



**The Otter Valley Association
TRUSTEES' REPORT
for the year ended 31 March 2022**

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 with Venn Ottery.

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 2011.

A copy of the Constitution is always available on request and can be downloaded from our website **www.ova.org.uk**.

Management

The management and administration of the OVA is carried out by the Executive Committee (EC), which during the year met ten times. This Committee normally consists of the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Treasurer, Hon. Secretary, and up to twelve other members of the Association. Members of the Executive Committee, all of whom are Charity Trustees, are elected annually at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee includes 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 has been carried out by sub committees or individuals who report to the EC but the Constitution makes it clear that the Executive Committee is responsible for all the decisions made on behalf of the Association.

Trustees Report of Activities for 2021~2022

Chairman's Introduction

Chairman's introduction.

We are slowly emerging from the restrictions that have bedevilled us for so long. It has been a dreadful experience for so many.

My first task is to express the gratitude of us all to the many members who have given so much of their time to ensure the good governance of our association. So many people are involved and without them we would just not be able to function. Particularly, I must thank members of the Executive Committee, some of many years standing, who have guided me and assisted with the decision making. We are sad to see the following members stand down; namely Roger Saunders who has held several positions amongst the officers and is now relocating. We wish him well. Also Jacqui Baldwin who has produced the most professional newsletters, Jon Roseway who has also filled several posts, Peter Baldwin who has arranged some wonderful talks, and Mo Sandford who has produced wonderful pictures to enhance the newsletter.

To all of you, a hearty 'thank you'.

I am in a position to welcome two key members to the Exec. Comm. Andrew Kingsnorth who has become our Vice Chairman. In order for him to take over, having become fully conversant with the workings of the association, the committee have asked me to remain in harness for a further year. We are also joined by Jane Kewley who has taken up the role of Honorary Secretary. She has taken to the job like a duck to water and has already immersed herself in the many organising roles that her position demands. We are lucky to have them both. One more major position remains to be filled and that is the newsletter editor. I have spoken about this so many times that perhaps one day someone out there will raise their hand.

In order to avoid the tenure of office, three years, for the officers, happening at the same time, we are proposing to stagger this timing. To this end Martin Smith has kindly agreed to remain in office for a further year.

continued next page

As far as the activities of the association is concerned, we are still gradually coming out of lockdown. The walks programme continued whilst following government guidelines. The talks programme has completed our season of winter talks. The Xmas Party was held, somewhat smaller in number than usual, but perhaps that was beneficial. All who attended were determined to enjoy it.

We have continued to finance the purchase of wild flower seeds for parishes within our Area of Benefit. We have several events waiting in the wings for when an Events Organiser raises their hand. We continue to respond to enquiries and interpret the aims of our association. We have at least three members sitting on the Liaison Committee of the Lower Otter Restoration Project, acting in various capacities. When Clinton Devon Estates resume their educational school trips to the Pebblebed Heathland and surrounding farms we shall continue to finance the transport. Should any of you know of any cause which is within our remit to support, the committee will give it consideration.

Gradually the OVA is emerging like a butterfly from hibernation.

Bob Wiltshire, Chairman

Natural Environment

The Natural Environment Committee (NEC) has not met this year, partly due to Covid-19 restrictions but also because there were no offers to join the Committee following a letter in the OVA magazine asking for volunteers. Nonetheless, a few things have happened which fall within the remit of this Committee.

At the suggestion of Geoff Porter, the Executive Committee decided that some funds should be made available to local communities to buy wild-flower seed to sow locally. This was taken up by Otterton and seed was planted on their village green. This is now germinating and it will be interesting to see how it develops. Sums were also given to Colaton Raleigh and East Budleigh P.Cs. for seed and for the reprofiled church ground at Newton Poppleford: we await the flowering.

The new and smart Gazebo with the Associations name emblazoned it was used for the first time on Lambing Sunday at Bickton College in March. There was a large number of visitors on the day, sadly few visited the tent.

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Natural Environment, *continued*

Along the help of Clinton Devon Estates, the annual estuary clear-up took place on April 2nd. This was attended by several volunteers and a considerable amount of rubbish was collected. There does seem to be a greater awareness of the problem of litter generally, particularly of plastic and dog excrement, and so perhaps other litter picks should be organised.

Several of the young Scots Pine trees that were planted last year in the clump overlooking the Otter valley in Otterton have survived, mainly thanks to Geoff Porter who has been nurturing them. They will still need to be looked after for a while until they are a good bit more mature.

One of the main activities of some OVA members in the past has been Himalayan balsam bashing. However, when Patrick Hamilton retired, no-one from the OVA was willing to take up the task of organising these outings. Luckily, Kate Ponting of Clinton Devon Estates offered to take this on and I believe there have been regular bashes when covid has allowed.

The changes taking place along the lower Otter Valley in association with LORP are now very obvious. Whilst this activity is not directly associated with the OVA, we have been keeping an eye on how this is developing. One of our main concerns at the moment has been the great increase in the last year or so of water boarding and canoeing in the estuary and the effect that this is having on the wild life. The OVA (along with Clinton Devon Estates) is proposing that legislation should be introduced to prevent this.

Chris Hodgson

Membership Report

Membership fluctuates year on year, as the Society is now over nearly 43years old. Many of the original members have left or sadly passed away, but we still have 7 of the original members who helped set up the OVA back in 1979. As said, we also lose members who think because they leave the Valley, can no longer be members, yet we have over 199 members who don't live within the Valley or nearby parishes. Despite COVID, we are still gaining new members, but sadly not at the rate of loss. It would be good if current long term members encouraged their children and grandchildren to join, to keep this strong amenity society going.

