

North Pennines AONB UNESCO Global GEOPARK (England, UK)



Major achievements in 2016

- A major new project, Earthworks, was submitted for funding. The project, worth approx. €650,000, will provide new interpretation and trails, education services, public events and a series of youth camps, plus a wide range of community projects. It will also allow for the appointment of a new

geoscientist to manage the work over four years. A decision is due on 7th March 2017

- We launched OREsome North Pennines, a two year project investigating the geology, ecology and history of a series of former lead mining sites
- Our visitor centre won 'Small Visitor Attraction of the Year' at the north east of England Tourism Awards, against 21 other entries in that category.
- We were partners in a major outdoor art installation, 'Waterfall' which brought 2000 people through our visitor centre to see moving images of local waterfalls projected onto traditional white barns at night. The team ran projects with local schools focusing on the geology of the waterfalls.
- Creation of our new North Pennines Observatory, which is partly developed with a local community and which will also include interpretation on the 'geodiversity of the solar system'.

Contribution towards the work of the EGN

- Participation in the EGN meetings in Spain and England (including the Global Geoparks Conference)
- We are part of a group of Geoparks and aspirant Geoparks which submitted a bid to the INTERREG (Atlantic Isles) programme.

Management structure and financial status

- The budget which underpins the overall management organisation for the Geopark has been protected by the UK Government from further cuts. The economic situation is still incredibly challenging for developing new projects. However, by the end of 2016 we had bid for (or were shortly due to bid for) approx. €18m of funding across a wide range of projects. The political climate in relation to collaboration with the EU remains complex and challenging. For the team it has never been more important to realise the opportunities before this becomes much harder; for vocal

elements of the public and some politicians, this kind of collaboration is even less popular than it had been in the past.

Strategic partnerships

- The team is actively engaged in wide range of strategic partnerships, including a cross-border initiative with southern Scotland, two multi-partner landscape-scale heritage conservation/tourism/education programmes and a major cross-border project with a neighbouring National Park.

Marketing and promotional activities

- Our visitor centre was named north east of England 'Small Visitor Attraction of the Year'
- We continue to secure good media coverage for our work on a wide range of issues.

Sustainable economic development

- Our visitor centre has continued to develop this year, expanding its range of local products and its offer of events for the public and activities for schools. Other work included the further development of our electric bike network.

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