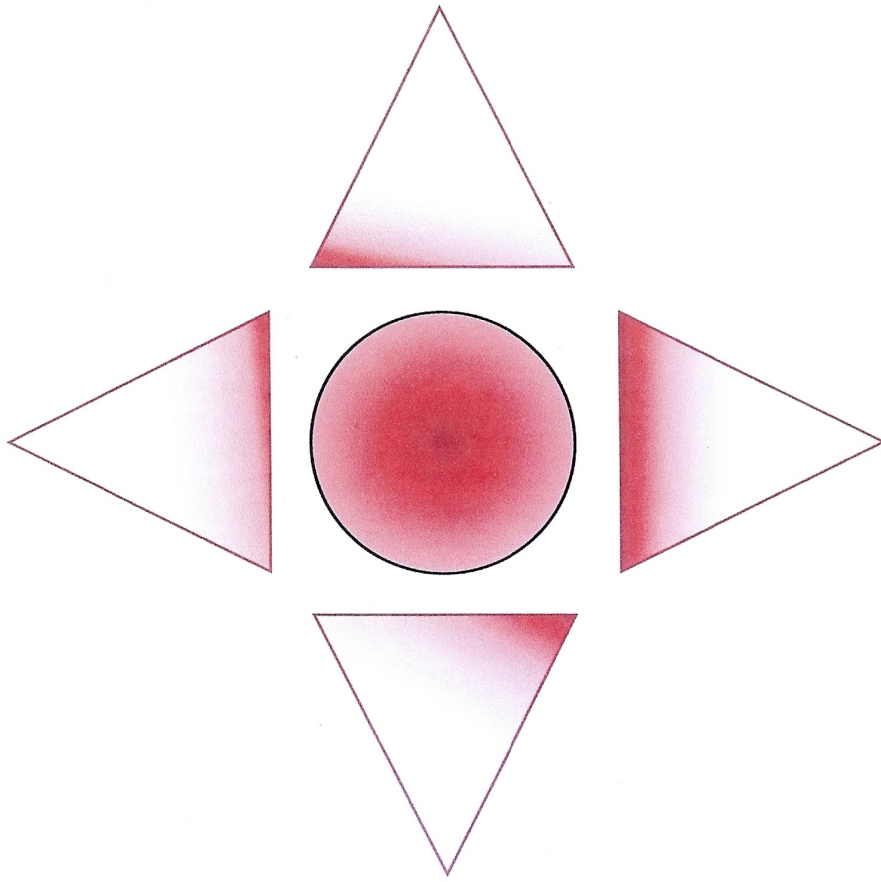




Naturist Action Group

Annual Report 2016

Foreword

Welcome to the second 'Annual Report' for the Naturist Action Group. Here we summarise what has taken place over the 12-months preceding February 2016 and outline our hopes for the future: short, medium and long term.

The Management Collective meet physically twice-a-year and we have had some good discussions about how to take existing projects forward and considered some new ideas. To keep us honest, we invite guests along to witness the proceedings and these have included among others: Judith Stinchcombe (BN Chairperson), Sam Hawcroft (Managing Editor, H&E Naturist), Alan Kidney (chairperson, Sun-Folk Society) and Tim Forcer (naturist writer and reviewer).

As an organisation, we are open to new ideas to advance naturism in the UK from outside the group but given our size, we may not be able to take them forward ourselves, but we will do our best.

As always, your comments are welcome.

Reg Barlow
Chairman, Naturist Action Group
June 2016

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Projects

Nudity and Children Campaign

This campaign is an attempt to interest academics in finding out the truth about what, if any, effect does non-sexual, non-aggressive nudity have on children considering the societal assumption that exposure to, or experience of, nudity is somehow damaging, and therefore unacceptable. The campaign was initiated by us, but has become a joint venture with British Naturism.

