

Shropshire Hills AONB Trust
Registered Charity Number 1168432

Unit 9 Drovers House, The Auction Yard, CRAVEN ARMS SY7 9BZ

Trustees' Annual Report for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022

*We will inspire people, organizations and businesses to be active in
supporting the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and in
helping to secure its beauty for the future.*

Objectives

The Shropshire Hills AONB Trust is a charity dedicated to promoting the conservation of the natural beauty of the Shropshire Hills landscape. It supports activities which protect the wildlife and heritage of the Shropshire Hills area and which spread knowledge and understanding of the importance of the natural environment. An important aim is to encourage local people and organizations to become actively involved in caring for the countryside around them.

Governance

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by a constitution based on the 'Foundation' model and dated 21st July 2016. Its constitution allows it to have a total of eight Trustees four of whom are appointed by the Trustee group. The manager of the Shropshire Hills AONB Partnership is an *ex officio* Trustee and the Partnership may also nominate up to three other Trustees. Appointed Trustees serve three-year terms whereas nominated Trustees serve two-year terms. No Trustee may be appointed for more than three consecutive terms without a gap of at least one year.

Sarah Griffiths (an appointed Trustee) resigned during the year and George Chancellor (a nominated Trustee) stepped down because he had completed three two-year terms. He was subsequently co-opted as a non-voting volunteer and continued to act as Treasurer. Charles Edwards was nominated as a Trustee by the Partnership in December 2021. At the end of the financial year the Trustees were as follows:

Appointed Trustees:

Anthony Morgan (chairman)
Alastair Warrington
Neil Willcox

Nominated Trustees

Veronica Cossons
Charles Edwards

Ex officio Trustee

Phil Holden (secretary)

In addition to the Annual General Meeting there were two formal meetings during the year at which the Trustees reviewed the financial situation, made decisions about allocation of funding and determined matters of overall policy. The AONB Partnership team provided administrative support and the day-to-day work of the Trust was carried out by Trustees meeting as groups or as individuals together with support staff and outside persons as appropriate.

Financial review

The Trust's income comes from subscriptions to the Friends of the Shropshire Hills scheme together with funds from other charitable bodies. The Trust is most grateful to those who donated money; in particular we thank the Millichope Foundation, P B Dumbell Charity Trust, individual donors and the many Friends of the Shropshire Hills. The majority of the Trust's money is used in awarding grants from its Conservation Fund but it also receives donations to specific objectives such as the project to repair erosion damage to Caer Caradoc.

At the start of the year the bank balance was £30,776 and the total income during the year was £13,205. £10,922 was paid out to grant recipients whose projects had completed and £5,226 was carried forward to cover expected claims from projects still in progress. At the end of the year the Trust had a bank balance of £36,156 (including £9,743 relating to restricted funds.)

Achievements

Conservation Fund

At the start of the financial year several projects which had started in the previous year had not completed because of restrictions relating to the Covid-19 pandemic and were therefore carried over to the new year. Eight additional projects were awarded grants covering a variety of topics consistent with the Trust's objectives. Trustees were pleased to be able to support a group in Bushmoor dedicated to restoring roadside verges so that they become wildlife corridors covered with wildflowers rather than barren strips of mown grass. The Trust first supported an initiative of this sort in 2017 and it has been pleasing to see how this has subsequently grown into the Restoring Shropshire's Verges Project, a coordinated enterprise which has made an important and continuing impact on declining biodiversity. A grant of a similar nature was made to Hopton Castle Preservation Trust to re-establish native wildflowers and plant trees to replace the ancient oaks blown down in a gale the previous year.

The Trust is keen to support initiatives which encourage young people to learn more about the countryside; Lightfoot Enterprises was awarded money to enable pupils at Bishop's Castle Community College to learn about good land management and carry out practical

sessions. Younger children were able to take part in awareness-raising activities as a result of an award to Branching Out, a Forest School operation near to Bucknell. Lower Bush Farm, which works with adults with learning difficulties and children with special educational needs was awarded support for the creation of a pollinator garden.

From a different perspective the Trust was able to assist groups that are aiming to achieve environmental improvement on a wider scale. Middle Marches Land Trust was helped with an ecological survey and bracken control on land at Norbury Hill which it recently purchased as part of its aim to improve the habitat for wildlife. Shropshire Ornithological Society received a grant to support the “Save our Curlew” initiative being carried out together with Stretton Community Wildlife Group. Different again was an award to Knighton Community Woodland Group so that they could purchase a charcoal retort. Interest in environmental management of local deciduous woodlands is growing and it is important that the woodland products generated are used in a sustainable way. Burning of brash from coppicing or scrub clearance releases stored carbon to no useful end and is polluting; a charcoal retort creates a material which can be used in barbecues and the like instead of imported charcoal.

Details of all the activities supported are presented on the Trust’s website www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk/help-to-look-after/shropshire-hills-aonb-trust/conservation-fund-projects.

