

Annual Review 2015–2016



our vision

An abundant world in which we care for the earth, each other and future generations, whilst living within nature's limits.

our mission

Empower people to design thriving communities across Britain, and contribute to permaculture worldwide.

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Welcome from the Board of Trustees

The year in review saw UK permaculture reach a global audience as we hosted the 12th International Permaculture Convergence and Conference, as well as a series of related events across the nations and regions.

Many of you will have attended, participated and lent a hand at these events. All of you that came, participated in a workshop, led a workshop, volunteered, shared on social media, translated, took photos, recorded sessions, helped tat down, networked with other folk, or engaged with any other of the thousand activities that made the events happen are part of their success. The core convergence and conference were attended by over 1100 people from 70 countries, and I'm particularly proud of the supported scholarships that allowed 27 permaculture practitioners to attend who otherwise would have been financially excluded.

The staff of the Association were impeccable in rising to the considerable challenges of hosting the largest and most complex event in our 33 year history as an organisation and I want to celebrate here, on behalf of the Board, all the work that current and former staff put into the event's design, planning and implementation. Their commitment, aptitude and good humour throughout over a year of pre-event activity and the roller coaster of the events themselves were essential. The work achieved by a small, determined team continues to inspire.

As action learners, all that activity has provided a fertile resource for developing future work and going forward we can expect a vibrant and diverse range of events and other ways to engage – more opportunities to learn, share, participate and design the world we want. Permaculture is not a DIY movement, it's a DIWO movement – we do it with others, we do it together. And there's lots to do – get involved!

James Taylor, Chair

Please note, this is an interim report. The final report, with accounts, will be available once our financial audit is complete (our first one)!

2 Our work in numbers

E-bulletin

Over **9,117** people kept up-to-date with monthly news, jobs, events, and courses

Wales

1 fantastic new Paramaethu Cymru coordinator in post
53 attendees at Welsh Gathering

Ambassadors

Ambassadors shared **14** blogs and spread the word about the benefits of permaculture at **10** events

Demonstration Network

80 LAND Centres
44 LAND Learners in England & Scotland
Over **42,000** visitors and volunteers to LAND projects to date

International

Identified over **270** organisations and key projects in over **130** countries (70% of all countries!)
Surveyed **451** individuals and **56** organisations with over **500** people participating in the strategic Next Big Step sessions at the IPC

Education

3 New Certa-accredited courses

Social media

Vibrant conversations on facebook
Main page **21,535** likes
Growing engagement on Twitter
4,075 followers plus LinkedIn and flickr

Children

12 attendees at first transnational meeting
23 attendees at 6 day training course
22,894 visits to new website
Survey of **316** resources
3,366 downloads

IPCUK

1,106 Overall registrations
Conference attendees **648**
630 Convergence attendees
Attendees at Research Day **70+**
Number of edge events **50+** including 9 PDCs
Nations represented **65+**

Governance

4 meetings
4 policies updated including
6 aims reviewed
6 major discussion topics

Design courses

23 Intro courses
31 Permaculture Design Courses listed on the website
472 certificates sold

Website

173,722 visits from **212** countries

Scotland

70 attendees at the Scottish Gathering
14 projects in the ScotLAND network
1,615 facebook users
1 amazing new ScotLAND project outreach worker!

Diploma

458 apprentices
33 tutors
59 Diploma registrations
12 accreditations
62 attendees at National Diploma Gathering

Membership

1,403 members of which **14** are businesses
75 are groups or projects and **87** are lifetime members
We gained **11** lifetime members and welcomed **403** new members.

Research

732 members of the new Permaculture International Research Network
Research Digest over **37,400** visits
20 permaculture entrepreneurs interviewed for the Knowledge Exchange for Enterprise in Permaculture project
116 speakers at the International Permaculture Conference

Farming

1 active new facebook group for Farmers and Growers Network!

4 Improve access to permaculture



Learners on a Nottingham permaculture design course.

This year we've continued to help many people access information & training about permaculture.

Paul Paine is a permaculture teacher from Nottingham, who joined the Education Working Group in 2016. He is one of a number of teachers who have been promoting access to permaculture, through a partnership with the Workers Educational Association:

"For the last six years I've been teaching permaculture through the WEA. I believe that if it wasn't for the WEA none of these courses would have happened.

Nottingham is the 8th most deprived area in the country, so if we had to charge students a few hundred pounds for a permaculture course we'd automatically exclude many of them. The WEA allows us to offer free places for anyone on a benefit but also offers support for learners who may not have studied since school.

Aim 1: Improve access to permaculture

Allowing anyone to participate in a course regardless of their income increases the diversity of learners from different economic backgrounds and can create an edge where interesting stuff happens."

