors joining and over the past year I am aware of a considerable number, meaning that overall, the number of parishes which are covered by an inspector has risen this year.

There are many volunteers to thank for their tireless work for PNFS, but I will mention a few this year. Some people spend many hours volunteering but often in the background. Shirley Addy, who compiles the *Signpost* magazines and annual report amongst many other things is vital to the smooth running of the society. Our Trustee, Mel Bale, who manages the membership and website does vital work, much of it behind the scenes. John Fisher does a wonderful job responding to the considerable number of reports we receive via our Path Checker app. Each and every one of you makes a difference. Finally, I want to formally thank Paul Easthope for his many years as Treasurer. He indicated his wish to stand down last year but kindly continued until handed over to Martin. Paul has continued as a Trustee. Thank you, Paul.



Had enough of this? Time to download PNFS's own Path Checker app available from App Store

Officers and Volunteers

PRESIDENT
David Bratt

CHAIR
Kathy McLean OBE*

VICE CHAIR
David Gosling*

ASSESSORS
Brian Hamilton
Alan Pickup
Phil Rheinberg

COURTS AND INQUIRIES OFFICERS
Rhoda Barnett (Derbyshire)
Martin Hampar (Trafford, Salford, Manchester)
John Harker (South Yorkshire, West Yorkshire (excluding Kirklees) and Stockport)
Andy Leader# (Kirklees)
Udo Pope (Tameside)
Dave Taylor (Wigan)
Terry Norris#
Geoff Jones#

WEBSITE EDITOR
Mel Bale*

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY
Mel Bale*

FOOTBRIDGES AND PATH IMPROVEMENT OFFICER
Nigel Howe

SIGNPOST OFFICER
David Morton*

SIGNPOST ASSISTANTS
Steve Brown
Vic Shannon
Shirley Addy
Bill Twigg
Chris Davies
Richard Vickery
David Gosling,
David Oldfield
David Edge
David Tibbitt
Jonathan Robbins
Linda Smith
Peter Knight
Bill Parke
Bruce Westwood
John Alexander
Simon Worrall
John Orson
Paul Marshall

WALK CO-ORDINATORS
Ross Myddelton (Short)
Ken Smith (Long)
David Gosling (Group Inspections)

TREASURER
Paul Easthope* (until October)
Martin Pugh* (since November)

HONORARY EXAMINER
Alan Clements

MAGAZINE EDITOR
Shirley Addy

FOOTPATH INSPECTIONS CO-ORDINATOR
Simon Worrall

VOLUNTEERS CO-ORDINATOR
Linda Smith

PATH CHECKER FAULT CO-ORDINATOR
John Fisher

OFFICE MANAGER
David Brown*

FILING CLERK
David C Brown*

ARCHIVIST
Andrew Harter

OTHER TRUSTEES
Tim Lewis
Chad Wilkinson
Simon Robinson (retired May)
Bruce Westwood (from September)

# indicates that the officer retired from post during 2025

*Officers marked * are also trustees*

Footpath Inspectors, Inspections and Faults

Footpath Inspectors and Inspections *- Simon Worrall Inspection Co-ordinator, Linda Smith, Volunteer Co-ordinator*

The team of volunteer Footpath Inspectors is fundamental to assisting the Society achieve its objectives of monitoring, protecting and improving the rights of way in all of the Highways Authority areas that concern the Society. Footpath Inspectors cover one or more parishes, and they take on the responsibility of walking all the public rights of way (PROW) in their area, identifying and recording faults and reporting faults to the Highways Authority. Inspectors also respond to requests from the Society's team of Assessors and to Path Checker reports. Some Inspectors forge links with their Parish Councils; indeed, some are Parish Councillors themselves seeking to protect the PRoW in their patch.

In common with previous years the Society retains good inspection coverage for large parts of Derbyshire and Cheshire East where we have a strong member base. In areas that are further afield from our core membership we have less comprehensive inspection coverage. Parts of Lancashire and Staffordshire, along with large unitary authorities such as Liverpool, have significant gaps in our capabilities. Even within some well inspected areas the Society still has difficulty in attracting Inspectors to take on the urban cores where PRoW can be especially important for connectivity and can often be threatened by planning decisions leading to extinguishment. However, during 2025 we have strengthened our inspection team in Kirklees, West Yorkshire and added inspection capability in Tameside, Trafford and very recently in Rochdale.

The Society entered 2025 with 165 volunteer inspectors. During the year 21 (2024 – 49) inspectors stood down and we recruited 18 (2024 – 34) new volunteer inspectors, ending the year with 162 inspectors covering 49.6% (2024 – 50.2%) of the parish areas in the Highways Authority areas that concern the Society. The very high turnover experienced in 2024 has thankfully reduced and since the end of 2025 we have attracted another nine inspectors, with only three resignations, resulting in the overall number rising from 165 to 171 (as at early March 2026). In common with previous years we have a small number of inspectors that look after a large number of parishes and they do a lot of the "heavy lifting" in terms of our inspection effort.