Progress has been slow, due largely to the unavailability of people. However matters have moved forward recently with academics from the Open University and Goldsmiths College London (who have experience in naturism) agreeing to make a presentation to the annual conference of the British Psychological Society this autumn. This is a highly respected forum for UK academic social and clinical psychologists. The aim of the presentation is to gain the interest of the wider world of academia in researching this subject of children and adult nudity. A long-time NAG supporter, Revd. Vivienne Heenan, will also speak using her own experiences as a teacher, Anglican priest, mother and grandmother, and 40+ years as a practicing naturist, to illustrate the subject. Both NAG and British Naturism have pledged some funds to get the project to this stage, and the International Naturist Federation are being approached to contribute further and larger scale funding for research.

It is still early days, in a project that will run for years, but there are encouraging signs of progress. NAG has been the main mover so far but collaborations with other stakeholders are being developed, and will be essential if we are to succeed.

Work in London

It is pleasing to report that many supporters, including more women, are involved in our work in London. A separate group – *Socks Off* – has given female naturists several opportunities to meet for joint activities, including the Naturist Swim at Malet Street on Sundays. Our coordinator for London activities is John Paine, and he has reported his progress throughout the year, both on the Group's website and in naturist magazines.

For **Hampstead Heath**, our strategy is to take ad hoc opportunities for naked sunbathing, to demonstrate that this does not cause offence among the public. In all, we had three photo shoots and a very successful small naturist picnic last year. Those members of the public who witnessed them did not report any upset. At this point, we would like to thank Harvey, John Mc, Carlie and Natasha for their help in making these events possible. While major construction work on the dams forming the Ponds has had some impact on naturist men, it is scheduled for completion in August 2016. Other works are continuing. Meanwhile, several women have come forward, willing to explore opportunities for nude sunbathing on the lawn at the Ladies' Pond. Plus the respected local paper, *Ham & High* has carried items and letters on naturism stimulated by NAG's activities.

We decided to close our online petition in support of naturism on Hampstead Heath at the end of December last. We are now analysing the results, as many of the signatories do not live within Greater London. While it is encouraging to have received support for this aim from naturists worldwide, the reality is that signatures from local residents carry far more weight in politicians' minds when deciding what action they should take.

In February 2015, we reported that NAG ran a stall at ***Re-imagine London: What if we made***

London a National Park? We have continued to promote the need for naturism to be considered as a healthy recreational activity with park organisers and several of us attended: “*Let's make Greater London a National Park City!*” on 14th July 2015. Ray will keep us abreast of further developments and in the meantime, we encourage all London-based supporters to participate and spread the word about the inclusion of naturism at a series of events being held to promote the park's creation by the organisers, throughout 2016.

Allied to this, following our involvement in the London National City Park initiative, we have decided to extend **The London Question** project, identifying open spaces suitable for naturism over the whole of Greater London. For those wishing to assist in exploring near their own locality, there is an information pack available, please contact us via the General Enquiry Form (<http://naturistactiongroup.org/contact/> please use *The London Question* in the subject line).

Another big London event, WNBR is one in which plenty of naturists are involved and among the 1,500 riders last June, many were naked. NAG supporters are also prominent in three of the six groups organising alternative starting points. For 2016 the London WNBR is scheduled for Saturday 11th June with starting points at Hyde Park, Regents Park, Kings Cross, Tower Hill, Clapham Junction and West Norwood and, as before, NAG is encouraging naturists to volunteer to be marshalls or stewards on the day.

Our London projects group is open to all supporters if you work or live in the capital, and meets every few months to review progress and plan future actions. We have planned a series of activities for summer 2016 and as well as continuing with the work mentioned above, there will be another naturist picnic in June and possibly two more naked photo shoots. The group has also worked hard to bring a Body Painting Day, with the New York-based artist Andy Golub, to London. Unfortunately we have been unable to secure a venue for 2016 but hoping to organise something for 2017 instead.

Casual Naturism Survey

In November 2014, NAG set up a survey on Casual Naturism, with an easy to complete online form, with the purpose of collecting information about the public's reaction when they come across naturists out walking or enjoying the beach. In court cases involving naturists we often hear that the very sight of a naked body has caused either offence and/or distress. We realised that there is little contrary evidence that can be presented – because, up to now, it has not been gathered in a systematic way – and it is difficult for individual naturists to collect this kind of evidence without appearing to be attempting to get a reaction. In our experience, this too has only worked against the naturist standing before the magistrate.

