

THE AVON AND ARROW GREENWAY PROJECT

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

**Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Charity number: 1188324**

THE AVON AND ARROW GREENWAY PROJECT

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

Trustees

Jeremy Harvey	Chair
Liam Maude	Vice Chair
Colin Tether	Secretary
Daryl Bailey	Treasurer

Principal Office

44 Dunnington
ALCESTER
B49 5NX

Registered CIO Number 1188324

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS – 31 MARCH 2021

Pages

- 3. Report of the Trustees
- 4. Report of the Chair of the Trustees
- 7. Financial Report for the period

THE AVON AND ARROW GREENWAY PROJECT

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

The trustees present their annual report and the unaudited accounts of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation ("CIO") for the period ended 31 March 2021.

The organisation became a registered CIO on 4 March 2020.

Charitable Objects

The objects of the CIO are to promote and encourage in the Avon and Arrow river valleys in Warwickshire and Worcestershire for the public benefit the development and provision of safe routes, paths and facilities for cyclists, walkers and persons with disabilities and to undertake such projects and activities of a charitable nature which will assist in promoting health, wellbeing and the protection of the environment.

Activities

Activities include the promotion of cycling and walking environments and infrastructure within the valleys of the rivers Avon and Arrow in Worcestershire and Warwickshire to support the creation of traffic free leisure paths linking rural communities to the principal towns in the area. The paths will support health and wellbeing, local tourism and responsible cycling for all ages and abilities.

Trustees

The trustees of the CIO who served during the period were:

D Bailey	(appointed 4 th March 2020)
J Harvey	(appointed 4 th March 2020)
L Maude	(appointed 4 th March 2020)
C Tether	(appointed 4 th March 2020)

Acknowledgements

The trustees acknowledge the ongoing support received from its stakeholders and Sustrans during the period.

Signed by order of the board of trustees

J Harvey
Chair

Approved by the board 1st June 2021

THE AVON AND ARROW GREENWAY PROJECT

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE TRUSTEES

Route 1 – Evesham to Alcester

Salford Priors Parish Council made a brave and far sighted decision in early 2018. Through their Neighbourhood Plan process, they called a meeting of adjoining parishes extending to Alcester Town Council to the north and Evesham Town Council to the south. Their purpose was to investigate the potential of developing pathways for walkers and cyclists across parish boundaries.

It soon became clear that there was enthusiasm for such a project among the parishes. The route would be based on the old railway line between the two towns that closed in 1962 and would run along a 10-mile spine route between Alcester and Evesham. As a result of that first meeting it was agreed to set up a group and take the challenge on. That group was comprised of representatives from the parish and town councils of Alcester, Bidford on Avon, Cleeve Prior, Evesham, Exhall, Harvington, North and Middle Littleton, Norton and Lenchwick, Offenham, Salford Priors and Wixford. It was originally called the Cross Parish Cycle and Pathways Project (CPCPP) but this was changed soon after to the Avon to Arrow Greenway Project (AAGP).

An early decision was taken to commission and fund a Feasibility Study for the project from 'Sustrans', the National Sustainable Transport Charity. This excellent comprehensive study has formed the basis for the work of the group since then.

We have made very significant progress over the last two years or so since then. We have properly established the organisation, gained charitable status and worked hard to start the implementation of the Sustrans Feasibility Study. From the start the AAGP's strategy has been to progress through forming positive partnerships and we now have all Town and Parish Councils along the proposed route supporting us both in principle and financially. We are in discussions with major local landowners and have the strong backing of organisations such as the Heart of England Forest and the Avon Navigation Trust.

Adding the Broom to Stratford upon Avon Route

Early in 2020, an approach was made by a representative of the Bidford Health Centre Patient Participation Group (BHCPPG) about extending the AAGP route from Bidford Village to the Health Centre. The Health Centre is located close to the old railway line which used to run from Broom to Stratford upon Avon and closed in 1960. It is located about a mile from the centre of Bidford on the B439 which has no footways so walking the Health Centre is not an option. The BHCPPG representative felt using the old railway line from Bidford village was an option to provide a good route with health benefits. AAGP Officers have met with BHCPPG and subsequently held a site meeting. Initial investigation of land ownership and other enquiries have shown that there seems to be a very good prospect of a continuous route to Stratford upon Avon being possible along the old railway line. This route, around 7.5 miles, would link up with an existing shared pedestrian cycle way within Stratford town along the old railway line, past Stratford Racecourse and join to the existing very popular Stratford Greenway.

