
Yeovil Rivers Community Trust

Trustees Annual Report for Year

1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024



The Yeovil Rivers Community Trust

19, Chilton Grove
Yeovil
Somerset
BA21 4AN

<https://yrct.org.uk>

Executive Summary

1. Registration Name:

The Yeovil Rivers Community Trust

2. Registration Number:

1180724

3. Registration date:

16th November 2018

4. Governing Document:

The Yeovil Rivers Community Trust Constitution

5. Names of Charity Trustees serving during the year:

Mr Lorne Thomson Chair

Mr Thomas Bell

Ms Yasmin Khan

Mr David Godwin

Mr Stuart Saunders

Mr Josiah Knights

Ms Lucy Davies (Resigned September 2023)

6. Objects of the Charity

- To promote for the benefit of the public both locally in Yeovil and the wider public within Somerset and Dorset, the conservation protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment by promoting and maintaining biological diversity, notably, but not exclusively, in the restoration, enhancement and creation of watercourses and any other water features (including multi-function surface features as part of a sustainable drainage system) and their adjoining terrestrial areas. Maintaining biological diversity includes managing and monitoring relevant habitats for the mutual benefit of biodiversity and the public.
- To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

7. Organisation of the Charity

- Number of elected Honorary Officers: 1
- Number of representatives of statutory authorities: 0
- Number of paid staff: 6

Note: Two of the trustees are professional ecologists who provide their professional expertise and experience to the Charity

8. Further details of the Charity

- Name and address of Bank: Barclays Bank plc,
King George Street
Yeovil
Somerset
- Insurers:

Zurich Insurance
The Zurich Centre
3000 Parkway
Whiteley Fareham
Hampshire PO15 7JZ

Objectives & Activities

The formation of the Yeovil Rivers Community Trust (YRCT) was spurred by the need to protect the local streams, rivers and ponds together with adjacent natural landscape features, amid growing concern for the environment expressed by the local population as well as a range of organisations including local authorities, the Environment Agency, Somerset Catchment Partnership and other NGOs.

The objectives of the Charity are to promote for the benefit of the public, in Yeovil and more widely in South Somerset and North Dorset, the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment by:

- Promoting and maintaining biological diversity, notably, but not exclusively, in the restoration, enhancement and creation of water courses and any other water features (including multi-function surface features as part of a sustainable drainage system and Nature Based Solutions, e.g. Natural Flood Management) and their adjoining terrestrial areas.
- Maintaining biological diversity includes managing and monitoring relevant habitats for the mutual benefit of biodiversity and the public.
- To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment with a special emphasis on water and the impacts of climate breakdown.

Funding to support this activity has thus far been sourced solely through public donations and grants from statutory nature conservation bodies (SNCO), local authorities and charitable organisations. Towards the end of 2023 the trustees were looking to develop the delivery of paid services by the Trust to diversify income streams with a view to begin implementing this in the 2024/25 financial year.

The Charity's work is managed and undertaken by local volunteers and a small number of mainly part-time staff. Technical advice and project management as well as specialist services are supplied by consultants as required.

Specifically, the needs and activities addressed by the Charity are:

- An independent overview of Planning Applications insofar as they affect the natural flow and diversity of waterbodies and habitats, this activity being undertaken in co-operation with the relevant authorities and organisations.
- Through the deployment of volunteer working parties, undertake physical activities on streams and riverbanks, clearing rubbish, debris and invasive non-native plants and undergrowth. This work is in support of the Local Councils, the Environment Agency and other stakeholders.
- To carry out surveys of local water courses checking for sustainable wildlife habitat by undertaking water sampling and checking out sources of pollution and reporting formally to the appropriate authorities.

