

Cotswold Way Association

Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts

Year Ended 31st March 2024



Structure and Governance

The Cotswold Way Association (CWA) was established on 13th May 2016 as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by a Constitution based on the “Association Model” provided by the Charity Commission. It was registered by the Charity Commission on 16th May 2016.

Charity number - 1167094.

Registered Office - The Barn, Woodlands Farm, Watery Lane, Doynton, Bristol. BS30 5TB

The Initial Trustees were selected on the basis of their volunteer work for the Cotswold Voluntary Wardens and the Ramblers, and their dedication to the Cotswold Way National Trail.

As outlined in the CWA Constitution, it was the intention of the Initial Trustees that the management of the CWA should be continually refreshed by the appointment of new Trustees, in order to ensure a continual regeneration and openness to new ideas and inputs. In pursuit of this objective, one-third of the charity Trustees shall, by rotation, retire from office at each AGM. A retiring Trustee is eligible for reappointment but may not be reappointed for a third consecutive term if they have served for two consecutive terms. It is hoped that new Trustees will be recruited from CWA members at the AGM and other events.

In accordance with the above process at the AGM held on the 5th January 2024 the following changes took place :-

- John Tennant, Martin Lovegrove and Clare Muir resigned by rotation but were re-elected as Trustees
- Martyn Hall was elected as a new Trustees

The Trustees at 31st March 2023 are therefore :-

John Alfred BARTRAM (Chair)
Malcolm HIGGINS
Martin Brian LOVEGROVE
Clare Elizabeth MUIR
John Edward TENNANT
Richard Ian HOLMES
Simon Richard JONES
Martyn Andrew HALL

During the period under review the Trustees have held four meetings.

Objectives and Public Benefit

The objectives of the CWA, as stated in the Constitution are... *“To promote the conservation and protection of the Cotswold Way National Trail and the surrounding environment of the*

Cotswold Way National Trail and its habitats (including the Cotswold Way Circular Walks, linking and access routes and other named trails in the area) for the public benefit.”

The CWA's objectives for the continual improvement of the Cotswold Way and other trails will bring the following benefits to the community :-

- *Conservation of a particular geographical area:* The Cotswold Way follows the scarp of the Cotswolds for over 100 miles. It passes through a significant amount of the remaining unimproved limestone grassland of the UK, and much ancient woodland. The CWA hopes that supporting habitat recovery, maintenance and monitoring projects close to easily accessible routes will not only be directly beneficial but increase the public awareness and understanding of such work.
- *Economic or community development/ Employment:* Walking the Cotswold Way and the other routes in the area is a significant tourist attraction to visitors from both the UK and abroad. These longer routes require overnight stops, increasing the economic gain for the area.
- *Advancing health :* The health benefits of walking are very well known and promoting walking has been an active NHS policy for many years. Well-maintained and well-signed routes means that the increased health benefit of longer walks is available to more people.
- *Promotion of volunteering :* The routine maintenance of the Cotswold Way is entirely cared for by volunteer wardens. 25 area wardens routinely patrol and do minor works 4-5 miles each, and volunteer co-ordinators arrange for work parties for larger tasks. It is expected that the area wardens will be the most common initiators of requests for funding. Access to CWA funding will give encouragement to volunteers in their efforts.
- *Community recreation/ Leisure facilities:* The long routes of the Cotswolds are in frequent use for charity walks, school outings, running events, cycling challenges (on the bridleway sections) and Duke of Edinburgh award challenges.

As required by the Constitution, at the 2023-24 AGM, the following trails (or parts of the trails which pass through the Cotswolds) were endorsed as being supported by the CWA - *Wychavon Way, Winchcombe Way, Wardens Way, Monarchs Way, Macmillan Way, Heart of England Way, Gloucestershire Way, Diamond Way and Wysis Way.*

Achievements and Performance - April 2023 to March 2024

The achievements made by the CWA in the year under review are as follows :-

1. Continuing the close working relationship with Cotswold National Landscape team to ensure the efficient use of donations, and to work together on the funding of improvement projects on the Cotswold Way.
2. Supporting improvement projects on the Cotswold Way. These included contributing funds towards the surfacing of a section near Stanton which has fallen into disrepair due to large volumes of traffic. In addition the CWA has paid for a replacement gate below Broadway Tower and contributed to the creation of a gravel pavement near Dover's Hill to keep walkers off the busy road.
3. Purchase of "ecogrid" to be used in conjunction with gravel and geo-textile for surface improvements along the length of the Cotswold Way.
4. Expansion of the CWA Online Shop so that it has become a major revenue stream for the charity.

