

Friends of the Centre (also known as REEP) registered charity 1000998

TRUSTEES REPORT 2023

2023 was a successful year for REEP as the Trust continued to develop existing environmental projects in Morocco, including its gardening project at *Le Foyer de Jeune Filles* in Marrakech, developing new connections with gardening and environment experts in the Marrakech vicinity, and working together with professors at Cadi Ayyad University to hold an environment conference in direct response to the devastating earthquake in the Atlas Mountains. REEP also had positive results in its continued efforts to grow its audience around the world through marketing many of its *English Through Gardening* lessons, games and craft tutorials on TES and Pinterest

***Le Foyer de Jeune Filles* Garden Project**

In May 2023, REEP took a small team of gardeners from Hever Castle Gardens to Marrakech to continue its gardening project at *Le Foyer de Jeune Filles*, a boarding house providing access to education for girls from the rural communities surrounding Marrakech. During REEP's previous intervention at *Le Foyer*, the raised planting beds had been stocked with a variety of drought-resistant, low-maintenance perennial herbs including rosemary, mint, thyme and roses. These had been excellently cared for by the girls of the REEP gardening club over the past several months. This year's focus was on more general garden maintenance skills. On REEP's last day at *Le Foyer*, the gardening club harvested some of the herbs from the garden to brew a delicious farewell tisane.

Collaboration with *Nectarôme*

A new horticultural connection with the *Jardin Bio-Aromatique d'Ourika* (*Nectarôme*) was established via Professor Fatima Bouabdelli, long-term ambassador for REEP. *Nectarôme* was the first commercial aromatic and medicinal herb garden in Morocco. REEP met Dr. Jalil Belkamel, its Director, to discuss a future collaboration with the Foyer project. As the vast majority of girls at the Foyer grew up in rural communities where the medicinal properties of plants are still understood and used in day to day life, a collaboration with *Nectarôme* has great potential in extending their skill as well as enabling REEP's British garden volunteers to gain detained experience of medicinal plant use that is now rarer in Britian.

In June, REEP returned to Marrakech to attend the *Aromaplant Expo* at the Museum of the "Water Civilization", with an invitation from Dr Belkamel, This was a great source of both gardening information and contacts for the future.

A Conference and a response to an earthquake: *Environment: Spaces and Visions*

Whilst in Marrakech, REEP was introduced to two professors from the Faculty of Languages Arab Marrakech (FLAM) at Cadi Ayyad University. One had taken part in REEP's gardening projects at the Faculty of Letters a decade earlier and had a project proposal for REEP. This

involved collaboration to stage an environment conference at the faculty in autumn 2023. Over the coming months this was developed via Zoom and email to develop a diverse and interesting programme of activities. During the preparatory phase, Marrakech suffered a devastating earthquake, making the proposed environment conference all the more poignant and it necessarily altered the focus of the event.

Entitled '*Environments: Spaces and Visions*,' the one-day event took place at the Faculty on Thursday 9th November with the aim of exploring sustainability and environment through languages, cultures and the Arts. It featured presentations, workshops and interactive activities on sustainable development, water issues, gardening, recycling, and Shakespeare & the Environment – the latter being a nod to REEP's ongoing Anglo-Moroccan Shakespeare Gardening project. Students heard Professors from the faculty and Dr. Belkamel from *Nectarôme* give presentations on sustainable development and water issues in Morocco, while one student group worked with REEP gardeners from National Trust Blickling Hall Gardens and Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens to develop a small garden in the Faculty which reflected these issues. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the students chose to design a garden which referenced the recent earthquake. They used rocks and gravel to create shapes that reflected the rise and fall of the Atlas Mountain peaks where the epicentre of the earthquake had occurred and chose plants which grew naturally in the mountain range to complete their design.

Another group of students took part in a drama workshop led by the Faculty's drama professor and a professional actor from the REEP team. Like the gardening group, the drama students chose to use the recent earthquake as the focus for the drama workshop. A variety of techniques helped the students work through some of the emotional trauma of the event, before the group worked together re-enacting their collective experience of the effects on the community, which they later presented to a wider group of students.

'*Environments: Spaces and Visions*' was a resounding success and REEP has since been in collaboration with the Faculty of Languages Arab Marrakech to discuss options for a second collaborative event in autumn 2024.