A notable feature of 2025 was the upgrade to the Footpath Inspection Database (FID). Strategically the Society wished to better capture inspection data to demonstrate it was achieving its stated objectives and the upgrade to FID v3.0 is now providing some greater clarity on the inspections carried out. The FID is unique to the Society and allows inspectors to record in detail inspection results, upload photographs of faults and build a chronology of events relating to a

particular footpath and its faults. The upgrade took place during July 2025 and was designed to shift the focus towards the fault records and provide better data capture for faults and the actions taken to get faults resolved along with other modifications relating to maps and general layout. Training on the revised FID was delivered both online and in-person during August 2025 accompanied by detailed notes. The Society thanks Roger Fielding and Mel Bale for their expertise in developing and releasing the upgrade. They continue to work on aspects of the FID to further improve its functionality.

Between January and June 2025, prior to the FID upgrade, inspectors carried out some 4,500 path inspections. During the remaining six months of 2025, after the upgrade, we inspected 2,650 paths that were deemed clear with no faults. Some 1,200 new faults were recorded on other paths, and 58 existing faults were found to have been resolved with the fault record being closed. The Society is grateful to every footpath inspector for giving up time to walk the public rights of way in their areas and further our objectives.

Path Checker Faults Report - *John Fisher, Path Checker Fault Co-ordinator*

We provide a service to members and to the public allowing footpath faults to be reported to the Society, followed up by an inspector or volunteer and reported to the relevant Highway Authority. The figures for 2025 are very similar to 2024. The 2024 figures are shown in brackets. 480 (476) footpath faults were reported during 2025. The Path Checker app for mobile phones accounted for 80 per cent (same) of all reports. Other reports came via the website or by email.

207 (218) people used the system. Of these, 105 (122) were new reporters sending their first reports this year; there were only 62 new users of the app. 75 of these new reporters have so far sent only one report, whereas the more regular users sent multiple ones. The standard response to new reporters now includes a link to membership. Each report is forwarded to the inspector for the relevant parish, where in post. The overall rate of response was 80% (same). The rest comprised those with no reply, 12 per cent, and those where we have no inspector or volunteer, 8 per cent. 95 (113) inspectors received at least one report, and thanks are due for this extra work, particularly those with multiple parishes and those in the more popular areas.

The area showing the most growth in reporting was Lancashire, but this is where we have most difficulty in finding inspectors and volunteers, as above. The biggest fall was in Derbyshire (High Peak), down 40 per cent, probably due to the closure of an important access road for the whole year. Yorkshire (both South and West) continued to be very under-represented (4 per cent). The biggest parish of all, Sheffield, had only one report. The most common reports, all similar to last year, related to stiles (175), signage (51), obstructions (50), overgrowth (36) and bridges (26). There were 18 reports of closures; in most cases the temporary closure had already been notified by the HA.

Lost Ways

Ken Brockway

This will be my last report for Lost Ways which suggests I covered the whole PNFS area but in fact I have only researched and submitted for Derbyshire with much appreciated support from Rhoda. It has been an interesting and enjoyable project, if anyone wishes to take it on I'm happy to pass on contacts. I did dream of taking on Staffordshire where there are lots of unrecorded routes but in the end travel to Stafford to inspect records has put me off.

In the last couple of years I got involved with Ramblers and their Don't Lose Your Way. Their approach did identify thousands of unrecorded paths nationally but in Derbyshire it has been difficult to find documents to support claims. This is sadly also true for many walked paths that have offered no historical evidence, these should be claimed on user evidence now rather than wait until the landowner prevents access. Brooks Drive in Trafford and the old Cromford and High Peak Railway trackbed off Macclesfield Old Road Buxton are two examples. Whaley Bridge FP86 and Crich FP44 are others that highlight the importance of claiming the walked route.

I made my first PNFS DMMO application in 2018 and while DCC made an order in 2019 the route remains obstructed and the order is awaiting a decision from the Planning Inspectorate. A well known campaigner started a recent submission with "Before starting on my points of law I wish to register my serious concern about the timescale of this order. The application to modify the definitive map and statement was submitted in June 2002. That is over 23 years ago from now. The order was made in August 2012. That is over 13 years ago from now. The PINS start date was July 2025." The application on that occasion, in Leicestershire, was also mine.

Courts and Inquiries

Derbyshire and Derby City - *Rhoda Barnett*

The financial constraints on both Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and Derby City Council's rights of way services have continued to prevent both councils from fulfilling their duties to protect the rights of users of public rights of way. The officers generally do their best, but it is an uphill battle for them.

This has continued to be most apparent in the removal of obstructions and the repair of surfaces. I was given authority by the Courts and Inquiries Committee to serve several legal notices on DCC, seeking to resolve problems which affected walkers the most, but the council has become adept at doing just sufficient to stall the process which leads to the Society applying to the court. As a lack of resources is a valid defence in the case of notices for the removal of obstructions, it is very difficult to pursue notices under these circumstances. I have supported five diversion orders made by DCC which would resolve obstruction problems; none have been confirmed, presumably because of a lack of resources to undertake discussions to remove objections.

