

Ironbridge Coracle Trust
Receipts & Payments account
For the year ended 31 March 2023

Ironbridge Coracle Trust

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2023

Charity registration number: 1161685

Objectives and Activities

Purposes of the charity

The Ironbridge Coracle Trust (ICT) aims to advance the culture and heritage of the craft of coracles and coracle making in the Ironbridge Gorge and on the River Severn for the benefit of the public.

Summary of activities

The Old Coracle Shed, purchased by ICT in 2015, was the workshop of Eustace Rogers, a renowned coracle maker. Coracle uses on the River Severn included transportation of people and property, line and net fishing, laying eel lines, securing driftwood, rescuing people and animals, recovering cadavers, and poaching.

Set at the heart of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site and Conservation Area, and less than 70 metres from the base of the world-famous Iron Bridge, the Shed is the only remaining physical reference to a coracle building tradition that dates to prehistoric times. The Shed forms an important and unique part of the view that any visitor can see when looking at the Iron Bridge for the first time from the Ladywood Car Park at the south end of the Bridge.

The Shed, built in the 1920s from timber reused from the construction of Atcham Bridge, was owned by the Rogers family until the death of Eustace Rogers in 2003. ICT owns this heritage property and during this year (April - October 2022) has been completing the National Lottery Heritage Fund project to preserve and restore the property so it is available to the public as a viewable exhibition space for the display of coracles and associated equipment to tell the story of coracles in Ironbridge.

ICT trustees have had regard to CC's guidance on public benefit and have taken a decision that all its exhibitions and buildings will be freely accessible by the public, and that additional resources, when available, will be invested in running workshops and events to make the best use of the Trust's buildings and exhibitions to benefit people with dementia and mental health issues.

The charity may charge for the provision of some services such as car parking, printed leaflets, guided tours, talks and use of the Trust's coracles.

Policy on grant making and social investment

ICT has not made any grants to individuals or organisations during the year's activities and no investments have been made during the year.

Contribution made by volunteers

ICT relies heavily on its many volunteers and supporters to run the programme of events and activities throughout the year, not least the annual coracle regatta. Volunteers are also essential to the maintenance of the Old Coracle Shed, the exhibitions and interpretation materials used in the New Coracle Shed and elsewhere and to the running of the general business of ICT.

Achievements and Performance

Performance against objectives

The Trustees' objectives for 2022/23 were:

1. to complete delivery of the NLHF project
2. to run the annual coracle regatta
3. to raise funds to help achieve our charitable objectives
4. to complete the transition process post-NLHF

1. Complete delivery of the NLHF project

The most significant achievement of 2022—23 was the completion of the Ironbridge Coracle Trust National Lottery Heritage Fund project.

NLHF Evaluation Report - Executive Summary by Jenni Waugh

In March 2019, the National Lottery Heritage Fund (hereafter the Heritage Fund) awarded Ironbridge Coracle Trust (ICT) a grant of £333,100 towards the repair and stabilisation of the last historic coracle making shed in England to have survived in situ, and to deliver a complementary programme of activities and interpretation. The grant represented 69% of the total eligible project cost of £480,155.

Since gaining permission to start in August 2019, ICT has had to overcome the detrimental impacts of severe flooding (Feb-Mar 2020 and Jan 2021) and of the Covid-19 lockdowns and ensuing safety regulations (Mar 2020 to Dec 2021). To add to the difficulties, the roads of Ironbridge Gorge have undergone almost constant works throughout.

In spite of these difficulties, which might have felled another organisation, ICT has performed extremely well against the project targets, connecting with local partners, artists and funders to revive interest in the endangered heritage craft of coracle making.

Working with local artists and the Men in Sheds, and with the support of funding from the Heritage Fund, Arts Council England (ACE) and Visit England, ICT has installed fascinating displays in both the Old and New Coracle Sheds which combine museum objects, archive film, oral history, creative interpretation and art works inspired by the Gorge's river heritage.

A band of newly trained volunteers have worked at cleaning, conserving, researching and documenting the collections, according to best practice guidelines, to ensure their future preservation. They will continue this work beyond the project's end. In 2020, the team began recording oral histories from coracle makers, river workers and local residents, with the assistance of a local film-maker.

In 2022, more volunteers received training in oral history collection so that ICT can and expand the collecting programme in future. Even as this final report is being written, building contractors and ICT volunteers are excavating the original steps and slipway under the Old Coracle Shed lost for many years beneath 6ft of silt and vegetation. This allows ICT to re-install a safe coracle landing place immediately down-river of the famous Iron Bridge. Another team of volunteers are building a wooden roundhouse beside the New Coracle Shed at the Green Wood Centre which will provide shelter for future heritage and crafts workshops in the warmer months. Both activities are funded by project underspend.

With the further support of Heritage Compass investment, ICT itself has undergone a governance review and provided extensive training for trustees and volunteers, increasing organisational resilience and preparing it for future sustainability beyond the project end. A new 10-year business strategy has been developed and formal

agreements reached with the Small Woods Association and Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust to secure the future of ICT's collections and buildings.

