

## Trustees' Report 2019-20



### Introduction

Since the 2019 AGM last June our lives have been changed by the Coronavirus pandemic. Normal activities changed in March 2020 with the lockdown, which restricted social contact in the workplace and most other social activities. NYMA's activities too had to be changed to comply with the restrictions. From the end of February all group events for the remainder of the year were cancelled. The MoorsBus, which has been supported for a number of years by the NYMA, was also cancelled for the year. Quarterly Council meetings have been held as on-line video meetings. Plans for NYMA to host the 2020 National Park Societies Annual Conference in October – which were already well advanced - were cancelled; it is hoped the conference can be held in 2021. Other meetings have been held outdoors with social distancing rules observed.

### Finance

At the end of the financial year in March 2020 our position was sound with an end-of-year balance of £52,543.88. 'Voice of the Moors' production and postage continues to be the main expenditure, totalling £2,968.62 for the year. Expenditure on securing a venue for hosting the 2020 National Park Societies Conference was £1,640.02, this being held over to 2021 following the postponement of the event. A contribution of £2,397.95 agreed for MoorsBus will be carried over to 2021 because of the cancellation of this service. Principal sources of income were membership subscription (£4,842), donations (£1,216.90) and book sales (£332.90). A deficit of £3,084.45 over the year was declared.

### Meetings

Over the past year Council meetings were held at Kirkbymoorside Community Library on July 9<sup>th</sup>, October 16<sup>th</sup> and January 22<sup>nd</sup>, with online video meetings conducted using on-line video on April 7<sup>th</sup> and July 7<sup>th</sup>. A round-table meeting with representatives from ICL Boulby Mine concerning a proposed extension of planning permission was held on October 31<sup>st</sup>. NYMA's Chairman and Secretary attended a Campaign for National Parks meeting of National Park Societies Chairs and CEO's in London on October 20<sup>th</sup>, followed by the National Park Societies Annual Conference on 21<sup>st</sup> October.

In February 2020 NYMA Council members attended a Liaison meeting with the National Park Authority attended by senior staff from the NPA including CEO Andy Wilson. Over the Colin Speakman and Adrian Leaman represented NYMA at MoorsBus meetings, and Janet Cochrane attended a Heritage Lottery meeting to prepare a funding proposal for a wildflowers project. Unfortunately, HL subsequently withdrew all possibility of support for this kind of project due to the urgent pressures of the Covid crisis.

### Membership

At the end of June 2020 our total membership was 374, an apparent decline of 43 members since the end of June 2019. This is largely due to 'weeding out' Life Members by the Membership

Secretary, Cal Moore, through an 'opt in' letter (many of the non-respondents are thought to be no longer interested or sadly deceased). This has resulted in a cost saving in terms of printing and distributing 'Voice of the Moors' and also in the annual levy on members paid to the CNP (Campaign for National Parks). There has been a continued uptake of the new 10-year membership category.

### **Voice of the Moors**

Our quarterly magazine continues to be a vitally important connection to our members. Its high quality has been maintained through the efforts of the editor, Sharon Artley, working with Pascal Thivillon at Basement Press who designs and prepares the magazine for printing. Talented regular contributors include Ian Carstairs, Anne Press, Albert Elliot, Mike Gray, Cal Moore, Colin Speakman, and Alan Staniforth, with occasional features by many others. Cal and Dave Moore organise the distribution of the magazine along with Brian and Barbara Spicer. In June, Sharon stepped down as editor after 10 issues: we thank her for her hard work in producing a high-quality magazine with varied content, frequently enhanced by her superb wildlife photographs.

### **Guided Walks**

The programme of guided walks continued until the beginning of March. There were 10 walks, including the monthly walks organised by Heather Mather and led by Wendy Smith, Jane Ellis, Heather and Colin Mather, Dave and Cal Moore, Kath Mair, and Jenny Shepherd. 'Town & Village Walks' at Robin Hood's Bay, Thornton-le-Dale and Stokesley were organised by Janet Cochrane and led by Alan Staniforth, Beryl Turner and Liz Whitehouse.

### **President's Award 2020**

The project chosen for the 2020 award is an archaeological investigation at Beck Hole into the development and history of the Whitby Company Iron Works (1860s) and the pre-industrial remains of a fulling mill. The work will be carried out by Simon Mayes, a professional archaeologist, on land owned by his brother, Kevin Mayes. It is planned to encourage participation by residents of Beck Hole, who will be offered training in excavation and recording techniques. The value of the award was doubled from £500 to £1,000 for this and future years.

### **Corbett's Copse (formerly the Park Wood Biodiversity Project)**

Work has continued on this long-term project with the planting of Alder Buckthorn. This shrub was brought to our notice by the Whitby Naturalists' Club in 2019 with their project 'Buckthorn for Brimstones', which was awarded the 2019 Conservation prize. The planting aims to extend the range of the Brimstone butterfly northwards using conservation corridors. Linked to this initiative, several NYMA members also planted Alder Buckthorn in their gardens.

### **Yorkshire Parks Societies and Leeds Beckett University**

Early in March a field trip for students from Leeds Beckett University on a Masters programme in Responsible Tourism Management was organised by NYMA Secretary Dr Janet Cochrane and Course leader Dr Davina Stanford. The field trip included a visit to Kirkbymoorside talks on MoorsBus, Ryedale Cycle Network, volunteering in the National Park, and a moorland management tour.

### **Planning Matters**

The vast Woodsmith Mine project near Whitby saw the collapse of Sirius Minerals Plc and a take-over by major conglomerate Anglo-American in April 2020. Lockdown measures have meant a reduction in activities at both the minehead and the tunnel access site. There have also been changes in the construction plans. It is anticipated that the major work will start on the service shaft by the end of 2020.

Plans were submitted in early 2020 for an extension of operations at the ICL Boulby Mine. NYMA was given the opportunity to discuss the proposals prior to the planning submission at a meeting in October 2019. Present permission expires in 2023. The National Park Planning Authority has asked for changes and modifications which are expected to be submitted later this year.

Discussions have been held with the National Park Authority on the possibility of using the bequest from Prof. Allan Patmore for public benefit at the Sutton Bank Visitor Centre.

### **Publications**

NYMA publishes two books in 2019: 'Wildflowers of Westerdale' by Carol May Wilson, and 'Wheelsheds of North Yorkshire' by David and Joan Hartley, and is the main distributor of the 'Picture Guide to the Wild Flowers of North East Yorkshire' by the Yorkshire botanist Nan Sykes. The book was reprinted by the charity PLACE, with substantial financial support from NYMA, as a tribute to Nan who sadly died early in the year. Sales of the 'The History Tree' book are continuing.

Prepared by Tom Chadwick, Chairman, and Janet Cochrane, Secretary, on behalf of the Trustees of the North Yorkshire Moors Association, August 2020