

## **BONIFACE TRAIL ASSOCIATION**

**REGISTERED CHARITY NO 1168111**

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1 JULY 2024 TO 30 JUNE 2025**

### **Contact Details**

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### **Names of Trustees**

Nick Dyer (Chair)

Paul Taylor

Stephen Parker

### **Structure Governance and Management**

The Charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) using the model Constitution for a CIO with voting members other than its charity trustees.

Membership is open to individuals and to those representatives from local Parish Councils, District Council and County Council representatives and local sustainable transport interest groups who fit the purpose of the objects of the Charity and accept the duties of membership.

Members and Trustees meet together as and when required.

A chair and an administrator/treasurer have each been appointed, and sub committees for various tasks are appointed as and when required. Under

the constitution Trustees retire by rotation at each AGM and are eligible for reappointment.

The Charity currently has three Trustees. This number is considered sufficient to meet the Charity's current objectives.

Objects of the Charity and Aims and Objectives.

The objects clause of the Constitution reads as follows

*To promote, encourage, provide and maintain an all purpose, traffic free trail, for general use by pedestrians, cyclists and wheelchair and mobility scooter users, in whole or in part between the town of Crediton, the village of Newton St Cyres and the city of Exeter, in the County of Devon.*

The Association wishes to support and promote a significant large scale, long term project with the ultimate aim of securing a motor vehicle-free all purpose trail from Crediton to Exeter passing through the village of Newton St Cyres in Devon. This will comprise approximately 6 miles in distance.

The Association's website is at [bonifacetrail.org](http://bonifacetrail.org)

Public consultation carried out by the Association has shown much support for the proposed project with intrinsic benefits to the public at large. The scheme will offer an alternative for pedestrians, pedal cyclists, and wheelchair and motorised mobility scooter users to what is currently a very busy and dangerous main road, the A377. For most of its length the main road is narrow with no pavement for pedestrians and along which there have been numerous serious accidents over the years, some involving fatalities to cyclists as well as car users. On line and printed surveys carried out by the Association in 2016 showed large-scale public support and demand for the trail.

Initial consultations with an engineer with specialist experience in this type of project, resulted in the engineer's opinion that there should be no insurmountable burdens in the project in terms of construction, and that the

scheme would be workable in practice. The construction methods would largely comprise a tarmac path of suitable width, with stock proof fencing for most of the route with a small number of small scale bridges over streams, a limited amount of excavation, improvement to an existing railway bridge, and it is likely that one river bridge may be required. The view that most of this preferred route was workable was confirmed by consultants appointed by Devon County Council (DCC), now that the project has reached this level of consultancy stage, with the precise extent of the engineering challenges requiring further assessment.

Land owners have been very supportive of the project and a number of land owners along the proposed route of the path have confirmed an intention in principle to grant legal agreements without payment to facilitate construction and use of the trail along their respective sections of the route. An initial comprehensive land owner agreement covering the whole length of that part of the route which runs past the village of Newton St Cyres was completed in April 2020. This comprises an agreement for a twenty five year lease of land conditional upon funding and planning permission. It is recognised that this agreement will need at least to be revised depending on the requirements of the appropriate authorities, and if DCC eventually takes over construction of the trail (as now seems likely if the whole length of the trail between Crediton and Exeter is to be built) new agreements between DCC and relevant landowners will be required.

Relevant Parish, District and County Councils have been notified of the project and discussions have taken place with Councillors and various officers regarding the project.

### **Background activities prior to the current year**

Please refer to our Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2024 for activities and progress prior to the current year.

## **Activities during the year**

The Association is aware that in order to obtain the necessary planning permissions and other consents to enable the trail to be constructed it will be necessary to comply with all statutory requirements as to route and as to engineering specification and if, as is likely, it is to be adopted by DCC to be maintained at the public expense, it will need to be constructed to adoptable standards.

The Association has accepted that it is unlikely to be able itself to raise the substantial funding required to meet these requirements and standards. Accordingly, looking forward, the Association's main focus will be to continue to work with DCC and other relevant Councils, authorities and interest groups to advance the project, to press for the trail to follow the best possible route, to assist DCC if required in negotiations with local landowners and to press DCC to produce a viable scheme with a view to its being presented for funding at the earliest opportunity.

