

OTTER VALLEY ASSOCIATION

TRUSTEES' REPORT for the year ended 31 March 2009

Aims

The Otter Valley Association was established in 1979 as a civic amenity society covering the civil parishes of Budleigh Salterton, East Budleigh with Bicton, Otterton, Colaton Raleigh, Newton Poppleford and Harpford.

Its principal aims are:

- To promote high standards of planning and architecture
- To educate the public in local geography, history, natural history and architecture
- To secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest
- To conserve, protect and restore natural features of ecological or scientific importance.

Organisation

The OVA's activities are governed by a written Constitution, which sets out its objects and regulations. It is registered with the Charity Commission, and is subject to the legislation applicable to charities, in particular The Charities Act 2006.

A copy of the Constitution is always available on request and will be available very shortly as a download from our website www.ova.org.uk.

Management

The management and administration of the OVA is carried out by the Executive Committee, which this year met ten times. This Committee normally consists of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Secretary, and up to 12 other members of the Association. Members of the Executive Committee, all of whom are Charity Trustees, are elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. They include representatives from each parish. The names of those who served as Trustees during the year under review are listed elsewhere in this report.

Much of the OVA's work is done by committees which report to the Executive Committee, Built Environment Committee, Natural Environment Committee, Events (previously Social) Committee and the History Group. We set up ad hoc committees when necessary.

Chairman's Report

OVA activities depend on the commitment and active involvement of many people and I would like to express my appreciation to everyone who has contributed to a very busy year. We have a great range of experience and expertise among our active volunteers and through teamwork and effective communication the OVA has benefited from their talents.

The revision of the Rules which had begun in January 2008 was completed. Brief job descriptions for the officers and committee chairmen were incorporated to clarify responsibilities. Since all Trustees are equally responsible for the organisation's actions, measures to improve communications using ICT were introduced. The role of Newsletter Editor was clarified, the position remaining outside the Executive Committee but liaising with the Chairman. We have been delighted that Nick Speare's skills and

enthusiasm have remained available to the OVA in this capacity. The role of Webmaster, of which more later, is similarly defined in the rules.

Clive Bowman stood down in April after serving for three years as Secretary but the good news is that he is resuming the role of Budleigh Salterton representative and will remain a member of the Natural Environment Committee. Clive and Mo bring very valuable skills and contacts to the OVA and we are very grateful to them.

Neville Lister is standing down as Budleigh Salterton representative but I am sure his involvement will continue, as Maureen is remaining on the Executive Committee. Barrie Papworth has relinquished the role of Membership Secretary after doing valuable work in updating our procedures. We thank all three of them for their work as members of the Executive Committee. We welcome Roger Saunders, who took over as Acting Secretary in April; he was already secretary-designate but was willing and able to start earlier than planned.

Martin Smith has done an excellent job as Treasurer and we will hear from him later. My thanks also to Haylor Lass, our Vice-Chairman, who can always be relied on to give sound advice and solid support.

Built Environment Committee

Matters relating to building development and the preservation of trees continue to arouse strong feelings and there have been a number of well publicised schemes which have divided local opinion. The Built Environment Committee scrutinises all planning applications for the area and decides whether or not an OVA response is appropriate. We are very grateful to Geoff Aplin and his committee for undertaking this work and for the even-handedness of their approach, giving praise to schemes which enhance or are seen as being in keeping with the area and putting forward the case against those which threaten its character and beauty. The Built Environment Committee has developed good working relationships with the EDDC Planning Department. There have been fewer applications to consider this year but the workload is still significant. Canon Roy Henderson is standing down after making a very valuable contribution over several years. Our sincere thanks to him.

Natural Environment Committee

Norman Crossland took over as Chairman a year ago and the Executive Committee have been grateful for the input of his scientific knowledge and his ability to make it accessible to the layman. The protection of the important habitats and natural beauty of the area in which we are fortunate enough to live are this committee's area of responsibility. The annual litter pick on the Otter Estuary was blessed with pleasant weather and enthusiastic volunteers. The wildflower meadow in Jubilee Field continues to develop. It was cut just once in September and the huge volume of vegetation was raked off by Bicton College students and some OVA members. An interpretation board to explain the ongoing developments will soon appear in Jubilee Field, financed by the Sustainable Development Fund of the AONB.

