

BRADLEY CANAL RESTORATION SOCIETY

England & Wales · Charity number 1188375

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2020-03-06

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE:1. TO PRESERVE AND RESTORE THE BRADLEY CANAL TO GOOD AND NAVIGABLE ORDER FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC, BOTH LOCALS AND VISITORS, ABOUT THE REGION'S PROUD INDUSTRIAL HISTORY, CANALS AND WATERWAYS, WILDLIFE AND THE ENVIRONMENT.2. TO CONSERVE AND ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT BY LINKING TWO EXISTING WATER HABITATS AND NATURE CORRIDORS BY EXCAVATING AND RESTORING BURIED SECTIONS OF THE BRADLEY CANAL, PROVIDING A NEW WETLAND HABITAT, ALLOWING GREATER MOVEMENT OF SPECIES AND ENCOURAGING BIODIVERSITY, WHICH CAN BE ENJOYED BY LOCAL RESIDENTS AND VISITORS.

Activities: Our activities relate to the conservation and preservation of the Bradley Canal. Through fund-raising, volunteering, awareness-raising and community engagement, we intend to reinstate a stretch of waterway to benefit health, wellbeing, wildlife, environment and general usage of the canal and environment.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Sandwell
- Walsall
- Wolverhampton

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£6,827	£4,484	-	-
2024-03-31	£3,472	£4,529	-	-
2023-03-31	£4,434	£4,272	-	-
2022-03-31	£4,693	£3,892	-	-
2021-05-01	£5,787	£1,102	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
David Arthur Pearson	Chair	2020-03-05
Darren Clift		2020-03-05
Emily Irene Clift		2020-03-05
Gavin Mark Hawkins		2020-03-05
ROBERT DAVID FOX		2021-04-20

BRADLEY CANAL RESTORATION SOCIETY

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Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Annual Trustees Report 2024-25

General Update

We continue to make progress with our plans for restoration, which now includes a regular dialogue with the Leader of Wolverhampton City Council, Cllr. Stephen Simkins and colleagues from the regeneration and transport teams. Prior to the West Midland Combined Authority Mayoral elections, we also benefited from the support of Andy Street. However, since the change of Mayor, it has proved difficult to re-engage with the Combined Authority, but the association will continue to strive to meet with colleagues at the Combined Authority to share our plans. Both organisations are critical to our plans as we move forward and we are committed to pursuing similar relationships with both Sandwell and Walsall, as the scheme is located within area adjacent to both regions.

Commissioning a detailed and fully costed Feasibility Study is a vital next step in the long-term restoration of the Bradley Canal. The study will provide a robust evidence base to assess technical viability, environmental and heritage considerations, delivery options, and realistic costings and timescales. Over the past year, the Society has undertaken fundraising activities, and received donations from members and supporters, to fund this work and is now seeking additional grant funding to enable the Feasibility Study to be commissioned. Securing this investment will allow the Society to progress with confidence, strengthen future funding applications, and move from aspiration towards a deliverable restoration project.

Our relationship with the Canal & River Trust continues to be central to both our current activity and our long-term sustainability. Colleagues from the CRT Bradley Workshop and the West Midlands area office have provided significant support throughout the year, contributing to the planning and delivery of the Bradley Canal Festival, supporting volunteer work parties through training and guidance, and helping to raise community awareness via regular health walks delivered in partnership with Bilston Urban Village Medical Centre.

In last year's report we explained how a relationship has been developed with Kennedys Law to support the update and further development of our policies and procedures, on a pro-bono basis and how they could support our future work through their corporate social responsibility activities. This has resulted in the production of essential statutory policies and guidance, and we look forward to continuing to benefit from Kennedys Law in the future.

During the year we have had the opportunity to present to other local organisations and canal societies. As part of our partnership with the Birmingham Canal Navigation Society, we organised a series of guided walks to complement their Explorer Cruises. These walks provided participants with the opportunity to explore the canal's history, heritage, and

natural environment in greater depth. The walks, alongside guided tours of the Bradley Workshop helped to engage a wider audience, promote local heritage, and foster a deeper appreciation of the canal restoration scheme and its surroundings. Further such walks and presentations are planned for the new year and are an excellent opportunity to share our plans with the wider community and generate interest in the restoration and hopefully add capacity to the Society.

Work Parties

With regular monthly gatherings and a consistent group of attendees, we continue to see considerable advances in clearing and maintaining the stretch of canal from Moorcroft Junction to the bottom lock and the area above, up to Bilston Road bridge.

Significant work has been undertaken to expose the pounds in the vicinity of locks eight and nine, which has allowed for a greater flow of water through the culverted locks. We are now in discussions with CRT regarding the use of machinery to excavate the full extent of the pounds.

Ongoing management of the canal environment, including the regular removal of overhanging branches and the clearing of Himalayan Balsam and other low-level vegetation, has greatly enhanced the appearance and accessibility of the area. These efforts by our dedicated work parties have not gone unnoticed, with frequent positive feedback from local residents and visitors highlighting the tangible benefits of our work.

