

# GGN/EGN - Geopark Annual Report 2019

## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY



**Geopark name, country, regional Network:**  
North Pennines AONB and UNESCO Global Geopark, United Kingdom, European Geoparks Network

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

**Image:** Hush – a monumental temporary art installation by Steve Messam in the North Pennines AONB and UNESCO Global Geopark, July 2019 –

received 5000 visitors and coverage in national and international press.

## 2. GEOPARK FIGURES

**Number of Geopark staff:** 32 staff including 2 geoscientists

**Number of visitors:** Bowlees Visitor Centre 52,000. (full area survey not conducted this year).

**Number of Geopark events:** 110+ (organised by management body)

**Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes:** 20

**Number of Geopark press release:** 30+

## 3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

### Major achievements in 2019

- Peatland restoration continues on a large scale in the Geopark, including projects with other UK and European partners including LIFE, INTERREG and other funding sources.
- The Geopark team organised training for volunteers, programmes for schools involving mining heritage, making animations and creative writing, and public events including a major art installation (see image), walks, talks, exhibitions and workshops.
- A multi-million pound Landscape Partnership Scheme, Fellfoot Forward, covering the north-west part of the Geopark and its surroundings was awarded funding to begin in 2020, working with local partners and communities towards conservation, engagement and interpretation.

### Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- Participation by two staff in the 43<sup>rd</sup> and 44<sup>th</sup> EGN CC meetings and European Geoparks Conference. The Director, Chris Woodley-Stewart, was elected to the EGN AC in March 2019.

- Participation in an INTERREG Atlantic Area project with 11 other Geopark partners including assisting 2 aspiring Geoparks. This project has been extended and will end in November 2020.
- Assistance for aspiring UK Geoparks through the UK Geoparks Forum, of which Chris Woodley-Stewart is vice-chair. 3 staff attended the UK forum in May 2019.
- Colleagues from an aspiring Geopark in Sweden were hosted for a visit in August 2019.
- Chris Woodley-Stewart undertook a revalidation mission for Sobrarbe Geopark in Spain.

### **Management and Financial Status**

- The core management budget is currently secure. Major conservation and engagement work is funded by grants from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, EU, UK Government sources and trusts/foundations etc. The UK's departure from the EU does not affect existing projects but could impact on future collaborations.

### **Geoconservation**

- A funding bid was submitted in November 2019 for a mining heritage research and conservation project. Access work and footpath improvements were carried out at a couple of the most popular geosites.

### **Sustainable tourism (Geotourism)**

- A series of workshops was held in January to March 2019 for local tourism businesses to help them find out more about the Geopark and opportunities for visitors.
- The INTERREG Atlantic Geoparks project involves working together with partners to collectively promote geotourism through events, training and communications.
- Good relationships continue to be built with businesses and Destination Management Organisations through events, projects, regular email updates and working groups.

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

- 2019 education programmes have included school visits to the Geopark, a programme for schools to explore geological and mining heritage, training for volunteers and connections to local universities including contributing to a careers event for students.

### **Strategic partnership**

- The team works with many strategic partners, including local authorities, conservation organisations, government agencies, educational institutions and other protected landscapes.

### **Promotional activities**

- Good media coverage has been secured for work on a wide range of issues such as wildlife conservation, peatland restoration and public events, along with successful promotion on social media (e.g. 60,000 Twitter and 4200 Facebook followers).

#### **4. CONTACTS**

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