



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

Period start date 01/04/22

To

Period end date 31/03/23

Charity name: Snodhill Castle Preservation Trust

Charity registration number: 1165749

Objectives and Activities

Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	To preserve for the benefit of the people of the Hamlet of Snodhill, the Parishes of Dorstone and Peterchurch, Herefordshire and the Nation ("the beneficiaries"), the historic, architectural and constructional heritage that exists in and around the Castle of Snodhill ("the area of benefit") in buildings (including any building as defined in Section 336 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) of particular beauty or historical, architectural or constructional interest, including but without limiting the generality of the foregoing acquiring, renovating, restoring and utilising for the benefit of the beneficiaries the structure, curtilages, site and environs of Snodhill Castle, Snodhill, Herefordshire, and to educate the general public in the geography, history, natural history, architecture and economic and social history of the area of benefit ("the Objects")
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<p>Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.</p>	<p>The aim of the charity is to rescue, restore and open up to the community for research, education and enjoyment the remains and site of Snodhill Castle – a little-known but highly significant Marcher castle set in Herefordshire’s Golden Valley.</p> <p>Decades-long neglect by its owners had led to the 10-acre site becoming impassably overgrown, leaving the castle’s standing remains perilously close to collapse and loss. Thanks to the persistent lobbying of a few individuals, English Heritage and latterly Historic England were drawn to the plight of this unique structure and temporary works were undertaken while the local community and enthusiasts assembled a trust to start clearing the site, obtaining ownership of it, then commence its rescue and restoration (including its landscape setting) for the enjoyment and cultural enrichment of the community, the county and the nation.</p> <p>During the year in review the charity aimed to fulfil its objects by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inviting an organised archaeological excavation of the site by students from Manchester University, Cardiff University and the American institute for Field Research (the ‘Beneath Hay Bluff’ project) - Involving the local community with the objects, including through social media and other local media - Inviting practical participation in the pursuit of those objects by regular volunteering sessions - Inviting wider participation in the objects through the commissioning of a new website with wider appeal, greater functionality and in the building of a new database - Conducting media interviews including appearing on Radio 4’s Open Country - Recording the Trust’s activities through an emailing programme and social media (Facebook and Instagram) - Taking out appropriate liability insurances - Liaising with associated relevant conservation bodies, local and national

Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Trustees have had regard to the guidance issued on Public Benefit through all the conduct and activities of the charity. Details of the activities of the Trust during the year are set out below.
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policy on grant making	The charity does not grant funds
Policy on social investment including program related investment	The charity has no investments
Contribution made by volunteers	<p>ARCHAEOLOGY</p> <p>The 'Beneath Hay Bluff' project engaged 40 archaeology students, supervised by Tim Hoverd, Archaeological Projects Manager, Herefordshire Council, and contributed 5096 student and volunteer hours. (plus 848 professional staff hours).</p> <p>SITE MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT</p> <p>The Trust runs volunteering sessions on a weekly basis throughout the autumn, winter and early spring, dedicated to clearing overgrowth and maintaining the site's amenity and accessibility for visitors. The volunteers contributed 336 hours in the year under review.</p> <p>PROJECT MANAGEMENT, ADMINISTRATION AND MARKETING</p> <p>The Trust is managed by four officers ('constables') whose volunteer hours during the year in review exceeded 1000.</p>
Other	

Achievements and Performance

<p>Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.</p>	<p>During the year under review the charity focused on six areas of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continuing the restoration works - Improving public access, awareness and appreciation - Administration, fund raising and finance - Land management - Community outreach <p>1) RESTORATION WORKS</p> <p>The Trust continued to make progress in the investigation and restoration of the standing remains and to explore the archaeology of the site:</p> <p>North Keep</p> <p>Following consolidation of the North Keep in 2021, the Trust designed and installed public access stairs to its interior in September 2022. A custom-designed secure cover was installed over the newly discovered well as a safety precaution for visitors.</p> <p>Royal Free Chapel</p> <p>A major discovery during the year in review was that of the site and layout of the unique Royal Free Chapel. Excavations undertaken by the students during June-July 2022 revealed the remains of an altar, nave walls, the remains of a chancel arch and an exquisite enamelled figurine, which together with fragments of pottery, wall-plaster and other artifacts constitute evidence of a high status building. As a result of these discoveries the Trust decided to launch a long-term fund-raising appeal for its research, exploration and conservation.</p> <p>North Curtain Wall and possible Barbican Tower</p> <p>Further archaeology revealed a collapsed tower structure outside and below the curtain wall boundary, which the Trust intends to further investigate in the years to come.</p> <p>2) PUBLIC ACCESS, AWARENESS AND APPRECIATION</p> <p>IMPROVED PUBLIC ACCESS</p> <p>The site remained open (free of charge) throughout the year and proved an increasingly popular destination for castle enthusiasts, nature lovers, walkers, families and locals, in addition to those curious to view the findings from the digs.</p>
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	<p>We welcomed Golden Valley pilgrims and conducted guided tours on bank holidays.</p> <p>In addition we offered bespoke tours for the Woolhope Natural History Field Club and other interested groups.</p> <p>We marked the occasion of the Queen's Diamond jubilee with a spectacular bonfire, a fitting tribute given the 800-year record of the castle's loyalty to the Crown.</p> <p>The constables invited our insurance broker (Hayes Parsons) to visit the site and advise on elements of liability and risk management.</p> <p>The Trust purchased a quantity of hand-made chestnut paling, a visually sympathetic yet effective moveable barrier which can be installed in areas of potential public hazard as required</p> <p>The noticeboard was updated regularly with news of recent discoveries, health and safety precautions, news and information leaflets.</p> <p>NEW AND ENHANCED WEBSITE</p> <p>A completely new website was commissioned, designed and launched in April 2022. The new site brings greatly improved functionality, security and accessibility and connects donors to Givey, the Trust's donations engine, as well providing a comprehensive contact form connected to a mailchimp database. At the end of the year under review the database had some 400 names.</p>
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2) Administration, fund raising and finance

The Constables (trust officers) continued to meet on a regular basis (online and face-to-face) to track finances and to consider how to manage activities. In addition full trustees meetings were held online/in person twice during the year.