Credible information in the database would be useful in assisting naturists facing legal sanctions. It will also be helpful when promoting awareness of naturism. The online form is quite comprehensive in locations and types of naturist activity, but only takes about five minutes to complete. We are receiving a steady trickle of reports, but the more we get, better the case in favour of naturism can be made.

With your help; by completing a form, by publicising it among naturist friends here in the UK, giving details of an actual time of being out in the open, we can then develop evidence of sufficient status to refute unfounded suggestions that people are harmed when seeing naked bodies. Some of the London activities, reported on above, have been lodged in the databank. Other reports received are naturism on forestry land, country walks, and beaches. For those who find online forms difficult to manage, a paper version of the form is available on request by either emailing john.paine@naturistactiongroup.org or by writing to our postal address (please provide a stamped SAE).

Financial Report

A summary of the accounts for the year to 29th February 2016 is set out below:

	<u>15/16</u>	<u>14/15</u>
Opening funds at 1st April	1,113.45	1,147.06
<u>Income:</u>		
Donations	545.32	296.00
Publication fees	260.00	500.00
Photo Competition	99.90	0.00
Total income	905.22	796.00
<u>Expenditure</u>		
PayPal costs	-10.79	-12.06
Website costs	-177.39	-31.14
Campaign costs	-387.53	-755.81
Photo Comp costs	0.00	-30.60
Sundry	-186.00	0.00
Total costs	-761.71	-829.61
Surplus/deficit	143.51	-33.61
Closing Funds at 28th February	1,256.96	1,113.45

This summary understates the full extent of NAG's activities, in that it does not take into account the substantial donations-in-kind by volunteers who have paid their own expenses on campaigning matters. Though not recorded in detail, such contributions are estimated to be greater than the donations shown above.

Chairman's Report

If I was to describe NAG's progress during the 12-months up to February 2016, which this report covers, I would say: "slow but steady." To some, this might be considered a disappointment, but not to us. We knew when we started this that it would be a difficult task and one that that would take time to accomplish. Perhaps I should not mention eighteenth century slavery and naturism in the same sentence, but as an example, William Wilberforce began to introduce Bills in the House of Commons to abolish slavery from 1789, but it was only in 1833 that the Abolition of Slavery Act was finally passed, ending slavery in Great Britain and its colonies. Some 44 years. I say this, not to scare you but to prepare you for a long campaign to bring about social change.

We currently have a two-pronged attack with one being the [Children and Nudity](#) project, asking: 'Do children suffer any kind of harm from adult nudity?' It is a question heard in court sometimes as 'but what about the children!' as if that trumps everything else put before the court. It is still early days for this particular project and while we have pledged money to enable it to progress, more will be needed if the hoped for academic study is to go-ahead. Such a peer reviewed study, completed to academic standards will have far reaching and international consequences, as it would be admissible evidence in court to counter those who believe that any amount of nudity, in whatever circumstances, is harmful to a child's development.

The other prong is our [Work in London](#). This combines a number of different projects we have based in the London area. It began with [The London Question](#), which asked why, in a metropolis of 7 million people, were there so few naturist facilities? We learned from this that open space naturism is far more common than we imagined, including on Hampstead Heath, but it tended to be carried out surreptitiously, one eye looking out for those who might not consider public social nudity normal, or the law. We think, however, it would be far better if open space naturism was accepted by the authorities rather than waste public money on vexatious prosecutions.

To help with the original Hampstead Heath Project and with Police and Public Nudity, NAG initiated the [Casual Naturism Survey](#) in an attempt to gather more details about the public's reaction to open space naturism, in an unsensational way wherever it occurs in the UK; while walking in the countryside or when enjoying a day out on the beach. This data is highly valuable to naturism as a whole and the more data sets we have to work with the better. Every completed survey helps us in our campaigning work.

The London Projects Group continues to advance naturism in London, and as John Paine has already mentioned, it is open to all naturists who live or work in the

Greater London area, and we need help with the revived [The London Question](#) in particular. As they say, many hands make light work.