In addition to general maintenance, the careful placement of logs and natural materials has been used to create microhabitats, supporting insect populations and contributing to local biodiversity.

Litter picking remains an important part of our work, as littering continues to be a challenge. Our consistent efforts have fostered strong community engagement, with local residents and walkers regularly expressing appreciation for the improvements to the canal environment. These activities not only maintain the area's beauty but also encourage community stewardship and a sense of shared ownership of this important local green space.

As always, we take this opportunity to record our thanks to both the Birmingham Canal Navigations Society and Canal & River Trust for their support and of course to all the volunteers who, through their efforts, have made such good progress.

The Black Country Canals Strategy 2024-2029

The Society was pleased to attend the launch of the Black Country Canals Strategy 2024-29, on 18th October 2024, at the Black Country Living Museum. This is an important step in shaping the future direction of the area's waterways. The Strategy includes references to the restoration of the Bradley Canal, recognising its heritage significance, environmental value, potential contribution to regeneration and community wellbeing and a local authority aim and an active project:

"Restoration of the Bradley Arm Canal in Bilston to reconnect the Birmingham Main Line and Walsall Canal Line, whilst creating the existing active travel route along the corridor and ensuring that restoration does not sever existing connectivity between communities on either side of it. This will create a significant urban ecological corridor restoration project, linking with Moorcroft Wood Local Nature Reserve, which is a geosite in the Black Country Global Geopark"

This formal recognition within a strategic document strengthens the case for future investment and provides an important framework for partnership working with local authorities, funders, and delivery organisations. Attendance at the launch enabled the Society to raise the profile of the restoration project, engage with key stakeholders, and position the Bradley Canal as a credible and integral element of long-term regional planning. Further details and a copy of the strategy can be found here:

<https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us/where-we-work/west-midlands/black-country-canal-strategy-2024-2029>

Bradley Canal Festival

The Bradley Canal Festival continues to play a vital role in raising the profile of the restoration project and celebrating the canal's heritage within the local community. The event provides an important opportunity to engage residents, visitors, and partner organisations, helping to increase awareness of the Society's work and its long-term ambitions. The festival also generates valuable income through stalls, activities, and donations, while acting as a key route for recruiting new volunteers who often first encounter the Society through the event.

However, the scale and success of the festival also bring significant challenges. Planning, coordinating, and delivering the event requires a substantial commitment of time and effort from a small number of dedicated volunteers. Tasks include securing permissions, managing logistics, coordinating partners and stallholders, marketing the event, and ensuring health and safety compliance. While the Festival remains a highly valued and successful occasion, its organisation places increasing pressure on volunteer capacity. The Society therefore appeals for additional support from members, volunteers, and partners to help share the workload and ensure the festival remains sustainable in the future.

In light of these pressures, the Society is exploring the option of delivering the Bradley Canal Festival on a bi-annual basis. Moving to a two-year cycle would allow sufficient time for planning, fundraising, and volunteer recruitment, while reducing the risk of volunteer fatigue. A bi-annual approach would also create opportunities to develop a larger, higher-quality event, strengthen partnerships, and increase overall impact, while continuing to use smaller activities and engagement events in intervening years to maintain visibility and

community involvement. This approach would help ensure that the festival remains a positive, well-managed, and sustainable celebration of the Bradley Canal for years to come.

If you feel you can help, with the planning or on the actual day, please contact us on info@bradleycanal.co.uk

Priorities for 2025-26

- Collaborate with Canal & River Trust engineers to explore clearing infill within the pounds at locks 8 and 9, improving navigation potential and enhancing the canal environment.
- Partner with local businesses to raise the profile of the restoration scheme, attract external support, and develop opportunities through corporate social responsibility initiatives.
- Identify and pursue grant funding opportunities to resource specific restoration and environmental improvement projects.
- Continue to work with City of Wolverhampton Council and other partners to secure grant assistance for the Canal Restoration feasibility study.
- Commission the Feasibility Study to provide a robust evidence base for future planning, informed decision-making, and strengthened funding applications.
- Undertake a LiDAR survey of the canal corridor to support the restoration programme and identify the most viable options for crossing Bradley Lane.
- Engage with the School of Built Environment at the University of Wolverhampton to explore opportunities for research collaboration, technical expertise and student involvement in the restoration project.
- Expand the skills, capacity and expertise of the Executive Committee through the recruitment of additional members, strengthening governance and long-term sustainability.
- Build and maintain strong, collaborative relationships with Sandwell and Walsall Councils to support effective communication and shared strategic objectives.
- Continue to deliver the annual Bradley Canal Festival, increasing attendance and deepening community engagement with the canal and its heritage.

The targets will be the focus for Executive Committee meetings during the year, and progress will be reported back at the Annual General Meeting.



Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Financial Report 2024-25

This report reflects the financial position of the association from 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

Gift Aid continues to be reflected in the accounts, and we would encourage members, who are UK taxpayers, to indicate as such when they renew.

