



Grid Square

The Newsletter of the Geograph community

#02 March 2026

Geograph Britain and Ireland - www.geograph.org.uk



cc-by-sa/2.0 - Bembridge Lifeboat Station by Ian Capper - www.geograph.org.uk/p/7751247
<https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/7751247>

Ian Capper's classic study of Bembridge Lifeboat Station starts off this edition of Grid Square.

Taken in April 2024, this has the honour of being voted joint winner of Photograph of the Year (PotY) 2024, which has recently been finalised – see [Link to discussion](#)

Within this edition is a potted history of the peer-review 'game' PotY by Phil Halling and at the end is the other joint winner for 2024.

Among the regular articles this month is the Chair's report with information on developing the outreach of the company AGM so that hopefully more of us can contribute to the direction of Geograph in the future.

Also, Lewis Clarke discusses how Geograph has run in parallel with his journalistic career.

From the Chair – David Martin

Welcome to the second edition of Grid Square – I'd like to begin by thanking Jonathan Billinger on behalf of us all for the energy he has put into this newsletter and to everyone who has commented positively on the new style.

If you are reading this in March 2026, you are probably an active user who has logged in and accepted our revised Terms of Service during the past few weeks. Thanks for your patience – this has been an important action leading up to the first annual review of our Online Safety Act risk assessments. I hope that most of our behind-the-scenes work has not affected you at all, but I'd like to express particular thanks to all our moderators – the prime reason that you don't encounter inappropriate images or advertising spam on Geograph is primarily because we have a dedicated team keeping it out.

Continuing with thanks, at the March Board meeting, we said farewell and thanks to our former Chair Christine Johnstone who is stepping down from the Board, but also welcomed back fellow trustee Ruth Sharville after a period of illness.

If you haven't spotted my theme yet, it is that Geograph is very much a community. We continually have opportunities to become involved, whether as moderators, trustees or in other roles large and small: **Geograph needs you!** If you value the project and would like to do something to help, please contact myself or any of the trustees. Geograph operates as both a charity and a company, and company members have a key role in our decision-making.

We look forward to welcoming as many members as possible to our Annual Meeting and AGM in Nottingham on 2-4 June.



[Geograph Summer gathering and AGM 2026.](#)

Do please let us know via that link if you are intending to come, as it helps with the detailed planning. Company membership is open to any contributor who has more than 100 submitted images and active contributors are invited to join, via their personal profile pages. Again, if you have questions please don't hesitate to ask. We have recently contacted around 15 long-term inactive members to confirm whether they wish to continue and we expect to remove some names from the membership roll at the May Board meeting.

The Trustees have been considering the conduct of company meetings, as smaller numbers have been able to attend recent AGMs. This is understandable due to constraints of time, cost and personal circumstances and we have been asked about the possibility of permitting remote attendance. The Charity Commission recognizes that there are good reasons for meetings to be held in hybrid or online mode, but provision

for this needs to be made in the Articles of Association and ours, which date from 2011, do not currently permit this. We are therefore preparing a proposal for the June AGM that we amend our articles to permit hybrid and online company meetings to be held in future: we intend to use standard wording provided by Companies House and are not proposing any other changes.

We know that many members value the social aspects of a face-to-face annual meeting and we are not planning to stop this but want to offer members every possible mechanism for participation. Further details and background information will be posted to the discussion forum in advance.

If you are a company member it is especially important that you use your online vote if unable to attend the AGM, to ensure that we have a quorum. As usual, AGM papers and details of how to vote will be circulated to members three weeks in advance of the AGM.

David

Treasurer's Report – Richard Rogerson

March 2026 - Treasurer Report

Income and expenditure for last month and 2026 to date is summarised below.

