



Gateway to grants

Tucked away in a National Park village is a remarkable centre selling solidly-made garden and household furniture-with a difference.

For all the rustic seats, picnic tables and recycled tables and chairs at Longnor's Honeycomb Centre are produced by trainees with education disabilities.

When manager Ken Weston wanted to expand he investigated what grants were available through the National Park Authority, and came away with £20,000 over two years from the Peak District Sustainable Development Fund (SDF).

Now the centre takes 60 trainees a week, aged 16 upwards, from all over the Staffordshire Moorlands and Derbyshire, who gain skills and experience to apply for further jobs.

"We wouldn't have been able to do the extension without the SDF grant," said Mr Weston, "We've doubled the workshop area, enabling us to do a lot more."

You can buy furniture, or donate solid timber items, at the Honeycomb Centre, Buxton Road, Longnor, tel. 01298 83857 (website www.leek.ac.uk/honeycomb). The centre is also funded by Leek College and national and European agencies.

SDF grants are allocated by a panel of local people, whose chair, National Park Authority member Anne Ashe, explained: "We support social or business projects, renewable energy, training, sustainable travel, healthy eating/walking and recycling - any good idea that improves quality of life, especially if it involves young people."

One SDF-aided scheme involving young people and sustainable travel is Reach for the Peaks, at Sheffield's Wood Lane Countryside Centre. Donated bikes are repaired, maintained and kept by youngsters from disadvantaged areas, who are then introduced to cycling in the Peak District.

Manager Kevin Burke said: "We're showing them a whole world on their doorstep which some have never seen before. They're getting healthy exercise, new skills and not hanging round on street corners. The £15,000 SDF grant was crucial, it's paid for trainers' time, equipment and publicity."

More than 100 projects have been helped by the Defra-funded SDF since 2002, with grants between 50% and 75% of costs.

They include recycling waste cooking oil to heat Castleton Youth Hostel, a Farming Life Centre, a rural crafts revival scheme, rainwater harvesting, water turbines, bio-fuel technology and community car-sharing for the elderly.

Find out more on www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/sdf



Workshop at the Honeycomb Centre

Other sources of grants and support:

- **The New Environmental Economy programme**, offers up to £20,000 (30%-80% of costs) for environment-friendly new businesses, products or services which feature the Peak District as a positive asset.
- **The Countryside & Economy** team helps businesses, farmers and landowners access national and Peak District grants, including the **Environmental Enhancement Scheme**.
- **The Environmental Quality Mark** is awarded to businesses which achieve high environmental standards.
- **BESST** (Business, the Environment and Small-Scale Tourism) links small tourism operators to exchange ideas between the Peak District and Scandinavia.
- **Skills for Sustainable Business** helps organisations identify ways to reduce their environmental impact and make efficiency savings.

For further details log on to www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/grants or **contact Customer Services on 01629 816200**

SDF facts

- £1.6m was channelled to SDF schemes between 2002-05
- 8,350 young people benefited from SDF schemes in 2004-05
- 81 community and voluntary groups and 23 businesses received SDF help in 2004-05



Helpers at a Hathersage spring-clean

Villagers' tonic for their own communities

Villages across the Peak District have a fresh zest thanks to the can-do attitude of residents getting together to benefit their communities.

The villages are in the Community Planning Scheme, which helps organise and channel funding for improvements – from restoring ancient features to installing new amenities and sprucing up the environment.

But all the ideas, enthusiasm and action come from the villagers themselves. Community planning officers, Dan Yates

and Adele Metcalfe, help set up “wish days” and surveys, in which residents say what improvements they would like.

The villagers then draw up a Village Plan, listing priorities and action.

For the first year they can apply for 100 per cent grants for small schemes to set the ball rolling, then after that they are advised on other sources of funding.

Hathersage and Outseats' Village Plan was published in 2005, with early achievements including a village spring-clean, Memorial Hall lighting, and extra decorations for its summer Gala, and at Christmas. Longer-term proposals focus around transport, young people, the environment, leisure and play, and improvements to the village centre.

Steering group chair Mark Wedgwood said: “Many positive things probably wouldn't be happening without the Village Plan process. Success with smaller projects has shown us what we can achieve together, and given us confidence to move forward with more complex and ambitious proposals. We are beginning to appreciate how our Village Plan can help secure significant funding for community projects. The National Park Authority's community planning officers have been a tremendous support.”



Parwich Village Action Group celebrate at the opening of their affordable housing scheme. For more on this initiative, see page 3.

Fact-file

- More than £500,000 of grants have been distributed since 2002
- 23 villages have benefited
- The money has bought: new stage equipment, paving stones, dry-stone walling, decorative gates, a restored village clock, lighting, a smarter war memorial...and much more.
- 50% of suppliers and contractors are from the local area.

Community Planning covers most of the Derbyshire Dales area, and parts of Staffordshire Moorlands, & is managed by the National Park Authority with Rural Regeneration North East Staffordshire, supported by the European Regional Development Fund.