In August 2022 we were honoured to welcome Sarah Lewis, latterly Heritage at Risk Adviser, Historic England, as Trustee.

The Trust continued to take measures to ensure it was compliant with General Data Protection Regulation. The Trust continued to maintain a good working relationship with Historic England, local community groups and tourism bodies.

3) Land Management

Under the management of Nick Longman (Vice Chairman and volunteer manager) a regular team of volunteers met weekly to clear and maintain the site for the benefit of both ecology, heritage and public access.

During the year in review the Trust procured some 150 native hedging plant whips from the Woodland Trust which were planted to enhance the long-term hedge cover of the site's northern boundary.

Selective clearing, felling, burning and brash removal was undertaken with regard to the trust's ecology survey of 2019, the archaeologically sensitive site, and the standing remains of the castle.

The volunteers contributed 336 hours during the permitted clearance season.

The Trust continued in its efforts to restore the site to a combination of woodland, woodland grazing and cropped turf against which the ruins might be best displayed and maintain risk-free access by archaeologists, historians, and the public.

In addition, the volunteers cleared and reclaimed an important adjacent ancient Holloway to the site - Gattimer Lane - for public access.

Ash dieback was reported as a problem nationally and subsequently found to have affected a number of trees on site. With careful monitoring and stewardship, affected trees were assessed and treated professionally. Affected trees were cut and it

	<p>is intended that the timber will be sold locally to boost income for the Trust.</p> <p>It was decided not to bring sheep on site to graze as previous flocks had trampled some of the turf capping. Sheep grazing continues to be kept under review.</p> <p>Badger activities continued to be monitored around the site (under the supervision of a professional ecologist and under licence from Natural England). Little or no activity was recorded.</p> <p>The Trust has regard to its obligations regarding gaining Scheduled Monument Consent for all its works where required.</p>
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	<p>4) Community Outreach</p> <p>During the year in review the Trust welcomed visits and tours from various groups ranging from lepidopterists to local running clubs, and specifically from the Longtown History Group, the Castle Studies Group and the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club.</p> <p>We intend to broaden our community involvement, actively engaging with both visitor, community and special interest groups to further our objects.</p>
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	<p>The Trust was delighted to receive two substantial donations from individuals during the year, in addition to the modest yet continuous funds raised from donations for leaflets and organised tours.</p> <p>A volunteer generously donated hand-turned wooden bowls created from willow and alder from the site for sale for the Trust's benefit. Details of our fundraising results are recorded in our Accounts.</p>
Investment performance against objectives	The charity has no investments
Other	

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	The charity's financial position during the year is set out in the attached Annual Accounts. Income was less than £25,000 and therefore did not meet the threshold for independent examination.
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	The Trust maintained a balance of £10,000 as per its reserves policy.
Amount of reserves held	£10,000
Reasons for holding zero reserves	N/A
Details of fund materially in deficit	There are no funds in deficit during the year in review
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	N/A

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	The principal sources of funds in the period 2022-3 were donation income from individuals, and earned income from the sale of leaflets and tours.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	The Trust has no investments
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Public and employers' liability insurance was taken out to protect visitors and volunteers. Risk assessments and method statements have been prepared to cover this activity. The use of chainsaws was restricted to those qualified to use them, and the site's coordinates are known to the emergency services.
Other	

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:	
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods including details of any	Elected and appointed by existing trustees
constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	All new trustees are provided with a copy of the constitution, a copy of meeting minutes, a link to the Charity Commission's guidance on becoming a trustee (The Essential Trustee) as well as an opportunity to have a guided tour of the castle.
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	The charity is governed by a board of trustees, among whom certain management duties are undertaken by 'Constables': they are Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer and Secretary. Specific and time-limited projects are undertaken by Working Groups as necessary.
Relationship with any related parties	<p>The charity has informal links with Hay Castle Trust, St Faith's Church (Dorstone), the Dorstone History Society, the Longtown and District Historical Society, the Castle Studies Group, The Hay Festival, Kilvert Society, Wellington Historical Society, the Woolhope Club, the Sutton Walls Conservation Group, the Eaton Camp Historical Group and the Mortimer History Society.</p> <p>We have a close relationship with Historic England, and we aim to strengthen links with other like-minded bodies regionally, nationally and internationally.</p>
Other	

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	The Snodhill Castle Preservation Trust
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Other name the charity uses	SCPT
Registered charity number	1165749
Charity's principal address	The Green, Snodhill, Dorstone, Herefordshire HR3 6BH

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Garry Crook	Chair		
2	Bridie Sullivan	Secretary		
3	Surrey Garland	Treasurer		
4	Nick Longman	Vice-Chair		
5	Bridget Knight			
6	Louise McIntyre			
7	Ruth Woolmer			
8	Susannah Garland			
9	Kate Hayward			
10	Jade Leigh-Beresford			
11	Joe Emmett			
12	Tom Oliver			
13	Sarah Lewis		10/08/2022	
14				

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	N/A
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	N/A
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation	N/A
of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)**Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)**

Type of adviser	Name	Address
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Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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Other optional information

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Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustee

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Bridie Sullivan	Surrey Garland
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Secretary	Treasurer
Date	30 January 2024	