Paul Paine

Key work for the year

Children in Permaculture

In September 2015 we started the innovative Children in Permaculture (CiP) project.

- Funded by Erasmus+, this project sees us working with partners from 5 countries across Europe. This will train people who work with children to teach them about permaculture through a range of activities, and in diverse of settings.
- Our series of Outdoor Classrooms training courses in England, Scotland, Finland and Slovenia reached 154 educators who are spreading the knowledge to the many children they work with.
- We surveyed 316 resources (films, videos, books, websites etc.) about the field of engaging children in permaculture. The Survey of Resources has been downloaded more than 3300 times.

Diploma Tutor Training

- In November 2015 we trained 12 new diploma tutors. Having more trained tutors facilitates support for more apprentices. New tutors also bring new areas of expertise, enabling apprentices access different areas of specialism.

Permaculture Design Course Certification

- We rounded the year off by launching the new Certifying Teachers Register. This is a list of people who have shown that they have the knowledge, skills and experience to award the Permaculture Association's Permaculture Design Course certificates, and who have committed to teaching the Association's PDC curriculum. This gives students greater confidence in their teachers, and it gives new teachers greater clarity about the requirements to become a teacher.
- We also raised the price of PDC certificates slightly to establish a modest but sustainable income stream to help fund education activities.

6 Nurture and grow permaculture networks



Allan in his urban garden.

“My interest in permaculture has always been from a community development point of view, particularly how the permaculture framework works well for participatory development in disadvantaged communities. With the current refugee crisis developing in Europe I am interested how permaculture might assist settling these groups into new communities.

After many years away from permaculture, working with the Union of International Associations in Brussels and their Encyclopedia of World Problems and Human Potential, I decided to get back involved by studying urban permaculture systems as they could be used in the cities such as Brussels.

I have joined the Permaculture Association in order to draw upon the wealth of ideas and initiatives taking place around the UK for use in Brussels.”

Allan Howard, Permaculture Association member.

Key work this year

- The International Permaculture Conference and Convergence (IPCUK) was a fantastic way to nurture and grow networks. New relationships were formed, existing relationships strengthened and there was a huge increase in learning for over 1100 participants.
- We continued to support the development of the European Permaculture Network.
- Our work on the Next Big Step project in the run up to IPCUK has supported the formation of the African Permaculture Union.
- At home, both Permaculture Scotland and Paramaethu Cymru are going from strength to strength, with new dedicated websites developed and supported by help from our fantastic team of regional web volunteers!
- We supported 55 events 2015–16, including 52 IPCUK Edge events.
- We developed a resource to inspire and support new permaculture groups, compiled from advice given by existing regional permaculture networks.
- The Permaculture Scotland Gathering took place in Coldstream, Scottish Borders in June 2016. The Paramaethu Cymru Gathering took place in Pembrokeshire, June 2016.
- Permaculture Works, the members’ newsletter, continue to share news, stories and designs from the network. The accompanying poster lists events and courses, for members and other poster viewers to connect with.
- Over 60 apprentices attended the National Diploma Gathering to support and learn from each other, and to celebrate their journey on the Diploma in Applied Permaculture Design.

8 Enhance collaboration within permaculture and related networks

Over 600 people engaged in thinking about permaculture's future at the International Permaculture Convergence. Photo: Sagara, shared under Creative Commons Attribution license.



AIM 3

"I enjoyed so much and I created useful connections during both the International Permaculture Conference and Convergence. The process of the events were well designed and it engages a lot that I lost track of time, eight days was like two days, days and nights went so fast.

The presentations and workshops at both conference and convergence were very much educational and helped me to rethink of sustainable tools for permaculture development in Africa.

The main key areas I learnt were as follows:

1. Empowering women and youth in permaculture.
2. Improve permaculture qualification from PDC to diploma, masters to PHD.
3. Permaculture support should start at household, to community, to district, province to country, region, and continent and to the whole world.

4. Permaculture is a positive tool for climate change and poverty reduction."

From a letter of appreciation sent by John Nzira, Ukuvuna Project, South Africa.

