

## Trustees on the 31st March 2009

### Name

Carol Cooper (Chair)  
Louise Lomax (Vice Chair)  
Veronica Cossons  
John Dixon  
Nick Downes  
Jayne Greenaway  
Steve Miller  
Jean Jones  
Sean Kelly  
Bob Hill  
Gina Rowe  
Jacqui Seymour  
Liz Swift  
Michael Swift  
Judy Walker  
Neil Willcox

### Nominated by:

Bridgnorth District Council  
Telford and Wrekin Council  
Shropshire Wildlife Trust  
Telford and Wrekin Council  
Barrow Parish Council  
Telford and Wrekin Council  
Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust  
Shropshire County Council  
Telford and Wrekin Council  
Sutton Maddock Parish Council  
British Trust for Conservation Volunteers  
Telford and Wrekin Council  
Madeley Parish Council  
The Gorge Parish Council  
Small Woods Association  
Shropshire County Council

## Staff

Russell Rowley  
Chris Wenlock  
Andy Cutts  
Carrie Hallam  
Pauline Levesley

Kate Chetwood

Manager  
Countryside Projects Manager to 20 March 2009  
Countryside Officer  
Community Development Officer  
Company Secretary and Finance Officer  
to 23 May 2008  
Company Secretary and Finance Officer  
from 12 May 2008

## Where to find us

Wesley Rooms Annexe  
Jockey Bank  
Ironbridge  
Telford  
TF8 7PD (registered office)

Telephone: 01952 433880

Email: [info@severngorge.org.uk](mailto:info@severngorge.org.uk)

Website: [www.severngorge.org.uk](http://www.severngorge.org.uk)

Annual Review 2008/09

Managing local countryside for  
the long term benefit of local  
people, visitors and wildlife

## Severn Gorge Countryside Trust:

- Is a registered charity, founded in 1991
- Is the principal land manager within the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage site, having responsibility for over fifty per cent of the land for the long term benefit of local people, visitors, and wildlife
- Manages an internationally important landscape, which includes nationally important wildlife habitat full of key species such as orchids and scarce birds like the marsh tit. The landscape in itself is a key tourism attraction contributing to the region's economy
- Is unique in offering free public access over all of its 265 hectares of land, equivalent to 240 football pitches
- In addition to its staff, employs at least 25 local contractors on a regular basis thereby contributing to the local economy
- Manages 70 structures and over 25 kilometres of rights of way
- Manages a volunteer and community development programme which contributed over 3,000 hours of work this year and helped people reconnect with their local heritage and environment

## Its main aims are:

- to record and maintain features of cultural and historical significance
- to ensure a landscape that retains its locally distinctive characteristics
- to ensure that key habitats and species on its land are sustainable and thriving
- to maintain a comprehensive network of paths and trails that give high quality access for informal recreation to all sectors of the community and visitors
- to provide a wider awareness and understanding of its work
- to encourage the local community to use its land and to become involved in its work

The Trust works to balance the conservation of landscape, wildlife and public access and to conserve the cultural value and character of the land it manages.

## Foreword by Carol Cooper, Chairman

This year has been the last year of the current 3 year volunteer programme, funded through Heritage Lottery and led by Carrie Hallam, strongly supported by the rest of the staff and contractors. It has been a great success and has led to a tremendous range of improvements to our access infrastructure including several new footbridges, hundreds of steps, benches, boardwalks and handrails. It has also led to new friendships being formed by the many local people who have volunteered and the mark of its success is that small groups of these have begun to organise their own days out, outside of the main volunteer programme. To all of the people who have volunteered, a big thank you from myself, the rest of the Trustees and staff. Your enthusiasm, dedication, hard work and sense of humour is highly valued. I am pleased to report that Trustees have decided to carry on the volunteer project as a core part of its work.

We have had an increasing number of very positive comments from both local people and visitors, that this hard work is paying off as more people explore our fabulous sites and learn about their rich history and biodiversity. As I write I am also pleased to report that the Trust has won considerable funding from the Big Lottery in partnership with many local organisations for a 'Telford Access to Nature Partnership' to further improve access for all throughout many areas of Telford.

The Trust continues to move forward with its plans for a new highly sustainable office and base for its volunteer programme on land which we manage off Darby Road in Coalbrookdale. We hope that this will allow the staff base to be at the heart of our landholding, close to some of the highest quality meadows for nature conservation in the whole of Shropshire.

