



Welcome to the Newsletter

Hi, Sebastian (Geofanatic) here, Ruth is once again enjoying life out and about, I'm not sure where but I suspect the weather is more clement than what I am currently seeing out of my window. We may have an obsession with the weather but it has never stopped the Geograph membership from getting out and about and taking such a wonderful eclectic collection of photos. All the best for 2025.

From the Chair (David Martin)

Happy Birthday!

Welcome to 2025 and Geograph's 20th Anniversary year! Although there is more than one way to measure Geograph's exact birthday, on Barry's advice we are treating 12th March as the anniversary date

It is a truly remarkable achievement that – right now - 13,964 contributors have submitted 7,928,610 images covering 282,933 grid squares. (I'd love to soon be able to say 14,000 contributors and 8,000,000 images!) Geograph is many things – for many of us a hobby that keeps us active and stimulates our interest in the environment, as well as an online community for sharing and learning, but it has also become unique open-access photographic archive of the British and Irish landscapes.

In just one example of the educational value of the collection, the Geograph image collection is a searchable layer in Digimap for Schools <https://digimapforschools.edina.ac.uk/about/> – Ordnance Survey's digital mapping product used by around 4,800 primary and secondary schools, allowing pupils to explore what an area looks like through our photography at the same time as exploring its representation in Ordnance Survey mapping

New Trustees

At the start of this New Year, I'm also particularly pleased to welcome Jonathan Billinger and Peter McDermott as new Company Directors and Charity Trustees. You'll find introductory messages from them both below. I'm very grateful to them for responding to my appeal in the November newsletter and subsequently meeting with the present board members and myself.

Anniversary Appeal

As we begin to prepare the 2024 annual accounts, I will be writing to all members and active contributors around the time this newsletter is published regarding our Anniversary Appeal. With apologies to those of you who may read about this twice, we are mindful that we have many active contributors who do not read the newsletter.

As mentioned in the November newsletter, our regular income has not kept pace with the substantial inflationary increases of the last couple of years and 2024 will likely see a deficit of around £4,000 compared to recurrent costs, as noted in Richard's Treasurer's report below. We have not held an appeal for donations since 2022 but need to do so now to help secure the future of the project.

Further details will be in the separate appeal communication, but you can always find our donation details on the Support Us link <https://www.geograph.org.uk/help/donate> from Geograph's main menu.

Anniversary Events

Our 20th Anniversary Spring meeting, incorporating the AGM, will be held at the University of Bradford on 19-21 May. Again, there are further details below and more will follow via the Geograph Events page

A strong message from those who gathered at last year's annual meeting was how enjoyable it was to meet others face to face and how good it would be to have more local opportunities to do so.

We are therefore encouraging you to suggest an anniversary outing in 2025 by simply choosing a day that you intend to go out with your camera to an interesting location and advertising it via the Geograph Events page <https://www.geograph.org.uk/events/> inviting others to join you. That might begin and end at a favourite pub or coffee shop, but it need be nothing more than you would enjoy doing anyway. Do give an indication of the distance/duration and terrain in the description.

If you are going on an anniversary outing, then why not invite a friend to bring their camera as well –share the enjoyment of Geograph and maybe even encourage them to join?

There will be a new shared description for images from these events, so that we can identify and showcase the collection at the end of the year. Keep an eye on the events page for anything going on in your area and let the organizer know if you're planning to attend.

Geograph's 20th Anniversary in 2025 – 12th March

Geograph has a long tradition of hosting collections of photos taken on Christmas day and New Year's Day. We'd particularly like to invite you to take a photo on or very close to Geograph Day, 12th March 2025, to mark the 20th Anniversary. How about planning to revisit some early photographs (your own or another's) for the anniversary to show what has changed? One of Geograph's great benefits as an archive is the growing timeline that shows how landscapes and neighbourhoods have changed – again, those images could serve us well in generating external articles and news stories and we'll create a shared description for these.

Treasurer Report (Richard Rogerson)

We continue with the frustrations of dealing with banks and HMRC, with slow and sometimes no response to queries making life more difficult than it needs to be. As before, I can confirm that accounting records are being updated and no payments have been missed. We are also starting to put together the end of year accounts for approval and submission.

At the recent Board meeting I shared a spreadsheet showing income and expenditure for 2024 – this is summarised below.