With respect to the making of modification orders to correct the definitive map and statement (DMMOs), five were made by DCC, but again none have been confirmed. After research of documents and considerable help from the relevant PNFS Inspector, I objected to one order on behalf PNFS. If confirmed this order would recognise a well-used footpath in Charlesworth as legally being a bridleway. We feel that use by horse-riders and cyclists would cause considerable inconvenience and even danger to walkers, but such considerations are not relevant to the determination of DMMOs. However, I concluded from my assessment of the evidence that it was insufficient for it to be concluded that the route is a bridleway, so on this basis an objection was justified. Following my detailed investigation of documentary evidence, and a local resident's collection of user evidence, a DMMO was made by DCC to add a path in Buxton to the definitive map. Objections to the order were received, so we await further action by DCC. I have continued to help the Society's Lost Ways co-ordinator to make DMMO applications - see the relevant report in this document.

Other more routine work continued: I commented on 129 planning applications, resulting in many cases by the safeguarding of public rights threatened by developments, and in improvements to public paths.

The Society has had to cope with a lack of volunteers to carry out legal work for the Society, so I have been helping to deal with queries from members of the public and consultations on proposed diversion orders and DMMOs elsewhere in the PNFS

area, especially in Staffordshire and Lancashire. Since I live too far away to travel to the locations of the sites affected by these proposals, the PNFS Assessors and I have been relying on the help of Inspectors who live nearer the sites, and we are very grateful for their help. If any of our members feel that they would like to learn more about the legal side of PNFS's work, they would be welcomed with open arms.

I have continued to work with the local Ramblers, the Peak District Green Lanes Alliance, and the Denby Footpaths Group, and to a lesser extent the British Horse Society, with our common aim of protecting and enhancing the use of public rights of way.

I am very grateful for all the help given by the Society's Officers and Inspectors; without their diligence, much of the work which I have carried out would have been impossible.

Manchester, Salford and Trafford - *Martin Hampar*

As in previous years, my work on behalf of the Society during the year has involved attention to matters relating to public rights of way and public access, mainly in Manchester, Salford and Trafford, and also in other parts of Greater Manchester and Lancashire.

Much of my time in the first half of 2025 was spent on preparation for a public inquiry held in July into a Definitive Map Modification Order relating to Brooks Drive in Hale Barns, Trafford, that I had submitted on behalf of the Society in 2020. The Society's trustees were able to fund a rights-of-way consultant to assist with the preparation work and a barrister to represent the Society at the public inquiry. To the great relief of all concerned (except the objectors), including the many local people who had been prevented from using the route, the Inspector confirmed the Order to record a restricted byway. Unfortunately that is not yet the end of the story. The route had been blocked by a security fence in 2019 and removal of the fence is down to the highway authority, Trafford Council. At the time of writing (February 2026) the fence has not yet been removed.

Manchester City Council are looking to review their Definitive Map and Statement and I have been working with colleagues from Ramblers to provide user input to the review.

I have attended regular meetings with rights of way personnel in Manchester, Salford and Trafford.

I have been collaborating with Ramblers groups in several areas within Greater Manchester on matters of common interest and concern.

I have responded to consultations covering Public Path Orders proposing changes to the rights of way network in several Greater Manchester and Lancashire districts. I have also commented on planning applications that may affect public rights of way in Trafford, Manchester and Salford.

Tameside - *Udo Pope*

There is relatively little to report this year. In particular, no new footpath faults have been referred to me this year that have necessitated threatening legal action against Tameside Council in my capacity of Courts & Inquiries Officer for Tameside.

However, I have continued to press Tameside Council to deal with unresolved faults that were raised with them in previous years. I am glad to report that, towards the end of 2025, the Council finally informed me that works had been instructed to resolve a couple of long standing faults notified to them in previous years. Most significantly, works have now taken place to reopen FP166 in Hyde to walkers. This is a potentially useful footpath linking a housing estate in Newton to open country, but which has been both obstructed by a fence and impenetrably overgrown for many years. Potential legal action regarding the obstruction and disrepair of this path was first threatened against Tameside Council back in September 2023 and formal notices under sections 56 and 130A of the Highways Act were subsequently served in August 2024. The reopening of this path just before the year end demonstrates how long it can take to resolve long-standing faults (in the last Annual Report I reported the Council telling me they had run out of money in their maintenance budget to carry out the works, leading to further delay). But the reopening of the path is nevertheless encouraging. This is despite a further problem with the path now having been identified, namely the need for steps at a particularly steep and muddy section of the path that it was previously impossible to identify due to the lack of access. The Council have informed me that they have already asked for a price for the required steps, which hopefully will be installed in the next year to enable the path to be used without too much difficulty.

In the last three Annual Reports I mentioned the ongoing obstruction of Mossley Footpath 186 (in respect of which I have previously threatened to serve a s130A notice on Tameside Council) and the need for a potentially dangerous gulley to be bridged before this footpath can safely be reopened. The bridge remains to be installed. However I am hopeful that, with the prospect of financial support from the Society towards the cost of installing the necessary bridge, this footpath will be re-opened to the public within the next 12 months.

Consultations and Orders

Brian Hamilton, Assessor

Alan Pickup, Phil Rheinberg and I continued the work of Assessors in the Consultation and Orders Section, working from home.