This year also saw the departure of Chris Wenlock, as Countryside Projects Manager after over 11 years with the Trust, to pastures new in the North East and we thank him for his hard work.

Finally, no Trust can manage without a sound financial system and this year we have introduced new software which has made our financial management even more efficient.

Once again I would like to thank staff, Trustees and Partners for all their hard work and support over the year. We hope that you enjoy reading about our work together and if you want to get involved as a volunteer, don't hesitate to give us a call.

'all features of cultural and historical significance are recorded and maintained'

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust  
Development Strategy 2006-2011



### Structures Portfolio

Over the years the Trust has set aside funds in an approach to proactively address known issues with the extensive structures portfolio it holds. This portfolio of 70 features includes the rock face at Jiggers Bank, high roadside retaining walls and historically significant structures throughout our landholding. Even with this prudent approach the necessary repairs required places a significant long term expenditure commitment on the organisation. Unexpected events can place even more strain on the Trust's limited resources. It is therefore very important that the Trust is able to work in partnership with agencies like Advantage West Midlands and the European Regional Development Fund to repair and maintain these structures into the future.

The rock face at Jiggers Bank has been a dynamic geological feature throughout the Trust's period of stewardship. In 2005, in response to deterioration of the rock face, a rock catch fence along the base of the rock face was constructed along with the removal of unstable blocks and the smoothing of the profile of the lower embankment. It was acknowledged at this time that further work would be required to provide a long term solution to the problem. The heavy storms of 2007 caused several rapid and dramatic rock falls to happen at Jiggers Bank - this sudden deterioration instigated

### LiDAR

As part of a package of ERDF financed projects around the Gorge, the Trust was instrumental in setting up a LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) aerial survey of the landscape throughout the Gorge working with Forest Research, and Telford and Wrekin Council Engineering Department. LiDAR operates by using a pulsed laser beam as the aircraft flies over the survey area, measuring between 20,000 to 100,000 points per second to build an accurate, high resolution model of the ground and the features upon it. The images that it captures can be used as a method of archaeological recording. This data will be vital in helping to interpret and maintain the features of the Gorge.

a new phase of physical works on the rock face.

Four stabilisation options were considered. The option to build a reinforced concrete toe buttress provided the best balance between risk mitigation and resource requirements. Working with Telford & Wrekin Council the Trust was able to secure partial funding through Advantage West Midlands and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) to support the work on Jiggers Bank rock face. Scott Wilson Ltd was commissioned

### Paradise Meadow – Barn

The annual structures inspection report highlighted the fact that this disused barn in Paradise Meadow had been deteriorating rapidly upon each quarterly inspection throughout 2008. A crack had appeared in one of the end walls whilst the lintel above the doorway had been pushed out by vandals. Although it is not that old the barn is an important cultural and historical feature within the landscape and is therefore worth protecting. Repair works were carried out by local contractors NW Tree Services including pointing of the brickwork, installation of a brick buttress to stabilise the structure, re-establishment of the lintel, and erection of galvanised grids over the window and door.

to act as Project Manager and CDM co-ordinator and CAN Geotechnical Ltd were successful in securing the contract to deliver the works on site.

Stabilisation works began on the 2nd June 2008. Raking drains were drilled deep into the lower face to draw out water and prevent pressure building up behind the concrete toe buttress, a geotechnical membrane was secured to the lower face which would drain water into the internal drainage system and concrete foundations

### Sunnyside Deer Park

This small but significant 18th century deer park, used extensively by local walkers, lies adjacent to the Shropshire Way. Its main features are its magnificent 250 year old veteran trees, home to invertebrates, bats and owls. These oak, beech and lime trees are significant landscape features and in summer can be seen for miles around. It is vital that the genetic diversity of the veteran trees is not lost and therefore cuttings have been taken from these trees for replanting in the future. The trees have also undergone tree surgery to increase their longevity and reduce any hazards to site users.

for the buttress were then installed. As work progressed on the rock face it became evident that a design revision to the concrete buttress would be necessary to accommodate the physical conditions encountered. The consequence of this was a revised concrete pouring programme which increased both the time and cost necessary to complete the work.