Deliverables resulting from the work of the Charity include:

- The provision of technical/specialist analysis and reports to the appropriate sponsor/authority of the Trust's findings.
- Provision of hydraulic and hydrological modelling studies, design drawings, mapping and ecological proposals for aquatic and terrestrial habitats, e.g. new ponds, wetlands and modified riverbanks etc., as required.
- Provision of plants, fencing, trees etc., in support of new pond and wetland creations.
- Visual and amenity improvements and ongoing maintenance and monitoring to existing projects.
- Learning opportunities for young people via formal programmes integrated with school curriculum and informal events sponsored outside school hours. We continued to extend this work to local adult groups and organisations with a focus on mental and physical wellbeing and learning disabilities but also to other sectors of the community, e.g. Wild Women over 50 Project.
- Active public engagement on environmental issues around rivers and waterways and habitats and biodiversity generally with an increasing emphasis on Climate Change adaptation and building resilience.
- Physical improvement and extended viability to the local streams and rivers in respect of public accessibility and enjoyment. This includes a healthier and sustainable wildlife habitat. This incorporates identifying, designing and implementing a range of measures to restore, enhance and create aquatic and terrestrial habitats using nature based solutions (NBS) and natural flood management (NFM) techniques wherever possible within the Yeo and adjacent Catchments.

The Charity completed work on the Brympton and Dodham Brook Phase 3 projects during the financial period. The projects numbering seven in total are described in the following section. At the time of reporting, two projects are currently not being worked on as they are held awaiting approval/clearance from sources external to the Yeovil Rivers Community Trust.

The trust employed one full-time and 5 part-time staff within the year to assist the delivery of projects and provide administration capacity.

Achievements and Performance

The following table itemises the major project activity undertaken by the Charity during the reporting period.

Project Identity	Description	% Completion	Deliverables	Funding Status
Dodham Brook Restoration 001 Phase 3	Implementation of the physical changes required for rehabilitation of the concrete flood channel containing a section of the Dodham Brook beyond the Yeovil Country Park (YCP) towards Newton Road. Works include a fish pass on the YCP weir, enhancement of the culverted channel at Tanyard Way and a small fish easement at the Newton Road weir.	100% All logistical actions and practical delivery completed by 30/06/2023.	Installation of Rehabilitation features, i.e. macrophyte and habitat bays, baffles and fish easements, aquatic plant establishment, interpretation and project related public engagement.	£196,300 secured from Green Recovery Challenge Fund (£77,440 paid in year). 10% (£19,360) balance to be paid after 30/6/23.
004	Restoration and long-term maintenance of Brympton Pond. Planned activity: Development of a natural pond which will be semi incorporated into a proposed business park development. Future use and maintenance to be planned.	0%	Following discussion within the YRCT, it is considered that the site may be suitable for Biodiversity Net Gain Offsetting with no public access. Project currently on hold while BNG develops and discussions can be had with landowner and developer.	Awaiting landowners agreement. Project on hold

(005, 007 and 009) Projects combined to become the Brympton Project in February 2021.	(formerly P007) Redesigned interventions in the brook backwaters and riparian margin with new proposal developing in 2024/25	0%	Activities at this location will be designed in conjunction with Brympton Parish Council.	<p>All funding secured from the Somerset County Council Climate Change Fund was expended in the year. A small residual budget from a private grant provider remained. No further funding was sought within the year due to staff shortages and an emphasis on delivering projects P011 and P012.</p> <p>YRCT are exploring funding options with Brympton Parish Council and will seek new grant funding in 2024/25.</p>
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	<p>The rehabilitation of two ponds at Oak Tree Park. This includes creating two new complex habitat banks, wildflower areas and establishing aquatic plants in both ponds. Interventions are on-going but have been undertaken through activities associated with volunteer days in Project P011. The remaining works, i.e. completion of two habitat banks, scrapes and the meadow area will be accelerated from Spring 2025.</p>	50%	<p>Works to install dipping platform, interpretation boards and relocate fencing at one pond have been completed. The establishment of the wildflower grassland areas and habitat bank completion will now take place in the 2024/25 return period.</p>	
006	<p>Brimsmore housing development. Improvements and overall enhancement of the SuDS which will include: stabilisation of water level and improvements in its quality. Cleaning the outlet culvert and stream which are severely silted up.</p>	0%	<p>No activity undertaken in the reporting period. Awaiting the SSDC adoption of the site</p>	<p>No budget in place at this time Project on hold until site is adopted by the SSDC. This may be complicated by the move to a unitary Somerset LA.</p>