As explained last year, the change of date for membership renewals resulted in reduced membership income as members who paid during the year would have their date deferred to the new April 1st date. Following the new membership period we have seen membership income return to previous levels.

Statement of Accounts: 1st April 2024 – 31st March 2025

	2024-25	2023-24
Income		
Subscriptions	£ 1,482.00	£ 858.68
Donations	£ 3,860.00	£ 1,607.00
Gift Aid	£ 43.31	£ 33.17
Charitable Giving	£ 229.79	£ 54.69
Bradley Canal Festival	£ 1,212.72	£ 918.50
Total	£ 6,827.82	£ 3,472.04
Expenditure		
Equipment	£ 82.27	£ 314.82
Insurance	£ 562.24	£ 389.76
Administration	£ 1,352.07	£ 2,077.58
Subscriptions	£ 363.00	£ 285.40
Event Costs	£ 120.44	£ 134.75
Accountancy Fees	N/A	£ 400.00
Printing	£ 1,326.11	£ 427.76
Bradley Canal Festival	£ 678.47	£ 499.28
Total	£ 4,484.60	£ 4,529.35
Balance	<u>£ 2,343.22</u>	<u>£ -1,057.31</u>

G Hawkins (Hon. Treasurer) – 5th April 2025

BRADLEY CANAL RESTORATION SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1188375

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Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Annual General Meeting – 1st May 2024

Annual Trustees Report

General Update

We continue to make progress with our plans for restoration, which now include a regular dialogue with both the West Midlands Combined Authority and Wolverhampton City Council. Both organisations are critical to our plans as we move forward. To this end, several meetings and visits to the site have been held with Andy Street (the West Midlands Mayor) and his colleagues, which has resulted in the BCRS being named within his re-election manifesto and a commitment to support the funding of a much-needed Feasibility Study, which will provide us with the evidence and underpin the business case for restoration funding. Andy Street was joined on his most recent visit by Sir Michael Fabricant MP, (Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group for the Waterways), who was keen to discuss the impact of the restoration on the local community, including visitor economy, health benefits and the environment.

In addition, we now meet regularly with the Leader of Wolverhampton City Council, Cllr Stephen Simkins (a member of the Society), who has committed the City Council to assisting with the funding for the Feasibility Study and who is willing to allocate council resource to support our aims. Our relationship with Wolverhampton City Council is particularly important due to the location of the restoration scheme, and we now need to pursue similar relationships with both Sandwell and Walsall

Our relationship with Canal & River Trust is essential to our current and future success. Colleagues both locally at the CRT Bradley Workshop and regionally at the West Midlands area office are supporting us in a range of ways, including with the planning and delivery of the Bradley Canal Festival, support with the work parties by providing training for volunteers and raising awareness through their regular health walks, organised in partnership with the Bilston Urban Village Medical Centre. These walks are proving beneficial in several ways by promoting the health benefits of walking, improving mindfulness, and showcasing the recreational opportunities along the canal, thus reinforcing CRT's message that "Life is better by water".

We have held a number of meetings with local businesses and organisations, including Warburton's, which backs onto the canal at Moorcroft Wood to explore opportunities for grant funding and their corporate social responsibility agenda. The conversations are ongoing, as we look to develop this relationship to hopefully include a more formal working relationship and opportunities to contribute to our committee.

In addition, a relationship has been developed with Kennedys Law to support the update and further development of our policies and procedures, on a pro-bono basis and how they could support our future work through their corporate social responsibility activities.

Members will recall that at last year's AGM we were joined by Graham Whorton, who explained the significance of the Black Country GeoPark and the significance of the Bradley Canal within the Geopark. Following Graham's presentation, we were then invited to meet with UNESCO Assessors on their evaluation trip to gather evidence in support of the GeoPark's re-designation. This group of international visitors were genuinely interested in the historical significance of canals within the context of geological heritage and the development of the Black Country.

During the year we have also had the opportunity to present to other local organisations and canal societies. These have included Wolverhampton Archaeology group, who have committed to some investigative work at the site of the lock-keepers cottage, the Black Country Society, for whom we delivered one of the Summer Walks along the route of the restoration, and a presentation to the Worcester-Birmingham and Droitwich Canals Society. All of these events are an opportunity to share our plans with the wider community and generate interest in the restoration and hopefully add capacity to the Society.

During the year, our Chair, Dave Pearson took the decision to stand down for personal reasons and Rod Griffin, in his role as Vice-Chair, took the reins for the remainder of the year. Rod has indicated that he will not seek election as Chair for health reasons but will remain as a member of the Committee and will contribute to our ongoing work. The Committee wishes to place on record our sincere thanks to both Dave and Rod for their huge contributions. At the AGM, we will seek to elect a new Chair and Vice-Chair.

Work Parties

With 12-15 regular attendees, the year to date has seen considerable advances in clearing and maintaining the stretch of canal from Moorcroft Junction to the bottom lock and the area above, up to Bilston Road bridge, through our regular work parties on the third Saturday of each month.