Work was finally completed on Sunday 10 August 2008 and the road was re-opened on Monday 11 August.

# Landscape

‘a landscape that retains its locally distinctive characteristics’

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust  
Development Strategy 2006-2011



## Tree works at The Crostan

Tree works were carried out in December by Trust Contractors, DJ Asbury within the western portion of The Crostan. This work was part of the Trust's Management Plan for this site and is aimed at reducing the level of sycamore in the area whilst retaining native ash and oak. It is intended to restock a small area with Scots Pine, found naturally regenerating in the nearby heathland, which has a strong cultural significance within this location. The work has resulted in a graded edge to the woodland with much better sightlines for motorists and pedestrians using the adjacent highway.

## Woodside Orchard

During late January, Trust contractors carried out work within Woodside Orchard, Coalbrookdale. The work was aimed at alleviating pressure being placed on the extensive stone culvert system which runs through and underneath the locality. This is an interesting complex of structures that carry the water from New Pool under the upper Coalbrookdale area and discharge it into Upper Furnace Pool. A small number of large trees around the culvert structure were removed whilst several others received surgery e.g. crown lifting to extend their expected lifespan. The storms of 2007 have caused damage to the retaining walls of the culvert system; work to repair these walls will be undertaken in 2009/10.

## Hedgerows

Originally hedgelaying developed as a way of making a stockproof barrier out of readily available material, that is, living woodland plants. Until the invention of wire, hedges were the only practical and cost-effective way for a farmer to enclose his stock in areas where walling stone was not to hand. Hedgelaying involves partially cutting through the living stems near ground level, and bending them over as 'pleachers'. The pleachers are then anchored by stakes and binding to form a type of living fence.

Volunteers, under the guidance of instructor Karl Liebscher, carried out the traditional craft of hedgelaying at the Ropewalk in November and December.

## Panoramic Photographs

As part of an ERDF funding package the Trust commissioned Panoptics to create several panoramic photographs of prominent viewpoints in the Gorge. These images which can be viewed on the Trust's website allow you to 'virtually' visit the Gorge. The first three images were taken in the Autumn of 2008 and were views from the Rotunda, the Iron Bridge and Haywood Pastures, the images give a full 360 degree view of the sites. The images allow you to scroll left & right and up & down. There is also the facility to zoom in and out. A second set of images will be displayed on the website in July 2009.

The Countryside Stewardship Scheme (CSS) which was initially set up in 1991 was (at the time) the Government's main scheme for the wider countryside, aiming to improve the natural beauty and diversity of the countryside, enhance, restore and re-create targeted landscapes, their wildlife habitats and historical features, and to improve opportunities for public access. This scheme was ideal in helping the Trust to meet many of its own objectives and so in 1999, the Trust entered a ten year agreement whereby various parts of the Trust land

came under the Countryside Stewardship programme.

The overall objectives of the Trust under the scheme are to actively manage the grasslands and their boundaries to improve and extend habitats that are home to a wide collection of wildflowers, invertebrates, birds and small mammals. The interlinking of these conservation areas through hedgerows and occasional scrub provides corridors for wildlife and an attractive and varied landscape. The management of other historical and

traditional features like the old orchards are also included in the scheme. This will increase recreational opportunities for local people and visitors to the Severn Gorge, and organised visits will enable study of the local natural history and landscape.

In March 2005 the Countryside Stewardship Scheme was replaced by the Environmental Stewardship Scheme – the primary objectives of Environmental Stewardship Scheme are to:

- conserve wildlife (biodiversity)
- maintain and enhance

landscape quality and character

- protect the historic environment and natural resources
- promote public access and understanding of the countryside

As the ten year agreement for the CSS is drawing to a close, the Trust will be applying to put part of the land it manages under the Environmental Stewardship programme. This will ensure that the Trust continues to manage its land in the most appropriate and beneficial manner for wildlife and visitors alike.

## 'ensure key habitats and species are sustainable and thriving'

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust  
Development Strategy 2006-2011



### Nature Conservation

The meadows are a glorious spectacle in the summer months with many plants in flower including several species of orchid. Management of the meadows includes an annual hay cut which is generally carried out in late July. Many other species dependent for survival upon well managed meadows can also be found including Dark Bush Cricket *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*. This species is quite uncommon in the Midlands being at the northern edge of its current range. The ovipositor, which is used for laying eggs, at the base of the abdomen shows that it is a female. This individual was found in Shakespeare Meadow amongst a whole host of amazing flies, bees, butterflies, moths and the like.