As the project ended on 31 October 2022, ICT can be rightly proud of their phenomenal achievements:

Highlight achievements

- 2 new visitor attractions have opened, celebrating the craft heritage, lives and river trades of working-class families in Ironbridge Gorge
 - 6130+ people have visited the New Coracle Shed during 2021-2022
 - A popular sculpture has been added to the Wharfage riverbank and has been viewed by more than 100,000 pedestrians
 - A wooden roundhouse has been built in the garden beside the New Coracle Shed, providing extra space for activities and events
 - The original slipway from the Old Coracle Shed to the Severn has been excavated and will be restored to its original use
- ICT have reached an audience of 160,602: that's 53,000 in-person, 107,602 online
 - 6,500+ people have taken part in 155 in-person events or activities
 - 5000+ people have attended one of three annual Coracle Regattas
 - 7018+ people worldwide have watched online films and talks about the Gorge's coracle heritage
 - 200+ people have Had a Go at paddling a coracle, either on the riverbank by the Museum of the Gorge or Dale End Park, or at the annual Regatta
 - 53 local young people with learning disabilities, adult and young carers, and people at risk of isolation have taken part in craft and coracling workshops
- ICT have recruited and retained 80+ volunteers who have contributed 351 days to the project, worth £164,000
- 44 people have taken part in ICT heritage skills workshops and made:
 - 19 Ironbridge coracles
 - 4 hide coracles
 - 6 hand-carved wooden paddles
 - 6 hand-made purse nets
 - 5 model Ironbridge coracles
- In July 2022, a record number of 27 coracles took part in a stage of the Queen's Baton Relay for the 2022 Commonwealth Games organised by ICT

2. To run the annual coracle regatta

Attendance at ICT's Annual Coracle Regatta has risen from 850 in 2018 to 2500 in 2022.

ICT has organised an annual Coracle Regatta for many years. A major event, the Regatta is held beside the Ironbridge Rowing Club and includes charity stalls and refreshments, a Duck Race, coracle races and Have A Go activities.

Participants in the coracle races travel to the event from Wales, Cheshire and Warwickshire, Nottinghamshire, Essex and Buckinghamshire. Attendees at the event tend to be more local, coming from the Shropshire and Telford area.

3. To raise funds to help achieve our charitable objectives

Grants and other support received in the report period include:

- National Lottery Heritage Fund
- Telford & Wrekin Council – Kings Coronation Fund

- Heritage Trade-Up
- Moonshine & Fuggles
- Ironbridge Lions (Silver over the Bridge)

4. To complete the transition process post-NHLF

To further guarantee the organisation's future sustainability, ICT has undertaken a strategic review for the Trust beyond the Heritage Fund project. Since 2019, they have recruited 4 new trustees and a new Chair. The Board have just developed a new Business Strategy document, intended to direct their activity and fund raising over the next 5 to 10 years.

Capital works

Old Coracle Shed steps - The Trust received planning consent to begin the work to reinstate the slipway steps behind the Old Coracle Shed in September 2022. Works to complete the removal of the silt were completed in October 2022.

Social Media and Communications

A new website was a priority for the charity and the new website was launched in 2022. This now includes an online shop for our growing range of merchandise.

Communication with project supporters has mainly been through our Facebook page. We are planning to try and reach a younger audience using Instagram and Facebook and also to drive more interest in content on our website.

There are currently 1.5K followers for our Facebook page and 1.3K likes, with a reach of 23,768. Our audience is consistent with around 63% women and 36% men, primarily in the 25-54 age group. Facebook remains our most effective way of interacting with our followers and promoting events and activities. Our Instagram account is growing steadily with 774 followers and a reach of 1076 in a slightly younger age profile.

Financial Review

The charity aims to hold sufficient funds in hand to cover one year's activities (£2500 for insurance cover and the regatta outlay). These are not held as separate reserves, but retained as cash in the main bank account.

For this year (22/23) the charity had a balance of £13188.55 at the start of the year.

The opening balance was boosted by several sources of income during the year, ending with a balance of £16800.84.

Total project funding expended on the Arts Council and NLHF project was £93010.60.

Risk Management

The charity is run entirely by volunteers, so as long as there is sufficient funding to cover insurance costs the charity is not putting any person or other organisation at risk. The project manager and evaluation consultants are funded through the project grants and are self-employed.

Risks to the charity include trustees leaving or retiring, financial procedures not being followed, or grants being wrongly used or claimed.

Additional risks include breaches of Health & Safety regulations which are reduced through careful Risk Assessment, including Covid Risk Assessments; Reputational risk which is controlled by a process of signing off media; and GDPR compliance which is monitored by our Data Privacy policies.

The trustees require guidance and assistance with financial procedures and JHP Shrewsbury has been employed as financial advisors to the board.