Unfortunately, at the beginning of the year Jenny Allen resigned as Area Officer for Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester. Jenny did some valuable work for the Society in those areas, and would also assist us with issues in Staffordshire. It was a great loss for us, but many thanks to Jenny for her help and support over the years.

We were fortunate in April to have Richard Vickery and Chris Davies appointed as Area Officers for Cheshire East. They seem to have settled in well and are a great asset to this Department and the Society.

Although not pertaining to the year 2025, at the time of writing we have just been informed of the resignation of Andy Leader as Courts and Inquiries Officer for Kirklees. Andy has been a great help to us, not only in Kirklees, but in surrounding areas also. His good work and knowledge of legal issues has been invaluable. He will be greatly missed.

I would like to thank the Society's Inspectors for the good work and prompt reports they give us, and the Courts and Inquiries Officers for their great support. Also, David Brown who files all our documents digitally at Taylor House and also puts them on the cloud where they can be accessed by our Inspectors and other Officers.

We have been involved in three Objections during the year. These are all still ongoing.

The statistics for the year are listed below, (previous year's figures in brackets).

Orders 190 (210)
Consultations 257 (272)
Confirmed Orders 93 (65)
Objections 3 (8)

Signposts

David Morton, Signpost Officer

The number of new signposts halved again this year from 19 in 2023 to 7 in 2024 to two in 2025. I thank again the member of PNFS and the member of the public who suggested theirlocations. More suggestions are needed in 2026, especially in popular walking areas of outlying districts, where we have very few signposts or none at all. The donation to cover the full cost of a new signpost remains £800. This includes a modest amount to cover future maintenance. We are still maintaining signposts dating all the way back to 1905, so in the long term, maintenance costs are met out of PNFS funds. Our minimum required donation remained £500, but we asked donors, if possible, to pay the full amount and those who pay UK income tax to Gift Aid their donations.

By December we had a total of 587 signposts, ie a net increase of only two. This total included eight fingerposts, five commemorative wall plates and 2 toposcopes (viewpoint indicators). In March S385 was reported as found in a nearby stream bed and reinstated by Tatham PC. It had disappeared from its secluded spot near Lowgill Parish Church, in late 2023 to 2024. S010 disappeared from Snake Woodlands in April, but was traced to Forest England's depot at Darley Moor, retrieved and reinstated in July. S093 at Hope, which was smashed by a hedge-cutter in late 2024, was replaced in April. In May S332 at Holymoorside had its alloy plate cut off and stolen. A new plate is ready.

In November signpost number 1, erected in 1905, was stolen from Carr Meadow, Hayfield. Cast iron plate and angle-iron post had been uprooted, bypassing my use of shear-nuts fastening plate to post. I questioned a close neighbour and the farmer and with the help of two other trustees, we notified the police and appealed for its return via the BBC's North West News and Radio Derby and publicised its loss through Derbyshire Police and Social Media, but as of February 2026 we have heard nothing. In due course we will replace the sign.

All our signposts can be seen on our website: www.pnfs.org.uk > what we do (at the top in orange)> signposts and bridges> here (in orange).

New Signposts in 2025

- S660 at SJ 83130 40782 at Hobgoblin Gate, Swynnerton Old Park, Staffs on FP19 and BW Whitmore 9.
- S661 at SK 05480 79478 at Chapel en le Frith station on FPs 45, 59, 56.

Maintenance

With so many signposts to maintain, I was very pleased by the response of those members who clean, paint and/or now send me reports and photographs of our signposts, especially those in outlying places like Wakefield, Sprotborough (Doncaster), Thorpe Salvin (near Worksop), Ashover and North Wingfield, Belper, Kedleston, Wootton, Ipstones, Stafford, Thurstaston (Wirral), Ormskirk, Silverdale, Tatham and Bowland.

Four signs were reposted using either wood repair half-posts (242 and 311) or concrete (226 and 518). When our wooden posts rot, their sound sections are saved and re-used to repair posts.

Several cast metal plates were shot-blasted and powder-coated, then highlighted by myself. A small number of plates and posts were wedged and a great many were variously cleaned, touched-up or fully repainted and/or cleared of vegetation by a small but growing number of PNFS members.

My thanks in particular to Steve Brown, Vic Shannon, Shirley Addy, Bill Twigg, Chris Davies, Richard Vickery, David Gosling, David Oldfield, David Edge, David Tibbitt, Jonathan Robbins, Linda Smith, Peter Knight, Bill Parke, Bruce Westwood, John Alexander, Simon Worrall, John Orson, Paul Marshall, Wirral CP rangers and our contractor John Hodgson. I apologise for any omissions.



