

# GGN - Geopark Annual Report 2023

## 1. GEOPARK IDENTITY

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

**Year of inscription / Year of the last revalidation:** 2003 / 2022

**Photo caption:** Visitors can now borrow mobility scooters to explore five key sites in the North Pennines.



## 2. GEOPARK FIGURES

**Number of Geopark staffs:** 56 staff including 2 geoscientists

**Number of visitors:** Visitor Centre approximate numbers for 2023 – 43,300

**Number of Geopark events:** Management body organized approx. 96 public events, plus 81 volunteering events. Approx. 30 partner events. This does not include activities not open to the public such as for schools, youth groups and community groups.

**Number of school classes realize Geopark educational programmes:** 39

**Number of Geopark press release:** 22

## 3. GEOPARK ACTIVITIES

### Major achievements in 2023

- 7250ha of peatland restoration.
- A major new £1.5m engagement project began, focused on our mining heritage.
- A wide range of nature recovery and public engagement activities through several projects including working closely with farmers and landowners, volunteer events, arts programmes and education programmes.

### Contribution towards GGN - Networking and participation

- 2 staff attended and contributed to the EGN meeting in Romania in March and online in November, including facilitating discussions. 1 staff member attended and presented at the global conference in Morocco in September. 3 staff attended the UK committee annual meeting in June, including meeting with and supporting aspiring UK Geoparks.
- The Director was an active member of the EGN AC throughout 2023, and is vice-chair of the UK committee for UNESCO Global Geoparks.
- The Director undertook 3 evaluation and revalidation missions.

### Management and Financial Status

- We added to our reserves at the year-end (currently over £400,000) and have secure budgets for the rest of our period up to revalidation and beyond.

### **Geoconservation**

- Development phase of major mining heritage project, including planning the conservation of sites.
- Access work on Geotrail routes, such as footpath improvements.
- Commenting on any planning applications that affect identified Geoheritage sites.

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

- Events including Stargazing Festival, family activities, arts events, guided walks and exhibitions.
- Continued engagement with tourism businesses including annual tourism forum, working group and sessions on improving the experience of disabled visitors.
- 'Tramper' mobility scooters installed at 5 venues across the Geopark to improve access.

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

- Programme which connected schools in the North Pennines with other Geoparks across Europe through making and sharing films.
- A wide range of schools activities including arts, practical conservation tasks, enjoying the outdoors and curriculum-based learning.
- Sessions for home educators in summer and autumn 2023 as well as for schools.

### **Strategic partnership**

- The Geopark management body is made up of a partnership of local authorities, agencies, NGOs and community representatives.
- Other partnerships include project partners such as a National Park Authority, water and utility companies, Rivers Trusts and Wildlife Trusts and various community groups.

### **Promotional activities**

- Staff contributed to a range of conferences, seminars and training events at local, regional and national level.
- Promotion of activities through social media and local press.

## **4. CONTACTS**

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