THE AVON AND ARROW GREENWAY PROJECT

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE TRUSTEES

This route passes through the parishes of Bidford on Avon, Binton, Temple Grafton, Luddington and Stratford upon Avon and close to Welford on Avon. The route is wholly contained within Stratford upon Avon District Council and Warwickshire County Council areas. Contact has been made with senior officers and politicians including the sitting MP and a close working relationship established with Luddington Parish Council who are particularly active regarding their footpaths and cycleways.

There is widespread support in principle and a key part of the AAGP's strategic approach is to establish the project as an element of future infrastructure planning at all political levels. This approach is vital in order to open up the opportunity for substantial funding via government grants.

The Broom to Stratford upon Avon spine route matters because:

- The link will be an important part of the off road network being developed in the area and would link up with both the AAGP spine route and the existing Stratford Greenway.
- The link will allow longer journeys to be made to between the three historic towns Alcester, Evesham and Stratford and would have massive tourist potential.
- The inclusion of Stratford upon Avon will substantially increase the profile of the AAGP and could become a key tourist amenity as well as having massive local benefits.

As a result, the AAGP is now commissioning a further Feasibility Study from Sustrans to identify potential routes and their costs so we can build an evidence based business case to take to our politicians and landowners.

Like everything else the project has been hit hard by the consequences of Covid 19 since the first lock down in March 2020. Despite this we have made positive progress through regular Zoom meetings and updated the wider working group with virtual meetings and regular Newsletters. We believe that with the exciting partnership we have with Salford Priors Parish Council and the three landowners involved, it is possible we will see work on the section from Salford Priors to Wixford begin before the end of 2022. The opening up of a significant stretch of the route will undoubtedly give the AAGP a huge boost in terms of both profile and credibility.

The potential is enormous – consider the impact of opening up such an ambitious network of paths and cycleways giving access to the rich environment that surrounds us. It offers the opportunity to build on the new enthusiasm for walking and cycling which is one of the few good things that the pandemic has given us. It will accelerate the situation where children and adults alike rely less on cars and public transport getting to school and to work respectively. That the route crosses District and County boundaries only increases its already huge potential value and offers the opportunity for a wider partnership of those working to see this project succeed.

THE AVON AND ARROW GREENWAY PROJECT

REPORT OF THE CHAIR OF THE TRUSTEES

It really is something worth fighting for – a new Greenway with spines from Evesham to Alcester and Broom to Stratford linking to the existing and well used Stratford Greenway from the Racecourse.

My thanks go to all those who have supported and helped the AAGP over the last year. In particular parish, district and county council members and officers already themselves under pressure. Special mention goes to Salford Priors Parish Council who we have been working so closely with and to Jo Fleeman, parish clerk for Luddington Parish Council and the Council itself for its generous donation. We are also extremely grateful for donations during the period from Evesham Town Council, Worcestershire County Council and Broom Action Group.

I would also like to offer personal thanks to all on the AAGP executive, Colin, Daryl, Jill and Liam who have put in so much time and effort to keep our project moving under very challenging circumstances. Finally, a big thank you to Martin Philpott from Sustrans for his continuing guidance, support and expertise. It has been very exciting to be a part of such a great team. We are very hopeful that we will see much faster progress as we return to a more normal world over the next weeks and months.

J Harvey
Chair

THE AVON AND ARROW GREENWAY PROJECT
FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 31 MARCH 2021

£

Income:

Donation from Evesham Town Council	1,500.00
Donation from Worcestershire County Council	2,235.00
Donation from Broom Action Group	500.00
Donation from Luddington Parish Council	500.00
	<hr/> 4,735.00

Expenses:

Hire of Village Hall	(9.00)
AAGP website	(547.98)
Professional Indemnity Insurance	(244.00)
HM Land registry fees	(103.00)

Total income less expenditure	<hr/> 3,831.02 <hr/>
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Balance sheet:

Cash at bank	5,996.02
Accrual - hire of Broom Village Hall	(45.00)
Accrual - land registry fees	(28.00)

5,923.02

Reserves b/fwd	2,092.00
Income less expenditure in period	3,831.02

Reserves c/fwd	<hr/> 5,923.02 <hr/>
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Accounts prepared by D Bailey, Treasurer