S215 and S247

My daughter Kathleen and I at S215, Phoside Farm, Hayfield with sunlit clouds over Kinder during a tour of signpost inspections in November 2025. Below photograph shows S247 at the top of William Clough, Kinder



Membership and Websites

Mel Bale, Membership Secretary and Trustee

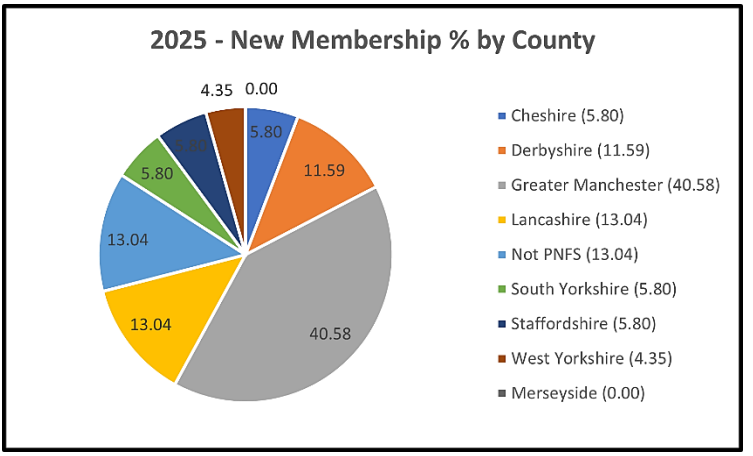
It is now almost 2 years since the Society increased its subscription rates, and I am delighted to report this doesn't seem to have had a detrimental impact on existing members renewing their membership. Nor has it affected our new membership figures either. Clearly, people believe that our rates of £20/£30 (Individual/ Household and Affiliate) represent good value for money, and a small price to pay to support our important work of Protecting, Promoting and Improving Public Rights of Way.

The table below shows that there has been a modest increase in our overall numbers in the last twelve months.

Membership	**Jan 2025**	**Jan 2026**
Individual	678	709
Household	213	218
Affiliate	92	90
AffFree	106	108
Concessionary	8	7
Honorary	33	37
VP	7	6
Total	**1,350**	**1,393**

The people and organisations that joined the Society in 2025 were drawn from half of the Highway Authorities that we cover. In fact, 17% came from just two, Stockport and Trafford. The county breakdown (see graph on next page) shows that Greater Manchester accounted for approximately 40%, and 13% were from outside the PNFS catchment. Food for thought!

I now send out monthly email renewal reminders, and I'm pleasantly surprised by how many recipients respond quickly and positively. Most people now renew either by PayPal or BACS. I would also encourage the use of Direct Debits (DD). Once set up, these payments are automatic. A DD form is on our website, and can be found at pnfs.org.uk/join. Once completed, just email it to me, and I will do the rest. You'll be spared my nagging renewal letters and emails. If you still prefer to pay by cheque, that's absolutely fine. Postage is expensive, PLEASE use a 'second class stamp' and save yourself 80p!



I am disappointed to report that our Growth and Engagement subgroup has made limited progress to date. It has proved very difficult to attract members to become actively involved, but for those who have stepped forward, rest assured that your ideas have been very welcome and will be acted upon in the coming year. Our main initiative has been to encourage more parish councils to affiliate to the Society. All those in Cheshire have been contacted; sadly the response rate so far has been patchy to say the least. I suspect a personal approach could be more successful, but that requires resources we don't current have, a classic catch 22 situation. If you feel you can help, please contact me.

Work has continued to develop the society's website. The members' area (pnfs.org.uk/members), which I mentioned last year, is now fully available. To recap, its contents include the latest issue of our quarterly *Signpost* magazine, access to the minutes of the society's various regular meetings and read-only access to our unique Footpath Inspection Database (FID). Access to the member's area should be via your membership number entered as your username and your personal password. Existing members should have already received their login credentials by email. Please email me at membership@pnfs.org.uk if you haven't received them as yet.

Our FID underwent a significant redevelopment last year. Version 3 was successfully implemented in July. Fault information is now presented in a clearer and more manageable way. The underlying data structure has been modified making it more straightforward to monitor how faults are being managed and hopefully resolved. Our thanks, as always go to Roger Fielding, who designed and developed the FID.

I would like to thank my fellow trustees for all their support and encouragement throughout the year. Finally, please do contact me at membership@pnfs.org.uk if you have any questions or ideas about membership matters or our websites.

Financial Review

Martin Pugh, Treasurer

Accounting Basis

These accounts have been prepared using the "receipts and payments" method, rather than the "accruals" method as used up to 2006. This is in accordance with Charity Commission guidance and the Trustees decisions made in 2006.

Income	**2025**		**Variance to 2024**
	£		**£**
Subscription Fees	18,700.80		1,932
Affiliation Fees/others	1,893.40		65
Donations general	7,844.25		-8,826
Donations signposts	2,600.00		-1,573
Legacies	171.40		-3,669
Tax Credits Gift Aid etc	5,061.87		-451
Dividends	5,229.30		1,212
Interest	6,867.26		1,062
Miscellaneous	58.75		-9
		48,427.03	-10,256.64

Income for 2025 and variances between 2025 and 2024 are shown above. Legacies are down, this is something beyond our control. Similarly, donations are down as 2024 was exceptional

Expenditure

General expenditure	**2025**		**Variance to 2024**
	£		£
Fund Raising & Function Costs	1,290.25		346
Miscellaneous Expenses	140.91		86
Signposts Expenses	4,903.14		271
Footbridge expenditure			-6,307
Footpath Improvements	10,928.60		4,954
		17,262.90	-650

Actual expenditure and variance to 2024 are shown above and are broadly similar to last year. Footpath improvements was a payment for gates which was approved by the Management Committee and is a one-off, likewise footbridge expenditure in 2024 was a one-off and not repeated this year.