Events Committee

Nicky Daniel and her team have done an outstanding job in putting together a very diverse programme which has proved popular and been well supported. The linking of talks with subsequent visits has proved very successful. We have focused on Bystock Ponds, Beer Quarry Caves, the Axe Estuary and will visit Braunton Burrows next month, with the speakers whetting our appetites for the visit. The Lundy Island trip, by contrast, was a one-off initiative by Mo Bowman who chose a perfect day. The Christmas Party was at Woodbury Park, a new venue for the OVA, but retaining the traditional and popular format; it has been booked again for this year's party. The New Members' party, held every two years, attracted a favourable response, particularly for the delicious canapés.

As Walks Organiser Diane Gee has extended and diversified the Walks Programme, introducing the optional lunches at local hosteleries. She has now stood down and handed over to John Jones. We are very grateful to both of them and, of course, to all the walk leaders.

Alan Huddart is relinquishing his role as Talks Organiser after being responsible for providing us with some memorable speakers and also for dealing with the technical support on the night. This role will be divided in future but Alan will remain as Webmaster.

New website

The decision to commission a new website was taken unanimously by the Executive Committee after careful research by a subcommittee. Now members of the web team will be able to update the content without delay or expense. The full extent of the website development will depend on its use by members, but over time we expect it to become a key tool of communication. We are very grateful to Alan and his colleagues for all their work so far and in anticipation of ongoing commitments. OVApedia is a new part of the website, allowing for historical research to be made available publicly via internet search engines. David Daniel has undertaken a great deal of work in bringing the idea to fruition and he has arranged for a workshop with Dr Todd Gray in September to promote the process of research. We will be issuing a press release and notifying interested parties shortly. This has been the main focus of activities by the History Group.

Community involvement

The Budleigh Salterton Gala Week fête saw us engaging with children via a wildflower quiz based on the OVA leaflet, and giving a small prize to every entrant. We also attended the Colaton Raleigh fête in July with the same format.

Increased involvement, especially with younger people, is the underlying objective of the OVA Community Fund which was launched last October as a pilot project. We have not received any applications from groups wishing for support so will review the initiative at the next Executive Committee meeting. We attended the Town Council's recruitment morning for local societies in March and added to our supporters.

The Parishscapes Workshop at Drake's School in September 2008 brought us into closer contact with Philippe Planel of the AONB team, who allowed us to experience the Tithe maps now available online. Using the school's facilities strengthened our links with the first Communityscape school. Plans for a similar scheme with St Peter's School in Budleigh Salterton to focus on safe cycling routes have been shelved for the time being.

General

Membership levels have remained strong but ongoing recruitment is always necessary and this is an area where we hope all members will assist, alerting friends and neighbours to the benefits of membership.

Charity Commission guidelines for the annual report suggest the use of qualitative or quantitative information, but suffice it to say that most of our activities recruit enough participants to go ahead. Attendance on walks has varied widely, largely as a result of weather conditions and most talks have attracted enough people to cover the expenses.

Helen Tickle
Chairman

Treasurer's Report

The Otter Valley Association has had a satisfactory financial year. As can be seen from the Statement of Financial Activities incoming resources were down on last year and resources expended were greater than in 2008, leaving us with a small deficit of £1171.00.

Most of our transactions were broadly in line with last year but there was a one-off cost for the new OVA website which is mentioned above.

I must thank Alan Collier for his continued work acting as the OVA's publications salesman.

I would also like to thank Brian Leveridge for examining the accounts again this year and ensuring that everything is in order.

At the end of the year the Balance Sheet shows a balance of £18,194.00 which will be available for suitable projects in the Lower Otter Valley.

The OVA's cash balance is held in a Scottish Widows account and that account is covered by the Financial Services Authority guarantee.