Removing dead wood, overhanging branches, and clearing Himalayan Balsam and other low-level vegetation has enhanced the area. Careful placement of logs has created microenvironments for insects. The by-wash adjacent to lock number eight has been exposed above and below the lower end of the lock. The old arm below the flight has been identified and work has commenced on clearing the infill and vegetation. Additionally, work has been done to straighten steel rails atop the fencing along the towpath down to Moorcroft Junction, bent over the years by falling trees from the adjacent woods.

Litter picking continues as littering remains a challenging theme. Local residents and walkers remain interested and appreciative of our efforts to improve the environment.

We take this opportunity to record our thanks to both the Birmingham Canal Navigations Society and Canal & River Trust for their support and of course to all the volunteers who through their efforts have made such good progress.

Bradley Canal Festival

Our second Bradley Canal Festival, held in June, was again well attended, even though the weather wasn't quite as kind as the year before! The next festival will be held on the 15th June and is set to become a regular fixture on the local calendar.

The festival is a significant undertaking for us and needs considerable planning and organising on the day. However, the benefits are significant, both from an awareness raising perspective, and as a revenue stream. Whilst we aren't looking to make a large profit, we do need to cover costs and hopefully generate income from stall holders, raffles, donations, new members, etc.

Other canal festivals across the region benefit enormously from this level of profile and it would be valuable to the Society to organise an event each year in Bradley. We are indebted to our friends at the Birmingham Canal Navigation Society, IWA, and CRT, all of whom make a huge contribution to the day, from running the bar, delivering workshop tours, organising boat trips, and preparing the site in advance of the day.

To make this a successful day, we do need support from members and supporters. If you feel you can help, with the planning or on the actual day please contact us on info@bradleycanal.co.uk

Targets for 2024-25

- Explore with CRT engineers the possibility of clearing the infill within the pounds at locks 8 and 9.
- Engage with local business to raise the profile of the scheme and explore opportunities for funding and/or their corporate social responsibility agenda.
- Explore opportunities for additional fundraising by identifying suitable grant applications to undertake specific pieces of work.
- Commission a Feasibility Study to inform future business planning and funding applications.
- Further expand the expertise of the Executive Committee by recruiting additional committee members
- Pursue contacts with both Sandwell and Walsall Councils to further develop positive relationships and meaningful communication.
- Continue to organise the annual Bradley Canal Festival, with increased numbers of attendees.

The targets will be the focus for Executive Committee meetings during the year and progress will be reported back at the Annual General Meeting in 2025.



Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Financial Report 2023-24

This report reflects the financial position of the association from 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

Gift Aid continues to be reflected in the accounts, and we would encourage members, who are UK taxpayers, to indicate as such when they renew.

A rule change, agreed at last year's AGM, brought all membership renewals in line with a consistent date (1st April) to make the renewals process simpler and to aid cashflow forecasting. As expected, this has resulted in reduced membership income as members who paid during the year would have their date deferred to the new April 1st date. We have now instigated the new membership period which should see membership income rise next year.

Statement of Accounts: 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024

	2023-24	2022-23
Income		
Subscriptions	£ 858.68	£ 1,792.14
Donations	£ 1,607.00	£ 2,238.00
Gift Aid	£ 33.17	£ 155.07
Amazon Smile	£ 54.69	£ 84.43
Bradley Canal Festival	£ 918.50	£ 165.00
Total	£ 3,472.04	£ 4,434.64
Expenditure		
Equipment	£ 314.82	£ 256.03
Insurance	£ 389.76	£ 600.37
Administration	£ 2,077.58	£ 2,029.48
Subscriptions	£ 285.40	£ 249.00
Event Costs	£ 134.75	£ 99.15
Professional Services	N/A	£ 360.00
Accountancy Fees	£ 400.00	£ 400.00
Printing	£ 427.76	£ 278.33
Bradley Canal Festival	£ 499.28	
Total	£ 4,529.35	£ 4,272.36
Balance	<u>£ -1,057.31</u>	<u>£ 162.28</u>

G Hawkins (Hon. Treasurer) – 5th April 2024

BRADLEY CANAL RESTORATION SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1188375

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Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Annual General Meeting – 26th April 2023

Chair of Trustees Report

General Update

Last year I reported that Rod was negotiating for a ground survey to be undertaken by BRIC (Brownfield Research & Innovation Centre) on the infilled locks. We need to establish what materials were used when the locks were infilled in the 1960s. This will enable us to determine if digging out by volunteers is practical or if grossly polluted infill, then it will be an expensive task by approved contractors. This unfortunately didn't happen, and BRIC has now been wound up as the funding, which was EU derived, has now ended. Wolverhampton University may be doing a comparable replacement programme, so all is not yet lost! Thank you, Rod.

Shortly after our last AGM a newly updated Nicholson Guide, covering our area was published. These are one of the most popular canal guides for boaters and has been completely updated. The rather unfavorable comments in the previous edition have been replaced, and whilst not glowing recommendations, at least they should encourage boaters to venture off the Main Line and explore the truncated loop. Our proposed restoration is shown by a broken red line that will inform guide users of our intentions. BCRS also gets a mention in the text. Thanks are due to Ivor for introducing us to the author.