The Trust annually reviews how key habitats and species are responding to its management regimes. This last year has seen a typical year with monitoring of several woodland, grassland and heathland sites. These have included Lloyds Coppice, Dale Coppice, Lincoln Hill, and Oilhouse Coppice and Pastures.

The surveys have demonstrated that all of the sites reviewed were in good condition, although some issues that need to be addressed were highlighted. In woodlands such as

### Ferns

Ferns are found in many habitats around the world. In the Gorge they tend to be associated with the woodlands but several species are also found growing on man-made structures. The leaves, or fronds, cover a diverse range of shapes and sizes, often with subtle differences amongst the species. Underneath the leaves you will often see the sporangia which contain the reproductive spores. This arrangement is very different to flowers which are generally associated with plant reproduction. There are some fine specimens of Royal Fern *Osmunda regalis* (pictured) in Dale Coppice.

Dale Coppice and Lincoln Hill, beech and sycamore regeneration was recognised as a particular concern, as was the increasing amount of holly in the understorey which blocks out light for plants and regenerating tree seedlings.

The year's monitoring also highlighted the importance of the Trust's woodlands and grasslands for dingy skipper, green hairstreak and white-letter hairstreak butterflies. This latter species is the most abundant, its caterpillars able to feed on the widespread elm growing

### Fungi

Many plants develop symbiotic relationships with fungi where both benefit through the exchange of nutrients. The various mushrooms which appear throughout the year and protrude from the ground or tree bark are the fruiting body of fungi. These come in numerous shapes, sizes, and colours. The Collared Earthstar (pictured) can be found in deciduous woodlands from late summer to autumn. This particular example was discovered at Captain's Coppice on a Fungi Foray run by the Trust. Although several species of fungi are edible care must always be taken when picking as some are poisonous. It is important that several fruiting bodies remain in situ as these are critical in the production of the next generation.

in the woods and hedgerows of the Gorge.

The results of these surveys are discussed with the Trees of Knowledge group as well as being posted onto the Trust's website. This enables us to work with local people to share and learn together whether the aims, objectives and targets of our work are being met and whether, after a period of time, management techniques need to be adapted to better achieve our objectives.

Trust volunteers received

### Reptiles

In the UK there are 6 native reptile species found. The Gorge and surrounding areas support the 4 most widely distributed species. A variety of habitats are found within the Gorge including woodland, grasslands, heath, pools, and riparian habitat alongside the River Severn. Ecological niches within these habitats are utilised by Grass Snake, Adder, Slow-worm, and Viviparous Lizard. Warm days are best for seeing reptile activity and particularly early summer mornings when the animals are basking to generate heat within their cold-blooded bodies. Once warmed up a Viviparous Lizard can move quickly to hunt invertebrates and also avoid predation.

training in Woodland Condition Monitoring, leading to an OCN qualification. This enabled them to input to our monitoring programme by carrying out surveys of Captain's Coppice, Oilhouse Coppice and Devil's Dingle. Volunteers were also trained to identify butterflies, orchids and grasses, and carried out a meadow survey of Ropewalk Meadow. Training in species ID and monitoring is ongoing and it is hoped that volunteers will continue to increase their involvement in this programme.

‘a network of paths and trails which gives high quality access for informal recreation’

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust  
Development Strategy 2006-2011



LOTTERY FUNDED



### Fingerposts

Throughout several key Trust sites new fingerposts can now be found. In total 65 finger posts have been designed, constructed and then placed in situ. The project was funded externally by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) allowing the way-marking infrastructure on Trust sites to be updated with little financial cost to the Trust itself. The posts and fingers are made from green oak which is expected to last many years. Each post has circular areas routed in order to accommodate discs denoting the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site and logos displaying long distance trails.

### Preenseddy Picnic Site

In conjunction with Telford & Wrekin Council the route for public access has now been significantly improved on this site. The old steps have been removed and an 'All Ability Access Gate' installed. Pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders can now all access and use this site safely. The new route follows the upper contours of the site away from the flood zone of the adjacent River Severn. The Trust has purchased two picnic benches which have been placed on site. These benches were constructed by regular Trust contractors, Access and Habitat Management, and have been specifically designed to allow wheelchair users easy access.

