



Annual Report of The Watercress Way 24-25

I would like to thank our Trustees and volunteers for all their work this year. The real progress we are making is due to their commitment to this charity.

This year, our work has taken a slightly different direction.

We have concentrated on experiences and expansion, with a touch of expectation.



Emma had secured a grant from the Watercress and Winterbournes Project, and this was the final year of our work to bring new people to understand and experience the unique qualities of the Itchen chalk streams and encourage participants to volunteer. It enabled us to try out new events and improve our publicity material for the future.

The Bat walk proved popular and is being repeated as part of our 'annual offer' now.

Photography sessions and bird walks are popular and with the persistence of Mike, we installed QR codes at 15 points along the route to capture the birdsong likely to be heard there.

The annual Dawn Chorus walk led by Trustee Clive and volunteer Mike remains popular, but now includes an added dimension: how to use the 'Merlin' app so that participants can expand their knowledge at other times too.



Chris, our webmaster has made changes to the website so that payments can be made, and we now use the sum up system to take payments as well as 'Give as you live' and Eventbrite to book events. This has improved our opportunities to receive paid income and we are using this to sell our merchandise.

Barry, our new Treasurer was recruited at the last Annual Meeting.

He has been instrumental in the banking process too. We now have many more recipients of our regular mailings as we continue to collect 'Friends of the Way' locally and further afield.



We published the first edition of our new Guide Book

Kim had started the process when she was a Trustee in 2021, and after several false starts, it was the hard work of Clive that brought this to fruition.

Stephen took the photographs in this beautifully illustrated guide to the route.

It was a real pleasure to share a book gifting with Kim and Gordon Thoday of Hellards who kindly sponsored the first publishing.



Events are a key way to expand public awareness.

Stephen's close links with the Watercress Line has enabled better links between the two organisations, and we have held stalls at Watercress Line events.

Tony, Mike, Stephen, Chris, Emma and her daughter have been stalwarts with me at a number of shows, festivals and fetes. Thank you!

In this year, we agreed that a focus of our work must be to claim more metres of the disused and currently private line for public use.

Tony's work responding to planning applications has proved successful and we were delighted that a planning permission in Martyr Worthy has resulted in a planning condition for a further 500m of expansion. Our

thanks to the SDNP and HCC who supported this.



The ecology of forgotten lines is complicated, so the

challenge is moving from a planning condition to a open footpath! Our clear aim is to enhance the ecology of the line, not destroy it. We are grateful to all those who help us in this way.

Some habitats join overhead, but in many cases, each side of the path is an ecological area in itself. The difference in habitat between the two lines, the DSNR and the Watercress Line is marked because of the orientation- one north/south and the other east/west.

The Watercress Way year is cut into two halves: September to end February is conservation work: cutting back vegetation to allow new growth whilst protecting habitats. Citizen science & education events happen all year round, but from March to August we cannot destroy habitats, so we record species, and introduce the public to the ecology, heritage and health-giving benefits of the route.

We have used the evidence of public interest in use of the disused lines to talk again with other landowners on the route. One landowner, Itchen Abbas Parish Council is actively working with us on a new scheme for their recreation ground at Couch Green. It is enabling a new 'access for all' path from Couch Green to the line. Progress is slower than hoped but the plans are now in place, and the work will be done professionally as there is a lot of earth to move on a site in the National Park. More will be reported next year!

Last but not least, we can now say 'As seen on TV'!

After an initial expression of interest in early March, and Jackie's replies back and forth with them for several weeks, Margherita Taylor, and the Countryfile team came to film in March 2025.

With Mike as our trustee star, we had a few minutes on Countryfile which has about 4 million viewers. Many people who came to talk to us at the Watercress Festival had seen trustees Mike and Tony with volunteers Chris and Jim on the programme: the interest in our charity has truly expanded!



The Watercress Way
Registered Charity Number 1167675
For the year ended 5th April 2024

	Notes	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Income and Expenditure account					
Income					
Donations - general		607.45		465.25	
Donations - restricted	1	700.00		2551.17	
Calendar sales		185.41		598.44	
Other income - Eventbrite bird watching		-		24.40	
			1492.86		3639.26
Expenditure					
Restricted project expenditure (Note 3)		3909.50		1362.04	
Calendar costs		153.00		405.60	
IOW Expenditure		-			
Administrative costs		383.30		307.30	
Insurance		376.57		296.73	
Maintenance		409.50		90.00	
Training		175.00		-	
Tool stock write down		493.28		493.00	
			5900.15		2954.67
Net expenditure/ income			-4407.29		684.59
Balance Sheet at 5th April 2024					
Assets					
Debtors			-		120.80
Deposit for benches (restricted)			-		500.00
Stock of Tools	2		-		493.28
Cash at bank					
General funds		1692.29		3842.66	
Restricted funds		7027.78		8170.62	
			8720.07		12013.28
Liabilities					
Creditors		-	-	-	-
			-		-
Net Assets			8720.07		13127.36
Accumulated Fund					
General fund brought forward		2758.48		384.76	
Restricted fund brought forward	3	10368.88		12058.01	
			13127.36		12442.77
Movement in year - General fund		-1066.19		1873.72	
Movement in year - Restricted fund	3	-3341.10		-1189.13	
			-4407.29		684.59
General fund carried forward		1692.29		2758.48	
Restricted fund carried forward	3	7027.78		10368.88	
			8720.07		13127.36

Approved by the trustees of The Watercress Way on the2024

Jackie Porter - Chair

Julie Fullstone - Treasurer

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Notes to the accounts

1. Restricted grants

These grants can only be used for the purpose specified on the grant application and for which the grant is made.

2. Equipment

The trust has a stock of maintenance equipment which is shown in the accounts at cost. The stock comprises the following individual items:

	£
Loppers	47.94
High pruners	25.98
Pruning saw	32.90
Brush cutter and blades	658.46
Brush cutters (2)	1700.00
Less: write down for wear and tear	-2465.28
	<u>£0.00</u>

3. Restricted grants received and applied in the year

	Brought Forward	Transfer	Received	Applied	Carried Forward
	£		£	£	£
Hampshire County Council					
Leaflets	-		700.00	130.00	570.00
Boomtown					
Disabled access study/work	800.00				800.00
Rotary Club of Winchester					
Disabled access study	158.00				158.00
Rotary Club of Alresford					
Memorial benches	4,000.00			2,062.47	1,937.53
Hellards					
Pocket Guide book	500.00				500.00
Sutton Scotney Bridge					
Bridge Gates	2,551.17			1,232.53	1,318.64
Winchester City Council					
Posts	275.00			275.00	-
Isle of Wight	2,084.71			341.10	1,743.61
	<u>10368.88</u>		<u>700.00</u>	<u>4041.10</u>	<u>7027.78</u>

**The Watercress Way
Financial Statements
For the year ended 5th April 2024**