Clive Bowman, Membership Secretary

Walking with the OVA, 2021-2022 review

The walk programme for this period was again curtailed by two lockdowns and we were not allowed to hold group walks for 4 months.

The team and Walk Leaders have proved to be adaptable and flexible whilst remaining cautious and always following government guidelines. We have set up and managed: a central booking system; Leaders have taken their own bookings; walks have been split into 2 groups and stayed completely separate and Leaders have always had the discretion to decide how many walkers they wish to lead.

We have emerged from all the restrictions with consistently good numbers attending the walks, new walkers who have subsequently become OVA members and a feeling that we have made a positive contribution to all those who have had the opportunity to walk and socialise outside in the beautiful Devon countryside.

The walk details on the OVA website now contain a link to a map showing the start of a walk and the OVA email address has proved to be an invaluable tool for booking and planning purposes. Many thanks to Martin Smith.

The posters advertising the programme, which are distributed locally throughout the area, have finally restarted in March 2022 with Haylor Lass managing a team for distribution.

Heather Fereday has stepped down from the Walk Team but has been busy collating an OVA archive of all the walks since the start of the walk programme which was in September 1979. Further details to follow.

The walk statistics for the 12 months ending 31 March 2022 show that 454 walkers have undertaken a total of 43 walks covering a total of 3,139 miles walked by members. There was an average of 10.6 attendees per walk and improvement from last year's 9, and approaching the 2019 average of 10.8.

Jane Connick and the Walk Team
Jon Roseway, Penny Kurowski, Paul Kurowski

Treasurer's Report

For the second year in succession we have experienced further restrictions on our activities and this has affected the OVA's finances. Once again events and talks were curtailed and we are only now returning to the old 'normal'. The OVA were able to hold a much reduced Christmas Party at the East Devon Golf Club in December and our popular walks programme is resuming. Now activities are recommencing we have resumed publishing our newsletters but as reported elsewhere we are seeking a new editor.

Thank you to all our members who have continued their subscriptions. We have continued to make use of this income by encouraging the parish councils to plant wildflowers where they have available land and have spent some £780 on this project during the year. We will be donating more money to the parishes during 2022.

We have also made donations to the St Luke's, Newton Poppleford and All Saints, East Budleigh parish newsletters for publishing details of our walks over a number of years.

Gift Aid claims have now been submitted to and paid by HMRC for the membership payments for the past 2 years.

Assets at the close of the financial year stand at £25,550. Of this £10,000 is held as a contingency for unexpected eventualities, £10,000 is allocated to fund worthwhile projects in the Lower Otter Valley and the remainder is to meet occasional shortfalls in our regular activities.

Once again I would like to thank Brian Leveridge for his assistance in preparing these accounts and ensuring that everything is in order.

Martin Smith, Treasurer

19 April 2022

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.

Otter Valley Association ~ Registered Charity No: 278266
Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Incoming Resources		
Membership	4066	4252
Donations	255	5
Surplus on Talks	146	
Surplus on Events	26	
Surplus/(deficit) on Publications	319	(27)
Norman Family Trust (Heritage Proj)		343
BS Town Council (HB)		100
Gift Aid	1543	(750)
Interest		109
	<u>6355</u>	<u>4032</u>
 Resources Expended		
Newsletters	2932	766
Publications	135	
Affiliation Fees	125	125
Insurance	758	368
Website Maintenance	300	360
Wildflower Donations	781	327
Administration	692	602
Parish Magazine Donations	200	
	<u>5923</u>	<u>2548</u>
 Net Surplus for Year	 432	 1484

General Fund

Balance at Start of Year	25,118	23,634
Balance at End of Year	25,550	25,118

Otter Valley Association Registered Charity No: 278266
Balance Sheet at 31 March 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank	<u>25,550</u>	<u>25,118</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Assets	<u>25,550</u>	<u>25,118</u>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Represented by:		
General Fund (Unrestricted)	<u>25,550</u>	<u>25,118</u>
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Notes:

1. The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis.
2. No remuneration has been paid to any Trustee during the year.

Approved by the Committee (electronically) on 19 April 2022
and signed on their behalf by:



Martin Smith, Treasurer

Policy on Reserves

The OVA aims to build up sufficient reserves:

£10,000 is held as a contingency for unexpected eventualities;

£10,000 is allocated to fund worthwhile projects in the Lower Otter Valley;

the remainder is to meet occasional shortfalls in our regular activities.

Independent Examiner's Report
to the Trustees of The Otter Valley Association
Charity No: 278266

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Otter Valley Association for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Otter Valley Association you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. Accounting records were not kept in respect of the Otter Valley Association as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. The accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. The accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the forms and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signature



20th April 2022

B E Leveridge C.A.
44 Honey Park Road
Budleigh Salterton
EX9 6EG
10

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
Bankers:	Lloyds Bank Plc, online account Virgin Money plc, Newcastle upon Tyne

Trustees

The following people served as Trustees during the year:

Bob Wiltshire	Chairman
Haylor Lass	President and Newton Poppleford
Andrew Kingsnorth	<i>co-opted</i> Vice Chairman
Roger Saunders	Hon. Secretary
Jane Kewley	<i>co-opted</i> Secretary
Martin Smith	Hon. Treasurer
Jacqui Baldwin	Newsletter Editor
Peter Baldwin	Talks Organiser
Clive Bowman	Membership Secretary
Chris Hodgson	Natural Environment
George Maddaford	Budleigh Salterton
Pat & Geoff Porter	Otterton
Jon Roseway	East Budleigh
<i>There are vacancies for an Events organiser, a Planning lead and a Colaton Raleigh Parish Representative</i>	

This Trustees Report was approved by the Trustees
on 26th April 2022
for publication on request and on the website.