



The Kennet & Avon Canal Trust

Charity number 209206

Treasurer



**The Queen's Award
for Voluntary Service**

The MBE for volunteer groups

The Kennet & Avon Canal Trust is seeking a new volunteer Treasurer to take on the task of leading the financial and related matters in the work of this small charity to Protect, Enhance and Promote the Kennet & Avon Canal. The current Treasurer is planning to stand down at the end of 2018 after 6 years in this fascinating and rewarding role.

Background

The Trust was formed in 1962 (having been an association since 1951) when the canal had become derelict along most of its 87½ mile length. Having prevented government plans to formally close the canal, the Trust set about restoring it. This was achieved by lobbying, fund-raising, millions of hours of volunteer work and partnerships with British Waterways and the local Councils. The passion was sustained for 28 years and the volunteers were finally rewarded when HM the Queen re-opened the canal in 1990. Work continued in close partnership with British Waterways (now the Canal & River Trust) to complete the work needed to assure the future of the K&A. With the aid of a £25m grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, this was achieved in 2003. The restoration has been a huge success and today the canal is used by all members of the community, including walkers, cyclists, anglers, canoeists, boat enthusiasts, and nature lovers.

The Kennet and Avon Canal Trust now aims to 'Protect, Enhance and Promote' the canal. It is organised in 8 branches which together run 4 passenger boats, 4 boats specially designed and built for disabled users, a youth training boat, the historic Crofton Pumping Station featuring the world's oldest working Beam Engine, 5 cafes, a museum and an archive of the canal's heritage.

The Trust has 7 staff (6 FTE) and around 300 volunteers. There are currently 9 trustees and 3 directors of the Trust's trading company. Turnover in 2017 was £1.1m (an atypical year, 2016 turnover of £576k is more usual). Total funds at the end of 2017 were £1.4m.

Expressed in the language of the Charity Commission, we have 4 objects:

1. promote, facilitate, and assist in the conservation, protection and improvement of the Kennet and Avon Canal and its associated watercourses, towpaths, structures and buildings;
2. advance the education of the public in general of the significance of the Kennet & Avon Canal and its associated structures
3. protect and conserve, objects, sites and buildings of archaeological, architectural, engineering or historic interest on, in the vicinity of, or otherwise associated with the Kennet & Avon Canal
4. promote and facilitate recreational use of the Kennet and Avon Canal by a wide section of the community in order to improve conditions of life for the public

The Role

In the Kennet & Avon Canal Trust (KACT), the Treasurer's role includes that of Finance Director of its trading subsidiary and is to oversee the financial probity of the Trust, to agree finance policies with fellow trustees and to ensure adequate financial resources are planned and maintained, both in the short term and for the foreseeable future.

The candidate does not have to be a qualified accountant, but would be expected to have gravitas, confidence and up to date accounting and business skills, including charity knowledge, to present a finance case to trustees and others within KACT. An ability to present financial affairs to non-accountants is invaluable. A keen interest in canals, the built environment and boating would be helpful.

The Treasurer is supported by a skilled and committed finance officer, who is on site for 2 days a week and available as appropriate outside of those core hours. The work undertaken by the finance officer is invaluable to KACT and includes day to day accounting, banking, systems, accounts payable, salaries and compliance including taxation – PAYE and VAT.

Externally, the Treasurer would be expected to liaise with auditors, bankers and, if required, regulatory authorities eg the Charity Commission.

Essential Tasks

1. Availability to attend Trust Council meetings, a monthly 2-hour meeting for 11 months a year. Trustees meet physically every 3 months in Devizes and other meetings take place online.
2. Availability to attend Board meetings of the Trust's trading subsidiary – in Devizes approximately every 3 months.
3. Preparation of the monthly finance reports to fellow trustees and directors of the trading subsidiary, comprising receipt and payment accounts, cash flow and project cost summaries and other appropriate reports.
4. Provide support to the finance officer and other colleagues as appropriate, whether on day to day finance challenges or advice on policies and analysis.
5. Provide robust financial input and challenge to topics raised at trustee and board meetings.
6. Help to minimise risk through a review of margins and balance sheet controls, including nominal data.
7. Provide finance input to the annual trustees' report for the accounts, agree this with auditors and present to members at the AGM.

Further tasks not carried out by the current Treasurer that could be undertaken.

1. Authorisation (using online banking) of all payments over £1000 and stand-in during absences of the Trust Administrator for other payments.
2. Participation in the Crofton Project Group delivering the Lottery funded 'Our Crofton Story' project.
3. Filing of some statutory returns with Companies House and Charity Commission, liaison with them and other statutory bodies as required.
4. Part of first line IT support team
5. Negotiate and sign Trust leases and other agreements