



Great Ouse Valley Trust
Our landscape for life

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for the
Year Ending 31 December 2022**

www.greatousevalleytrust.org

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Registration number 1179977

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Great Ouse Valley Trust

The Trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31st December 2022

Trustees

Helen Boothman
Graham Campbell – Chairman
Peter Downes – Resigned 5th April, 2022
Mark Ellis – Treasurer
Bridget Flanagan
Ian Jackson
Mick Jones
Michael Krause - Joined December, 2022
Phil Rothwell
Lucas Tatek

GOVT address

Town Hall
Market Hill
The Old Riverport
St Ives
Cambs PE27 5AL

Charitable Incorporated Number

1179977 (England and Wales)

Bankers

Lloyds, Treasurers Account

Website

www.greatousevalleytrust.org.uk

Email

sendanenquiry@greatousevalleytrust.org.uk

Facebook

facebook.com/GreatOuseValleyTrust/

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Great Ouse Valley Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which was set up in September 2018. The Trust is governed by its Constitution approved by the Charities Commission at that time.

Appointment and Recruitment of Trustees

As set out in the Constitution, one third of elected Trustees, who make up the Trustee Board, shall retire from office every year at the Annual General Meeting. The elected Trustees will determine amongst themselves the officers of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. New Trustees are found through word of mouth, newsletters and website promotions. All new Trustees receive a copy of the Charity's constitution, the Charity Commission's Essential Trustee Guide and a full induction

Organisation

The Board of Trustees meets monthly in order to manage the affairs of the charity. The Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits.

The Board is occasionally joined by invited specialists who give their time and expertise, but they do not have a vote.

Risk management.

The charity has reviewed its risk, in line with Charity guidance. The Charity does not have any significant regular outgoings so has minimal risk. Any planned activities have to be fully funded prior to commitment of any funds.

Financial reserves policy

Sufficient income has been retained from the first period of trading to ensure regular meetings can be held for the following 6 months.

Fundraising statement

In recognition of the Charities Act 2016 any fundraising undertaken by the charity or a third part operating on behalf of the charity will conform to the Code of Fundraising practice.

Related Parties

The Charity works with its Partner Members in delivering its objectives.

The Great Ouse Valley Trust is a member of CPRE.

Advisers

The Charity is extremely grateful to everyone who gives their advice and expertise freely.

Charity Object

The object of the CIO is to promote for public benefit the conservation, restoration and enjoyment of the landscape, wildlife and heritage of the Great Ouse Valley and its environs in the county of Cambridgeshire. We referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when setting up the Charity and will review our activities against the public benefit in our future planning.

3. Chairman's Report for 2022

The Trust has had another eventful year, the busiest since our inaugural conference back in 2018. It has been an exciting time. Our Trustees have all worked extremely hard and our Partner Members have tackled all the new challenges with the enthusiasm to Promote, Protect and Enhance our wonderful landscape.

There is far too much to report in detail so I will mention some of the key successes.

We were fortunate to obtain a grant from Natural England via Natural Cambridgeshire to allow us to appoint Dr Jade Gunnell to develop a "community engagement strategy". With a further grant from the National Lottery we were able to hold our first "community workshop, to help us define our major goals going forward. Our first workshop concentrated on the Huntingdon to St Ives area as a trial run before we carry out similar workshops for the north east, between St Ives and Earith and in the south between Huntingdon and St Neots.

From the workshop key projects emerged.

1. Increasing the Great Ouse Valley tree canopy
2. Improving the quality and health of the river itself
3. Enhancing the flood meadows
4. Encouraging access and exploration
5. Continuing to press for national recognition of our unique landscape

These projects are now the main focus of our activities. We are currently looking for a tree consultant to help us map all the potential tree sites and advise on the most suitable species as well as developing a programme to restore our ancient white willows. Our friends in the Wildlife Trust have already worked on the basic data to enable us to begin the long-term project of traditional meadow restoration. We have been key players in the formation of a new rivers trust for the Great Ouse (GORT) along with our friends in Bedfordshire and in Cambridgeshire and Norfolk up to Kings Lynn. We continue to work with Cambridgeshire County Council Highways and parishes to ensure that the Ouse Valley Way and other footpaths and bridleways are open to all. We still have the ambition to seek recognition of our landscape as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or possibly a self-declared special landscape.