Structure, Governance and Management

Staff

All staff worked on a consultancy basis and were not employed by ICT. Following the completion of the NHLF project in October 2022, there are now no paid project staff and all management is carried out on a voluntary basis by trustees and other volunteers.

Paid staff April - October 2022– Marion Blockley, Jenni Waugh Caris Jackson and Ruth Buttery

Trustees

ICT is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation whose only members are its Trustees. It is registered with the Charity Commission no. 1161685.

The constitution allows for up to 12 trustees, and in the report period there were 9: Mary Lewis, Kath Petty, Grant Foden, Julia Tinker, Viviana Culshaw, Pete Twibill, Bruce Watson, Marion Blockley and Jude Pilgrim.

The posts are Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Company Secretary, Minutes Secretary and Press & Social Media Officers.

If there are vacancies these are widely publicised prior to the AGM, with any specific requirements made clear (ie, local resident, legal or financial background, coracle builder).

Trustees are selected by open invitation at the AGM. Prospective trustees are requested to send in details before the AGM which are made available to existing trustees to check if they are eligible.

If elected at the AGM, the secretary will contact new trustees with information about their duties and responsibilities and requesting information to enable their registration as new trustees, including their relationship with any related parties. This includes a link to the Charity Commission guidance on good trusteeship and the existing policies of the charity, within a new trustee handbook.

During the year, Trustees reviewed and strengthened its policies on Safeguarding and Child Protection. ITC Trustee Board regularly reviews its policies and procedures.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

There have been two new appointments to the board in this financial year: Marion Blockley and Viviana Culshaw. Terry Kenny stood down as a trustee.

Trustees for the year 22/23 responsible for approving this report

Trustee	Office
Mary Lewis	Chair
Julia Tinker	Treasurer
Kath Petty	Minutes secretary
Grant Foden	Company Secretary
Peter Twibill	Press & Social Media Officer

Declaration

The trustees above declare they have approved the annual report above for 2022/23
Signed on behalf of the trustees

Signature Mary Lewis .
Position: Chair

IRONBRIDGE CORACLE TRUST
(Registered Charity Number -
1161685)
RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS
ACCOUNT
YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Year Ended 31- 03-2023			Year Ended 31- 03-2022		
	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total
RECEIPTS						
Grant Income						
Heritage Lottery Fund	£97,775	£0	£97,775	£48,912	£0	£48,912
Veolla	£1,000	£0	£1,000	£0	£0	£0
Gorge Parish Council	£5,000	£0	£5,000	£0	£0	£0
Donations & Contributions Received						
Other	£150	£2,668	£2,818	£0	£984	£984
Heritage & Regatta Events	£0	£4,279	£4,279	£0	£4,183	£4,183
Financial Ombudsman Claim	£0	£0	£0	£2,730	£0	£2,730
Interest re Claim	£0	£0	£0	£0	£411	£411
	£103,925	£6,947	£110,872	£51,642	£5,578	£57,220
EXPENDITURE						
Insurance	£0	£998	£998	£1,418	£0	£1,418
Coracle Shed Expenses	£25,804	£86	£25,890	£13,840	(£95)	£13,745
Trust Collection Expenses	£2,399	£0	£2,399	£1,527	£0	£1,527
Coracle Purchases	£1,720	£0	£1,720	£3,267	£299	£3,566
Project Management	£18,700	£200	£18,900	£28,720	£0	£28,720
Volunteer Co-ordinator	£8,250	£0	£8,250	£4,170	£0	£4,170
Heritage & Regatta Events	£33,797	£1,958	£35,755	£18,384	£0	£18,384
Accountancy	£1,116	£0	£1,116	£900	£0	£900
Training	£200	£0	£200	£4,752	£0	£4,752
Sundry Expenses	£20	£92	£112	£316	£84	£400
Input VAT claimed	£0	£0	£0	£2,397	£5	£2,402
Licenses	£896	£0	£896	£1,214	£0	£1,214
	£92,902	£3,334	£96,236	£80,905	£293	£81,198
RECEIPTS LESS EXPENDITURE	£11,023	£3,613	£14,636	(£29,263)	£5,285	(£23,978)
TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Bank Balances Brought Forward	(£3,596)	£13,188	£9,592	£25,667	£7,903	£33,570
Bank Balances Carried Forward	£7,427	£16,801	£24,228	(£3,596)	£13,188	£9,592

Independent examiners report on the accounts

Section A *Independent Examiners Report*

Report to the trustees/members of	Ironbridge Coracle Trust
Charity Number (if any)	1161685
On the receipts and payments account for the year ended	31 March 2023
Set out on page	7

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act")

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act


Independent Examiners statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date:

1 September 2023

Name:

Rob Humphreys

Relevant professional qualifications or body:

James, Holyoak and Parker Limited.
Chartered Accountants

Address:

1 Knights Court, Archers Way, Battlefield Enterprise Park, Shrewsbury SY1 3GA