As in previous years, thanks are due to the rest of the team. Emily for producing very prompt and accurate minutes of our meetings; in years to come these will form a valuable part of our archive. Darren is continuing to look after our Facebook Presence now ably assisted by Tom. Gavin as well as being our Treasurer looks after "The Arm" newsletter. Our membership is slowly growing & now stands at 215. Thank you, John, for continuing this work. All this voluntary work is carried out in addition to them having full time employment. Simon, having reduced his hours at WCC is continuing to support us. Ivor has resigned from the Executive Committee, due to the pressure of other voluntary work but will continue to support us when he can.

Our monthly work parties on the 3rd Saturday of the month continue on the truncated canal arm from Moorcroft Junction to Great Bridge Road, currently meeting under the Metro Bridge. A good regular team have been making a vast difference; you can now see where the canal is! On a recent Saturday we arrived to find that vandals had chipped 50+ coping stones off the edging that the ladies had exposed. These were collected and now safely stored for future reinstating. Nearly all of the overhanging tree boughs have been removed and a major cutting back of the area west of the Metro Bridge exposed a large area of land. This

we have grass seeded, seeds courtesy of Aaron at CRT. Our next task, as well as clearing more of the channel towards Moorcroft junction, is to attack the Himalayan Balsam to try and arrest it spreading. The support of the BCNS with tools and the pick-up truck makes all this possible. Too many individuals to name but thanks to all.

Maybe a one-off event, but on March the 18th we hosted the Northern Canal Association twice yearly meeting using the excellent facilities of Wilkinson School. The 50+ participants from restoration groups all over the UK, were split into two groups and in turn visited the workshops and went on a walk of the restoration. Lunch was taken in the Old Bush pub, being a very good Indian meal served buffet style. Well done and thanks to the Old Bush. Recently the NCA have sent us a useful donation, along with their thanks.

Last year we supported the BCNS open day at the Bradley Workshops and this year are planning to hold another event on Saturday 17th June in our name with the support of CRT. Whilst this will not be an "Official" BCNS event many members have said they will support us. On the day we will need lots of help please and the Friday before to set up. Darren with input from Brenda Ward (BCNS) is booking stalls. Hopefully this will stimulate more local support.

There are two Explorer Cruises booked to visit the workshops and have a walk on May 17th and June 28th. These provide opportunities for boaters to visit little used parts of the canal system and brings extra traffic to the arm.

For the future we need to have a plan. Covid slowed us down but in the new "Normal" we need a clear route plan. This will need a fully costed feasibility study. To do this we will need to boost our funds dramatically. One way to do this is to remember BCRS in your will. Any amount will be welcome, contact Gavin for details. It is simple and allows us to show to funding bodies that we will have a future funding stream. Not wishing the demise of any of you but it would seriously help us.

D. Pearson (Chair of Trustees) – 15th April 2023

Membership

Membership currently stands at 215 paid subscriptions with a further 24 individuals are supporting the Society via a personal donation rather than a formal membership.

It is hoped that physical attendance at events in the coming months will enable us to continue to increase our membership. A proposed rule change at the AGM is intended to bring all membership renewals in line with a consistent date (1st April) to hopefully make the renewals process simpler and to aid cashflow forecasting. New members subscribing before that date each year, will receive the first year at a pro-rata rate.

Social Media

The Facebook page has been active since April 2019, and we have seen a fantastic rise in followers in that period with the number currently standing at 2500 (a rise of some 200 since last year). Our Instagram following is also building with 250 followers.

Our social media following is critical to awareness raising, “friend-making” and keeping all interested parties informed of the progress that we are making. As we undertake a variety of projects, including work parties, public meetings, attendance at festivals, etc. we shall use our social platforms to keep everyone informed and invariably ask for additional support. Please encourage other contacts to follow our Facebook and/or Instagram accounts to continue to grow the following.

Regular viewers of the pages will have seen that support is growing from important sectors of the community and beyond. Local MPs, Local Authorities, CRT, Inland Waterways and the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust are all getting behind this scheme to bring back this bit of canal that holds such historic importance for our area and indeed, this country.

Bradley Canal Festival

A significant event during this year was the BCNS Open Day at Bradley Workshops, held in May. We have gained permission to hold a similar event on Saturday 17th June, which will hopefully become the annual Bradley Canal Festival. We were fortunately blessed with glorious weather which certainly helped to bring in an estimated 1500 visitors over the course of the day.

The opportunity to turn this into an annual event is a significant undertaking from us and will need significant planning and organising on the day. However, the benefits should be significant, both from an awareness raising perspective, but also as a potential revenue stream. Whilst we wouldn't be looking to make large profit, we would need to cover costs and hopefully generate income from stall holders, raffles, donations, new members, etc.

Other canal festivals across the region benefit enormously from this level of profile and it would be valuable to our profile to organise an event each year in Bradley.