The Trust has a great working relationship with many groups including Natural Cambridgeshire, RSPB, the Farming Wildlife Advisory Group and many others. We are working closely with Huntingdonshire District Council on a number of projects and we are especially grateful for their continuing support.

Our practical projects on the ground have continued. An additional 110 trees were planted on the community wood next to the A1307 and the Ouse Valley Way to replace those lost from the original 1400 trees. Mulching has continued to combat the drier climate. Our local schoolchildren have participated in all this work with great enthusiasm. The Trust is a great believer in getting children involved in real projects so that they can grow with a real understanding and love of the natural environment.

More black poplars have been planted on the river bank opposite Brampton Mill to add to those planted in the last season.

Peter Downes stepped down as a trustee and we thank him most warmly for all his work, help and sound advice to GOVT since its inception. We welcome Michael Krause as a new Trustee who has worked in nature conservation for over 20 years, picking up a wide range of experience from his time at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, RSPB, Plantlife International and Fauna & Flora International.

The Trust has tried to ensure that the Ouse Valley Way long distance footpath is properly maintained. We have kept a watchful eye on developments that might adversely affect our landscape and we have made representations to the local authorities on a number of issues including illegal tree felling and unauthorised river bank developments. We have also objected to the potential use of rare meadows for a solar farm arguing that solar farms are ideally sited on car parks such as the excellent scheme for the St Ives Park and Ride.

The Trust has continued to provide a regular column in the Hunts Post with articles from all aspects of the valley including heritage, nature, history and landscape. We have also given interviews on Huntingdon Community Radio. We have continued with production of our newsletter The Valley which is circulated to all our Partner Members, supporters and then available to the general public.

There have been illustrated talks from Stuart Orme from Cromwell Museum, John Brewington from the Rivers Trust and Kye Jerrom from the Environment Agency. We are now looking forward to our next talk from Trustee, Bridget Flanagan, on "The Watermills and Landscape of the Great Ouse" which will follow our AGM on 22nd April.

GOING FORWARD

In the coming year we will strive to follow on from the projects started last year, developing the tree canopy and restoring our meadows. The next Community Workshop is planned for the end of the year and work has already started. We are working with RSPB in developing better visitor facilities at Fen Drayton Lakes. We are planning exciting joint projects with Huntingdonshire District Council in connection with their "Biodiversity for All" programme, possibly developing a biodiversity map for the whole area. This year sees the return of the Ouse Valley marathon so we need to ensure that our footpaths are clear and safe. I am very heartened by the involvement of so many farmers and landowners in our work and their attendance at our workshops. Farming is a precarious business especially as the details of future subsidy schemes are sorted out, but the enthusiasm of the farming community in the protection of landscape and biodiversity is very encouraging.

The Trust is moving to a new phase of its development and taking on bigger challenges necessitating bringing in specialist consultants to develop some of the projects. We are grateful for the continuing support of so many groups and individuals that share our passion for the unique landscape and character of the Great Ouse Valley, and look forward to an even busier year next year with real results on the ground.

4. Financial Overview (attached)

During the year we received a grant of £2,000 from AstraZeneca for planting trees by the river. £625 of this had been paid in 2021 so the balance will be carried forward to this year for future plantings.

Also in 2022 we received grants from Natural England via Natural Cambridge £3,000 and Together for our Planet National Lottery Funding of £8002 for the work we have done on Living landscapes. There is a balance not spent that allows us to further develop this work into 2023.

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the charity and enable then to comply with SORP. All donations received in the period had no restrictions on the expenditure of those funds.

Trustees declare that they approved this report on 4 April, 2023

Signed: *Graham Campbell*, Chairman

