



Great Ouse Valley Trust  
*Our landscape for life*

**Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for the  
Year Ending 31 December 2020**

[www.greatousevalleytrust.org](http://www.greatousevalleytrust.org)

**Charitable Incorporated Organisation**

**Registration number 1179977**

# Great Ouse Valley Trust

The trustees are pleased to present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020

## 1. Trustees

<b>Trustees</b>	Helen Boothman Graham Campbell – Chairman Peter Downes Mark Ellis – Treasurer Bridget Flanagan Ian Jackson Phil Rothwell Graham Wilson
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<b>GOVT address</b>	Town Hall 1 Post Street Godmanchester Cambs PE29 2NB
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<b>Charitable Incorporated Number</b>	<b>1179977 (England and Wales)</b>
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<b>Bankers</b>	<b>Lloyds, Treasurers Account</b>
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<b>Website, email address and facebook</b>	<a href="http://www.greatousevalleytrust.org.uk">www.greatousevalleytrust.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:sendanenquiry@greatousevalleytrust.org.uk">sendanenquiry@greatousevalleytrust.org.uk</a>
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## 2. Structure, Governance and Management

### Governing Document

The Great Ouse Valley Trust is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which was set up in September 2018. The Trust is governed by its Constitution approved by the Charities Commission at that time.

### Appointment of Trustees

As set out in the Constitution, one third of elected the trustees, who make up the Trustee Board, shall retire from office every year at the Annual General Meeting. As all trustees started in the same year at the first AGM the trustees will determine amongst themselves who is to retire in the first, second and third year. The elected trustees will determine amongst themselves the officers of Chair, Secretary and Treasurer.

### Organisation

The Board of Trustees meets regularly in order to manage the affairs of the charity. 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 they do not have a vote.

**Risk management.**

The charity has reviewed its risk, in line with Charity guidance. The charity does not have any significant regular outgoings so has minimal risk. Any planned activities have to be fully funded prior to commitment of any funds.

**Financial reserves policy**

Sufficient income has been retained from the first period of trading to ensure regular meetings can be held for the following 6 months.

**Fundraising statement**

In recognition of the Charities Act 2016 any fundraising undertaken by the charity or a third part operating on behalf of the charity will conform to the Code of Fundraising practice.

**Related Parties**

The charity works with its Partner Members in delivering its objectives.  
The Great Ouse Valley Trust is a member of CPRE.

**Advisers**

The charity is extremely grateful to everyone who gives their advice and expertise freely.

**Charity Object**

The object of the CIO is to promote for public benefit the conservation, restoration and enjoyment of the landscape, wildlife and heritage of the Great Ouse Valley and its environs in the county of Cambridgeshire. We referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when setting up the charity and will review our activities against the public benefit in our future planning.

**3. Chairman's Report 2020-21**

This has been another very busy year for the Trust in spite of the Covid restrictions. The trustees have continued to meet monthly and we have had two open partner members' meetings, all via zoom. As well as the trustees GOVT is fortunate in having the services of a number of advisors with great specialist knowledge. Their input has been invaluable to the work of the trust throughout the year.

This is a brief summary of our activities under the headings of the Trust's main aims. A full documentation of all the Trust's activities would be too long for this summary.

**PROMOTE**

The Trust has continued to encourage a wider appreciation of the unique and clearly identifiable characteristics of the wonderful landscape of the Great Ouse Valley. The web site has developed to a high standard. We are lucky to have the help of Zoe Ryall to run our Facebook Page. We are very much aware of the importance of using all media in spreading the word. We have launched an individual supporter's group which we hope to expand in the coming year.

There is now a monthly article in the Hunts Post and the work of the Trust is regularly featured in publications such as The Riverporter, Huntingdon Town Magazine and many parish newsletters. We have featured on BBC Radio Cambridgeshire and Black Cat Radio. The Trust will feature in the new edition of the "River Great Ouse and its Tributaries" by Chris Howes for the Inland Waterways Association.

Several years have passed since the application to Natural England for recognition as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Glover Report, the Government review of National Parks and AONBs, has recommended a new approach to protected landscapes and our working group is now ready to submit

revisions and additions to the original application. The Trust is working to get wider support for recognition from the Mayor of the Combined Authority, the District Council and our Member of Parliament.

Overall there can be no doubt that there is now a much greater awareness of the special quality of our landscape, and its value to both the physical and mental health of our communities and the economic well-being of the county. During the last year with several long periods of Lockdown and restrictions, people have re-connected with this landscape or have discovered it for the first time.