As for the [Naturist Action Group](#) itself, as you have seen from the financial statement, we had a healthy income over the fiscal year ending 29th February 2016, and added £143 to the balance, but we still don't have enough.

A revenue stream we are still developing, apart from donations, is the photo competition with the theme of *living naturism*. The 2015 competition was the second outing for this biennial event, and while the entries were fewer than hoped for from Europe and Australasia, the overall standard was higher than before. We are currently reviewing possible improvements for the competition and plan to have them in place for 2017. If the Royal Academy can fund itself entirely through an annual summer exhibition, there is no reason why NAG could not do almost the same with a photo competition. With your participation and/or your help to spread the word and encourage entries, it is possible that goal could be achieved quite soon.

The reason for this preoccupation with money is that if NAG is to fully support academic research, such as the Children and Nudity study referred to above, then we shall need to have approximately £8,000 (€10,000) available, at least. If we wanted to undertake qualitative research by using someone like YouGov then we will be looking at something similar again, if not more. It is only through research of this kind will we influence public opinion. £20,000, that isn't so hard. One hundred and seventy-five people could do that easily by donating £2.20 per week – the price of a Starbucks coffee¹ – to NAG, for one year. We have more registered users to the website than that, over 300 page likes for our Facebook page and over 3000 twitter followers. Raising the kind of money needed to make a real difference to naturism in the UK and abroad should be easy.

The other preoccupation is the [Naturist Action Group](#) itself and its Management Collective. When in 2010 NAG was formed, it was remarked that we were a self-appointed group with no legitimacy to speak on behalf of other naturists. This is a fair point, although we have never said we are anything else. At the time, that was not an issue as NAG was aimed directly at those UK naturists who wanted to see a more robust campaign strategy than that offered by British Naturism at the time. Unashamedly, we wanted to bring together activists who were members and non-members of British Naturism into a collective, advancing naturism together.

However, if we acknowledge that social change will be necessary before naturism will be unremarked upon, and that it might take 20, 40 or even 50 years to achieve then NAG needs to change. How that change manifests itself is still to be determined. Look out for further developments over the coming months.

¹ <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/retailandconsumer/10327484/The-priciest-part-of-your-takeaway-coffee-its-the-cup-not-the-beans.html>

Who Are We?

The Directors (in alphabetical order)

NAG's chairman and cofounder. Reg currently produces the News From NAG column for the magazine H&E Naturist and posts for the NAG website. He lives in West Yorkshire and is currently between jobs.



Reg Barlow



Duncan Heenan

Treasurer and cofounder. An Isle of Wight resident, Duncan is a retired general manager and accountant, Duncan also oversees two of our current projects: **The Police and Naturism** and **Children & Nudity**

A cofounder of NAG, Peter has taken many different employment opportunities over the years following his service with the Royal Air Force, including a stint as a logistics manager for MSF in East Africa.



Peter Knight



John Paine

A cofounder of NAG and project leader, John is a retired Neighbourhood Development Officer for London Borough of Lambeth, where he still lives. John acts as a liaison for NAG Work in London, which includes The London Question.

We should also mention here two more people who attend management collective meetings and contribute to our email discussions but are not directors of Naturists Ltd, Andy Crawford and Harvey Allen, who provide valuable work for us.

Afterword

So we come to the end of this year's Annual Report for Naturist Action Group. As Chairman I would like to thank you for taking the time to read it, and for your continued support.

Talk of change is always frightening. That was something I discovered when I stood with John Paine and Duncan Heenan for the then Executive Council for British Naturism. At the time we felt the organisation needed change and that was our platform. Although we carried through part of our mandate, for one reason or another, none of us stayed to complete our term and British Naturism survived our involvement.

I am now talking about change for Naturist Action Group. What that will look like is something still to be decided through an internal discussion but change is necessary if NAG is to go past the current crop of directors and active supporters.

Despite these uncertainties, I and my co-directors have a positive outlook for both NAG and naturism as a whole. I hope you can agree.

Reg Barlow

Chairman, Naturist Action Group
West Yorkshire, June 2016