In order to make this a successful day, we will need support from members and supporters. If you feel you can help, with the planning or on the actual day please contact us on info@bradleycanal.co.uk



Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Financial Report 2022-23

This report reflects the financial position of the association from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

Gift Aid continues to be reflected in the accounts, and we would encourage members, who are UK taxpayers, to indicate as such when they renew as this allows us to benefit from Gift Aid. Unfortunately, Amazon has ended its Amazon Smile charitable contributions scheme, so we have now joined easyFundraising and we would encourage members and supporters to register with easyFundraising and nominate BCRS as the chosen charity.

The accounts have been externally audited by our Accountants (Tax Advisors and Accounting Services Limited, of Bilston) and will be submitted to the Charity Commission in accordance with statutory requirements.

Statement of Accounts: 1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

	2022-23	2021-22
Income		
Opening Balance	£ 5,486.52	£ 4,685.69
Subscriptions	£ 1,792.14	£ 1,537.00
Donations	£ 2,238.00	£ 2,937.00
Gift Aid	£ 155.07	£ 119.00
Amazon Smile	£ 84.43	£ 57.15
Bradley Canal Festival (2023)	£ 165.00	N/A
Total	£ 9,921.16	£ 9,378.34
Expenditure		
Equipment	£ 256.03	£ 520.60
Insurance	£ 600.37	£ 105.00
Administration	£ 2,029.48	£ 1,563.22
Subscriptions	£ 249.00	£ 239.00
Event Costs	£ 99.15	£ 144.00
Professional Services	£ 360.00	£ 1,320.00
Accountancy Fees	£ 400.00	N/A
Printing	£278.33	£ 0
Total	£ 4,272.36	£ 3,891.82
Balance	<u>£ 5,648.80</u>	<u>£ 5,486.52</u>

G Hawkins (Treasurer) – 5th April 2023

BRADLEY CANAL RESTORATION SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1188375

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Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Annual General Meeting – 27th April 2022

Chair of Trustees Report

General Update

With the lifting of Covid restrictions the new “normal” is making activities a little easier. We are getting better recognised and generally accepted. The majority of locals seem to be in favour of our objectives. This is good because as matters progress, we will need to rely more on local support.

Whilst most of our management meetings have been held via Zoom this has not stopped us moving forward. Recently Rod Griffin joined our ranks on the committee. Having recently retired from Birmingham City Council, Rod brings with him a wealth of local knowledge and contacts which will be very useful. Welcome Rod. I should also mention that he lives almost adjacent to the existing Bradley canal so has a very local interest in our waterway project. One of the first things Rod has contributed is to organise two management meetings with the aim of identifying our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) to help us focus on our aims and how best to go forward.

As many of you will agree modern life is getting more complicated and involved with rules and regulations. To sort out what to do and when, is time consuming especially when unfamiliar. Realising this the committee decided to appoint Simon Lucas on a small stipend to help us navigate the various rules and regulations. Simon is currently in the employ of Wolverhampton City Council and having reduced his hours pending full retirement is able to help us; this is also proving very useful. Welcome Simon.

Bob, Simon and myself recently attended the Restoration Conference jointly sponsored by CRT (Canal & River Trust) and IWA (Inland waterways Association) in Stroud. Virtual last year and previously in Bilston (maybe next year back to Bilston?) It was good to learn from the presentations and discussions with others that we are generally heading in the right direction.

Helpers are vital in our small organisation and thanks to all who have helped. Especially Emily for keeping us in order and doing the meeting minutes so efficiently; Darren for backing her up and for his unflagging Facebook input. Also, to both for allowing us to use their home for various meetings. Darren appealed for help with running Facebook, and we are very pleased that Tom Pickard has stepped forward to assist. The Arm, our newsletter masterfully collated by Gavin is well received by members and others who receive it. Keep it up Gavin! John beavers away efficiently looking after our membership matters; we are

closing in on 200 members; we need more, please ask your relatives, friends, neighbours, colleagues to support us.

After much Covid delays at last we have got down to some physical work on the remaining section of the canal from Moorcroft Junction to almost the bottom of lock 9. The support from locals was most heartening and despite snow cancelling one work party and CRT paperwork another we have achieved a lot. This has involved cutting back the overhanging boughs and clearing the undergrowth. Now it looks like a canal its existence being clearly visible probably for the first time in nearly 50 years. The birds are now nesting so we will have to take a break for a while but please go and walk the towpath. Whilst we cannot claim it is beautiful it is a pleasant walk as testified by the locals who are increasingly using it to do so. In all this we have been helped greatly by the BCNS (Birmingham Canal Navigation Society) with the loan of tools and especially their pickup truck to remove the rubbish collected. The ladies not wishing to be consigned only to litter picking (a vital job this) took a bow saw to fell overhanging tress and having castigated the men for talking, quickly bought down three saplings. Shall we have a Male/Female competition to see who can cut the most? Thanks also to the ladies for providing cakes & drinks and Bob for keeping me in order and generally helping. The hi-vis jackets that have been donated by Paul and Kathy Niblett have proved very useful.

