



Trustees' Report and Charity Commission return for 2023

This Trustees' Report represents the activities and results from the year January to December 2023. The document also includes plans for 2024/25 and a statement of ongoing viability. All parts of this Annual Return have been seen by the CPR Board of Trustees who have approved its content.

Aims

The Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome was founded in 2006, and in 2019 was granted charitable status as a CIO (registered charity number 1182135, company number CE016586). It is a non-denominational association whose objectives are:

- To encourage, inform, and assist those making a journey to Rome along historical pilgrimage routes on foot, bicycle or horseback.
- To promote the health and cultural benefits of journeying along ancient pilgrimage routes, learning about them and engaging with those who live along them.
- To collaborate with other organisations to support the maintenance and accessibility of pilgrimage routes to and from Rome.

Membership

The CPR is a volunteer run membership charity that is funded from donations, membership fees and sales from our on-line shop. Our active membership at December 2023 was 318 (320 at December 2022), most of whom were from English-speaking countries: 43% of our members are UK based, 30% from the USA and Canada, 17% from Australia and New Zealand and 10% from other countries.

Activities in 2023

Our annual conference in March is the main opportunity for members to meet in-person and over 50 attended our 2023 meeting in Greenwich. The March 2024 Conference was planned and a venue at St George's RC Cathedral in Southwark was booked.

There was also an on-line conference for overseas members and others who could not attend the Greenwich meeting. The main conference speaker, Sandy Brown, gave his presentation on line which was attended by over 20 members.

The Greenwich conference was preceded by an organised walk from London Bridge to Greenwich attended by over 20 members. Another walk, between Canterbury and Dover was organised in May and attended by 9 members.

Members benefitted from four e-newsletters and one printed newsletter in 2023 and CPR paid for the translation into English of the annual update of the French accommodation guide which was then sold through the CPR shop. The CPR volunteer team handled an estimated 500 plus email enquiries during the year.

The volunteer team continued to build strong relationships with European partners (EAVF, FFVF) and UK partners (Canterbury and Dover Councils, British Pilgrimage Trust, Pilgrim Ways and many local churches and groups on the Via Francigena). The CPR President and three new trustees attended the EAVF Conference in Calais in May. The President also attended the September EAVF Conference in Pavia as part of on-going negotiations to have an extension of the Via Francigena (VF) between London and Canterbury, the Francigena Britannica, formally recognised.

A major focus of 2023 has been to strengthen our day to day arrangements for running the charity's key services. A new website was designed and launched in October with improved facilities for on-line orders and payments. This prompted the design of a new logo and a more prominent trading name *Pilgrims to Rome*.

Personnel and Governance

The CPR is a volunteer run charity but, with increasing world-wide interest in the Via Francigena (VF), the work load has continued to grow. The decision in 2022 to routinely engage a part-time, self-employed book-keeper has been highly successful and a major factor in the smooth running of the charity's finances in 2023. We have also engaged self-employed personnel and companies for specific pieces of work (eg website design, translation work, printing and design). In early 2024 we will out-source the routine fulfilment of orders from our on-line shop to improve our capacity and reliability.

The Board of trustees welcomed four new trustees at the 2023 AGM, with one of them, Nick Dunne, taking over as Chair from Carlo Laurenzi who continues to be successful and active in the new role of President. With no physical office base, the trustees and one long term volunteer Membership Secretary share all the day to day operational and governance responsibilities by working from homes across the UK and meeting at least twice a year in person and at least twice by Zoom. Sub-groups meet by telephone, Zoom or in-person to progress specific areas of work, including finance and on-going projects.

At December 2023, the trustees were: Nick Dunne (Chair), Brian Mooney (Vice Chair), Robert White (Treasurer), Vince Rollason (Deputy Treasurer), Julia Lewis (Canterbury Rep), John Godfrey, Alex Knox, David Matthews, Eamonn Mullaly. Our volunteers were Carlo Laurenzi (President) and Tim Greig (Membership Secretary). During 2023, Mary Kirk (Editor) and Stephen Bradshaw (Shop) retired from their volunteer roles and their duties were taken on by Nick Dunne and Julia Lewis. All trustee meetings have been quorate.

Plans for 2024/2025

2024 is the 30th anniversary of the recognition of the VF as a European Cultural Route. To mark the occasion, we will organise a short ceremony in March at the British Library where the original document of Archbishop Sigeric's route dating from AD 990 is held.

We will progress our application to EAVF for recognition of the Francigena Britannica as a formal extension of the VF route and, if successful, aim to launch the route in 2025.

We will consolidate the outsourcing of the fulfilment of orders through our on-line shop and our arrangements for Canterbury Cathedral to stock the CPR Pilgrim Passports.

We will hold our annual conference in March and an on-line version soon after and begin to plan similar events for 2025.

We will assess opportunities to support activities linked to the 2025 Jubilee Year in Rome and the 2025 Pilgrim Festival planned for Canterbury.

We will continue to update information on the website and improve the design of our annual magazine.

We will be prudent with our finances and manage all our activities within the funds that we have.

Management of Risks

The risks to CPR's on-going activities posed by the COVID pandemic and BREXIT are diminishing. Pilgrim numbers on the VF are rising again and this is reflected in our stable membership levels and shop sales.

