



ANNUAL REPORT - 2022 to 2023

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Reg. No. 1191171

Introduction:

This is the third Annual report for Hastings Greenway Trust (HGT) since it was launched in 2020. It covers the reporting period up to end March 2023 with additional information about HGT work during 2023.

History & Formation of HGT:

Hastings Greenway Trust was set up by the Hastings Greenway Group with input from other groups and organisations, with an interest in walking & cycling infrastructure and the Greenway concept, and with support from Hastings Voluntary Action (HVA).

The **Hastings Greenway** concept was conceived over 20 years ago as network of radial walking & cycling routes connecting the Town Centre to other parts of the Borough by utilising the natural corridors to create direct routes at gradients to 'smooth out' the hilly terrain.

Although a refined version of the original Greenway network has now been adopted by East Sussex County Council and Hastings Borough Council (in the Hastings Walking & Cycling Strategy and the Hastings Local Plan), funding and progress on construction of these routes has been limited and hopelessly slow.

The decision to set up the **Hastings Greenway Trust** was taken in order to create a charitable organisation that would be a legal entity with the power to raise funds, acquire land and develop some parts of the Greenway network and other routes to link in. In other words, to focus on the delivery of Greenway routes and their maintenance and enhancement.

Hastings Greenway Trust was launched in February 2020 and was registered by the Charity Commission as a **Charitable Incorporated Organisation** in September 2020.

The small group of HGT trustees have significant and relevant skills and expertise together with detailed knowledge of the Borough and the planned routes and strong community connections. The process of recruiting more trustees with complementary expertise and connections is a continuing process.

HGT is still in the early stages of its development but has already undertaken some detailed design and costing work on key sections of Greenway and has made several funding applications, not as yet successful. However, there are a number of

opportunities for HGT to take on work to develop sections of Greenway in Hastings that should materialise over the coming years and to raise the necessary funding to do so

In addition, HGT continues to work with the local authorities and other organisations and community groups to realise its aims and objectives.

Principle Objects & Role:

Principles Objects (as registered with the Charity Commission)

To promote and assist in the development and provision, for the public benefit, of safe Greenway routes, paths and facilities for cycling, walking and healthy recreation in and around Hastings.

Operational Role

- Promote and consult on Greenway routes
- Support campaigns for Greenways and walking & cycling route infrastructure
- Obtain grant funding from statutory and charitable sources
- Design and develop routes and sections of routes
- Acquire land by purchase or transfer for Greenway routes
- Take on the lease of land corridors for Greenway routes where this is an option
- Research new Greenway routes and link routes
- Work with other organisations such as local authorities and land developers to construct, manage and maintain routes
- Involve other organisations and community groups to seek support and help to make the Greenway network a reality
- Enhance Greenway routes with surface improvements, seating and other amenities
- Train and support volunteers to maintain Greenway routes and infrastructure

Trustees (at March 2023):

- Gordon Russell:
- Julia Hilton:
- Ian Sier: (HGT Secretary)
- Tim Jemison:
- Linda Jeal:

Objectives and Development Work in 2022/23:

Collaborative Work

Since the initial organisational objective, to register as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) with the Charity Commission, was achieved Hastings Greenway Trust has continued to work with a number of other local organisations and forums, including Ore Community Land Trust, Hastings Greenway Group, Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum and Hastings Urban Bikes.

Hastings Greenway Trust will be working very closely with Ore Community Land Trust to develop the Ore Valley Greenway and work should be able to start on this important project in 2024.

An HGT trustee is a member of the Hastings Garden Town Project group - referred to below and another trustee sits on the Hastings & Rother Transport Action Group, which involves the local authorities, the health service, transport providers and other key stakeholders.

In addition, an HGT trustee is currently Chair of the Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum which was relaunched in early 2023.

Recruiting more trustees has been a continuing objective and will continue, with a focus on representation from organisations such as health and education and community groups in areas where Greenway routes are planned.

Greenways Conference

Hastings Greenway Trust worked with the Hastings Greenway group to organise a very successful Greenways Conference in March 2023. Councillors and local authority officers from both Hastings Borough Council and Rother District Council were invited along with representatives from the Health service and other local and national organisations. The event has certainly raised the profile of the planned Greenway routes in Hastings and the rural areas around the town.

Collaboration with the Sussex Greenways Group to work on the Country Park Greenway and the National Cycle Route 2 improvement has been another positive result.

Communications

The HGT web site was set up and is in the process of being developed and improved. A new HGT e mail system has also been set up.

The Greenways Conference, noted above, and the involvement with other local forums are used to promote Greenways concept and local planned routes.

Hastings Greenway Group also works to promote and campaign for Greenways to the wider public and organises walks along planned sections of the local Greenway network.

The Hastings Greenway network leaflet produced by the Greenway Group has been very widely distributed around Hastings over the last few years

Trustee Recruitment

No new trustees were recruited in 2022/23 *but two additional trustees were appointed later in 2023*

Hastings Greenway Group

Hastings Greenway Trust was set up by the Hastings Greenway Group, which has continued to operate alongside the Trust with a focus on publicising and promoting the planned Hastings Greenway Network and campaigning for its development.

Regrettably, there was a major setback in the development of the Greenway routes network, all of which are included in the Hastings Walking & Cycling Strategy adopted by East Sussex County Council and Hastings Borough Council, in December 2022 when Hastings BC voted to stop ESCC from completing the key section through Alexandra Park.