Hopefully this activity will show the local authorities (Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Walsall) that bringing this little bit of canal back to life will create a small free linear park connecting existing green corridors together for the benefit of all.

Now to the future. Shortly on Saturday May 14th the BCNS are holding their Spring Cruise ending at the Lock Gate Workshops and in conjunction with CRT the workshops will be open, with free admission, from 10-00 to 16-00. We shall also be conducting walks along the route of the infilled locks and on down to Moorcroft Junction.

On 24th/25th/26th of June there will be a cruise of boats from Smethwick to Birmingham to publicise the forthcoming Commonwealth Games. If you would like to join us, please let me know.

In July we are taking our stand to the Gnosall C Fest on 16th/17th/18th. And in September we shall make our regular appearance at the Black Country Boating Festival on September 10th/11th at Bumble Hole Netherton.

For all these events we need help, just for an hour or longer please come and assist. It's good to chat to visitors even if you have not done it before, is good fun and a very good "Flag Waving" exercise for us.

D. Pearson (Chair of Trustees) – 15th April 2022

Membership

Membership currently stands at 189 paid subscriptions with a further 16 individuals are supporting the Society via a personal donation rather than a formal membership.

It is hoped that physical attendance at events in the coming months will enable us to increase our membership significantly. All members should be receiving the newsletters, however if this is not the case, please confirm your email (or postal) address with us.

Social Media

The Facebook page has been active since April 2019, and we have seen a fantastic rise in followers in that period with the number currently standing at 2416 (a rise of some 400 since last year). Our Instagram following is also building with 238 followers.

Our social media following is critical to awareness raising, “friend-making” and keeping all interested parties informed of the progress that we are making. As we undertake a variety of projects, including work parties, public meetings, attendance at festivals, etc. we shall use our social platforms to keep everyone informed and invariably ask for additional support. Please encourage other contacts to follow our Facebook and/or Instagram accounts to continue to grow the following.

Regular viewers of the pages will have seen that support is growing from important sectors of the community and beyond. Local MPs, Local Authorities, CRT, Inland Waterways and the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust are all getting behind this scheme to bring back this bit of canal that holds such historic importance for our area and indeed, this country.



Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Financial Report 2021-22

This report reflects the financial position of the association from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. This is the first set of accounts to span a 12-month period as the previous accounts reflected an 18-month period from the formation of the association to the first AGM. I have included figures from the 2019-21 financial period, however direct comparison is quite difficult due to the initial 18-month period. Next year's accounts will give a more accurate comparison.

Gift Aid is reflected in the accounts for the first time, and we would encourage members, who are UK taxpayers, to indicate as such when they renew as this allows us to benefit from Gift Aid.

The accounts have been externally audited and will be submitted to the Charity Commission in accordance with statutory requirements.

Statement of Accounts: 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022

	2021-22	2019-21
Income		
Opening Balance	£ 4,685.69	£ 0.00
Subscriptions	£ 1,537.00	£ 1,751
Donations	£ 2,937.00	£ 3,865
Gift Aid	£ 119.00	£ 0.00
Amazon Smile/Paypal Giving	£ 57.15	£ 121.29
Miscellaneous	£ 42.50	£ 50.00
Total	£ 9,378.34	£ 5,787.29
Expenditure		
Equipment	£ 520.60	£ 239.76
Insurance	£ 105.00	£ 99.31
Administration	£ 1,563.22	£ 461.20
Subscriptions	£ 239.00	£ 276.33
Event Costs	£ 144.00	£ 25.00
Professional Services	£ 1,320.00	£ 0.00
Total	£ 3,891.82	£ 1,101.60
Balance	<u>£ 5,486.52</u>	<u>£ 4,685.69</u>

G Hawkins (Treasurer) – 5th April 2022

BRADLEY CANAL RESTORATION SOCIETY

England & Wales - Charity number 1188375

Accounts



Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Annual General Meeting – 20th April 2021

Chair of Trustees Report

General Update

Covid restrictions have affected us all and BCRS has not escaped. Whilst progress has slowed the trustees have been busily beavering away in the background. Thanks to their efforts we are now better established and getting better known and recognised. This is important as we go forward, we need to have a structure fit for purpose so that outside bodies, particularly funders, can see they are dealing with a serious body.

To increase capacity within the Board of Trustees, Bob Fox agreed to join us at the start of this year, thank you and welcome Bob. Whilst expressing thanks can I include Darren Clift for manfully maintaining our Facebook page, Gavin Hawkins for a lot of admin and producing “The Arm” and John Oakley for attending to membership matters. We have been meeting by Zoom and hopefully will be able to meet in the flesh shortly.

One item postponed was the BCNS spring cruise to Bradley replaced by a campaign cruise on May 13th/17th to Walsall overnighing en-route at Moorcroft Junction on the night of Friday 14th with a walk up the flight on the Saturday morning. The annual BCN clean-up was also cancelled where work here had been planned. We now have written permission to work here from CRT. This is important as one of the presentations of the annual IWA/CRT Restoration Conference held virtually (normally in Bilston...) was devoted to getting the correct permissions in place before physical work starts.

