



THE FRIENDS OF THE RIDGEWAY



ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2010

Objects: The preservation, for the benefit of the public and in the interests of social welfare, of all the natural aspects and features of the ancient Ridgeway track-ways along the chalk downs of Southern England, including The Ridgeway National Trail and any extension thereof, and of their associated features, monuments and access paths; and the provision of recreational and educational facilities and events relating thereto.

Patron: Sir Chris Bonington

President: Lord Bradshaw

Vice-Presidents: Richard Benyon MP, David Gauke MP, John Howell MP, David Lidington MP, Ed Vaizey MP, Robert Buckland MP, Claire Perry MP.

Trustees:

Ian Ritchie (Chairman): ian.ritchie1@btinternet.com

Jeffrey Goddard (Secretary): jandjgoddard@gmail.com

Sally Barnes (Treasurer): sallybarnes100@gmail.com

Janet Hierons (Membership Secretary):

jandal3-FRmembers@yahoo.co.uk

David Axford: dnax@dsl.pipex.com

James Gunter: jagunter@bopenworld.com

Marion Young: young@ramsbury101.freeserve.co.uk

Web-site: www.ridgewayfriends.org.uk

Contact: Ridgewayfriends@gmail.com

Principal Address: 6 Darell Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7AY

Registered Charity No. 1107926



European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development: Europe investing in rural areas.

Chairman's Report

The achievement of Restricted Byway status for much of The Ridgeway National Trail, resulting in a sustained improvement of its surface condition, has re-invigorated our original focus on preserving and promoting the use of all of our ancient Ridgeway greenways. Our current efforts to restore the ancient route between Avebury and Stonehenge, as The Great Stones Way, may be only the first initiative that we need to take in a continuing process. It is clear that the rebalancing of our economy away from public funding, in favour of the private sector and the "Big Society", will leave little prospect of enhanced public support, whether from central government and its agencies, or from local authorities, for environmental and countryside projects, or for the development of better facilities and access.

We need, as an association, to consider what role if any that we should play in this new world. It is clear to me at least, and I am confident that my view will be shared by most of you, that we should not shrink from playing our part. I was overwhelmed by the generosity of your response to my appeal for donations to fund our contribution towards the costs of establishing The Great Stones Way. Your very generous support for this project shows, I believe, that you agree with me that we should continue to take an active role in the promotion and enhancement of our network of Ridgeway paths, and to add to our membership and extend our activities.

However, an active role costs money, and your Committee has reluctantly decided that we must increase subscription rates to cover the day-to-day costs of our operations and our communications with members and with the public. I hope that you will understand and support this proposal.

We report elsewhere on the excellent progress being made with The Great Stones Way project. The positive result of the Feasibility Study presented to last year's AGM enabled us to move on to a process of consultations with the communities along the route, starting with the Wiltshire Area Boards concerned, all of which welcomed the proposals. Subsequent meetings with Parish Councils met with a varying response with some firmly in favour and some in the Vale of Pewsey concerned about the potential adverse effects of large numbers of walkers. We are very sympathetic to these worries and are working with these councils to ensure that the right measures are taken to mitigate any harmful impacts.

In concert with the consultation process, and discussions about the route, a lot of work has been done in applying for grants to take the main strain

alongside your essential contributions in funding development of the new trail. We are very grateful to have been awarded a LEADER grant of £24,750 by the Plain Action Local Action Group, and a Community Area Grant of £5,000 by Tidworth Area Board, both for the southern section of The Great Stones Way. Applications to the North Wessex Downs LAG for a similar LEADER grant and to Pewsey Area Board have also been submitted. An “external” fund-raising campaign will start shortly with a sponsored walk from Casterley Camp to Stonehenge on 26th March, and I hope that this will be well-supported.

For The Great Stones Way we shall not enjoy the luxury of the professional path management provided for The Ridgeway, at least for the present, as a National Trail. We shall be developing this year our plans for a local group organisation to take charge of recruitment of new members and volunteers and to raise funds for the on-going management and maintenance costs needed to supplement Wiltshire Council’s legal responsibilities.