5. Re-printing of paperback *“The Cotswold Way Companion, An Insider Guide”* by former CWA Trustee Keith Sisson in response to increased sales of this and the e-book version. Sales to date are 493 of the paperback and 85 of the e-book.
6. Further expansion of the CWA website pages on walking the Cotswold Way and our other supported trails.
7. A number of donation plaques with QR codes were put up along the Cotswold Way to encourage walkers to donate to the CWA.
8. Engagement with organisations involved with promoting Cotswold Tourism to ensure that tourist enterprises are aware of the CWA, and promote it to visitors to the area and walkers on the Cotswold Way.
9. Expansion of CWA's presence on social media with the set-up of Instagram and TikTok accounts. At the end of the year there were over 1300 Twitter followers and over 600 likes on Facebook.
10. The CWA assisted the Media Studies department of University of the West of England in preparing assignments for students to prepare live briefs on related topics.
11. Responding to messages from members and others, in relation to issues that they have identified on the Cotswold Way and adjoining routes.
12. Recruitment of a new CWA Trustee.
13. Membership increased to 145 members. At 31st March 2023 these are ...
 - Life Members – Single & Joint 48
 - Annual Members – Single & Joint 56
 - Honorary members 17
 - Business Members 15
 - Affiliate Organisations 9

Financial Summary

At the end of the 2023-24 Financial Year the CWA held a cash balance of **£17,650.28**

The CWA has no outstanding debts at 31st March 2024

The Income and Expenditure Report and Balance Sheet for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024 are attached.

Future Plans

1. To continue to focus attention on improving accessibility on the Cotswold Way and other named trails including investigating the viability of establishing an accessibility route along the extent of the Cotswold Way.
2. To add accessibility information to our website so that it provides such information to all users of the Cotswold Way and other named trails.
3. To identify more improvement projects on the Cotswold Way and Cotswold Way Circular routes which can be supported by the charity.
4. To work closely with representatives of the CWA's named trails to identify suitable improvement projects.
5. To work with partners to seek innovative solutions to ensure that resurfacing work on the trails is in keeping with the local environment.

6. To continue to work closely with the team from Cotswold National Landscape in joint fundraising campaigns.
7. To increase membership of the CWA and to keep members fully informed of its activities.
8. To continue the development of the CWA online shop as a significant source of income to CWA funds.
9. To publish a 2nd edition of "*The Cotswold Way Companion, An insider Guide*" so that it continues to raise the profile of the CWA and provides a source of revenue.
10. To encourage more businesses throughout the Cotswolds to join as Business Members of the CWA.
11. To encourage the public and members to give donations to the CWA to expand its programme of funding trail improvements.
12. To agree a CWA Communications strategy which increases publicity so that more people are aware of the CWA and its objectives.
13. To engage new Trustees who are able to take on the work of trustees who will be retiring in the next 2-3 years
14. To encourage volunteers to assist in the CWA's administration and operation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Bartram', written over a horizontal line.

John Bartram
Chairman – Cotswold Way Association

Cotswold Way Association				
INCOME & EXPENDITURE REPORT - 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024				
		Year ended		
		31st March 2024		31st March 2023
INCOME				
Donations	Give as you Live donations	£326.41		£1,327.02
	Other donations	£444.00		£628.28
	Donations from organisations	£1,662.34		£2,355.00
			£2,432.75	£4,310.30
Membership	Annual memberships	£562.00		£725.00
	Life Memberships	£200.00		£250.00
	Business members	£1,600.00		£1,100.00
	Affiliate organisations	£350.00		£200.00
			£2,712.00	£2,275.00
Shop	General sales from shop	£4,858.50		£3,025.58
	Sales of "Cotswold Way Companion"	£3,492.29		£3,461.95
			£8,350.79	£6,487.53
Other income	Interest	£32.75		£20.40
	Gift Aid on Memberships and "Give as you Live"	£391.59		£524.27
			£424.34	£544.67
	TOTAL INCOME		£13,919.88	£13,617.50
EXPENDITURE				
Administration	Give as You Live/PayPal fees	-£252.82		-£135.35
	MemberMojo fees	-£95.00		-£75.00
	AGM expenses	-£36.00		-£25.00
	Bank charges	-£60.00		-£72.00
	Insurance	-£59.47		-£48.38
			-£503.29	-£355.73
Shop	Stock for shop	-£2,778.33		-£1,826.77
	Shop expenses	-£1,000.04		-£318.76
	"Cotswold Way Companion" costs / expenses	-£68.25		-£4,143.68
	"Companion" related costs (website etc)	-£261.10		-£315.00
			-£4,107.72	-£6,604.21
Advertising	CWA website upgrade & maintenance	-£434.95		-£1,120.00
	Publicity - general	-£118.81		-£250.00
			-£553.76	-£1,370.00
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE BEFORE PROJECTS		-£5,164.77	-£8,329.94
	NET INCOME/EXPENDITURE BEFORE PROJECTS		£8,755.11	£5,287.56
Projects	Gates by Broadway Tower	-£1,000.00		
	Purchase of Ecogrid for use on Cotswold Way	-£998.48		
	Work at Kingscombe Lane, Dovers Hill	-£3,000.00		
	Surfacing work at Stanton	-£2,000.00		
	TOTAL PROJECT EXPENDITURE		-£6,998.48	-£12,642.07
	NET INCOME / EXPENDITURE AFTER PROJECTS		£1,756.63	-£7,354.51
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
	Funds at start of reporting period		£15,893.65	£23,248.16
	Funds at end of reporting period		£17,650.28	£15,893.65
Cotswold Way Association				
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2024				
		31st March		
		2024		31st March
				2023
Current assets	CAF Bank Account	£17,014.27		£13,150.11
	Paypal	£636.01		£2,743.54
	TOTAL ASSETS		£17,650.28	£15,893.65
	FUNDS OF THE CHARITY		£17,650.28	£15,893.65