### Access to Nature

In March 2009, the Trust in partnership with Telford & Wrekin Council, Telford and Wrekin NHS, The Green Wood Centre, The Gorge Parish Council, Woodside Green Spaces Group and Shropshire Wildlife Trust were successful in winning an Access to Nature grant from the Big Lottery. This project will be aimed at focussing on special needs access improvements, arts in the environment as a medium for communication, Forest Schools and providing information and interpretation at key sites throughout Telford including all of the Trust's land. Next year will be an exciting challenge for the Trust as this new project gets underway.

### Walking in the Gorge

The Trust actively maintains and promotes the network of way-marked paths and trails that have been established throughout the woods and meadows of Ironbridge, Coalbrookdale, Jackfield, Coalport, Madeley, Sutton Maddock, Barrow and Broseley. Several guided walks books have been published by the Trust written by Mike Pooley and these are available from the Tourist Information Centre or the Trust Office, the maps are also available to download for free from our website. Each book offers a number of self-guided walks that offer opportunities to explore the history of the area as well as the diversity of the landscape, geology and wildlife.

## Sutton Wood – Waterfalls Walk

After a successful volunteer project in 2006 to replace a long flight of steps in the south-eastern end of Sutton Wood, it was decided to further improve the access within this woodland by creating a new loop to enable circular walks.

Sutton Wood is a site of ecological importance with records for Large-leaved Lime (a nationally scarce species) and several other ancient

woodland indicator plants including Herb Paris. There is a pond where Great Crested Newts breed, and a diverse range of breeding birds.

Trust volunteers and Green Gym participants started the project in July 2008. With training and support from contractors, Access & Habitat Management, a new kissing gate, two footbridges, two benches, 24 metres of boardwalk and 132 steps were completed.

The route of the new footpath takes in attractive views of the

two small streams crossed by the path, with waterfalls over small limestone terraces. An ecological survey of the route was carried out by Churton Ecology prior to the work, and although no specially protected plants or animals were found, there was one uncommon plant; *Carex strigosa* (Thin-spiked Wood-sedge), only found elsewhere in the Ironbridge area in Lydebrook Dingle. There was one *C. strigosa* plant on the proposed route, so the path was re-routed to avoid damaging it. The project involved removing

small trees along the route, so this work was planned in late summer to avoid the main bird-nesting season.

The Waterfalls Walk can be accessed from Coalport, starting from Coalport Bridge and walking through the woodland to cross the Sutton Wharf access track. A circular walk can be made by returning via the pond. Volunteers on the project took part in a Christmas walk to officially open the path, followed by drinks and mince pies in Coalport Village Hall.

# Celebrating Volunteering in the Gorge



*"My health has certainly benefited from the projects I have undertaken. I think that it is not the task itself but the sense of satisfaction and sometimes sheer amazement at seeing the task completed that is really wonderful." (SM, volunteer since October 2007)*



*"My general physical health has benefited, having toned up with extra muscles! I consider the SGCT day as my day in 'paradise.'" (CP, volunteer since August 06)*



*"I feel welcomed and valued and very fortunate that I am able to work for the trust." (BW, volunteer since August 08)*



*"The woodland survey opened my eyes to what I have failed to see over the years... I have been inspired!" (DW, volunteer since January 09)*

*"It was a well-organised, fun day where I met like-minded people and felt I was being useful." (LD, volunteer since April 08)*



*"I have so enjoyed being out and active on Thursdays that I continued to volunteer and have now added scrub clearing, coppicing, step building and tile making to my portfolio of activities." (PW, volunteer since October 08)*



## 'a wider awareness and understanding of the Trust's work'

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust  
Development Strategy 2006-2011

Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site  
Overarching Interpretation Strategy  
Final Report

for The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Partners



### Trees of Knowledge

The Trees of Knowledge community group was set up in 2007 to provide opportunities for people to learn about, understand, input their own knowledge and become involved in the long term management of the Trust's land. Throughout the year several events were organised including a tile workshop at Jackfield Tile Museum which allowed participants to design tiles which reflected their passion and interest in the local landscape. The tiles will be collated to form a Mural for display in the Trust's new office. A fruit tree pruning course was held at Woodside and Coalport Orchards, which was supported by an 'Orchards of the Gorge' lecture by Mike Pooley.