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Postage	2,543.21		-299
Phone/Broadband/Web hosting	1,273.86		-114
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Refreshments	24.84		-52
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This resulted in a loss for the year of £17,619 Compared with a surplus of £15,593 last year. This loss had been budgeted for, the expenditure reflecting the purpose of the society, therefore the Trustees believe this loss is justifiable

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The balance sheet is £13,000 lower due to the P&L loss.

Our investments rose in value to £193,234, including £6,394 cash held waiting to be reinvested with Redmayne Bentley, our Investment Broker. We take dividend payments on a monthly basis and after payment of taxes and charges resulted in a return of 4.69%.

Current assets were down £18,000 as a result of the expenditure on legal fees.

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Honorary Members

The President and Vice Presidents are elected in recognition of outstanding services to the Society and they enjoy all the benefits of honorary membership. Members of 20 or more years standing who are aged at least 65 are entitled, upon application, to honorary membership

President
David Bratt

Vice Presidents
Kate Ashbrook
Jack Cornish
Norman Edwards
Mrs Gwynneth Littleton
Ian McMillan

Other Honorary Members

Hilda Bowler
Eva Burling
Wade Cooper
Michael Davies
Peter Edwards
Keith Feltham
Roger Fielding
Margaret Forster
Mrs M Frankland
Ian Gibbon
John and Audrey Grimsey
Margaret Haigh
John Harker
Philip and Anne Harris
Mrs J Hibbert
Mr and Mrs D Hilliker
David Hilton
David Hinde
Alan Hooley
Arthur Howcroft
Judith Hunt
Cliff and Marina Law
Keith Leslie
Roy Lomas
Will Mclewin
Pat Moneypenny
Terry and Vera Norris
David and Margaret O'Leary
Gordon Richards
Mr C H Shaw
David Sissons
John and Jan Slinn
Hilary Summerscales
Anne Watson
Peter Williams
Ted Wolfe
Keith Wykes

Affiliated Groups

Abbotsfield Fellwalkers of Flixton
Activity in Retirement Macclesfield
Altrincham Rambling Club
Anchor Ramblers
Ashover Rights of Way & Environment Group
Anderton Parish Council
Ashton-u-Lyne & District Walking Club
Billington and Langho Parish Council
Blackburn Rambling Association
Blackrod Town Council
Bolton CHA Rambling Club
Bolton Ramblers Group
Buxton Rambling Club
CHA Bradford Rambling and Social Club
CHA Manchester Rambling Club
CHA Mansfield
CHA Sheffield Rambling Club and Social Club
Chapel-en-le-Frith Parish Council
Chapel-en-le-Frith Rambling Club
Cheshire Tally Ho Hare & Hounds Club
Clayton le Dale Parish Council
Crescent Ramblers Northwich
CROWS
Dark Peak Bridleways Association
Denby Footpaths Group
Derby Nomad Ramblers
Derbyshire Pennine Club
Disley Footpaths Society
Dore Village Society
Eccles Rambling & Social Club
GM Ringway
Grindleton Parish Council
Halifax Rambling and Social Club
Hanliensian Rambling Club
Hayfield Parish Council
Helsby Parish Council
HF Bolton Group
HF Bury Group
HF Nottingham Group
HF Warrington Rambling Club
High Peak Ramblers
Hulme Walfield Somerford Booths Parish Council
Hunshelf Parish Council
Macclesfield Rambling Club
Manchester and Salford Ramblers Group
Manchester Pedestrian Club
Manchester Rambling Club
Manchester Weekend Walkers Ramblers Group
Marple District Rambling Club
Melbourne Footpaths Group
Merseyside & West Cheshire Area RA
Mid Cheshire Footpath Society
Mossley Town Council
North Turton Parish Council
Northenden Walkers
Oldham Wednesday Walkers
Oread Mountaineering Club
Osbaldeston Parish Council
Pennine Wayfarers Rambling Club
Pott Shrigley Parish Council
Poynton Rambling Club
RA Congleton Group
RA Doncaster Group
RA East Cheshire
RA Greater Manchester & High Peak Area
RA North & Mid Cheshire Area
RA Nottinghamshire Area
RA Oldham Group
RA Preston Group
RA Sheffield Group
RA South Yorks & NE Derbyshire Area
RA Stockport Group
RA Trafford Group
Ramsgreave Parish Council
Red Rope (Manchester)
Rossendale Ramblers
Saddleworth Pedestrians
Saddleworth Runners
Sale Walking and Activity Group
Salesbury Parish Council
Sandbach Footpath Group
Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group
Sheffield 40s Walking Group
Sheffield and Rotherham Wildlife Trust
Shirland & Higham Parish Council
Stockport Rambling & Social Club
Stockport Walkers
Stockport Walking and Outdoor Group
Sutton-in-Ashfield and District Rambling Club
Tameside Ramblers
The Irregulars
The Rucksack Club
The Strollers
Trafford Walkers
U3A Sale Walking Group
Whaley Bridge Town Council
Whalley Parish Council
Wilpshire Parish Council
Wirksworth Town Council
Wirral Footpaths & Open Spaces Preservation Soc.
Woolston Parish Council