008	<p>Yeovil Country Park (Ninesprings) Lake, Pond and Water Vole habitat Enhancement</p> <p>The project aims to: Create new aquatic habitats in the lake and pond</p> <p>The project will provide valuable new and enhanced aquatic habitats near the centre of Yeovil which already accommodate endangered species. The proposed enhancements will also augment the works planned for the restoration of Dodham Brook which runs through the country park to the north of the lake and pond. An optimised, resilient network of habitats will thereby be created to support enhanced biodiversity. The project area was expanded during the return period to include the Upper Yeo catchment of which the Dodham Brook Catchment is a part. The phosphate management element has also been expanded accordingly. The mitigation of phosphate pollution can be achieved via essentially the same interventions which would benefit water vole habitats.</p>	65%	<p>Funding was secured for the phosphate management element via the Somerset Catchment Partnership. A CSI phosphate sampling programme was initiated in the Yeovil area and extended to part of the Upper Yeo Catchment in nearby North Dorset. Data collection started in February and March 2024. Practical works are planned for delivery in the Yeovil Country Park lake and pond in the 2024/25 year. This includes the creation of reed beds, a water vole bund and increasing plant diversity in the lake and pond. An initial sampling survey was carried out at 24 sites to map phosphate hotspots and identify locations for mitigation works. Surveys of the lake and pond in Yeovil Country Park were carried out in the Summer of 2020 and will need updating prior to delivery works in 2024/25.</p>	<p>Total grants amounting to £17,000 were secured in the year: Somerset Catchment Partnership £5,000, Swire Charitable Trust, £10,000 and Naturesave Trust, £2,000 (this could only be spent on equipment, consumables, etc.). Grant expenditure was focused on purchasing sampling equipment, carrying out sampling and surveys and preparing concept designs for interventions for water vole conservation and management of phosphate. Some funding remains for practical delivery in 2024/25. Further grant funding will be applied for in 2024/25 with a target of £20-35k.</p>
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011	The Yeovil Wellbeing, Wildlife and Water Community Project continued to be developed.	Ongoing.	YRCT continues to deliver activities alongside Wessex Water at their Sutton Bingham site. These include guided walks and surveys. We continue to work with A2A (Able to Achieve) and have extended this to Cambian (Lufton College) and You Care We Care (Yeovil) to deliver activities to other vulnerable adults charities and their service users. Deliverables include nature walks, volunteering activities (surveys, land management, litter picking, etc.). Engagement continues with schools and other community groups and a specific project for women over 50 was initiated (Wild Women Project) which is proving to be very successful in engaging women with the environment through a broad range of activities.	Grant funding secured from The National Lottery in March 2024 for £20,000, Somerset Community Fund £12,500 between August 2023 and February 2024. Further bids to support this developing work will be submitted to private grant providers in 2023/24. We also received £515.00 payment for the provision of corporate volunteering days which is part of our new paid services income stream. This is also planned to be expanded in the 2024/25 year.
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012	<p>Upper River Yeo Catchment Strategy with Natural Flood Management (NFM) element. The NFM project element continues to be mainly funded through the Environment Agency. Overall, the project aims to prepare a detailed catchment restoration plan for implementing at the landscape scale to address identified environmental issues. The NFM element is designed to carry out co-ordinated works within parts of the catchment to build on the successful pilot scheme delivered in 2022/23. The NFM sub-project continues to grow with more landowners showing an interest in implementing NFM and Nature Based Solutions generally.</p>	Ongoing	<p>The scale of the project requires it to be delivered in phases. The phases are synchronized with the tax year as this is the basis of EA funding. Extensive stakeholder engagement is ongoing within the River Wriggle and Cam/Caundle Brook sub-catchments. The number of landowners in the Wriggle River Improvement Group (WRIG) continues to grow and up to 6 new sites are looking to accommodate NFM interventions to mitigate potential flooding and create enhanced habitat diversity. Further practical works are planned for further phases and stakeholder engagement will be expanded to new stakeholders and other sub-catchments. Slow but steady progress is being made in developing the Yeo Catchment Strategy with desktop analysis extended to the lower part of the catchment. Funding limitations are the main reason for the slow progress in this element. It is difficult to attach a deadline for completion of the strategy for this reason.</p>	<p>A £20,000 budget was secured via the EA for the 2023/24 financial year. £2000.00 was received from the Somerset Catchment Partnership to deliver practical NFM interventions at up to two sites. Funding has been secured from the EA for the 2024/25 year totalling £45,000. YRCT have commenced the registration process with Wessex Water to provide paid services to help them deliver their Phosphate Reduction Programme and hope to commence this in 2024/25 to generate additional income. YRCT also secured funding via the Dorset AONB FiPL grant Scheme for three projects for delivery in 2024/25 although YRCT was not the grant holder for any of these projects.</p>
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Financial Review

