



Dear Member,

As you will be aware the River Stour Trust, like many other charities and organisations, has been seriously impacted by the Covid-19 crisis. We have been unable to operate as normal this year and will have severely reduced income for over a year, very possibly longer. Nonetheless, we are doing all we can to ensure the future of the River Stour Trust.

Our main sources of income are through our public boat trips and functions at our venues, including full weddings, all of which have been curtailed. We cannot allow any risk to the health of passengers, customers, visitors, our staff and our volunteers. Although, we did oversee a successful socially distanced wedding ceremony in July and a scaled back, Covid-secure Sudbury to the Sea in September. Nonetheless, the ongoing restrictions and risk of a 'second wave' inhibited our usual activities this year. Therefore, until we get further advice or otherwise from the Government, these activities remain on hold and we cannot be certain on the impact of Covid-19 to our 2021 operations.

Fortunately, the Trust has reserves, thanks to the magnificent efforts of our volunteers and our financial management, but even with prudent spending, our reserves will not last forever. We applied for emergency grants but the amount of money available has been limited.

In line with Government support, we have put our small team of paid staff on furlough until such time as we are permitted to bring back crucial members of the team for a few hours per week. If you want to contact us, then phone messages and emails are being followed up but our response time might be slower due to limited working hours and access to the office.

How can I help?

We have raised the membership subscription by £5 and the minimum rates are as follows: £20 for an Individual, £25 for a Couple, £15 for a Senior, £20 for a Senior Couple.

This is the first time we have increased the subscription for over 14 years so has been long overdue! We hope you will agree this still represents good value given our achievements to date.

If you are unsure whether your membership is up-to-date then please contact us membership@riverstourtrust.org or call 01787 313199.

We are looking to our membership to help where possible and are incredibly grateful to those who have already contributed. We appreciate the different ways Covid-19 could be affecting you and understand if you cannot contribute any more than you are at the moment. But please read on for some ideas on how you might be able to lend your support...

5 Year Membership Subscription

Would you be prepared to pay the next five years subscription in one go? This will give us an immediate injection of much needed income and save on some administrative costs during that period. We can accept cheques and bank transfers (contact us) or card payments via this link:

www.riverstourtrust.org/members/online-membership-payment/

Gift Aid Declaration

Did you know that we can reclaim 25p for every £1 that is paid in subscriptions or donations at no additional cost to you? This applies only to UK tax payers paying an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax equal to the tax which will be reclaimed on your behalf. You can ask us to post you a form or complete it online: www.riverstourtrust.org/members/gift-aid-declaration/

One Off Donation

We are inviting you to make a one-off donation to the Trust. This can be any figure you can afford, but we are suggesting possible figures of £20, £40, £60 or £100, or more if you are able. We can take accept cheques, bank transfers and card payments. Please get in touch or go on our website to find out more: www.riverstourtrust.org/about/donate/

Give as you Live

Did you know that you can help us raise funds for FREE just by shopping online? Every time you shop online via Give as you Live at 4,000+ top retailers including Amazon, eBay, John Lewis and Expedia, a FREE donation will be made to us and it won't cost you a penny extra! Plus, if you shop through their website, you can access top offers so you can save money and raise money! Simply sign up, select us as your favourite charity and start shopping! Find out more:

www.giveasyoulive.com/join/stour

Join us online

We want you to know that we will be continuing to produce our magazine, Lock Lintel, as we feel this is important to continue to reach out to our members and the wider bodies that support us. We apologise for the delay and hope an issue will be with you soon!

In the meantime, the easiest way for us to communicate will continue to be on our website, social media posts and emailed newsletters. If you don't already receive our emails then please consider providing your email address to enable us to more easily stay in touch – email us at membership@riverstourtrust.org. We can also send you an electronic version of this letter which will make it easier to click on the links. We can assure you that we will never sell your personal data, will not divulge it to any third parties and are committed to protecting it.

Thank You

The River Stour Trust has achieved so much since it was formed 52 years ago and we want not only to just survive, but to come out of the situation stronger, and better placed to preserve the river we all love.

We hope you can continue to support us at this time and consider the aid you can bring in one of the ways we have suggested. But whether you support us by being a member and/or a donor, we thank you for your continued support in these difficult times.

We hope you and your loved ones are doing well.

River Stour Trust



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/GranaryQuayLane



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