

GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2020

1. GEOPARK IDENTITY



Geopark name, country, regional Network: North Pennines AONB and UNESCO Global Geopark, UK, European Geoparks Network)

Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation: 2003 / 2018

Photo: Engaging with the 'Fellfoot Fables' creative writing programme (see below).

2. GEOPARK FIGURES

Number of Geopark staffs: 33 staff members including 2 geoscientists.

Number of visitors: Numbers not collected in 2020.

Number of Geopark events: ~25 live public events (including in person and online) organised by the Geopark management body.

Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes: 25

Number of Geopark press release: ~16

3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

Major achievements in 2020

- Launch of 'Fellfoot Forward' Landscape Partnership Scheme – a major 4-year project to conserve, enhance and celebrate the natural and cultural heritage of a particular landscape.
- Launch of 'Tees-Swale: naturally connected' project – a major 5-year project in collaboration with the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority that puts farming at the heart of nature and nature at the heart of land management in these special landscapes.
- Continued extensive peatland restoration work through international and regional projects.
- Close of Interreg Atlantic Geoparks project collaborating with partners in 5 countries to enhance Geotourism opportunities and share best practice.
- Delivering geology-themed assemblies and workshops in 20 primary schools, reaching nearly all the primary age children in or close to the Geopark in January to March 2020.

Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Director Chris Woodley-Stewart continues his role on the EGN Advisory Committee and as vice chair of UK National Forum for UNESCO Global Geoparks.
- Two staff attended EGN and GGN digital fora and contributed to EGN working groups.
- Staff connected with EGN colleagues regularly through Interreg Atlantic Geoparks project.
- Assisted aspiring Geoparks through the Atlantic Geoparks project and UK Forum.

Management and Financial Status

- The core management budget is currently secure. Major conservation and engagement work including projects mentioned above and others are funded by grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, EU, UK Government sources and trusts/foundations etc. and so far has not been too strongly impacted by Covid.

Geoconservation

- Popular sites saw high visitor numbers and some irresponsible behaviour after the first lockdown lifted, so staff, authorities and local volunteers worked to improve the situation.

Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)

- It has been a very difficult year for the tourism sector and the full impact of the pandemic is not yet clear.
- The North Pennines annual Tourism Forum for local providers was held online in 2020 on the theme of 'Slow Tourism'. A Tourism Toolkit was launched to help providers and a total of 102 businesses are now signed up to the North Pennines Responsible Tourism Charter.
- The European Atlantic Geotourism Route and a Geotours app for visitors were produced as part of the Interreg Atlantic Geoparks project, in partnership with 10 other destinations.

New education programmes on geoconservation, sustainable development and disaster risk reduction

- Geology activities delivered by Geopark staff in 20 local primary schools in January to March 2020.
- Schools engaged with local landscape and intangible heritage through Fellfoot Forward project.
- Staff gave talks for public engagement university modules in biological and earth sciences.

Strategic partnership

- Ongoing involvement with a wide range of partners including National Association for AONBs, Local Authorities, statutory agencies for nature and culture, Destination Management Organisations, conservation charities, landowners, managers and farmers, educational providers, community groups.

Promotional activities

- Press releases, blog posts and online activities, social media promotion (as appropriate to the local Covid situation), particularly covering nature recovery work, new project announcements, Stargazing Festival, toolkit for tourism businesses, activities to do at home and safe visiting.

4. CONTACTS

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