Area Officers and Inspectors

BARNSLEY
Area Officer
Chris Davison
Inspectors
Barry Tylee
David Oldfield
Mel Bale
Simon Hulme
Simon Jones
Tony Whiting

BLACKBURN WITH DARWEN
Inspectors
David Hey
Graham Fullarton
Rob Johnson
Roger Marks

BOLTON
Inspector
Jim Foster

BRADFORD
Inspectors
Andrew Harter
Gill Darnbrook
Neil Walsh

BURY
Inspectors
Alastair Cooper
Andy McMullan
David Pollard

CALDERDALE
Inspectors
Andy Allen
Jenny Sibbons
Rory Brooke

CHESHIRE

East
Area Officers
Chris Davies
Richard Vickery
Inspectors
Alan Pickup
Andrew Seaford
Bernie Bolton
Brian Hamilton
Chris Davies
Clare Maxwell
Steve Maxwell
Clive Evans
David Brown
David Gartside
David Taylor
Duncan Smith
Gavin Miller
John Alexander
John Fisher
John Goodman
Linda Smith
Maria Novelly
Mark Kambites
Mike Greenwood
Pete Annice
Sue Annice
Quentin Blagg
Richard Vickery
Sheila Dillon
Steve Elliot
Chris Elliot
Tony Clare
Will Ablett

West and Chester
Inspectors
Alan Pickup
Andy Garland
Andy Thorne
Chris Fortune
Gavin Miller
Jan Howe
Jenny Allen
Jim Booth
Joe Park
John Gascoyne
John White
Linda Smith
Pete Annice
Sue Annice
Sheila Dillon

DERBY CITY
Inspectors
Barry Thomas
Kathy McLean

DERBYSHIRE

Amber Valley
Area Officer
Rhoda Barnett
Inspectors
David Armin
David Moreton
Dudley Ibbett
John Harker
Ken Brockway
Mike Nelms
Sandra Dixon

Bolsover
Area Officer
John Harker
Inspectors
Anne Green
Bill Parke

Chesterfield
Area Officer
John Harker
Inspector
Bill Park

Dales
Area Officer
Rhoda Barnett
Inspectors
Ann Haden
Bill Parke
Dan Ware
David Furniss
David Tibbit
Debby Pickvance
Derek Bodey
Geoff Lockwood
Jim Cowley
Jim Howell
John Eaton
Julian Hodgson
Kathy McLean
Merrick Iszatt
Philip Elliot
Richard Davies
Richard Whiteside
Simon Thompson
Stewart Keech

Erewash
Area Officer
Martin Davis
Inspectors
Kathy McLean
Ken Brockway
Martin Davis

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Area Officer
Derek Bodey
Inspectors
Colin Hill
Derek Bodey
Duncan Smith
Helen Steel
Ian Smith
Jackie Miller
Julian Hodgson
Kate Deamon
Mel Bale
Nigel Hackney
Paul Easthope
Richard Davies
Steve Millward
Steve Royle
Tracy Royle
Tim Lewis

North East
Area Officer
John Harker
Inspector
Bill Parke

South
Area Officer
Rhoda Barnett
Inspectors
Barry Thomas
Ed Green
John Eaton

Kathy McLean
Keith Armstrong
Martin Davis
Sally Lim

DONCASTER
Area Officer
John Harker

HALTON
Inspector
Mike Brown

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Inspectors
Dan O'Hara
David Oldfield
Emily Thompson
Jill Stitchcombe
Joanne Jones
Paul Marshall
Steve Slator

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Burnley
Inspectors
Rachel Meredith
Shirley Addy

Chorley
Inspectors
Bob Smith
Steven Greenbank
Tyrone McCarthy

Hyndburn
Inspectors
Danny Allen
Shirley Addy

Lancaster
Inspectors
Andrew Paton
Hugh Stewart
Jane Hodgson
Kathy McLean
Paul Tynan
Phil Featherstone
Rachel Evans

Pendle
Inspectors
Mark Chung
Simon Worrall

Preston
Inspector
Pete Kirby

Ribble Valley
Inspector
Shirley Addy

Rossendale
Inspectors
Alastair Cooper
Blaine Parkes
Danny Allen

South Ribble
Inspectors
Andy Rae
Brent Whybro
Danny Withington
Paul Cocker

West
Inspectors
Neil Davies
Nick Storer

Wyre
Inspectors
Andrew Paton
Brian Dearnaley
Mark Edwards

LEEDS
Inspector
Andrew Harter

MANCHESTER
Area Officer
Martin Hampar
Inspector
Martin Hampar

OLDHAM
Inspectors
Brian Lomas
Emily Thompson
Ken Smith

ROCHDALE
Inspector
Ross Myddleton

ROTHERHAM
Area Officer
John Harker
Inspector
David Oldfield

SALFORD
Area Officer
Martin Hampar
Inspectors
Drew Davis
Gary Webster

SEFTON
Inspector
Neil Davies

SHEFFIELD
Area Officer
John Harker
Inspectors
Bill Parke
David Oldfield
John Adler
Jose Cree