The Hastings Greenway Group mounted a very strong campaign, in conjunction with Hastings Urban Bikes, to try to stop this very damaging outcome and will continue to press for its reinstatement.

Development Work on Greenway Routes

In terms of development work, HGT decided to initially focus on three key sections of the Greenway network. These are:

- The Rail Trackside route divided into two sections
 - 1/. from Hastings Station to Waterworks Road (connected to Alexandra Park via the Bethune Way underpass)
 - 2/. continuing to Mount Pleasant Road and via Hughenden Road to Ore Station

The project group working on the Rail Trackside route have benefited from previously established liaison with Network Rail and have tried to involve the two local authorities (Borough & County) in a broader task group to try to take this project forward. As Network Rail have removed their portable buildings from the trackside land this first and easier to construct section is now looking more hopeful.

In addition, the Hastings Town Deal funded project to create a Garden Town & green (active travel) connection from the Seafront to Station Plaza strengthens the case for this Greenway route to connect with Alexandra Park

- The Ore Valley Greenway from Ore Station splits into two sections, one to the Broomgrove Estate and the other to Ore Village.

Collaboration with Ore Community Land Trust, in respect of the Ore Valley Greenway, is expected to enable corridor clearance work and more detailed survey and design work on some sections of the routes, subject to the green spaces in the Lower Ore Valley being transferred to the Land Trust.

This process is now proceeding with the land transfer process from Seaspaces directly to Ore Community Land Trust commencing in mid-2023 and is expected to complete by the summer of 2024. A joint application for funding for this key section to connect the Broomgrove Estate with Ore Station and the College Annex will be made as soon as the land is transferred

Detailed design and costings have already been completed on the Greenway section that runs through Speckled Wood at the top of Ore Valley but there are some land ownership issues for Ore CLT to deal with there.

Other key sections of the Ore Valley route are looking very hopeful as the development of the site in Frederick Road, which started work in early 2023, will include a section of the Greenway.

HGT will be working with the Borough Council to ensure the next Greenway connection through Council land west of the development site is constructed from where it will continue on an existing housing estate road to Hurrell Road and the Lower Ore Valley

- The Country Park Greenway route from the top of the East Hill lift to Fairlight, via Barley Lane was adopted for the Walking & Cycling Strategy and a construction costing assessment was made in order to make a joint funding bid, with Groundwork South in 2020. This was unsuccessful but it is planned to work in partnership with the Sussex Greenways Group to seek funding for this route, which is also a recognised important National Cycle Rote 2 improvement project.

Sustrans have been carrying out a feasibility study on the route through 2023

Funding Applications:

No further grant applications were made in 2022/23 but will be made for the projects noted above at the appropriate time.

The funding for the Greenway Conference, organised jointly by the Greenway Trust and the Greenway group, was applied for and administered by the Greenway Group.

Meeting venues have been provided for most Trustee Meetings at no cost by the White Rock Hotel, for which the Greenway Trust is very appreciative, so there was little expenditure from the Greenway Trust account during the year. The main costs were for developing the HGT web site.

Summary of Annual Accounts 01/04/2022 – 31/03/2023:

Income: £ 41.10

Expenditure: £ 267.66

Balance @ bank (31/03/2023) £ 196.84

Plans and Objectives for 2023/24:

1. **Publicise HGT** to key stakeholders and seek to **recruit more trustees** (including representatives from Health & other interest groups).
2. Engage with the Town Deal - **Garden Town project**, which supports green connections and includes the reallocation of Havelock Road to provide a walking & cycling route from the Sea Front to Hastings Station. This will make a strong case for the Rail Trackside Greenway route to Alexandra Park to be included in follow up work.

3. **Ore Valley Greenway** - Support volunteer work to clear the corridor for the key section of the route (Ore Station to the Broomgrove Estate), when the green spaces have been transferred to Ore Community Land Trust and make a joint funding application for the design and construction of the route
4. **Rail trackside route** - Call on local authorities and other key organisations to set up a task group to negotiate with Network Rail over the use of the trackside land and to seek funding for the project. This project will be given a significant boost as a follow on from the initial Garden Town project work
5. Work closely with the Greenway Group and other organisations and forums to support the wider campaign for active travel and walking & cycling routes in and around Hastings and for a genuine commitment from ESCC and HBC.
6. Seek funding for Greenway projects and to develop the role of Hastings Greenway Trust
7. Research new Greenway routes and link projects

Ian Sier - HGT Secretary

(Dec. 2023)

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Hastings Greenway Trust

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Reg. No. 1191171



Annual Accounts 01/04/2022 – 31/03/2023:

Balance @ bank (31.03.22) **£ 423.40**

Income:

- Donations £ 41.10

Expenditure:

- Triodos Bank Charges £ 0.30
- Web Site Hosting £ 202.56
- Web Site Domain Registration £ 34.80
- Meeting Room Hire £ 30.00

Balance @ bank (31.03.23) **£ 196.84**

The annual accounts 2022 - 2023 were approved by the Trustee Board at its meeting on 16th Jan. 2023

Notes:

1. No funding applications were made in 2022/23.
2. The funding for the Greenway Conference was obtained by the Hastings Greenway Group.
3. All but one of the Trustee Meetings was arranged at a free venue

Ian Sier
Hastings Greenway Trust - Secretary
(Dec. 2023)

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