Key work for the year

- Delivery of the 12th International Permaculture Convergence (IPCUK) supported 1,100 people from 70 countries to work and learn together in hundreds of workshops, conference sessions and edge events.
- 28 international permaculture scholars attended IPCUK, after we raised over £24,000 through our crowdfunder platform, and £9,000 from other sources.
- The Next Big Step project enabled hundreds of international practitioners to share their views on the future of permaculture, which then informed strategic discussions at IPCUK.
- A series of workshops were designed and coordinated that ran at the British, European, North American, and Australasian permaculture convergences to widen discussion and share our collaboratively developed plans to further enhance international coherence.
- This next phase of the Next Big Step project – the Permaculture Collaborative Laboratory (PcCoLab) – was designed and funds were secured.
- Association staff attended the second Ecolise General Assembly, a European wide network that is supporting collaboration between permaculture, transition and eco-village networks.
- Co-delivery of the Growing Together project, which is now providing advice to permaculture and other groups across the UK on community growing and social entrepreneurship.
- The Association supported many hundreds of local, national and international collaborations through our website information, public enquiry service and detailed responses to practitioners in over 40 countries.

10 Increase knowledge of the benefits of permaculture within society

Ben Margolis and his daughter Orianna with some visitors from Sierra Leone. Ben is one of many members who has told their story, sharing details of his project on the blog.



AIM 4

"It has opened up a whole new way of life to me and made my PDC become real. I have so much to think about and put into practice, starting with my diploma pathway.

It has made me realise that we seriously needed to spread the message of permaculture to people who have never heard of it and are completely new to it. We also need to greater involve people who may be practising permaculture but do not know it or not engaged with it. I am thinking about about how to communicate it to more, different groups and individuals."

Feedback from attendee at the International Permaculture Convergence.

Key work for the year

- Learning resources from the International Permaculture Conference and Convergence had over 7,000 views and listens (it's tricky to count accurately, there are so many resources)! People can freely access presentations and audio recordings, videos of talks, plus photos. Thanks to the IPCUK Learning team.
- We upgraded our website to make it mobile friendly, easier to navigate and more effective. It introduces visitors to permaculture, the work of the Permaculture Association and its members.
- 20 Permaculture Ambassadors attended 10 events across the country, spreading the word about the benefits of permaculture to new audiences.
- The Permaculture Ambassadors project secured funds from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. We started planning for the ambitious next phase of work, which will support many Permaculture Ambassadors to engage thousands of people in learning about the benefits of permaculture.
- Over 9,000 subscribers to the monthly ebulletin received updates on key news, recent stories, as well as notice of events, jobs and opportunities.
- We shared 24 blog posts on blog.permaculture.org.uk sharing stories from across the network about projects, events, designs and ideas. These stories depict how our members and supporters are using permaculture to improve their communities and livelihoods.



International permaculture conference participants and presenters.

12 Develop permaculture theory and practice



Photo: speaker at IPC conference ©James Lockley Creative Commons attribution.

Some feedback from attendees at the International Permaculture Conference:

"I feel I've gained a wider perspective on permaculture practice around the world, see permaculture practice in the UK now in more global context."

"It has opened up a whole new way of life to me and made my PDC become real. It gave so much to think about and put into practice starting with my diploma pathway."

"The academic approach by keynote speakers and in workshops was really helpful in deepening knowledge."

"Great to know there are so many other people out there doing such inspiring research into permaculture. A real motivation booster whilst fostering networks."

Key work for the year

- Organised the largest ever permaculture conference programme. At IPCUK, 116 speakers from around the world spoke on incredibly diverse subjects, including: community building, soil, teaching and learning, rethinking money, research, livelihoods, smallholder farming, water, permaculture in India, children, climate change and many others.

- Launched the world's first Permaculture International Research Network (PIRN). This network now has over 700 members in 70 countries. A range of activities were developed to support the network, including research sub groups, a regular ebulletin, a website, a facebook page, and the ongoing Permaculture Research Digest.
- Began our first major academic collaboration. In January 2016 we launched the Knowledge Exchange for Enterprise in Permaculture (KEEP) project, in collaboration with Kingston University Business School. This project will map existing permaculture inspired enterprises in the UK, survey and interview entrepreneurs, and share their insights to inspire and aid new entrepreneurs.
- Won our first European Union research funding. The Grow Observatory is a massive, European-wide project aiming to involve tens of thousands of citizen scientists through supplying them with electronic soil monitors. The aim is to increase small-scale food production and preserve the soil quality for future generations, whilst improving forecasting of extreme climate events. The Permaculture Association is a key delivery partner in this 5 million Euro project led by Dundee University.
- Began work on the world's first dedicated permaculture journal. One of the ideas that emerged from IPC was for an international, peer-reviewed, high quality, online research journal that would appeal to both academics and practitioners as authors and as readers. Permaculture Research is now under development, with an editorial team formed and fundraising underway. We hope to launch the first issue in Summer 2017.
- Secured more research funding than ever before. From Lush Cosmetics to support the second year of PIRN's development (April 2016 to March 2017), from The Institute of Small Business and Enterprise for the KEEP project, and from the European Union to support the GROW project.
- Hosted two wonderful interns. Silvio Volkman from Berlin came from October 2015 to March 2016 as Forest Garden intern and did brilliant work compiling the five year report of the Ten Year Forest garden Research Trial. Ilaria Noio arrived from Naples as PIRN intern, April to September 2016. She supported the development of PIRN and its membership, and designed the PIRN website.