Friends of the Shropshire Hills

The Friends scheme was originally established by the AONB Partnership in 2008 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the AONB but with the creation of the Trust in 2016 it was agreed that the Friends should be seen to be supporting the Trust as well as the Partnership. Money arising from subscriptions is paid into the Trust but the administration of the scheme is shared.

Fix the Fort

Working with the AONB Partnership, the Trust’s Fix the Fort appeal has continued to bring in donations and towards the end of the year progress was being made with raising match funding from other sources to enable repair work on the ground to be commissioned.

Shuttle Bus

In 2021 the Shuttle Bus operated by the AONB Partnership returned to a more normal but shortened route after not operating in 2020. Over 2,000 passengers were carried and additional donations were received by the Trust to support the service in future years.

Shropshire Hills AONB Trust

Accounts 2021-2022

INCOME

Friends Membership	£ 4,467.77
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General Donations	£ 1,339.21
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Shuttle Supporters Scheme	£ 552.06
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Caering for Caradoc Appeal	£ 394.69
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Gift Aid Reclaim	£ 952.08
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Millichope Foundation	£5,000.00
P B Dumbell Charitable Trust	£500.00

2018-19 Grants Received	£5,500.00
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Total Income	£ 13,205.81
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Surplus of Income over Expenditure	£ 5,379.36
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Additional Income

Pertaining to financial year but received post-April 1, 2022

Gift Aid Reclaim

Membership	£ 192.00
Membership	£ 597.75
Shuttles	
Caradoc	£ 41.13
Caradoc	

	£ 830.88
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Pertaining to 2020-21 but received in the financial year

Gift Aid Reclaim	£ 952.08
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Adjusted Total Income	£ 13,084.61
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Adjusted Surplus of Income over Expenditure	£ 2,161.92
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Funds at Bank (1/4/21)	£ 30,776.64
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Funds at Bank (31/3/22)	£ 36,156.00
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Restricted Funds	£ 9,743.43
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Shuttles Supporters Scheme	Carried over from 2020/21	-£ 0.31
	Income 2021/2022	£ 552.06
	Expenditure 2020/21	£ -
	Total	£ 551.75
Caering for Caradoc	Carried over from 2020/21	£ 3,529.26
	Income 2021/22	£ 435.82
	Total	£ 3,965.08

Previous Years Grants Carried Over	£ 5,226.60
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Available Unrestricted Funds	£ 26,412.57
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EXPENDITURE

Earthcare	CF2122/7	£ 160.00
Knighton Tree Allotments Trust	CF2122/6	£ 1,128.17
Janet Cobb	CF2021/3	£ 520.00
Middle Marches CLT	CF2122/3	£ 1,500.00
Hopton Castle Preservation Trust	CF2122/4	£ 504.06
A M Pettit Forest School	CF2122/2	£ 1,780.00
Knighton Tree Allotments Trust	CF2122/6	£ 165.58
Hopton Castle Preservation Trust	CF2122/4	£ 496.64
South Shropshire Youth Forum	CF2021/10	£ 1,492.00

Grants	£ 7,746.45
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D M Payroll Service (independent examiner)	£ 80.00
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Operating Costs	£ 80.00
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Total Expenditure	£ 7,826.45
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Additional Expenditure

Pertaining to financial year but paid post-April 1, 2022

Grants

Lower Bush Farm	CF2122/1	£2,000.00
Shropshire Ornithological Society	CF2122/5	£1,000.00
Bushmoor Verges Group	CF2122/7	£108.24
Lightfoot	CF2122/8	£2,000.00

	£5,108.24
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Pertaining to previous years but paid in the financial year

Grants

Janet Cobb	CF2021/3	£ 520.00
South Shropshire Youth Forum	CF2021/10	£ 1,492.00

	£2,012.00
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Operating Costs	£ -
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Adjusted Total Expenditure	£ 10,922.69
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Previous Years Grants Carried Over for Future Payment

Bushmoor Verges Group	CF2122/7	£ 350.00
Lightfoot	CF2021/4	£ 885.50
Edgton Parish Meeting	CF2021/3	£ 480.00
Shropshire Ornithological Society	CF2021/9	£ 2,000.00
Curlew Country	CF2021/2	£ 1,511.10

	£ 5,226.60
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Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Shropshire Hills AONB Trust Charity Number 1168432

This report is on the accounts of the Trustees for the year ended 31st March 2022

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

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 all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act as documented in their Guidance issued in September 2017.

It should be noted that an independent examination is not a statutory requirement as total income received is below £25,000, however it is recognised good practice.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with guidance given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records and bank records presented. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination and confirm that no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect :

Accounting records have not been kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act, Or, The accounts do not accord with those records; Or, The accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning form and content as set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.

Susan Hackett

Signed

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Date 28 June 2022

Mrs SD Hackett
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