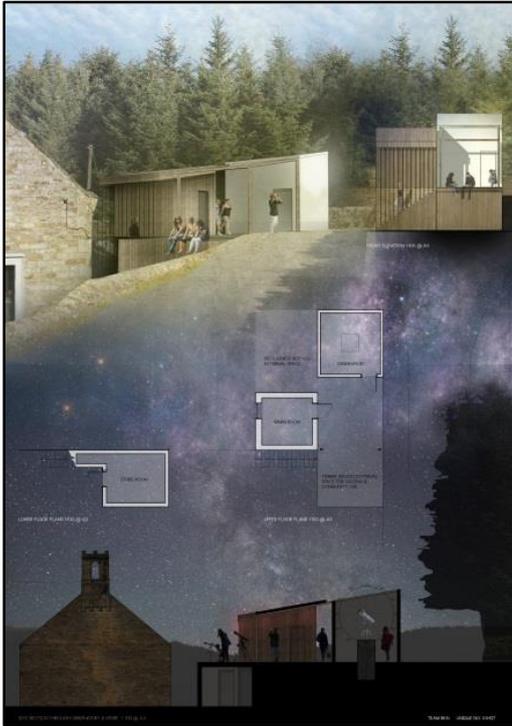


North Pennines UNESCO Global GEOPARK (England, UK)



Major achievements in 2017

- A major new project, Earthworks, was approved by a range of funders. Worth approx. €650,000, it will provide new interpretation and trails, education services, public events, plus a wide range of community projects. It will also allow for the appointment of a new geology projects officer and a geoscientist to manage the work over four years.
- We developed OREsome North Pennines, a two year project investigating the geology, ecology and history of a series of former lead mining sites
- We began consolidating a series of mining heritage features across the Geopark, at which we will interpret the geology and the social history associated with the area's lead mines.
- We opened our new North Pennines Observatory (pictured), and handed it over to a community business we have created. The observatory includes interpretation on the 'geodiversity of the solar system'. We also hosted our first North Pennines Stargazing Festival.
- The approval of our EU LIFE project will allow us to further expand our award winning programme of peatland restoration, which began in 2005 and has restored 25,000 ha of blanket bog

Contribution towards the work of the EGN

- Participation in the EGN meetings in Ireland and Portugal (including the EGN Conference)
- We are partners in an INTERREG (Atlantic Isles) programme which was approved during 2017 and in which we are leading on ICT interpretation and supporting two aspirant Geoparks.
- The Geopark Director undertook a revalidation mission in Turkey.
- The North Pennines hosted the annual meeting of the UK Geoparks Forum, which was also attended by staff from UNESCO Kenya and an aspirant Kenyan Geopark
- Geopark staff introduced UNESCO UK staff to the UK's Minister for Africa at a meeting designed to promote Foreign and Commonwealth Office support for Geopark development in parts of Africa.

Management structure and financial status

- The budget which underpins the overall management organisation for the Geopark has been protected from further cuts. The economic situation is still incredibly challenging for developing new projects but despite this the team secured approx. €10m of new funding across a wide range of projects lasting several years; submissions were made for an additional approx. €8. We now have a LIFE project and two INTERREG projects, but the future remains uncertain as the UK continues its preparations to leave the EU.

Strategic partnerships

- The team is actively engaged in wide range of strategic partnerships, including two multi-partner landscape-scale heritage conservation/tourism/education programmes, a major cross-border project with a neighbouring National Park and a strategic natural flood management programme in the early stages of development.

Marketing and promotional activities

- Our relationships with our DMOs continue to blossom, undoubtedly helped by the UNESCO status being formalised in 2015.
- New 'locator logos' have been produced which businesses can use to promote their presence and activities as being in a UNESCO Global Geopark. The use of the branding is subject to the signing of a charter, with 40 businesses signing up by the end of 2017.
- We continue to secure good media coverage for our work on a wide range of issues, and our social media channels continue to prosper (e.g. 70,000 twitter followers)

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. Our locator branding (see above) has proved [popular with businesses as a brand of quality which boosts the attractiveness of the area. Our festivals and events, trails and interpretation continue to attract people to the area.

Contacts:

Chris Woodley-Stewart

chris@northpenninesaonb.org.uk

Pete Jackson

petesmine@gmail.com

Naomi Foster

naomi@northpenninesaonb.org.uk