### Open Evening

This year's Annual Open Evening was at the Park Lane Centre in Woodside, Telford, over 40 local people attended. The main speaker for the evening was Sarah Raper (Chief Executive of Transforming Telford). 'Transforming Telford's work in South Telford' was the topic for the main speech. The Trust Manager gave a presentation of the work the Trust had carried out over the previous 12 months and there was plenty of opportunity for residents to ask questions and speak to staff and trustees about any issues or concerns they might have about any aspect of the Trust's work. The venue for the evening changes annually to provide equal opportunity for all local residents to have easy access to meetings.



### Shropshire Geological Society

The Trust worked with Shropshire Geological Society (SGS) to produce a 'Geo-Trail' for the Ironbridge Gorge, this will enable visitors to the sites to discover more about the geology that defines the Gorge. Its industrial heritage occurred because of its geological makeup - all the ingredients for making high quality iron were exposed in the area some fifteen thousand years ago.

The Trust hosted a practical session at Patten's Rock Quarry for SGS members to carry out scrub clearance to expose the rock face for easier viewing. A walk has been planned in Benthall Edge for Society members and Trust volunteers to launch the 'Geo-Trail' in April 2009.



### Ironbridge Woodland Products

This project was launched in 2000 with grant aid of £6,700 from the Forestry Commission. Nine years later, the project is still going strong.

Ironbridge Woodland Products aims to engage people in their local landscape through donations of timber to local schools and training centres. While some of those participating will have explored the Trust's woods many will have not done so. By converting mobile saw cut planks 'wany edged' with the bark still attached into CD racks, sewing boxes, bird tables and benches, participants start to develop an appreciation of their local woods and how they can be managed for timber and wildlife.

## Interpretation Strategy

As part of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site Strategy Group, the Trust was asked to manage a steering group with Anne Taylor of Transforming Telford and Katie Foster from Shropshire Marketing Partnership working with Interpretation Consultants PLB to develop an overarching strategy for the interpretation of the World Heritage Site. The Trust recognises the necessity and importance of working with other organisations and the IGWHS Strategy Group is a prime example of this.

The purpose of the strategy was

to review and assess the current interpretation in the Gorge to:

- 1 Help the different market segments to understand and enjoy the links between the cultural, archaeological and environmental aspects of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site (IGWHS).
- 2 Help people to access the urban and natural environments
- 3 Draw people from all communities into the natural elements of the IGWHS and improve the quality of their experiences and understanding of land management, and how it shapes the IGWHS
- 4 Enable partner organisations to be better able to communicate their existing messages

PLB proposed that the above could be

achieved in an over-arching, inclusive way by a consistent consideration of the following aspects when planning interpretation:

**The natural landscape** – topics can encompass geology, mineralogy, geomorphology, hydrology, ecology and biodiversity

**The cultural landscape** – topics can encompass archaeology, settlement, development, industrial heritage, technology, land use, management and change

**The social landscape** – topics can encompass people, personalities, skills, values, politics, creative and scientific influences, religion and changing attitudes. The Trust together with the IGWHS Strategy group will be

taking forward some of the suggestions and ideas from the Interpretation Strategy.

Possible ideas include an 'Iron trail', a more co-ordinated approach showing how the 10 wonderful Museums and the amazing landscape between them together form the visitor experience, and a better linking of urban and rural. Implementation will be sensitive and any works carried out by SGCT will be as a result of community consultation. For some areas it will be important to leave as 'wildscape' whilst others such as old rail lines may lend themselves to more interpretation.

‘a local community that enjoys and uses the Trust’s land and is involved in its work’

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust  
Development Strategy 2006-2011



### Guided Walks

To encourage people to use the network of paths and trails throughout the Gorge the Trust runs a variety of guided walks throughout the year. They continue to be very popular with both local residents and visitors alike. In conjunction with the World Heritage Site Festival the Trust led a walk around Lincoln Hill which gave participants the chance to enjoy the spectacular views from the ‘Rotunda’ viewpoint.

Other themes throughout the year have included a ‘Dawn Chorus’ walk, a Fungi Foray and a Glow Worm Walk. We hope that our walks will encourage people to go out and explore sites that they may not be as familiar with.