For more information, call Customer Services on 01629 816200

At **Parwich**, near Ashbourne (bottom left), villagers have already restored the village brook, found support for the village shop - and achieved an award-winning affordable housing scheme for local families.

Parwich Action Group member Janice Wigley said of the housing: “We're thrilled - we were losing our young people, and in danger of losing the balance of the community. This means we'll have a new influx of children and the school can keep going.”

Community Planning officer Dan Yates said: “The scheme gives villagers the skills they need to set priorities and find funding to achieve them - then they can go on to do it without our help in the future. The communities benefit, and the National Park benefits from thriving villages that have a sense of pride and achievement.”

Supporting communities

Over the past year we awarded £40,000 of village grants and supported 15 archaeological research and conservation projects.



All together now!

Let's hear it for team-power

"You'll never walk alone" goes the Liverpool football anthem – and it applies to the National Park squad too. We're increasingly teaming up with dozens of organisations, large and small, across the Peak District, and together we can achieve much more than we could on our own.

Moors for the Future, a five-year, £4.7m project, largely funded by Heritage Lottery, is a partnership of no fewer than 12 organisations – each with a strong

interest in restoring the Peaks' heather and peat moorland. Since 2003 the project has been reversing damage to one of the world's rarest habitats caused by erosion, pollution, fires and over-grazing. It is important not only for wildlife, but as a natural carbon sink to combat climate change.



The Moors for the Future team air-lift materials and equipment to these rare, remote habitats.

The other 11 partners are: National Trust, English Nature, United Utilities, Yorkshire Water, Severn Trent, Sheffield City Council, English Nature, Defra, Country Land & Business Association, National Farmers' Union and Peak Park Moorland Owners and Tenants Association.

Local people are pitching in too, helping to grow and plant cottongrass, spread heather brash and survey vegetation.

Peter Sharples of United Utilities said: "The benefit of partnerships is that you can achieve things much better than on your own – and on a much bigger scale. And as well as restoring the moors, together we can share expertise, develop access and recreation and manage visitors in better ways."

Part of the Moors for the Future project is a new £916,000 Moorland Centre, now under construction on the former site of the Edale's Fieldhead visitor information centre, to be completed by May. It will include new visitor amenities as well as community facilities and a moorland research centre.

Incorporated in the new displays will be "listening posts" – where visitors can hear local people's memories of the early days of moorland access, including setting up the Pennine Way.

To find out more, go to www.moorsforthefuture.org.uk

Partner-power has helped achieve:

- the Peak Birds Project, which is restoring habitats for curlew, lapwing and other declining upland birds, - a partnership with the RSPB
- the Lead Rakes Project, conserving the remains of a once-flourishing industry which helped shape the Peak District landscape, - a partnership with English Heritage and English Nature
- the management of visitors in the Upper Derwent Valley - a partnership with landowner Severn Trent, the National Trust, Forestry Commission and others.

Working together brings not only extra financial muscle but more expertise and resources – for the benefit of wildlife, cultural heritage and people's enjoyment of the environment.

Fact box

Moors for the Future is on target to:

- restore 300 hectares of moorland and 19km of paths
- rescue a Special Protection Area - the highest European conservation category
- reverse air pollution damage stretching from the Industrial Revolution to the late 20th century
- combat losses of carbon by creating peat bogs.
- make people more aware of this fragile ecosystem.

News in Brief...

Recharge your batteries with a special break

If you're looking to learn something new, find out more about the National Park or simply relax in beautiful surroundings, then a special interest holiday at Losehill Hall near Castleton could be the place for you. Here's a flavour of the short breaks on offer:

● Help our heather moorlands

Do you love the Peak District & want to help look after it? Find out about the fantastic heather moorlands of the area - some of the best in the world. You'll get a behind-the-scenes look at some innovative moorland restoration work and there'll be a chance to get some practical hands-on experience to help look after places such as Kinder and Bleaklow.

● Pre-history in the Peaks

Visit ancient tombs, henges and hillforts - we will take you back to the origins of the Peak District landscape, long before the Romans arrived. With our expert guide you will explore impressive monuments to prehistoric life set in some of the most beautiful Peak District locations including sites not normally open to the public.

● Mills, mines & navvies

Step back in time to visit the worlds of medieval lead miners, 18th century cotton spinners, Victorian engineers and Edwardian navvies. This break takes in the treasures of the Peak District's industrial past, including the famous Arkwright's Mill, Magpie Mine and Tin Town in the Upper Derwent valley.

● Navigation skills

Ever been out walking and not felt completely confident that you know exactly where you are? Or would you like to develop your existing skills even further? We offer navigation courses at beginner and intermediate levels.