	Twelve months to 31 Dec 2024	Year to 31 Dec 2023
Income:		
Donations, inc. gift aid	£28554	£22259
Profit from calendars	£848	£790
Advertising	£722	£2096
Interest	£1302	£699
Expenditure -		
Website Operation	£26778	£24687
Administration	£1403	£1155
Financial	£321	£3170
Net Income	£2924	(£3168)

A few short observations on the above:

Donations; this includes the legacy of £10k as well as a separate one-off donation of £1k

Advertising revenue is down (a trend that is common across the charity sector), but we are benefiting from the current favourable interest rates.

Website Operation includes £5k for a part of our website hosting for the next three years.

Whilst the above appears to show a healthy situation at first glance, it is a simple cash-based snapshot of the end of the year. However, taking into account the legacy and one-off donation and also the benefit the advance purchase for website hosting, we actually have an in-year deficit approaching £4k.

From Peter McDermott (new trustee)

I'm delighted to be accepted as a board member and trustee of Geograph. It's going to be an honour to work to support the Geograph project, which has given me, and many others, such pleasure over the years. As Geograph enters its 20th anniversary year I'm excited to see how we can develop and extend the project, ensuring it continues to grow as a unique archive resource over the coming 20 years.

My career background is as a civil engineer having worked in local government and private sector companies in the field of transport infrastructure. I've had a keen interest in the outdoors, walking and cycling, from a young age. I have also always had a fascination for maps, both old and modern, together with a passion for photography. I've been contributing photographs to Geograph since 2007.

From Jonathan Billinger (new trustee)

I'm privileged and honored to help serve the Geograph project. I have been contributing for 18 years. My life's full-time career in UK horticulture ended in December 2024, and I'm looking forward to doing some less-stressful part-time work and enjoying more time for leisure activities.

I discovered Geograph when researching garden centre locations in the run-up to starting a job selling plants and bulbs for a Dutch company. The job took me literally from Lizard Point to Duncansby Head as well as the island of Ireland. Between 2008 and 2013 I volunteered as a moderator and for the last dozen or so years I have been one of the shortlisters for the peer-review 'game' PotY. I also regularly contribute to forum discussions.

The contributions to Geograph form my diary, my territory, and my legacy. I have learned huge amounts from researching suitable captions for my images as well as following other members' image descriptions. The Geograph Project faces many challenges as it adapts to conditions in the third decade of its existence. I will bring a multi-skilled, can-do attitude to the Geograph Board.

Stephen Craven

Moderation

Our moderators continue to do a lot of essential work behind the scenes. Their duties include checking new images for accuracy and suitability (with new obligations under the Online Safety Act 2023), dealing with change suggestions, and approving written articles. We have recently updated the moderation manual that was developed in 2023, and this second edition will shortly be made available on the website for all registered users to view. Do let us know if you might be interested in joining the team.

2025 Spring Meet

The now customary format of our annual gathering over three days in the spring or summer will continue this year with a series of events in Bradford, West Yorkshire from Monday 19 to Wednesday 21 May.



The formal AGM for signed-up company members and interested observers will be held in the Norcroft Conference Centre at Bradford University (9 Tumbling Hill Street, BD7 1DB) on the morning of Tuesday 20 May.

There will also be walks, talks, meals and drinks as we want this to be a fun and educational way to meet other people involved in the project. So, we would love to see as many of you as possible for part or all of the three days, whether or not you come to the AGM.

Details of the gathering will be posted in the Forum at <https://www.geograph.org.uk/discuss/index.php?action=vthread&forum=2&topic=34039&page=0#2> as they develop. To register your attendance at the AGM, please see the 'Events' section in the sidebar of the website. If you have any questions or wish to be involved in organising the events, please contact Stephen Craven geograph@pilgrims.org.uk

Contact us

We always value comments and suggestions, whether on the "Trustees" section of the Forum at <https://www.geograph.org.uk/discuss/index.php?&action=vtopic&forum=22> or direct to us by email: trustees@geograph.org.uk



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The directors of the company and trustees of the charity are: Mark Anderson (Company Secretary), Sebastian Ballard, Jonathan Billinger, Stephen Craven, Bill Harrison, Barry Hunter (Treasury team), Christine Johnstone, David Martin (Chair), Peter McDermott, Richard Rogerson (Treasury team), and Ruth Sharville.

Image credits:

Woodchester Mansion

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The Summit of Minto South Hill

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