

# Annual Report of The Watercress Way

June 2016 – June 2017

## Background

The Watercress Way was formed in September 2015 following a general meeting which agreed to promote the idea of a circular route for walkers, riders and cyclists based on the old Railway lines from Alresford via Kings Worthy to Sutton Scotney.

9 trustees were recruited who produced a strategic plan and applied to the Charity Commission to form a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This application was registered on 16 June 2016.

**The Watercress Way      Registration number: 1167675**

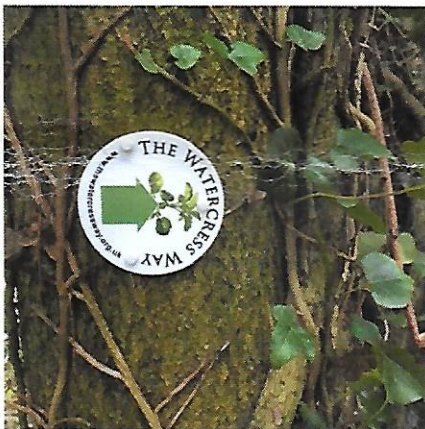
## The charitable aims

- Develop a route (non-motorised), which will be waymarked as The Watercress Way, based on the disused railway lines from Alresford to Sutton Scotney via Kings Worthy in Hampshire
- Connect sections of the route that are publicly accessible (by connecting paths or seeking new connections)
- Ensure the sections open to the public are well maintained
- Develop the route for all ages and levels of mobility
- Offer opportunities to volunteer (in physical or other activities)

## Achievements 2016 – 17

- Website regularly updated. <http://www.thewatercressway.org.uk/>  
A My Donate page has been set up with Gift Aid facility for donations. Statistics for usage show regular visitors and frequent downloads.
- Produced a regular Newsletter to inform Friends of The Line of our activities and plans
- Trustees met monthly to plan and co-ordinate activities
- Successful applications made for grants from HCC and other organisations. Money earmarked for two information board at Crouch Green car park and in Sutton Scotney.
- Meetings and support agreed with many local organisations including Parish Councils, Winchester Ramblers, The South Downs National Park, The Countryside Access forum, HCC, Winchester Council
- Maps have been produced and of the aspirational route and the currently walkable route which are available to download from the website
- Land searches have been carried out and a database of ownership of every section of the route has been produced. A letter has been sent to all relevant landowners informing them of our plans and seeking their support

- An Annual meeting for pre-CIO organisation was held on 12 January 2017 in the Tubbs Hall, Kings Worthy attended by members of the public.
- A design for waymarkers was agreed and an initial order for 200 was made. These have now been erected between Alresford and Sutton Scotney.
- Funding was secured for the purchase of information boards, and brushcutter. Plans are in place to set up The Watercress Way volunteers to clear and maintain the pathways. The SDNP volunteers have spent several days working on the route.
- A 'Dawn to Dusk' day was planned and implemented for 30 April 2017. There was a Dawn Chorus Walk, A Mouse Hunt for children, Peter Clarke spoke on the old Railway and a Botanical Walk. All were well attended. Two exhibitions at The Wonston Arms and Itchen Stoke church hosted by trustees explained the work of the charity.
- A variety of leaflets have been produced and circulated. Fliers & leaflets ensured that the Dawn to Dusk Day was well publicised. A leaflet has been produced which is available in Winchester Tourist Office, at Alresford station and at various pubs along the route.
- A map of a cycling route and also one showing sections which can be used by horse riders has been produced and will be available via the website.



### Our plans for the future:-

- Update our Strategic Plan to create a document. This work will involve:-
  - To hold more activity days to inform public about the charity and the routes.
  - To provide clear route maps for likely users of The Watercress Way on foot, by cycle or on horseback, and start disability access information for full publication in 2019.
- To waymark the remainder of the route, including on Drove roads.
- To clarify and confirm sections of the route: obtaining permissions from local councils and land owners to improve the sense of the route in following the old railway lines
- To obtain grants to further the aims in increasing accessibility and use of the route
- To continue to engage with local landowners and business to support the aims of the charity
- To produce a more detailed strategic plan to aid our work and to support applications for grants
- To improve and maintain the route with particular emphasis on the ecology, quality of environment and history of the route using Friends of the Line and The Watercress Way Volunteers.

Jackie Porter, Chairman,  
on behalf of the Trustees of the Watercress Way, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2017