The Association has previously been pleased to note that the Boniface Trail is included in the draft Devon Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) although only in the "longer term" group of trails as far as its priority is concerned rather than the "short term" or "medium term" groups. In the Autumn of 2024 DCC announced the holding of an online Consultation to determine the views of the public and interested groups as to the route the trail should take when built. The Consultation invited responses on two options, namely whether the trail should follow a less direct route mainly along existing public lanes to the east of the River Creedy (the "Quiet Lanes" route) or a route largely alongside the main A377 road (the "A377 Alignment"). The Association prepared and submitted a detailed response to the Consultation strongly supporting the A377 Alignment route and setting out the reasons for doing so, and also pressing for the priority of the trail in the LCWIP to be moved into at least the medium term group if not the short term group.

At a public meeting held in March 2025 DCC announced that the majority of the large number of responses to the Consultation favoured the Quiet Lanes route but with a substantial minority preferring the A377 Alignment. It was also confirmed that DCC's Cabinet had formally approved the LCWIP but with the Boniface Trail remaining in the longer term group.

DCC and their consultants had previously suggested that the cost of promoting and constructing the section of the trail from Crediton to Newton St Cyres might be in the region of £11 million to £13 million and that there were significant engineering and other challenges at the Exeter end of the route due to the convergence of road, railway and river. The Association suggested at the March 2025 meeting that DCC should consider dividing the trail into phases with a view to constructing the section from Crediton to Newton St Cyres first as that would be easier to construct and (despite the substantial expense) less costly than the Newton St Cyres to Exeter section.

### **Public Benefit**

The Trustees declare that they have had due regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit and they confirm that the objects of the Charity have appropriate public benefit.

In carrying out its activities during the year the Charity has had due regard to its objects and has served the public by continuing to promote the objects of the Association and has worked to promote support from local government, thus furthering the objects of the Charity which will ultimately benefit the public.

The Trustees can summarise how it is anticipated that the project will benefit the public as follows:

- a) It will provide a facility open to all persons which does not presently exist.

- b) It will be accessible to a wide range of potential users comprising pedal cyclists, pedestrians, and those with mobility impairments.
- c) Any person living within, or visiting, the geographical area will be able to enjoy the facility.
- d) Walking and cycling are widely regarded as having benefits for public health and well-being.
- e) The proposed route of the path is in a place of high natural beauty thus providing further benefits to well-being.
- f) The path will bring large improvements in terms of safety to the public, with a large percentage of respondents to the Charity's initial survey having expressed the view that the only currently available equivalent route along the A377 is particularly unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians.
- g) The project will improve air quality particularly in the Crediton area.

### **Financial Review of the Year**

No grant monies have been received during the year as the Association's expenditure has been minimal while the outcome of the long-delayed public consultation remains outstanding. Expenditure during the year has been limited to website hosting and Land Registry fees. There remains cash in hand in the sum of £12730 as at the year end for the purposes of discharging any further consultancy and legal or other professional fees which may be incurred and other general expenditure which may be required in order to achieve the construction of the trail.

As mentioned above the Trustees consider it likely that funding may be forthcoming in the longer term from DCC, utilising appropriate allocated funding streams and central government initiatives for this type of project.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

**Nick Dyer (Chair)**

**29 April 2026**



CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Boniface Trail Association

1168111

## Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period  
from

Period start date  
01/07/24

To

Period end date  
30/06/25

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Geosphere mapping software		-	-	-	90
Website hosting fees (refund to B Lunnon)	305	-	-	305	-
Land Registry fees	31	-	-	31	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	336	-	-	336	90
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>	336	-	-	336	90
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	- 336	-	-	- 336	90
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	-	-	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	13,066	-	-	13,066	-
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	12,730	-	-	12,730	13,066

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash in bank	12,730	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>12,730</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets				
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use				
B5 Liabilities				
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
	Nick Dyer	Nick Dyer (Trustee and Chair)	29/04/26	