



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

Period start date			Period end date		
6	4	2015	5	4	2016
From			To		

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name **Swansea Canal Society**

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) **1168894**

Charity's principal address

Westlyn
New Road
Llanmorlais
Postcode SA4 3TJ

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Gordon Walker	Chair		
2	John Gwalter	Treasurer		
3	Martin Davies			
4	Andy Ellis			
5	Gill Thomas			
6	Michelle Davidson			
7	Liz Willicombe			
8	John Davies		Appointed 3/5/2017	
9				
10				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document	Constitution
How the charity is constituted	Association
Trustee selection methods	Election at Annual General Meeting, co-option by Executive Committee

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

The Society maintains a close relationship with the Canal and River Trust, (CRT) who are the owners of the extant portion of the canal. We are also a corporate member of the Inland Waterways Association (IWA), the main UK association for canals and rivers with professional expertise in all aspects of inland waterway use, operation and restoration. We liaise with a large number of other local and national bodies over the canal and its restoration including Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Councils, Swansea Bay Inland Waterway Partnership, the Neath and Tennant Canals Trust and Sustrans. The Society is currently financially sound. The other current risks to the society are associated with accidents both during our maintenance and restoration work and relative to our canoe operation. These are mitigated by a close attention to safe practices combined with the proper levels of insurance. A developing risk to the work of the society is the budgetary constraints of CRT. The major implication of this is that no improvement work can be undertaken on the canal which would result in an increase to CRT's maintenance costs and we are developing means to offset such increase.

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

Swansea Canal Society exists for the restoration, reconstruction and maintenance of the Swansea Canal for the social, economic, leisure, environmental and health benefits of the general population.

It also works to promote education in the history and use of the canal.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

The Society currently furthers these aims by:

- Weekly work parties maintaining and enhancing the existing portions of the canal.
- Working with all other interested parties to promote the restoration of the remaining line where possible and creating new routes where the current route is irretrievably lost.
- Running a canoe operation for both the the general public and affinity groups thus bringing life back onto the canal.
- Hosting an annual Waterways Recovery Group canal camp.

Through undertaking these activities the society aims to provide the relevant benefits by turning an otherwise derelict liability into an asset enhancing the financial and physical well-being of the local community.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

In the 2016 to 2017 financial year the volunteer time contributed by members towards the society's aims was again the major contribution to the volunteer hours recorded by Canal and River Trust. This was supplemented by the hours contributed by volunteers from the other organisations mentioned in our achievements below.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The society has achieved much in 2016 -2017. We changed our charitable status to that of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in order that we could take ownership of 120 yards of the Swansea Canal which is currently buried underground in a pipe. We are indebted to the City and County of Swansea for this generous donation. We will shortly be demolishing a derelict building there which was built over the original towpath. We will then be able to restore the towpath which will be part of Sustrans National Route 43. In the absence of other funding we are constructing the new towpath from our own restoration resources with the final surfacing being generously provided by the City and County of Swansea

Our canoe hire project completed its third summer of operation. We are grateful to all our volunteers and qualified instructors who ensured that this facility was open every Sunday in summer. In addition, we increased the availability of this visitor attraction by opening each Tuesday during the summer school holidays. The number of bookings from clubs, schools and other groups for the use of the canoes and kayaks was also significantly higher. This revenue stream has been vital to us. (Money???)
We were disappointed not to be able to pursue our hopes of making the disused section of the old canal from Godre'r Graig to Ystalyfera a signed and waymarked Heritage Trail complete with Information Panels. The funding potentially available proved to be insufficient to make this hope a reality. However, we have used much of the information garnered in preparing that grant application for our current submissions to the Rural Communities Development Fund for dredging a mile long section of the canal. We are grateful for the support of the Canal and River Trust, the City and County of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot Borough Council in this endeavour.

The Society was awarded a Green Flag for being one of Wales' Best Kept Public Spaces by the Keep Britain Tidy organisation at a ceremony in Gloucester. We are very proud to be a recipient of this award and hope that it will be renewed in 2017.

Our work parties continued to meet every Tuesday to repair, restore and maintain the canal infrastructure. The number of hours worked each month are recorded and sent to the Canal and River Trust and in late 2016 we received a commemorative plaque from them acknowledging that the Society had reached a grand total of 25,000 hours worked in the three years since 2013. Between ten and twenty volunteers usually attend these Tuesday work parties, regardless of the season or the weather.

Section D

Achievements and performance

We were extremely pleased that in 2016 Liz McIvor, the Chief Curator of Bradford Museums, and the presenter of the BBC series 'Canals, the Making of a Nation' agreed to become our Patron. Her knowledge and support has been extremely useful and we were delighted to welcome her and her family to the canal in October 2016.

Another visitor to the canal in 2016 was Cheon Pyo Lee who was our artist-in-residence, a Welsh initiative sponsored by ADDO, the Arts Council of Wales and Glandwr Cymru. Cheon is based in New York but he was an engaging and creative addition to several of our Tuesday Work Parties. The work he has done, inspired by the Swansea Canal, will be on show in Newtown from May 20th this year.

We made the decision in late 2016 to start a monthly Sunday work party that will concentrate exclusively on maintaining the northern section of the canal from Pontardawe to Ynysmeudwy. We are aware that much of our work has concentrated on the southern section of canal from Clydach to Trebanos so this new work party will be a welcome presence in the three miles of canal to the north. The first work party meets on May 21st 2017.

Our commitment to the long-term vision of joining up the Neath, Tennant and Swansea Canal remains. In 2016-17 the members of the Swansea Bay Inland Waterways Partnership met each quarter. We have at least three of our own members at each meeting, two of whom are currently the SBIWP Chairman and Minute Secretary.

It is the trustees' opinion that the above has been a substantial achievement for a small charity of under 100 members. Behind these ongoing projects a wealth of everyday time-consuming work goes on. Publicity, meetings, photography, website and Facebook updates, catering, membership subscriptions, articles for magazines, liaison with schools and Day Care Centres, financial accounting, models and info boards for Society Stalls, and the making of craft items for sale at canal events have contributed equally to the considerable success of our society in 2016-17.

We consider that our funds, while not generous for the amount of work still to be done, will be adequate, with the addition of grant aid, to support further advancement for the foreseeable future.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The society allocates its reserves to specific projects by making formal provisions in the accounts.

These are reviewed regularly and spending against them is monitored at monthly meetings.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

The expected publication costs for the book on the Swansea Canal have escalated beyond the provision. We have several promises of donations which are expected to cover this shortfall.

Section F

Other optional information

Although the change of charity status to Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 24th August 2016 resulted in the old charity being removed from the register and a new one registered the society continued to function as the same organisation and both the accounts and this report are prepared on a continuing basis.

Section G

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)

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Full name(s)

Gordon Walker

Gordon Walker	
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Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)

Chair

Chair	
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Date

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