The risk of our volunteer capacity being unable to cope with routine work-loads and therefore being unable to sustain our core services and income through shop sales and membership is being managed by greater use of outsourcing to paid agents on affordable terms and scrutiny of project proposals for costs and affordability. We are also seeking to strengthen arrangements to cover key tasks should individual volunteers/trustees become unavailable.

Statement of Viability

The charity's income fell to £17,048 in 2023 (compared to £21,008 in 2022) due to there being no new restricted income received for specific new projects. Expenditure increased to £21,158 (£18,829 in 2022) due to investment in the new website and new (rebranded) shop stock. This resulted in an end of year deficit of £4,109 (surplus in 2022 of £2,179). Charity funds in reserve therefore fell to £7,947 at December 31, 2023 (£11,701 at December 31, 2022). Trustees have set a reserves policy of having between 6 and 12 months of essential core operating costs in reserve to protect against sudden significant income loss and ensure that the charity's basic infrastructure commitments can be fulfilled. Current reserves are the equivalent of 9 months of these essential operating costs.

The new extended team of trustees and volunteers has brought extra capacity to the charity and trustees are confident of the charity's future viability.

Nick Dunne

Chair of Trustees

28 February, 2024 and approved by Trustees at the AGM on 20 April 2024

Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome

Budget vs. Actuals: CPR Budget 2023 - FY23 P&L

January - December 2023

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Income				
INCOME				
Donations and legacies	44.90		44.90	
Gift Aid	472.76	2,000.00	-1,527.24	23.638%
On Line shop sales				
On Line shop sales - product	8,034.26	6,200.00	1,834.26	129.58484%
On Line shop sales - shipping	2,381.44		2,381.44	
Total On Line shop sales	10,415.70	6,200.00	4,215.70	167.99516%
Sales of Product Income	96.85		96.85	
Services	25.00		25.00	
Subscriptions	5,993.00	6,000.00	-7.00	99.88333%
Total INCOME	17,048.21	14,200.00	2,848.21	120.05782%
Total Income	£17,048.21	£14,200.00	£2,848.21	120.05782%
TOTAL	£17,048.21	£14,200.00	£2,848.21	120.05782%
Expenditures				
Annual Conference & other events	803.77	1,000.00	-196.23	80.377%
Annual conference exps	618.11		618.11	
Total Annual Conference & other events	1,421.88	1,000.00	421.88	142.188%
Books for shop	977.07		977.07	
COMMS				
FFVF booklet	1,175.03		1,175.03	
Print newsletter	2,142.97		2,142.97	
Zoom	158.27		158.27	
Total COMMS	3,476.27		3,476.27	
F&GP		2,265.00	-2,265.00	
Accounting software	493.82	990.00	-496.18	49.88081%
Insurances	365.12		365.12	
Paypal commission	801.77		801.77	
Travel and Accommodation	196.69	1,000.00	-803.31	19.669%
Total F&GP	1,857.40	4,255.00	-2,397.60	43.65217%
IT Costs				
Mail Chimp fees	186.51		186.51	
Website Development				
Web dev & maintenance	5,062.90	1,920.00	3,142.90	263.69271%
Total Website Development	5,062.90	1,920.00	3,142.90	263.69271%
Total IT Costs	5,249.41	1,920.00	3,329.41	273.40677%
London Canterbury route	250.00	1,000.00	-750.00	25.00%
Merchandising Investment	1,470.10	770.00	700.10	190.92208%
Office/General Administrative Expenses	1,277.68	1,200.00	77.68	106.47333%
Other Professional Services	445.79		445.79	
Pilgrim Festival	40.00		40.00	
Shipping/Postage				
Printing, Postage and Stationery	4,274.83	3,130.00	1,144.83	136.57604%
Total Shipping/Postage	4,274.83	3,130.00	1,144.83	136.57604%
Shop stock	417.60		417.60	

Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome

Budget vs. Actuals: CPR Budget 2023 - FY23 P&L

January - December 2023

	TOTAL			
	ACTUAL	BUDGET	OVER BUDGET	% OF BUDGET
Total Expenditures	£21,158.03	£13,275.00	£7,883.03	159.38252%
NET OPERATING INCOME	£ -4,109.82	£925.00	£ -5,034.82	-444.30486%
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	£ -4,109.82	£925.00	£ -5,034.82	-444.30486%

Confraternity of Pilgrims to Rome

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2023

	TOTAL
Fixed Asset	
Total Fixed Asset	
Cash at bank and in hand	
Cooperative bank	0.00
Metro bank	7,342.05
Paypal	628.14
Total Cash at bank and in hand	£7,970.19
Debtors	
Debtors	0.00
Total Debtors	£0.00
Current Assets	
Allowance for bad debts	0.00
Stock of books	0.00
Total Current Assets	£0.00
NET CURRENT ASSETS	£7,970.19
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	
Current Liabilities	
Accruals	360.63
Accrued income	-337.50
VAT Control	0.00
Total Current Liabilities	£23.13
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	£23.13
NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	£7,947.06
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	£7,947.06
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	
Prepayments	0.00
Total Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year	£0.00
TOTAL NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	£7,947.06
Charity funds	
Opening Balance Equity	0.00
Retained Earnings	12,056.88
Surplus/(Deficit)	-4,109.82
Total Charity funds	£7,947.06