The Vale of White Horse local group of members, ably led by its Chairman, Roger Griffin, and his Committee, is now well established, and is going from strength to strength in developing its role as a provider of interesting and increasingly well-supported talks and activities in this core area of our membership. I am very grateful to Roger and all his colleagues for their sterling efforts. I’m also grateful to Jim Gunter for arranging and helping to lead a guided walk around Avebury in May.

Our web-site continues to be important in our communications with both members and the world at large, and we have this year introduced a Junior Ridgeway section, launched with the aid of a competition aimed at primary schools and children’s groups along the route. I am most grateful to Marion Young for getting this new facility off to a flying start, and to Sarah Newman for her continuing work as Webmaster.

My warmest thanks are once again reserved for Peter Gould, who has for so many years borne the brunt of the work of the association’s activities, at first as our long-serving Secretary, then as both Webmaster and as Editor of our Newsletters. Now finally he has surrendered his editorial responsibilities for the Newsletters as well as the web-site. We shall greatly miss both his efficiency and the humour with which he has salted all his contributions.

Ian Ritchie, 8th February, 2011

Trustees' Report

The Trustees of the Charity are responsible as members of the Executive Committee for its administration and management, and present this Report in compliance with the Charities Acts, 1993 and 2006.

Membership as at 31st December 2010:-

	2009	Net Change	2010
Individual	179	+16	195
Family	81	-3	78
Life	174	+12	186
Associations	18	-	18
TOTAL	452	+25	477

This year we welcomed 30 new members, but we lost 5 members who had moved away from the area or died. The actual number of supporters is more than shown in the table above, as a family membership covers everyone in the family, and some associations that support us have many members.

Not apparent from the above figures are changes from one type of membership to another. For example, Individual to Family membership and vice versa evened itself out at about 5 each way, and several members took out Life membership.

Preservation: In pursuance of its aims to preserve the ancient Ridgeway paths for public, recreational use, the Society continued to promote the creation of a way-marked path, The Great Stones Way, southwards along the presumed line of the ancient Ridgeway from Overton Hill across Salisbury Plain to Stonehenge and thence to Old Sarum near Salisbury. The feasibility study commissioned last year from the Land Access Ltd consortium, with the help of grants by North Wessex Downs AONB, by Plain Action LEADER funds, and by Wiltshire Council, reported positively in April, 2010. Consultations with Wiltshire Council, Area Boards and Parish Councils are continuing, and applications have been lodged for grant funding for implementation of the project. After an appeal by the Chairman, donations had been received from members for this purpose totalling £10,068, inclusive of Gift Aid, by the year-end.

Your Society continues to monitor development proposals along the line of The Ridgeway, and to oppose any judged likely to adversely affect its environment and atmosphere. We continue to be represented at the Ridgeway Forum. The Society subscribes to the Ramblers' Association, the Campaign to Protect Rural England, and the Green Lanes Environmental Action Movement (GLEAM). It exchanges newsletters with the Open Spaces Society and the Icknield Way and Offa's Dyke Associations. We continue to work closely with these and other organisations.

Recreation & Education: The Society continues to promote recreational use of the Ridgeway paths, and to work for greater public awareness of their archaeological, historical, ecological and landscape features. Thanks are due once again to Anna Hanslip, and to Dr Gary Lock, for arranging another of our annual tours of the archaeological excavations at Marcham. Thanks are also due to Jim Gunter, and to Dr Matilda Webb for arranging and leading a very informative tour of the Avebury World Heritage Site on 16th May, 2010.

We continue to publish a quarterly Newsletter, and to maintain and develop a Web-site, introducing new features and information as resources permit, including this year a new section aimed at primary school-age children. Past Newsletters and articles, Google maps and photos continue to be available on the site, and members and the public are cordially invited to add their photos and comments.