## **PROTECT**

The outstanding achievement of the year was the formal scrapping of the proposed elevated road river crossing between Huntingdon and St Ives (the 'Huntingdon Third River Crossing'). This would have had a catastrophic impact on one of our most precious landscapes. Our campaign had gone on for several years and included much personal lobbying, attending board meetings and committee meetings, radio appearances, newspaper articles and a great effort to change the focus of priorities at a time of climate change and biodiversity loss. We have also been at pains to emphasise the great economic benefits of the landscape, not only through tourism but also in attracting the brightest and best to live and work here.

The next road proposals to have an impact on the valley are those to upgrade the A141. These are currently in the early stages of consultation.

The Trust has continued to look at river pollution, litter and to protect Rights of Way for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

The Trust has continued to monitor planning applications to check the impact of new developments on the landscape, notably the new housing on Houghton Hill. The Trust will continue to look to encourage public transport, cycling and walking.

## **ENHANCE**

Working with the County Council our project to upgrade the route of the Ouse Valley Way Long Distance Footpath has continued. With the assistance of an A14 Legacy Grant the programme of repair and restoration has started, but has been somewhat delayed because of the extensive winter flooding. Nonetheless, 14 information boards on the route have been completely renewed with new information on the natural world as well as notes on local heritage for the first time. New finger posts and way marking are ongoing. To accomplish this we have had welcome help from our Partner Members who have contributed local knowledge and expertise.

Working with FWAG, (Farmers Wildlife Advisory Group), we have engaged with farmers and landowners on various enhancement projects. Rare Black Poplars have been planted on West Meadow opposite Brampton Mill using special spiked metal guards to prevent damage by cattle. A £2,000 grant has been gratefully received from Astra Zeneca toward the cost of tree planting and protection.

Our Partner Members have been engaged in many projects with the Trust's support. These include a new fish pass, a sand martin hotel, a bird hide and tree planting projects.

## **GOING FORWARD**

The Trust has established a firm foundation in the two and a half years of its existence as a coalition of many groups and local authorities. It is now recognized, respected and known as a force to be reckoned with. However, there is a need to build further on this and there is much to do.

In the coming year we must improve the two-way connections between the Trust and its Partner Members. Hopefully we can do more to publicise and support the activities of our Members in all parts of our area from Earith to St Neots. The Trust wants to represent the views of all our Partner Members who have a stake in the landscape including farmers, horse riders and everyone who values the Great Ouse Valley.

The Ouse Valley Way project continues. Our proposal to re-route the footpath towards Holywell away from Meadow Lane in St Ives remains a strong possibility, but at present we are held up in negotiations with the landowner. Maybe 2021 will be the year we succeed.

Many of our ambitious projects for new tree planting and hedgerow restoration have proved difficult to achieve in the short term. Landowners are waiting to see the outcome of the new post-Brexit Government farm subsidy schemes. Some farmers, although keen to work with us to plant more trees, are concerned about possible the long-term maintenance costs. So the challenge is to find a mechanism to fund well into the future. Funding for initial planting does not seem to be the issue.

Our applications for grant funding has had only moderate success this year in spite of our best efforts. It is clear that we will need to focus on broadening the appeal of the Trust to ensure that we have access to grants in the future.

Our most ambitious project is the potential for a major Landscape Partnership project that would attract serious grant money going forward. The Trust is currently in discussions with many of our Partners such as RSPB, Natural Cambridgeshire, BCN Wildlife Trust, CPRE, Natural England, NFU, and the National Trust to try and get this off the ground. This would enable a major investment in our landscape, improvement of land management, visitor centres, outreach to schools and the wider community, and much else.

Hopefully the lessons learnt during the pandemic and the ‘extra value’ everyone is now placing on the environment will inform decisions as we come out of restrictions and get back to new normal. Climate change, biodiversity loss and the importance of landscape to the economy of the country will be the starting point for new policies.

#### 4. Financial Overview

The Trustees are responsible for maintaining proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy, at any time, the financial position of the charity and enable them to comply with SORP.

Report and accounts for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2020

Income for the period	2020		2019	
Donations	692.20		1,206.11	
Member organisations	210.00	902.20	1,080.00	2,286.11
Expenditure				
Website	200.00		982.40	
Training	40.00			
Bank fees	1.78			
Membership	36.00		36.00	
Cost of meetings	-	277.78	481.52	1,499.92
Surplus of income over expenditure		<u>624.42</u>		<u>786.19</u>
Bank accounts brought forward		<u>786.19</u>		<u>786.19</u>
Bank account balances as at 31 December		<u>1,410.61</u>		<u>786.19</u>
Lloyds		1,385.39		786.19
PayPal		25.22		
		<u>1,410.61</u>		<u>786.19</u>
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Approved by:

Mark Ellis FCA, Treasurer.

The Trustees declare that they approved this report on 21 April, 2020

Signed:

*Graham Campbell*

April 13, 2021