

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 2022 to 31st March 2023

*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 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.

George Chancellor was nominated as a Trustee by the Shropshire Hills AONB partnership after a one-year gap since he had previously served in this role. He was subsequently elected by the other Trustees to act as Treasurer. Alastair Warrington, who had served as an appointed Trustee since shortly after the Trust was founded, died unexpectedly in January 2023. His enthusiastic contribution over this time, particularly his role in recruiting Friends of the Shropshire Hills, will be much missed. At the end of the financial year the Trustees were as follows:

Appointed Trustees:

Anthony Morgan (chairman)
Neil Willcox

Nominated Trustees

Veronica Cossons
Charles Edwards
George Chancellor

Ex officio Trustee

Phil Holden (secretary)

In addition to the Annual General Meeting there were four formal meetings during the year at which the Trustees reviewed the financial situation and determined matters of overall policy. The Trustees also met in March to consider applications to the Conservation Fund and award project grants for the forthcoming year. 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.

Achievements

Conservation Fund

Eight projects taking place in the 2022-23 year were awarded a total of £12,055. As in past years the awards fulfilled the underlying principle of supporting community groups aiming to care for the natural environment in their local area. Three groups received money to enable them to restore the verges of local lanes so that they can once again become havens for wildflowers rather than barren strips of closely mown grass. An award was made to support work to try to prevent the decline in the local curlew population and another was made to carry out preservation work on ancient black poplar trees. Hedge-laying courses and work to clear bracken and Sitka spruce invasion were also supported.

Details of all the activities supported and reports on their outcomes are available 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

The restricted funds derived from targeted donations from members of the public were supplemented by a generous donation from HF Holdays and further supplemented by matched funding from Farming in Protected Landscapes. As a result, £23,000 was available to carry out essential repair work on the Caer Caradoc Hill Fort near Chchurch Stretton. This got underway towards the end of the year and up to date details can be found on our website [Fix the Fort appeal \(shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk\)](http://www.shropshirehillsaonb.co.uk). Many thanks to all those who contributed to the fundraising and to the repair work.

Shuttle Bus

Unfortunately there is now only a limited shuttle bus service through the Shropshire Hills and donations to restricted funds under this heading have ceased.

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, 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.

The Trust holds all its financial assets in a current account with Barclays Bank. At the start of the year the bank balance was £36,156 and the total income during the year was £11,842. £14,859 was paid out to grant recipients whose projects had completed and £7,259 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 £27,904. Because of payments made to Fix the Fort and the Shuttle Bus, restricted funds had reduced to £105.

Shropshire Hills AONB Trust

Accounts 2022-2023

INCOME

Friends Membership	£ 4,681.67
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General Donations	£ 644.32
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Shuttle Supporters Scheme	£ 445.32
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Caering for Caradoc Appeal	£ 240.79
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Gift Aid Reclaim	£ 830.88
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Millichope Foundation	£5,000.00
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2018-19 Grants Received	£5,000.00
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Total Income	£ 11,842.98
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Surplus of Income over Expenditure	-£ 8,251.91
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Additional Income

Pertaining to the financial year but received post-April 1, 2023

Gift Aid Reclaim

Membership	£ 237.82
Membership	£ 707.09
Shuttles	
Caradoc	£ 37.50
Caradoc	

	£ 982.41
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Pertaining to previous years but received in the financial year

Gift Aid Reclaim	£ 830.88
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Adjusted Total Income	£ 11,994.51
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Adjusted Surplus of Income over Expenditure	-£ 1,391.43
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Funds at Bank (31/3/22)	£ 36,156.00
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Funds at Bank (31/3/23)	£ 27,904.09
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Restricted Funds	£ 5,137.09
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Shuttles Supporters Scheme	Carried over from 2021/22	£ 551.75
	Income 2021/2022	£ 445.32
	Expenditure 2021/22	£ 1,035.00
	Total	-£ 37.93

Caering for Caradoc	Carried over from 2021/22	£ 3,965.08
	Income 2022/23	£ 278.29
	Expenditure 2022/23	£ 4,100.00
	Total	£ 143.37

Grants Carried Over	£ 5,031.65
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Available Unrestricted Funds	£ 22,767.00
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EXPENDITURE

Janet Cobb (CF/2021/3)	£ 480.00
Game & Wildlife Conservation (CF/2021/2)	£ 1,511.10
Light Foot Enterprises (CF2021/4)	£ 885.50
Shropshire Ornithologists (CF/2021/9)	£ 2,000.00

Lower Bush Farm CIC (CF2122/1)	£ 2,000.00
Shropshire Ornithological Society (CF/2122/5)	£ 1,000.00
Restoring Shropshires Verges (CF2122/7)	£ 70.00
Mr M White (CF2122/7)	£ 38.24
Light Foot Enterprises (CF2122/8)	£ 2,000.00

Mr R W Rowe - Bushmoor Verges (CF2223/3)	£ 80.00
NCG Parks & Gardens - Bushmoor Verges (CF2223/3)	£ 660.00
Janet Cobb - RSVP Collaboration (CF2223/4)	£ 907.05
Clunbury Parish Council (CF2223/6)	£ 1,288.00
S Cook & Partner - Black Poplar CF2223/7)	£ 1,940.00

Shropshire Council (SH Shuttles)	£ 550.00
Shropshire Council (SH Shuttles)	£ 485.00
Shropshire Council (Fix the Fort)	£ 4,100.00

Grants	£ 19,994.89
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SDH Accounting Services	£ 100.00
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Operating Costs	£ 100.00
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Total Expenditure	£ 20,094.89
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Additional Expenditure

Pertaining to the financial year but paid post-April 1, 2023

Grants		
Shropshire Ornithological Society - Curlews	CF2223/1	£2,000.00
Restoring Shropshire Verges - All Stretton	CF2223/2	£279.59
Janet Cobb - RSVP Collaboration	CF2223/4	£996.30

	£3,275.89
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Pertaining to previous years but paid in the financial year

Grants	£ 9,984.84
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Adjusted Total Expenditure	£ 13,385.94
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Notes

Grants Carried Over for Future Payment	
Bushmoor Verges (CF2223/3)	£ 895.00
Janet Cobb (CF2223/4) - Underspend to support CF2324/7	£ 96.65
Llanfairwaterdine Community Trust (CF2223/5)	£ 1,000.00
On Whinberry Hill (CF2223/6)	£ 1,940.00
Clee St Maragaret Hedgerows (CF2223/8)	£ 1,100.00

Total	£ 5,031.65
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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 2023

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 03 July 2023

Mrs SD Hackett
Brandiston,
Norwich
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