	February 2026	2026 Year to date
Income - Donations, inc. gift aid	£1641	£3413
- Advertising	£50	£64
- Interest	£184	£373
Expenditure - Website Operation	£2183	£4332
- Administration	£67	£134
- Financial	£12	£27
Net Income	(£387)	(£643)

Regular monthly income has been below our monthly expenditure in January and February - we are very grateful to all Geograph users who donate, whether it is one off donations, irregular donations or regular monthly donations. However, whilst one-off donations are helpful, it is the regular donations that are the lifeblood of our finances. As, I mentioned in November, we have reviewed our Donations page on the website and have now updated it to better reflect the preferred donation methods, with a focus on direct bank transfers which do not incur fees. Also (and apologies for repeating this message), another reminder that if you are a UK taxpayer, you can make every £1 you give – or have given – worth 25p more by completing a Gift Aid declaration. This simply requires your street address: it does not require your date of birth or any other personal information.

Please contact me if you would like a Gift Aid declaration form or if you have any questions about donation methods. treasurer@geograph.org.uk

Richard

Company Secretary – Mark Anderson

In order to improve access to our AGMs, the Trustees are keen to try hybrid or online meetings.

Since our Articles do not currently allow this, we are preparing suitably amended Articles which will be voted on by Members at the 2026 AGM in June.

Mark

Special Message – Ruth Sharville

After a year during which I have been treated for Breast Cancer, and taken a break from the Geograph Board, I am now back and ready to get involved again. I just want to say thank you, publicly, to the Board for bearing with and supporting my absence, and particularly to Chair David, for his ongoing encouragement throughout my treatment. The treatment still continues, but the worst of it is, thankfully, history!

Ruth

Contributors' Article March 2026 – Lewis Clarke

I first stumbled across Geograph while I was at university, at a time when I was already hooked on photography and used any excuse to be outdoors. Back then I was uploading hundreds of images to the now-defunct Panoramio, happily documenting places and quietly building a personal archive of landscapes and street scenes.



From one of my most recent walks. I always make sure to go into churches and buildings and discover new areas.

What immediately appealed to me about Geograph was the idea of documenting places not just as pretty photographs, but as part of a long-term record. Landscapes change, buildings disappear, roads appear where fields once were. Capturing a place in a specific moment in time felt oddly important - like contributing a small piece to a much bigger historical puzzle.



Documenting events is a good use of Geograph

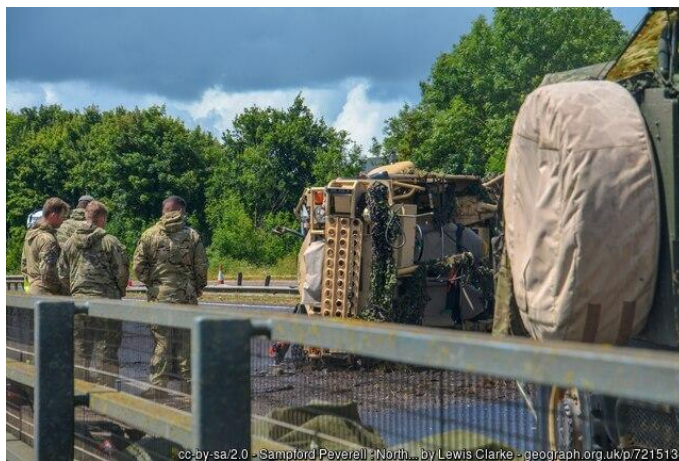
Fast forward a few years and my career took me into journalism. More recently I've launched my own website, DevonToday.com, after an unexpected unemployment and tribunal planning.

Throughout my time working in media, Geograph has been an incredibly useful resource. When covering stories - whether it's an Ofsted report, a road closure, or something happening in a particular village - having access to a huge bank of location images is invaluable. Often you just need a clear, representative photograph of a place, and Geograph delivers exactly that.



This one has had a lot of usage on many websites as the perfect GV (general view)

Even when I'm out taking photos myself, I'm often thinking with my journalist's hat on: *Could this image illustrate a story? Would someone else find this useful one day?*



You never quite know what you may stumble across

One of the best things about contributing to Geograph is how it nudges you into exploring places you might otherwise overlook. The grid square challenge has taken me to some wonderfully random locations - from awkward coastal squares nowhere near a footpath to corners of cities I'd never normally wander into.