- At the end of the reporting period, the total income amounted to £103,048. The total expenditure amounted to £174,694, thus making a deficit of £71,646. Cash carried forward from the previous year of £119,504 gave a year end balance of £47,858.
- The charity does not currently have any unallocated financial reserves. The credit balance at the end of this financial year represents unspent grant funds which are committed to current projects according to the required expediency in maintaining progress. We recognize the importance of a reserve to the long-term sustainability of the trust. When further funding has been secured and the prospect of a reserve being retained becomes potentially viable, a discussion will be held among the trustees to agree the amount of unrestricted funds which should be placed in a reserve.
 - Funds in deficit - None

Financial Report

The financial status of the Yeovil Rivers Community Trust for the period ending 31st March 2024 is shown in the Accounts Form CC16a for submission to the Charity Commission.

Report Prepared by: Lorne Thomson (Chair – YRCT)

Signed



Date: 07/11/2024

Report Approved by: Josiah Knights (Trustee)

Date: 05/12/2024

Definitions & Abbreviations

BPC	Brympton Parish Council
CIO	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
EA	Environment Agency
FWAG	Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group
helophyte	plant which grows in marsh, partly submerged
HotSWEP	Heads of South West Local Business Groups
LDC	Land Drainage Consent
macrophyte	aquatic plant that grows in or near water
PA	Planning Application
SCC	Somerset County Council
SSDC	South Somerset District Council
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
YRCT	Yeovil Rivers Community Trust
YTC	Yeovil Town Council

Yeovil Rivers Community Trust
Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees
For the Period Ended 31 March 2024

Independent examiners report to the Trustees of Yeovil Rivers Community Trust

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts for Yeovil Rivers Community Trust ("the charity") for the period ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the charity'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 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the accounts do not comply with these records

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.

Michelle Ferris FCA DChA

Albert Goodman LLP
Chartered Accountants
Goodwood House
Blackbrook Park Avenue
Taunton
Somerset
TA1 2PX

Date: 23/01/2025



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Name
Rivers Community Trust

No (if any)
1180724

Receipts and payments accounts



CC16a

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01-Apr-23		31-Mar-24

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 £
A1 Receipts					
Donations	121	-	-	121	1,112
Grants		102,577	-	102,577	143,594
Service	350	-	-	350	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	471	102,577	-	103,048	144,706
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	471	102,577	-	103,048	144,706
A3 Payments					
Insurance	395	-	-	395	455
Consultancy Fees		19,930	-	19,930	27,409
Data & Services Supply		-	-	-	-
Water samples analysis		311	-	311	378
Handtools & Protective Clothing		800	-	800	1,000
Website/media	904	-	-	904	2,242
Miscellaneous /expenses		1,500	-	1,500	3,098
Project Site Works		83,353	-	83,353	53,809
Staff wages/PAYE/Pensions	4,920	62,581	-	67,501	46,328
Sub total	6,219	168,475	-	174,694	134,719
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	6,219	168,475	-	174,694	134,719
of receipts/(payments)	- 5,748	- 65,898	-	- 71,646	9,987
A5 Transfers between funds	7,000	7,000			
A6 Cash funds last year	569	118,935	-	119,504	109,517
Cash funds this year end	1,821	46,037	-	47,858	119,504

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	Bank Current Account	1,821	46,037	-
	Bank Reserve Account	-	-	-
	Cash in hand	-	-	-
	Total cash funds	1,821	46,037	-
	(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	Details			
	Balance of SCC Climate Emergency Community Fund £7058 (grant £22,400 +£542=£22942 (Additional received on	-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	General & specialised handtools	Unrestricted	500	-
	Protective clothing	Unrestricted	300	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval	
		Lorne Thomson	03/12/2024	
		Josiah Knights	04/12/2024	