ST HELENS
Inspector
Kevin Rigby

STAFFORDSHIRE
Inspectors
Bill Parke
Bill Twigg
Chad Wilkinson
David Edge
David Gartside
David Tibbit
Eric Davies
Martin Balderson
Tony Clare

STOCKPORT
Area Officer
David Gosling
Inspectors
Aidan Moss
David Gosling
Geoff Green
John Mooney
Udo Pope

TAMESIDE
Inspectors
Drew Davis
Paul Easthope
Tony Ellis
Udo Pope

TRAFFORD
Area Officer
Martin Hampar
Inspectors
Martin Hampar
Tom Gurrie

WAKEFIELD
Area Officer
John Harker
Inspectors
Caroline Devonport
Stephen Hanslip
Stephen Hird
Tim Saunders

WARRINGTON
Area Officer
Jan Howe
Inspectors
Jan Howe
Jenny Allen
Nigel Howe
Patrick Knowles
Peter Varetto

WIGAN
Inspectors
Dave Taylor
Nick Storer
Peter Burns

PNFS signposts - considerations for selecting locations

Members and affiliated groups are invited to put forward suggestions for new PNFS signposts to be placed. Please read the below criteria. If you know of a suitable location, please contact David Morton, Signpost Officer on signposts@pnfs.org.uk. Commemorative plaques to sponsor cost of signposts can be arranged.

We always need:

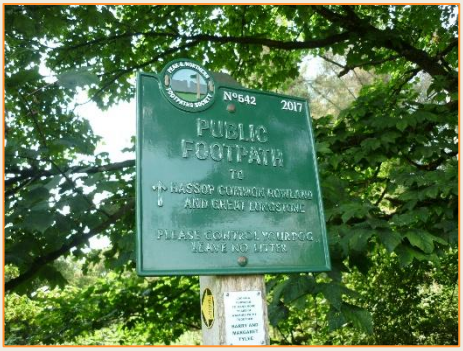
- The landowner's consent (or details of the relevant parish council).

We like the signposts to be on public footpaths and/or bridleways:

- At a junction of public footpaths and/or bridleways in walking country.
- Accessible for installation and future maintenance.
- In parishes and areas which have few or no existing PNFS signs as silent ambassadors.
- Close to a wall or fence, if in a field used by horses or cattle.
- In the shelter of trees, which minimises the need for maintenance.
- In locations where lost walkers face potential danger, eg those regularly visited by Mountain Rescue teams in bad weather.

We like to avoid:

- Locations near busy roads or roads treated with salt in the winter, eg the A57.
- Locations adjacent to an existing Highway Authority or Peak District National Park footpath sign.
- National Trust (NT) estates, unless we have a donor willing to accept their ban on memorial plaques (eg S526 above Alport Castle, donated by the Friends of the NT).
- Locations where vandalism is a likely problem.



S542 at Hassop, SE of Longstone Edge, being restored by David Morton. One of the many efforts of maintaining PNFS's signposts by volunteers



Financial Review

Martin Pugh, Treasurer

Accounting Basis

These accounts have been prepared using the "receipts and payments" method, rather than the "accruals" method as used up to 2006. This is in accordance with Charity Commission guidance and the Trustees decisions made in 2006.

Income	**2025** £		**Variance to 2024** £
Subscription Fees	18,700.80		1,932
Affiliation Fees/others	1,893.40		65
Donations general	7,844.25		-8,826
Donations signposts	2,600.00		-1,573
Legacies	171.40		-3,669
Tax Credits Gift Aid etc	5,061.87		-451
Dividends	5,229.30		1,212
Interest	6,867.26		1,062
Miscellaneous	58.75		-9
		48,427.03	-10,256.64

Income for 2025 and variances between 2025 and 2024 are shown above. Legacies are down, this is something beyond our control. Similarly, donations are down as 2024 was exceptional

Expenditure

General expenditure	**2025** £		**Variance to 2024** £
Fund Raising & Function Costs	1,290.25		346
Miscellaneous Expenses	140.91		86
Signposts Expenses	4,903.14		271
Footbridge expenditure			-6,307
Footpath Improvements	10,928.60		4,954
		17,262.90	-650

Actual expenditure and variance to 2024 are shown above and are broadly similar to last year. Footpath improvements was a payment for gates which was approved by the Management Committee and is a one-off, likewise footbridge expenditure in 2024 was a one-off and not repeated this year.

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CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of: Peak and Northern Footpaths Society

On accounts for the yr ended: 31st. December 2025 | Charity Number 212219

Set out on page: One (remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

First of January

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended.31st. December 2025

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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

Signed: Alan A Clements **Dated** 9th May 2026

Name: Alan A Clements Rev'd.

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any): Fellow Association of Charity Independent Examiners

Address: 15 Carleton Road, Great Knowley, Chorley PR6 8TQ

Section B Disclosure