English Through Gardening

Continuing on from the marketing work conducted the previous year, REEP continued to find ways to increase its audience using its many *English Through Gardening* (ETG) resources. In the first half of 2023, ETG lessons on *Sowing Seeds*, *How to Plant*, *Growing Plants*, *Colour in the Garden*, *The Buzz about Bees* and *Shakespeare Plants* were posted on the TES and Pinterest platforms. These have been very well received with the resources receiving nearly 400 downloads on TES and over 200 impressions on Pinterest. REEP also posted its series of Key Stage 1, 2 and 3 Gardening Games to the two platforms, again with positive results with the resources receiving over 100 downloads on TES and close to 100 impressions on Pinterest. Following on from this success, 28 of its extensive library of ETG craft tutorials and worksheets

were uploaded. In previous years these resources have been very popular on REEP's YouTube channel. On Pinterest in particular, the tutorials have made over 2,000 impressions. However, the audience is undoubtedly larger than REEP has already been able to access, as it has not had the resources to do much promotion to support the postings and a plan for further marketing this extensive and very rich resource will be developed.

As this work shows, REEP is indebted to the wonderful professionals who continue to volunteer their time so willingly to facilitate its gardening and environment projects. In particular, Professor Fatima Bouabdelli, our Moroccan ambassador, works tirelessly in helping to develop new and existing projects in Marrakech and was paramount to REEP's successes in 2023. REEP is also deeply grateful to Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens, Hever Castle Gardens and National Trust Blickling Hall Gardens for so generously allowing their gardeners to join REEP in Morocco for its gardening and environment projects there.

Finance & Futures

This year REEP closed its account with COIF, which had been dormant for several years. The balance of £66.15 (including interest) was paid to REEP.

It is also the last year that REEP will receive funding from the Metanoia Trust as this Trust has now been closed. It is therefore the time to pay tribute to all those at Metanoia who founded REEP and continued to support it for several decades. The original vision has, we hope, been kept up and had evolved over time, providing insights and opportunities to young people to be involved with and reflect on the environment in all its contexts, together with the recognising the importance of physical, artistic and spiritual engagement with the world around them and with their own and other people's beliefs. A massive thank you is due to all those who have encouraged this work over the past 30 years.

The other trust that has supported REEP substantially is about to undergo a transformation. The Martin McLaren Trust, funder of the McLaren Scholarship and REEP garden education work, has been merged with another small trust. As the Martin McLaren Foundation it will be continuing to support REEP in the coming year and we shall be working with it to look at future projects. Meanwhile, the extremely large educational resource that REEP has built up over the years can be accessed at www.reepinfo.org We hope you will use and enjoy it

Signed



Paul Willcox

Date:

29/10/25

Chair, Friends of the Centre

Summary Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023

| | 2023 £ | 2022 £ |
|--|--------------------|-----------------------|
| INCOME | 44802 | 15000 |
| EXPENDITURE | | |
| REEP McLaren Scholarship | 3319 | 2168 |
| English Through Gardening Project | 6007 | 9308 |
| Moroccan Gardens Project | 22152 | 11799 |
| Website | 6500 | 12333 |
| Social Media | 5209 | 1920 |
| Fundraising, Administration & Office Expenses | <u>720</u> | <u>720</u> |
| TOTAL EXPENDITURE | 43907 | 38248 |
| Surplus (-deficit) | <u>895</u> | <u>(23248)</u> |
| Cash Position | | |
| Opening cash position | 4374 | 27622 |
| Surplus (-deficit) for the year | 895 | (23248) |
| Closing cash position | <u>5269</u> | <u>4374</u> |
| Cash & Deposits | | |
| Bank | 5269 | 4324 |
| COIF Charity Funds | 0 | 50 |
| | <u>5269</u> | <u>4374</u> |

NOTES

1. The charity was registered with the Charity Commission with effect from 30th April 1993.
2. The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis.
3. The charity holds no assets other than a bank account with Natwest. The balance on the CCLA managed COIF account was transferred to the account with Natwest.
4. The charity continues to rely greatly on the time effort, office space and equipment given freely by its supporters, including the Director. This cannot be quantified easily so is not represented here.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name
FRIENDS OF THE CENTRE also known as REEP

On accounts for the year ended

31ST DECEMBER 2023

Charity no (if any)

1000998

Set out on pages

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. *Delete [] if not applicable.*

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

* *Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Jay Antoyue

Date:

28th October 2024

Name:

JOY ANGELA HOYLE

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

FCA, CTA.

| |
|-------------------------|
| WOOTTON FARM, PENCOMBE, |
| BROMYARD |
| HEREFORDSHIRE, HR7 4RR |

Disclosure

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.