### Events

The Trust continues to work with other organisations to support local community events which attract a great many visitors. Supporting such events allows the Trust to reach many people that might not be aware that they are able to use and enjoy the Trust’s land. Events the Trust supported included the Ironbridge Gorge Walking Festival, the World Heritage Site Festival, Madeley Green Day and Apple Day.

At Madeley Green Day and Apple Day a board game was produced based on the Trust’s land to encourage people to understand and explore our sites.

### Awards for All

In March 2009, the Trust was successful in being awarded a grant from Awards for All. The grant will be put towards a programme of access improvements to the Rotunda on Lincoln Hill. Contractors will initially regrade and widen the upper path. Trust and Green Gym volunteers will then be working to replace the steep flight of steps to the historic landmark with new steps, and to install a bench half-way up. Further improvements will be made to enable people with pushchairs or wheelchairs to visit the Rotunda and enjoy the view, including replacing an entrance stile with a kissing gate.

### Green Gym

Via our volunteering project we have been able to host 27 Green Gym sessions on our sites this year. Telford Green Gym is an NHS project that provides a fantastic opportunity for people to improve their physical or mental health as well as their local environment. The Green Gym offers an alternative to conventional methods of exercise to all ages and abilities. Local Green Gym participants have contributed to several of our projects this year including the steps at Lincoln Hill, the boardwalks and footbridges at Sutton Wood and hedgelaying at the Ropewalk.

## Volunteering in the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site

In its final year the Volunteering in the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site project has proved to be a huge success. This three year project, part funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund has enabled over 700 individuals to take part in practical projects on the Trust’s sites. Opportunities for people to become involved in the management of a World Heritage Site are extremely rare

and through the project the Trust has been able to recruit and retain volunteers by offering local people a completely new experience and by providing high quality training and support.

Over the three years, volunteers have been integral in improving the access to sites around the Gorge – they have built over 160 metres of boardwalks and constructed over 640 steps as well as building 13 benches, 5 footbridges and installing 5 gates to enable easier access to the Trust’s sites.

Volunteers have also provided valuable input into the Trust’s biological monitoring programme

by carrying out meadow surveys, woodland condition surveys and orchid counts.

Although the project has come to the end of its three years, the Trust is keen to sustain a highly skilled and motivated volunteer group on a permanent basis. The Community Development Officer’s post has now become a permanent position, demonstrating the Trust’s commitment to continuing its volunteer programme.

In an evaluation of the project, 100% of volunteers agreed that volunteering had given them a greater appreciation of the local environment and 91% said

that they hoped to continue volunteering with the Trust long-term. All respondents agreed that the project had provided increased opportunities for people to enjoy their local woodlands and meadows and all agreed that they had been given the opportunity to participate in training and learning.

Volunteers will play a key role in the Access to Nature Project over the coming three years. It is hoped that this project will encourage more people to ‘get involved’ in their local landscape and enhance their appreciation and understanding of the area’s special heritage.

## Summary Statement of Severn Gorge Countryside Trust's Finances

This is a short financial summary taken from the full audited financial statements for the period 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2009.

If you would like to see a copy of the full Auditor's Report and Financial Statement, it is available on our website:

[www.severngorge.org.uk](http://www.severngorge.org.uk)

Or printed copies can be obtained by writing to:

Severn Gorge Countryside Trust,  
Wesley Rooms Annexe  
Jockey Bank, Ironbridge,  
Telford TF8 7PD