These are just a sample of the many fascinating and stimulating breaks on offer – for full details log onto www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/studybreaks phone 01433 620373 or email holidays.losehill@peakdistrict.gov.uk

Drop-in advice centre for land managers

A new first-stop shop for farmers, landowners and land managers to get advice on environmental/diversification schemes and grants is now available - for the first time in one joined-up service.

The Peak District Land Management Advisory Service has been jointly set up by English Nature, the Rural Development Service, the National Park Authority, Forestry Commission and Countryside Agency to provide help all in one place.

It holds sessions every Monday, 10am to 4pm, at the English Nature office, Ashford Road, Bakewell. Here you can find out about environmental land management schemes, legal requirements, rural regeneration and diversification schemes and business support grants.

Or call the National Park's Countryside & Economy Team on 01629 816270, English Nature/Forestry Commission on 01629 816640, or the Rural Development Service on 0115 900 5303.

New £½m cycle-hire centre on High Peak Trail

This Spring sees the opening of a new cycle-hire centre with visitor facilities and refreshment bar at Parsley Hay, near Hartington, on the High Peak Trail.

The centre aims to offer information about the trail and its past as a former railway line, its wildlife and nearby archaeological sites. It is also designed to blend in with the countryside, and has sustainable features for energy efficiency.

The cycle-hire area is much improved, plus landscaping and a re-sited car-park access so that cyclists no longer have to cross traffic to get to the trail.

The centre is funded by the National Park Authority, Peak District Rural Action Zone, Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership and the European Regional Development Fund.

Be our eyes and ears...

on graffiti, vandalism and fly-tipping

Most National Park users leave nothing more than footprints, but a small minority leave much more ugly traces for others to clean up.

We are asking for your help to combat the vandals, graffiti-scrawlers and fly-tippers who destroy and deface National Park amenities.

Racist graffiti in particular should be reported to the police on **0845 123 3333**.

Vandalism in the past year has included the virtual destruction of a public convenience block and the drilling of holes for cameras in a convenience for the disabled. Again, contact the police, particularly if you see someone doing the damage.



National Park Rangers clear fly-tipped rubbish

We have also had substantial items - such as a three-piece suite, abandoned cars, mattresses and sacks of animal bones - left in wildlife areas and beauty spots. In some cases people actually drive past an official household refuse disposal site where they could leave it for free, to dump in the open countryside.

To report fly-tipping contact the local council for the area.



A628 anti-congestion proposals on the way

The National Park Authority will shortly be giving its response to the Highways Agency's draft proposals to relieve traffic congestion round Tintwistle/Mottram on the A628.

Environmental considerations and residents' concerns will be at the heart of our recommendations.

The A628 is a heavily-used trans-Pennine route, and the National Park Authority will stress that adjacent wildlife areas, which are specially designated for protection at national and EU level, must be safeguarded.

Website upgrade for National Park

The National Park Authority's website has been improved for residents, businesses and visitors who want a one-stop, online shop to find out about the Authority's work or to access services.

New features include "real time" planning information where you can track applications, view plans and drawings or even apply on-line, a database of rangers' guided walks with a search facility to match your requirements and abilities, and quick links to Authority publications and partner sites.

There is also a feedback page and, if possible, we will try to incorporate your suggestions into the site. Visit www.peakdistrict.gov.uk



Walks with Vision

The Vision Project to restore wildlife areas in the centre of the National Park, offers guided walks, talks and practical activities.

Their main theme is special wildlife habitats, focusing on work done with communities, landowners and local contractors, including restored dew ponds, top quality hay meadows, recreated wetlands and dale-sides rich in wild flowers.

Additional walks with local naturalists focus on particular species, such as butterfly strolls on Longstone Edge or fungal forays at Eyam Delf.

Look out for the 'Vision for Wildlife Walks' in the rangers walks central pull-out..

BESST heritage walking guide out soon

Look out for the BESST project's new Heritage Walks guidebook, coming soon – revealing the history of the landscape through walks around Hartington, Alstonefield, Wetton, Warslow and Hulme End.

Ken Parker, project leader, explained: "These are ten easy to follow circular walks. The idea is that you can set off from local accommodation to enjoy the landscape as well as local shops, galleries, tearooms and pubs along the way. We hope that as people understand more about the special qualities of these places they will take a greater interest in conservation and support local businesses."

The book is supported by the European Union's Interreg Programme. BESST (Business and the Environment linked through Small Scale Tourism) is one of its international collaboration projects.

Check out www.besst.org



Pedal prize for Tom

Keen young cyclist Tom Searle, from Edale, was delighted to be chosen as the winner of our Mountain Bike competition.

Tom, 16, entered the competition by filling in a young people's survey in our previous publication, Peak District 2005, and was presented with his prize at the Upper Derwent cycle-hire centre, which is open at weekends throughout the winter and daily from March to October (tel: 01433 651261).



The next issue of 'Park Life' will be published in July 2006. You can also read 'Park Life' on-line at www.peakdistrict.gov.uk and copies are available in large print and on audio cassette – our contact details are on page 18