Catch up with these excellent talks on <https://www.youtube.com/user/waterwaysassoc>

We are currently working on, and need help with getting a risk assessment completed, survey of the utilities and access rights. Do please let us know if you can help with this.

A few weeks ago, mooring rings were installed by CRT adjacent to Glasshouse Bridge, which is the nearest access to Bilston Town Centre. This followed rings being installed at the end of 2020 by the lock-gate workshops at Bradley. This will encourage boaters to stay on the arm and one of the most popular guidebooks for the canals and rivers; the Nicholson's Guide, for this area is currently being revised. I have spoken with the editor who has agreed to mention the mooring facilities. The offside bank protection “Coir” rolls installed early in 2019 on the arm are now established and encouraging much more waterfowl.

In July flooding caused by downpours between Locks 7 and 8 inundated local houses and we were able to spur CRT into rapid action that resulted in some spot dredging being undertaken and the blocked culvert cleared. It now looks like a canal and with volunteer help could be easily renovated.

We have also met on site between lockdowns with WCC leaders to explain the project in detail. By Bradley Lane where CRT still own the open land adjacent to Atlas Trading Estate, we have measured the land and asked if the pending new lease may be modified to allow space for a canal channel. How to replace Tup Bridge across Bradley Lane, to connect with the remaining Bradley arm, is our biggest challenge.

How many people walk the existing canal? By reconnecting the two sections will this increase. Funders ask this. To collect data CRT have agreed to erect a counter near Highfields Bridge to produce some data for us.

To guide us through the various processes, we are using a template jointly produced by the IWA and CRT, the "Restoration Work Stages". We have almost completed the first three parts of Phase One, putting the necessary organisational structures and permissions into place.

The next phase is a transitional stage where we plan for project delivery. This will require us to raise funds for commissioning the necessary engineering, wayleave, and easement surveys for the whole scheme and whilst your help with a personal donation would be much appreciated, we will start applying for more substantial funding from appropriate organisations. The help of a volunteer qualified Civil Engineer/Quantity Surveyor in an advisory role would be extremely useful.

To further publicise our Society, we have a gazebo with which we plan to attend the Gnosall Canal Festival on the 16th/18th July and the Festival of Water at Worcester on August 27th 30th. If you can help, if only for a short time it would be appreciated. This will enable us to reach a wider audience and recruit more members.

Membership

Membership currently stands at 176 paid subscriptions (however a number of these are due for renewal). A further 16 individuals are supporting the Society via a personal donation rather than a formal membership.

It is hoped that physical attendance at events in the coming months will enable us to increase our membership significantly. All members should be receiving the regular newsletters, however if this is not the case please confirm your email (or postal) address with us.

Social Media

The Facebook page has been active since April 2019 and we have seen a fantastic rise in followers in that period with the number currently standing at 2040. Our Instagram following is also building with followers loving the wildlife photographs in particular.

Doubtless we have all seen how arguments and negativity can upset group members and become a real headache for the administrators, so it is great to run a page where we have seen virtually none of this type of activity. It does seem that most people are behind restoring this small stretch of canal.

Regular viewers of the page will have seen that support is also growing from important sectors of the community and beyond. Local MPs, Local Authorities, CRT, Inland Waterways and the Birmingham and Black Country Wildlife Trust are all getting behind this scheme to bring back this bit of canal that holds such historic importance for our area and indeed, this country.



Bradley Canal Restoration Society

Annual General Meeting – 20th April 2021

Financial Report

This report reflects the financial position since the opening of the Society bank account on 1st July 2019 until 31st March 2021. This is a longer period than would normally be the case due to the delay in formal recognition of the Society by the Charity Commission (several annual costs therefore appear twice). Future financial reports will span a 12-month financial period.

The accounts currently show little activity due to current restrictions, however we would hope to see an increase in subscription income (and expenditure) following the lifting of restrictions during the summer. Our Gift Aid claim has been started but is not yet complete, so will be reflected in the 2021-22 accounts.

The accounts have been externally audited but are currently unsigned due to Covid-19 restrictions. The accounts will be signed by the auditor prior to submission to the Charity Commission. Future financial reports will also show a year-on-year comparison of income and expenditure.

Statement of Accounts: 1st July 2019 – 31st March 2021

Income

Subscriptions	£ 1,751
Donations	£ 3,865
Gift Aid	£ 0.00
Amazon Smile/Paypal Giving	£ 121.29
Presentations	£ 50.00
Total	£ 5,787.29

Expenditure

Equipment	£ 239.76
Insurance	£ 99.31
Website Hosting	£ 244.80
Subscriptions	£ 276.33
Printing	£ 44.00
Rallies	£ 25.00
Display Board	£172.40
Total	£ 1,101.60

Balance **£ 4,685.69**