(01952) 433880

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES for the year ended 31st March 2009	General Fund	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2009	Total Funds 2008
	£	£	£	£	£
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
INCOMING RESOURCES FROM GENERATED FUNDS					
Rents Received	305,757	—	—	305,757	281,984
Contracting Projects	—	—	—	—	3,000
Grants	16,173	—	321,819	337,992	178,869
ACTIVITIES TO GENERATE FUNDS					
Investment Income	13,774	11,454	—	25,228	31,047
Other Income	1,484	—	—	1,484	4,807
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>337,188</b>	<b>11,454</b>	<b>321,819</b>	<b>670,461</b>	<b>499,707</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
COSTS OF GENERATING FUNDS					
Costs of generating voluntary income	4,760	—	—	4,760	4,452
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES					
Woodland / Countryside Management	163,677	—	—	163,677	269,365
Access	46,304	—	4,950	51,254	22,027
Community Projects	150,192	—	308,889	459,081	113,080
GOVERNANCE COSTS	18,391	—	—	18,391	16,054
<b>Total Resources Expended</b>	<b>383,324</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>313,839</b>	<b>697,163</b>	<b>424,978</b>
<b>NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES BEFORE TRANSFERS</b>	<b>(46,136)</b>	<b>11,454</b>	<b>7,980</b>	<b>(26,702)</b>	<b>74,729</b>
Transfers between Funds	136,901	(136,901)	—	—	—
<b>NET INCOMING / (OUTGOING) RESOURCES FOR THE YEAR</b>	<b>90,765</b>	<b>(125,447)</b>	<b>7,980</b>	<b>(26,702)</b>	<b>74,729</b>
<b>OTHER RECOGNISED GAINS AND LOSSES</b>					
Gains/ (Losses) on Investments – realised	(18,528)	—	—	(18,528)	—
Gains/ (Losses) on Investments – unrealised	—	(25,685)	—	(25,685)	(43,652)
Pension Scheme actuarial gains/ (losses)	27,000	—	—	27,000	(27,000)
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>	<b>99,237</b>	<b>(151,132)</b>	<b>7,980</b>	<b>(43,915)</b>	<b>4,077</b>
<b>BALANCES BROUGHT FORWARD AT 31ST MARCH 2008</b>	<b>98,151</b>	<b>640,645</b>	<b>109,497</b>	<b>848,293</b>	<b>844,216</b>
<b>BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD AT 31ST MARCH 2009</b>	<b>197,388</b>	<b>489,513</b>	<b>117,477</b>	<b>804,378</b>	<b>848,293</b>

BALANCE SHEET as at 31st March 2009	2009		2008	
	£	£	£	£
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
Tangible Assets		51,921		53,440
Investments		209,513		390,645
		<b>261,434</b>		<b>444,085</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
Debtors	27,403		203,299	
Investments	445,906		407,927	
Cash at Bank and in hand	155,278		49,344	
	<b>628,587</b>		<b>660,570</b>	
<b>CREDITORS – amounts falling due within one year</b>		(7,961)		(161,354)
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		620,626		499,216
Pension Scheme Funding deficit		(77,682)		(95,008)
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>804,378</b>		<b>848,293</b>
<b>FUNDS:</b>				
General Fund		197,388		98,151
Designated Funds		489,005		560,803
Restricted Funds		117,477		109,497
Revaluation Reserve		508		79,842
<b>MEMBERS' FUNDS</b>		<b>804,378</b>		<b>848,293</b>

## Grants to help us with our work

Thank you to the Heritage Lottery Fund, Defra (Countryside Stewardship Scheme, Single payment scheme) the Primary Care Trust, Awards for All, Advantage West Midlands, ERDF, Madeley Parish Council and the Forestry Commission for the grants that we have received this year. Without their support and assistance a lot of the Trust's activities would not have been possible.

Above all a big thank you to our volunteers, visitors, staff and Trustees.

TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED	Generating Voluntary Income £	Woodland/ countryside management £	Access £	Community Projects £	Governance Costs £	Total 2009 £	Total 2008 £
Direct costs	—	84,835	22,713	302,656	—	410,204	238,717
Employee costs	4,760	66,452	25,225	53,503	6,132	156,069	140,018
Insurance	—	2,613	700	1,827	—	5,140	6,608
Transport	—	1,404	376	982	—	2,762	4,142
Office Costs & other costs	—	8,373	2,240	5,852	1,830	18,295	17,851
Trust support	—	—	—	—	1,898	1,898	2,717
Professional costs	—	—	—	—	8,531	8,531	5,729
Depreciation	—	—	—	7,971	—	7,971	8,196
Finance costs	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,000
Exceptional item: office Project write off	—	—	—	86,293	—	86,293	—
	<b>4,760</b>	<b>163,677</b>	<b>51,254</b>	<b>459,081</b>	<b>18,391</b>	<b>697,163</b>	<b>424,978</b>



LOTTERY FUNDED



Telford and Wrekin Primary Care Trust



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Department for Environment  
Food and Rural Affairs



Telford & Wrekin  
COUNCIL



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