



## ANNUAL REPORT - 2024 to 2025

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Reg. No. 1191171

### Introduction:

This is the fifth Annual report for Hastings Greenway Trust (HGT) since it was launched in 2020. It covers the reporting period up to end March 2025 with additional information about HGT work during 2025.

Hastings Greenway Trust has been very active in working in collaboration with other groups and organisations on Greenway projects and funding opportunities during the period of this report and in 2025 but has not made any funding applications nor undertaken any development work. However, prospects for progress in the near future are encouraging.

### 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, the Hastings Local Plan and the LCWIP), funding and progress on construction of these routes by the local authorities 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 2025):

- Ian Sier: (HGT Secretary)
- Tim Jemison:
- Linda Jeal:
- Tony Polain:
- Rebecca Polain

## **Hastings Greenway Trust Work in 2024/25:**

### **Funding Applications and Greenway Development**

No funding applications were made by Hastings Greenway Trust during the report period but Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum (HSTF), of which HGT is a member, had submitted funding bids for three Greenway projects in 2024 to the Hastings Long Term Plan £20M fund.

Government funding allocated for the **Hastings Long Term Plan** in March 2024 included Transport & Connectivity as one of the three themes that could provide funds for Greenway route development.

HSTF was asked to set up a focus group to put forward transport projects for this fund and the submission included the following Greenway orientated projects:

- Ore Valley Greenway – Section 1 Broomgrove Estate to Ore Station – (full funding)
- Country Park Greenway – Barley Lane to Fairlight (part funding)
- Alexandra Park to Conquest Hospital – (feasibility and outline design work)

However, the newly elected Labour Government froze this national program in late 2024 and, following a review, effectively repurposed the £20M allocation as the **Government Plan for Neighbourhoods**. This altered the 3 themes in the HLTP to 8 although transport was still one of them. This was seen as setback for Greenway funding opportunities by introducing a significant delay into the process and diluting the likely amount of funds that would be allocated to transport projects.

In 2025 HSTF resubmitted project bids to the new fund for:

- the Ore Valley Greenway – Section 1
- and for the Alexandra Park to Conquest feasibility work.

As at December 2025 the process for preparing an actual funding program for what is now being called the **Pride of Place** fund is still being worked on by the Hastings Board that was set up to undertake this work with a definite funding plan due in mid-2026.

## **Collaborative Work & Activities**

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, Sustrans and Hastings Urban Bikes.

Hastings Greenway Trust will be working very closely with Ore Community Land Trust (Ore CLT) to develop the **Ore Valley Greenway route from Broomgrove to Ore Station** as Ore CLT will be having all of the woodland and green spaces in the Lower Ore Valley transferred to it from Seachange. This will mean that all of the necessary land for the route will be available as Ore CLT is a strong supporter of all of the Ore Valley Greenway routes. An HGT trustee is currently Chair of the **Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum** which was relaunched in early 2023. HSTF set up a Transport & Connectivity focus group in 2024 to provide project proposals for the **Hastings Long Term Plan** Board, as described earlier in this report.

Collaboration with the **Sussex Greenways group** to work on the Hastings Country Park Greenway, which is also a National Cycle Route 2 improvement project, has been another positive development.

In September 2024 the Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum organised an event in the Town Centre on Car Free Day to promote walking and cycling and sustainable transport, which HGT supported and provided a Greenway information table and display

In March 2025 Hastings Greenway Group, Sussex Greenways and Hastings Urban Bikes organised an Active Travel public meeting, which HGT supported and which was very well attended with a number of Councillors among the attendees.

HGT was also present at another HSTF organised Car free Day event in September 2025.

## **Communications**

**Hastings Greenway Group** has a web site and a Facebook page and works to promote and campaign for Greenways to the wider public. HGG organises walks along planned sections of the local Greenway network and has a very substantial e mail contact list that is used to advertise walks and meetings and to provide information about Greenway progress and campaigns.

The Hastings Greenway network leaflet that was produced by the Greenway Group, several years ago, has been very widely distributed around Hastings and contains a very useful map of the Greenway network.

## **Trustee Recruitment**

This objective has not been successful but it is anticipated that new recruits will be likely when real progress is being made on realising sections of the Greenway network

## **Hastings Greenway Group**

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

Regrettably, there was a major setback in the development of the Greenway routes network 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 2023, in conjunction with Hastings Urban Bikes, to try to stop this very damaging outcome but was unsuccessful. In fact, the damage done by this action taken by the Borough Council resulted in East Sussex County Council cancelling all walking & cycling route projects in Hastings and the loss of almost £1M.

In April 2024, Hastings Greenway Group working with the Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum organised a **Hustings event for the local Borough Council elections** in May. The

purpose was to promote active travel and the infrastructure needed to encourage walking, cycling and wheeling. All election candidates were invited to participate and set out what steps they would want to take to help with this aim. Hastings Greenway Trust provided a Greenway display and information at this event.

A significant change in the administration of Hastings Borough Council from the 2024 local elections is seen in a very positive light in terms of support for active travel and Greenways.

## **Development Work on Greenway Routes**

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

- The **Rail Trackside Greenway route** from Hastings Station to Waterworks Road (connected to Alexandra Park via the Bethune Way underpass) is the key first section of the whole Greenway network.