The Chairman has continued to be an active and eloquent speaker at various events, and to represent the Association on the North Wessex Downs AONB Council of Partners, and on the Ridgeway Forum. The Committee continues to seek new recruits to its membership, particularly anyone with communications and other relevant skills and experience. Anyone willing to help is invited to contact the Chairman or Secretary.

Local Groups: The Vale of White Horse Local Group of members, formed on 13th February, 2009, continued to develop and gain adherents during the year. Its Committee, chaired by Dr Roger Griffin, met several times, and a number of events were held, including guided walks, and talks on the Geology of the region, on its Lepidoptera, on Red Kites, and on Wildlife on Sheepdrove Farm. The Committee will actively encourage the formation of other Local Groups, particularly for the Kennet and Avon area, to include The Great Stones Way.

Subscription Rates: The Trustees have reluctantly agreed that an increase in the rates of membership subscription is needed in order to

cover the increasing costs of administration and management, including those arising from the operations of Local Groups, and to ensure adequate reserves at the expected increased levels of preservation and educational activity. They accordingly propose to increase rates, with effect from 1st January, 2012, to the following:-

Individual	£8 pa
Family	£15 pa
Life	£80
Joint Life	£120
Corporate	£15 pa

Reserves and Investments: Policy: To ensure financial stability a minimum general reserve equal to eight calendar months' expenditure is maintained at all times. Designated Reserves for such purposes as the provision of benches, re-design of the brochure, commissioning articles, or legal fees, are invested with the general reserve until the projects come to fruition or are formally abandoned.

The Trustees believe that it is necessary to have an amount of up to £500 available to meet short-term cash requirements and therefore maintain this amount in an account with Lloyds TSB Bank plc. Any additional funds are invested in the COIF Charities Investment Fund run by CCLA Investment Management Ltd.

Bankers

Lloyds TSB Bank plc,
3-5 Bridge Street,
Newbury, Berks,
RG14 5BQ

COIF Charity Funds,
CCLA Investment Management Ltd
80 Cheapside, London, EC2V 6DZ

Approved by the Trustees on 8th February, 2011, and signed on their behalf by

Jeff Goddard, Secretary.

THE FRIENDS OF THE RIDGEWAY

NOTICE OF THE 2011 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

To be held at The Village Hall, Avebury, Wiltshire
on Sunday, 20th March, 2011, at 2pm

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence and Proxies
2. Minutes of the 2010 AGM held on 21st March, 2010
3. Matters Arising
4. Annual Report
5. Treasurer's Report & Accounts
6. Election of President & Vice-Presidents
7. Election of Executive Committee Members/Trustees
 - Chairman
 - Secretary
 - Treasurer
 - 5 Committee Members
8. Appointment of Auditor
9. Membership Subscriptions
10. Any Other Business

Speaker: Mr Robert Clarke will give a talk to Members about his new book, shortly to be published, on the pre-historic monuments of Wiltshire.

Report and Accounts: The Accounts for the year ended 31st December, 2010, set out below, have been audited and were approved by the Trustees, with their Report for the year, by circular resolution on 9th February, 2010.

Nomination of Trustees: Members of the Association may stand for election to the Committee, or nominate any other member willing to stand, by writing to the Secretary by 14 days before the Meeting. Nominations will be warmly welcomed and should be made known to the Secretary or the Chairman by **4th March, 2010**. All the current Trustees resign in accordance with the Constitution, and all, being eligible, offer themselves for re-election.

Lunch and Transport Arrangements: The Village Hall in Avebury is in the centre of the village, which is served by a number of public bus services. Car parking is available in the National Trust Car Park near to the village. Light vegetarian lunches will be available at The National Trust Circle Restaurant in Avebury before the Meeting, or you may prefer to bring a packed lunch. Teas will be served in the Hall after the Meeting.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE FRIENDS OF THE RIDGEWAY

I report on the accounts of The Friends of The Ridgeway for the year ending 31st December, 2010, which are set out on the attached pages.

Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and Examiners

As the Charity's Trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (The Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners, under section 43(7)(b) of The Act, 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 for 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 connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which:

1. Gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements to
 - keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of The Act, and
 - prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of The Act have not been met; or
2. In my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

T.C.L. Webb, FCIS FAIA
9th February, 2011

7 Sandy Lane
Shrivenham
Oxon SN6 8DZ

THE FRIENDS OF THE RIDGEWAY

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR TO 31ST DECEMBER 2010

INCOME	2010	2009
	£	£
Subscriptions	2289	2011
Donations	212	532
Sales of Greetings Cards	723	952
Talks	250	240
Local Group Income	12	48
AGM Income	20	-
Sundries	-	35
Bank Interest COIF Charity Funds	34	186
Tax recovered by Gift Aid	1874	359
Great Stones Way Grants	6000	5000
Great Stones Way Donations	<u>8625</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>20039</u>	<u>9363</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Newsletter	1537	1348
Office Costs & Leaflets	462	1264
Greeting Cards	300	305
Affiliation Fees	88	82
AGM Expenses	-	33
Website	975	530
Insurance	225	215
Local & Group Events	198	154
Meeting Expenses	229	-
Sundry Expenses	79	199
Bench Seats	-	678
Great Stones Way Project	<u>11714</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>15807</u>	<u>4808</u>
Surplus for the year	4232	4555
Fund Balances brought forward	<u>13030</u>	<u>8475</u>
Fund Balances carried forward	<u>17262</u>	<u>13030</u>

THE FRIENDS OF THE RIDGEWAY

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AS AT 31ST DECEMBER 2010

	2010	2009
	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Balances: Lloyds Current Account	9942	1848
COIF Deposit Account	<u>5306</u>	<u>10273</u>
	<u>15248</u>	<u>12121</u>
Claim for Tax Recovery on Gift Aid	1764	359
Stock	250	550
	<u>17262</u>	<u>13030</u>
REPRESENTED BY FUNDS		
Designated – Development (1)	-	1023
Restricted – Great Stones Way (2)	9263	5000
General	7999	7007
	<u>17262</u>	<u>13030</u>

Notes to the Accounts:

(1) The Development Fund has been closed and £1023 from 2009 has been transferred to the General Fund.

(2) The Restricted Fund Great Stones Way is made up of:-

	£
Balance at 31 st December 2009	5000
Grants received from Wiltshire Council and Plain Action	6000
Donations	8625
Gift Aid receivable	1352
<u>Less Project costs</u>	<u>11714</u>
Balance at 31 st December 2010	<u>9263</u>

Approved by the Trustees on 8th February, 2011, and signed on their behalf by
Sally Barnes. Hon. Treasurer

Data Protection Act

Do you object to The Friends holding your membership record on computer? The data is used for membership records, including subscriptions and label printing. It is not disclosed outside The Friends. Objections or requests for more information to Ridgewayfriends@googlemail.com, or in writing to the Secretary, please.

THE PLAIN AND AVON WALK

A fund-raising Walk will be held on Saturday, 26th March, 2011, in aid of the improvement of The Great Stones Way. Walkers may be sponsored to walk from Casterley Camp, or from Netheravon to Stonehenge. Anyone wishing to take part or to sponsor walkers should apply direct to Ian Ritchie or log on to our campaign web-site www.greatstonesway.org.uk, and follow the links to our charity giving site, or go directly to the walk registration pages to register and to receive details of arrangements.

NEW!! THE GREAT STONES WAY GREETINGS CARDS

We are offering for sale packs of 4 cards, blank inside, with envelopes. Each pack contains 4 different photos by Chris Cole of countryside scenes along The Great Stones Way. An Order Form is enclosed.



"Frost at Silbury Hill"



"Poppies in the Vale of Pewsey"



"Kennet & Avon Canal"



"Distant Stonehenge"

Some 'Avebury Scenes' Greetings Cards are still available:



"The Guardians"



"The Avenue"

An Order Form is enclosed for both these sets of cards.