14 Build an effective and sustainable organisation



Many hands make light work. Hundreds of people help the Permaculture Association achieve its aims.



“I was blown away by the organisation of the Convergence; it must have raised the bar for IPCs and I felt quite proud to be British (for once)! The excellent structure provided the framework and stability for all sorts of things to emerge.”

International Permaculture Convergence post-event survey response.

Leadership is nurtured and supported in every part of the organisation.

- The Permaculture Ambassadors project secured funds from the Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. This will enable many people to develop new skills and engage others in permaculture.
- Scottish and Welsh working groups learned about and started to use Sociocracy.
- Many members were supported to take leadership positions within working groups, projects and the delivery of events.

Members, beneficiaries and customers are served, valued and engaged through a strong focus on understanding the network and their needs.

- Ongoing surveys and dialogue improved our understanding of the network’s needs.
- The International Convergence engaged over 600 people in thinking about the international network’s needs and future potential.

Strategy and planning processes are participatory and ongoing.

- Members commented and engaged with different areas of the Association’s work, and working groups developed plans for Scotland, Wales, Farming, Education and the Diploma.

People are valued and nurtured and able to contribute to the Association’s work in many ways.

- Hundreds of volunteers were celebrated in many creative ways!
- Training and support enabled people to get involved with working groups and events.

Our processes are well designed and managed and subject to ongoing improvement and innovation.

- Focused work on our open source database and website has helped to make many processes more efficient and responsive to members needs. More coming in this area over the next year!

We focus on learning and manage our information and knowledge effectively.

- The Knowledge Base made a big step forwards, and internally we are moving to an online office structure and communication platform to enhance teamwork amongst 13 widely distributed staff, 8 working groups and over 100 volunteers!

We know when, why and how we are successful and the organisation can be sustained well into the future.

- After a Board led Major Discussion Topic, we initiated a trial on measuring our social impact, looking first at the LAND network. Results in next Annual Review!

16 Looking ahead

Our three big challenges for the next year:

1. **Support disadvantaged communities** to engage with permaculture. Launch the Friends of Permaculture Scheme and work with members to develop the Thriving Communities project.
2. **Develop our entrepreneurial side** to increase earned income and financial self-reliance. Continue to find out about enterprise in the network and support more of it.
3. **Enter into an 'organisational re-invention phase'** to look at how online working and dynamic governance approaches can enhance member participation and increase impact.

Over the next 3-4 years we want to:

Practice

Create a Welsh projects network and nurture the LAND network in England and Scotland.

Widen the focus to include all active practitioners and projects.

Support more local learning, skill sharing and network building.

Information and events

Increase our public profile and communications.

Improve online networking.

Run more public events and conferences.

Develop the knowledge base to be interactive and comprehensive.

Research

Grow the Permaculture International Research Network.

Continue to develop and disseminate a permaculture evidence base.

Develop new research collaborations.

Education

Ensure disadvantaged groups can more easily access permaculture.

Develop new learning modules.

Nurture the network of permaculture educators.

Membership

Increase membership levels & donations through Friends Of scheme.

Explore new approaches to member participation and involvement.

International

Contribute to international permaculture through the Next Big Step project and Permaculture Collaborative Laboratory (PcCoLab)

How to contribute



Thanks!

- **To you** and the thousands of other people in the network who have worked together to develop permaculture over the last year.
- **To the 273 IPC Crowdfunders and Sponsors** – who enabled us to bring scholars from around the world to IPC.
- **To our many volunteers and interns** – over 300 people have helped over the year – the Board of Trustees, members of the 13 IPCUK working groups, IPC event stewards, crew, and workshop leaders, Education, Diploma, Farming, Research, Knowledge, Scotland and Welsh working groups, and our regular office volunteers.
- **To our wonderful staff team** and their families, our regular contractors, enCircle for web support, dg3 design, and the Hollybush Conservation Centre in Leeds.
- **To the many LAND Centres and LAND Learners** who provide a brilliant way of engaging thousands of people.
- **To the teachers and Diploma tutors** who inspire, inform and engage many hundreds of students.
- **To Permanent Publications** for their ongoing support as media partner and IPC sponsor.
- **And finally, to all the members** who continue to support the Association in so many ways.

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