A project group working on the Rail Trackside route had benefited from previously established liaison with Network Rail and had tried to involve the two local authorities (Borough & County) in a broader task group to try to take this project forward. More recently a Greenway Trustee has been working with Sustrans and other contacts to try to progress this but a housing development behind the College in Station Plaza (*nearing completion in 2024*) has effectively cut off the planned connection. This project will require agreement with Network Rail to utilise a section of disused siding to be viable.

Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum held a meeting with the MP for Hastings & Rye in 2025 to seek her support to progress negotiations with Network Rail for the use of a redundant siding as noted above.

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 and is referred to below

- 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, will 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 has been agreed and will happen in early 2026.*

*A project submission for funding for the section from Ore Station to Broomgrove was made to the Long-Term Plan fund, noted above, in 2024 by the Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum – transport & connectivity focus group. This project has been resubmitted to the repurposed fund that is now called the Plan for Neighbourhoods*

Outline 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.

In November 2025, Ore CLT secured grant funding from the Broomgrove Shared Prosperity Fund to contract TCV to clear the corridor for this section of Greenway through the dense woodland in order that the necessary surveys and details route design work can be undertaken when funding for this is available. As part of the work by the TCV volunteer team an informal footpath will also be created.

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 as a planning condition.

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 Hastings 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 this route is also a recognised important National Cycle Rote 2 improvement project.

**Hastings Borough Council**, now run by a Green Party administration, has included the construction of one Greenway route in its objectives and has focused on the **Country Park Greenway section from Barley Lane to Fairlight**, as it owns all of the land required for this route. During 2025 the Council has been working on a funding bid to a specific national fund to improve access to farmland areas, which is the current use of the land that the route would run through.

It is hoped that this will be successful. Hastings Greenway Trust has worked with the Council and Sustrans over the years to promote this route for several years.

### **Other Greenway related Projects**

Hastings Town Centre – **Public Realm & Green Connections Project**. This project, being managed by Hastings and East Sussex Councils, has funding allocated from the Hastings Town Deal Government fund. The original design was for a green corridor from the Seafront to Hastings Station to include designated walking and cycling lanes and the exclusion of cars from Havelock Road with a one-way bus lane travelling North. Hastings Greenway Trust did provide input into the consultation process and strong support for this project.

This design has now been altered but some cycle lanes will still be included and will provide an important Greenway connecting route.

**Alexandra Park to Conquest Hospital Greenway.** This part Greenway and part safe cycle route would provide a valuable active travel route to the Conquest hospital for staff and others and is strongly supported by the NHS Hospital Trust. It is part of the Hastings Walking & Cycling Network which has been agreed by both local authorities, which is, in effect, the same as the Hastings Greenway network.

*A project funding submission has been made in 2025 by the Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum to the Hastings Plan for Neighbourhoods (£20M) fund for feasibility work on this route that Sustrans could take on.*

## **Funding Applications:**

No further grant applications were made in 2024/25 but will be made for the projects noted above at the appropriate time. *It is hoped that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan funding for Greenway routes, noted above, will be fruitful with a decision due to be made mid 2026*

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.

## **Summary of Annual Accounts 01/04/2024 – 31/03/2025:**

**Income:** £ None

**Expenditure:** £ None

**Balance @ bank (31/03/2025)** £ 161.24

## **.Plans and Objectives for 2025/26**

1. **Publicise HGT** to key stakeholders and seek to **recruit more trustees** (including representatives from Health & other interest groups).
2. **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 joint funding applications for the design and construction of the route as necessary. This funding may come for the Hastings Neighbourhood Plan
3. **Rail trackside route** – Representatives from the Hastings Sustainable Transport Forum met with the MP for Hastings & Rye to ask for her support the restart negotiations with Network Rail to seek agreement to release a redundant siding for the construction of this key Greenway link from Hastings Station to Alexandra Park. This project will be given a significant boost as a follow on from the Public Realm and Green Connections project noted above.
4. **Country Park Greenway** – Continue to work with Hastings Borough Council, Sussex Greenways and Sustrans on this project. Funding may come from the

funding bid that Hastings Borough Council is working on for a key section of this Greenway. All of the land is owned by Hastings Borough Council.

5. **Alexandra Park to Conquest route** – Take on the management of feasibility work and work with NHS Hospital Trust on this project if the HSTF Submission for funding to the Neighbourhood Plan is agreed
6. 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.

**Ian Sier - HGT Secretary (Jan. 2026)**

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# Hastings Greenway Trust

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Charity Reg. No. 1191171



## Annual Accounts 01/04/2024 – 31/03/2025:

**Balance @ bank (31.03.24)**      **£ 161.24**

### **Income:**

Donations      £ none

**Expenditure:**      £ none

**Balance @ bank (31.03.25)**      **£ 161.24**

The annual accounts 2024 - 2025 were approved by the Trustee Board at its meeting on .....

### Notes:

1. No funding applications were made in 2024/25.
2. No donations were received in 2024/25.
3. All Trustee Meetings were arranged at a free venue
4. Other meetings and events were paid for by Hastings Greenway Group

Ian Sier  
Hastings Greenway Trust - Secretary

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