



Great Ouse Rivers Trust

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for the
Year Ending 31 December 2024**

[**www.greatouserivertrust**](http://www.greatouserivertrust)

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Registration number 1201688

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Great Ouse Rivers Trust

The Trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31st December 2024

Trustees

Helen Boothman
Rob Cathcart (resigned 09/12/24)
Rob Cunningham (resigned 2/09/24)
Kat Gillbe (joined 14/10/24)
Lara Hawkins (joined 14/10/24)
Paul Leinster (joined 14/10/24)
Genevieve Madgewick
Howard Osborne
Colin Rodden (joined 14/10/24)
Phil Rothwell
Simon Wightman

GORT address

C/O Houghton & Wyton Parish Council
St Mary's Centre
Chapel lane
Houghton
Cambs PE282AY

Charitable Incorporated Number

1201688 (England and Wales)

Bankers

The Co-operative Bank

Website Email

www.greatouserivertrust.org
info@greatouserivertrust.org

2. Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Great Ouse Rivers Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation that was established in January 2023. It is governed by its Constitution, which was approved by the Charity Commission at that time.

Appointment and Recruitment of Trustees

As set out in the Constitution, Trustees are appointed for a term of office for three years. No trustee shall serve longer than three terms of office without a one-year interval. The elected Trustees will determine amongst themselves the officers of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. New Trustees are found through word of mouth, newsletters and website promotions and advertising in an open and transparent process. All new Trustees receive a copy of the Charity's constitution, the Charity Commission's Essential Trustee Guide and a full induction.

The role of Trust Chair was passed from Phil Rothwell to Genevieve Madgwick; however, due to increased work commitments, the Board agreed to seek a new Chair. Dr Paul Leinster joined in October and was elected as Chair. Both outgoing Chairs are still fully committed to the work of GORT and remain as Trustees.

Organisation

The Board of Trustees meets monthly to manage the charity's affairs. Special interest groups and project groups meet in between the monthly meetings. The Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits. The Board is occasionally joined by invited specialists who give their time and expertise but do not have a vote.

Financial Reserves Policy

The Trustees review potential financial risks and future expenditures as a new charity. Based on identified needs, we aim to hold at least three months' operating costs as the target for our Reserves Policy.

Advisers

The Charity is extremely grateful to everyone who gives their advice and expertise freely, especially from the Rivers Trust Movement.

Charity Object

The objects of the CIO are

- (1) To conserve, protect and improve the rivers, streams, watercourses and water impoundments of the catchments comprising the River Great Ouse from source to sea including adjacent estuarine and coastal areas, for the advancement of environmental protection or improvement for the benefit of the public.
- (2) To advance the education of the public, or any association, institution, voluntary organisation, local authority, administrative or governmental agency or public body or representative body in: -
 - (a) The understanding of rivers, river corridors and river catchments, including their fauna, flora, biodiversity, economic or social activity, and river catchment management.
 - (b) The need for, and benefits of, conservation, protection and improvement of aquatic environments.

3. Trustees Report for year ending December 2024

The Great Ouse Rivers Trust is a new environmental charity (charity number: 1201688) dedicated to protecting the Great Ouse and its tributaries, lakes, wetlands, and wider catchment for the benefit of people and nature.

During the year, two Trustees resigned due to personal time commitments but we were pleased to welcome four new Trustees, each bringing a wealth of experience in different aspects to help further the Charity's objectives. In August, the Trustees reviewed their performance as Trustees, forming the basis for future annual reviews.

We were very pleased to secure income from the Rivers Trust Development Fund and Anglian Water to support the appointment of a Trust Development Manager. Following a successful recruitment campaign, we were pleased to make an appointment; however, after a few weeks, they received another job offer and resigned. No direct costs were incurred from this appointment. After further careful consideration, the trustees are mindful of covering the role by contracting two consultants, one to establish governance processes and procedures for the charity and the other to develop a pipeline of potential projects.

The Trustees continued to network and work in partnership with neighbouring River Trusts. GORT was part of two partnership bids, one for chalk streams alongside Norfolk and East Mercia Rivers Trusts and the second in collaboration with River Thame Conservation Trust for a Natural Flood Management Scheme. We were pleased that the Esmee Fair Foundation application was successful; sadly, the NFM was not.

We have continued to have regular contact and dialogues with CaBA hosts, their Partnerships, and other key charities and statutory bodies involved in the River Great Ouse and its tributaries. We have been pleased to facilitate conversations between some of these bodies on River Quality monitoring.

4. Future Plans

As part of our ongoing development, GORT has identified several key focus areas to strengthen our operations, enhance our impact and ensure long-term sustainability. Over the coming year, we will:

- Strengthen Organisational Capacity—Establish clear processes and systems for employing and managing staff to ensure an effective and well-supported workforce.
- Develop a Strategic Plan—We will collaborate with our stakeholders to develop and publish a strategic plan that defines GORT's longer-term goals and priorities.
- Expand Funding Opportunities and Partnerships—Actively seek and secure funding opportunities, enabling us to lead funding applications and support other partners within our catchment in delivering valuable projects.
- Strengthen Financial Governance – Implement robust financial oversight and governance processes that will allow GORT to grow its project funding income and effectively fulfil its mission.

By focusing on these priorities, we aim to build a resilient organisation that continues to deliver a meaningful impact within our catchment area.

4. Financial Overview

Summary of Accounts for Great Ouse Rivers Trust 2024		
Income	2024	2023
	£	£
Donations	20	0
Grants	49,520.2	500
Interest	151.37	
Total	49,691.57	500
Expenditure		
Marketing	31.49	420
Recruitment Costs	690.2	0
IT	0	0
Office Supplies	0	0
RT Membership	100	0
Bank charges		0
Total	821.69	420
Surplus	48,869.88	80
Bank Account Balance	48,949.88	80

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records that disclose the charity's financial position with reasonable accuracy at all times and enable them to comply with SORP.

Trustees declare that they approved this report at their Board Meeting held on 4 April 2025

Signed:



Dr Paul Leinster CBE

Chair of Trustees

Signed:



Howard Osborne

Treasurer