Martin Smith
Treasurer

Policy on Reserves

The OVA aims to build up sufficient reserves:

1. to meet occasional shortfalls arising from its regular activity
2. to be responsive to local needs and opportunities as they arise
3. to fund worthwhile projects up to £10,000 from time to time.

Risk management

The major risks to which the Association is exposed are reviewed on a regular basis. Policies and controls have been established to mitigate those risks. These include appropriate property and public liability insurance. In addition, all payments over £100 are countersigned by two Trustees, one of whom is normally the Hon. Treasurer.

Reference and administrative information

Name of Charity: Otter Valley Association
Correspondence address: PO Box 70, Budleigh Salterton, EX9 6WN
Registered Charity No: 278266
Independent Examiner: Brian Leveridge, 44 Honey Park Road, Budleigh Salterton EX9 6EG
Bank: National Westminster Bank plc, Budleigh Salterton
Scottish Widows Bank plc, Edinburgh

Trustees

The following people served as Trustees during the year:

Helen Tickle	Chairman
Haylor Lass	Vice-Chairman & Newton Popleford
Martin Smith	Hon. Treasurer
Clive Bowman	Hon. Secretary
Geoff Aplin	Built Environment
Norman Crossland	Natural Environment
Nicola Daniel	Events
David Daniel	History
Susan Tickle	Publicity
Barrie Papworth	Membership
John Winson	Otterton
Alan Jones	Colaton Raleigh
Mitzi Crossland	East Budleigh
Maureen Lister	Minutes Secretary
Neville Lister	Budleigh Salterton
John Jones	Budleigh Salterton

By order of the trustees

Helen Tickle
5 May 2009

Otter Valley Association
Registered Charity No: 278266

Balance Sheet at 31 March 2009

	2009	2008
	£	£
Current Assets		
Stock of books	1380	1695
Debtors & prepayments	1047	906
Cash at bank	<u>15897</u>	<u>16847</u>
	<u>18324</u>	<u>19448</u>
Current Liabilities		
Creditors & accruals	<u>130</u>	<u>83</u>
Net Assets	<u>18194</u>	<u>19365</u>
Represented by:		
General Fund (Unrestricted)	<u>18194</u>	<u>19365</u>

Notes:

1. The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis under the historical cost convention.
2. The stock of books is recorded at the lower of cost or realisable values.
3. No remuneration has been paid to any Trustee during the year.

Approved by the Committee on 28th April, 2009 and signed on their behalf by:

Martin Smith
Treasurer

Otter Valley Association

Registered Charity No: 278266

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2009

	2009	2008
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Subscriptions	2969	2910
Donations and grants received	783	986
Surplus on talks	100	226
Surplus on visits	184	64
Deficit on other events	-300	-535
Deficit on Christmas Party	-106	108
Bank interest	536	767
Surplus on book sales	397	724
Other receipts	22	51
Gift Aid	745	1057
	<u>5330</u>	<u>6358</u>
Resources Expended		
Newsletters	1565	1464
Publications	404	592
Affiliation fees	350	354
Donation made and prizes	75	50
Insurance	280	230
Website maintenance	350	700
Governance costs	123	65
Printing & stationery	93	100
HP printer & laminator		502
Chairman's resignation letter		237
HP LCD projector	432	
New website	1811	
Other administration	1018	1129
	<u>6501</u>	<u>5423</u>
Net Surplus/Deficit for Year	-1171	935
General Fund		
Balance at start of year	<u>19365</u>	<u>18430</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>18194</u>	<u>19365</u>

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Otter Valley Association

Charity No: 278266

I report on the accounts of the Otter Valley Association for the year ended 31 March 2009.

Respective Responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) Of the Charities Act 1993 (the 1993 Act) and that an independent examination is required.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under section 43(3)(a) of the 1993 Act);
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 43(7)(b) of the 1993); and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the trustees have not met the requirements to ensure that:

- proper accounting records are kept (in accordance with section 41 of the Act); and
- accounts are prepared which agree with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

BE Leveridge C.A.

44 Honey Park Road
Budleigh Salterton
EX9 6EG
1st May, 2009