It turns everyday exploring into a bit of a treasure hunt.



One of my more memorable trips involved braving tide times and having to crawl through this hole in the rocks



It's also perfect for my dog Molly, who is always very happy to accompany me on these slightly unusual excursions.

For anyone not yet involved, I'd absolutely encourage giving Geograph a go. Beyond the photography and the mapping, it's simply a great reason to get outside.

Recently, after losing my job, it's been a genuine motivator to get out of the house, explore new places, and clear my head rather than sitting indoors worrying about what comes next.

And, really discovering somewhere new - even if it's just a single grid square - is never a bad way to spend an afternoon!

PoTY Coordinator – Phil Halling

Twenty years of PoTY

January 2026 marked the twentieth anniversary of PoTY (Photograph of The Year); it was begun by Geograph's founder, Gary Rogers, as a way of highlighting some of the excellent photographs which are submitted to Geograph. In the early days it was known as GOTY (Geograph of the Year)

Over the years some outstanding pictures have been featured, and for every winner there are usually other pictures that are equally worthy. It is a subjective process, and there can only be one winner each week.

TINAPS (This Is Not A Photography Site) has often been mentioned in the Geograph discussion forums over the years. This is not a conventional photography site; it is much more than that. This is a Geo-cum-photography website, giving us the portmanteau word 'Geograph'. The difference is each picture is geo-located on a map, giving the viewer the opportunity to visit that spot.

Anyone can return to that very same spot and attempt to take the same picture. Well, not really because it is often that something else which sets the picture apart. That "Je ne sais quoi", that something extra, it can be the light, the position of the sun, or a person just stepping into the frame and adding a point of interest to draw the viewer's attention.

However, to have a PoTY winner you have to align the stars, or more precisely have selector and judge in alignment. Firstly, the photograph must catch the attention of the selector who shortlists the nominations for the week and then the judge (who is the previous week's winner) also must like it.

We all know how subjective this can be. The strength of PoTY is that each week the combination of selector and judge will be different and this results in a wide range of pictures. This process is very much in the eye of the beholder. You may feel you have a strong contender for a particular week, but it doesn't appeal to the selector, or it is chosen as one of the nominations, but the judge doesn't like it. On occasion many of us must have taken a photograph and had hopes it might be under consideration only for it not to be selected. For those pictures there is always the option to enter them in YOMP, the monthly sister competition.

Every year a total of more than 2,500 pictures are shortlisted for consideration by judges. That is around 50,000 after twenty years. Perhaps we should have the subtitle PoTW because each week there is a winner, but ultimately, we arrive at a PoTY, a winner for the entire year. There was a delay in the results for 2024 being revealed, partly due to there being a tie between two exceptional pictures which could not be separated, so for the first time we have shared winners.

[Editor's note – see beginning and end images]

It's not too late to cast your vote for 2025 from the monthly shortlist so please do so if you haven't already. Here is the link [PoTY 2025 - Monthly Winners \(+ voting\)](#)

Phil

Editor's Final Note – Jonathan Billinger

Now that spring is with us (even the far north?) let's carry on getting out and photographing our walks, rides, journeys and visits. Geograph should really be prescribed as good for the health of the nation!

As mentioned at the top of the edition, and referred to by Phil Halling, this seasonal photo was chosen joint winner of the Photograph of the year (PotY) for 2024



cc-by-sa/2.0 - A misty Autumn walk by Andy Stephenson - geograph.org.uk/p/7909363
<https://www.geograph.org.uk/photo/7909363>

Contact Us

We always value comments and suggestions, whether on the "Trustees" section of the Forum [here](#) or direct to us by email: trustees@geograph.org.uk



Geograph Project Limited is a company limited by guarantee registered in England & Wales no.7473967, charity no.1145621, registered office Dept 1706, 43 Owston Road, Carcroft, Doncaster, South Yorkshire, DN6 8DA.

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.