

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1028121

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2021
FOR
THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

Crane & Partners
Chartered Accountants
Leonard House
5 - 7 Newman Road
Bromley
Kent
BR1 1RJ

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

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**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
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**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
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The Commons Conservators

The Chislehurst and St Paul's Cray Commons Conservators (whose working title is 'Chislehurst Commons') was established by the Metropolitan Commons (Chislehurst and St Paul's Cray) Supplemental Act 1888 to protect and maintain the Commons. The Conservators became a registered charity on the 10th November 1993, since when, and for ease of reference in the community, we refer to ourselves also as Trustees. We carry out our work supported by funds granted by the London Borough of Bromley (LBB), generous donations from local residents, money raised from events, small annual grants from government-sponsored bodies, occasional grants from other organisations and the help of volunteers.

Governing document and objectives

The 1888 Act sets down the responsibilities of the Board of Conservators. These responsibilities are translated into a working strategy by a 10-year Management Plan, the current one being applicable for the years 2014-2024.

Location

The Trustees operate from leasehold premises situated at:

The Old Fire Station
Hawkwood Lane
Chislehurst
BR7 5PW

Organisation

During the reporting period the charity was administered by a Board composed of:

John Hayhow (Chairman)
Robert West (Treasurer and Clerk)
Alexandra Burman resigned May 26th 2021
Peter Hedges
Ian Leonard
Alan Porter
Christine Wearn
Mary Wheeler
Margaret Yardley
Patrick Phillips
Brian Knights
Joanna Friel – appointee of the Lord of the Manor
Sarah Harris – appointed September 8th 2020

Staff

The Board employs two members of staff:

Mr Jonathan Harvie (Head Keeper)
Mr Peter Edwards (Assistant Keeper)

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1. Board Structure and decision-making

The Board, which is required to be quorate and to meet no fewer than 2 times per annum, during the reporting period held meetings on 5 occasions, of which 2 were remote meetings facilitated through Microsoft Teams software. The ability to hold physical meetings from December 2020 to May 2021 was constrained by the legal requirements to contain the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Board has a number of committees which are appointed by the Board and whose reports are received and reviewed by the Board:

Chairman's Committee:

It meets as required to deal with any matters arising between meetings of the Board, staff management, legal, financial and compliance matters.

Natural Environment Committee:

It is directly responsible for the implementation of the Commons 10-year Management Plan, recommending major projects to the Board, protection and enhancement of biodiversity with recording and monitoring of the flora and fauna, and formulation of policies for community use including advertising and filming on the Commons.

Verge Committee:

It has responsibility for the Protection and maintenance of the Commons' verges:

It protects the Commons from encroachment and illegal use by liaising with public utilities, the London Borough of Bromley on litter, fly-tipping, roads and paths and those whose land adjoins and have access across the Commons, monitoring and responding to Planning applications and checking the boundaries, the maintenance of footpaths and bridle paths to support ease of access for users, and the maintenance of monuments on the Commons.

External Relations and Administration Committee:

It provides the management of the relationship with our supporters, Public Relations and media, the initiation of and support for events, the organisation of fundraising activities and representation to relevant external organisations.

Information Technology Committee:

It formulates, delivers and maintains for the Trustees a unified IT policy with specific requirements to maintain the database of supporters, ensure compliance with the Data Protection legislation and maintain the website.

Regular reports are also received from the Head Keeper. Responsibility for day-to-day management resides with the Chairman, the Chair of the Verge committee, the Treasurer, and the Head Keeper.

2. Public Benefit Statement

The main purpose of the charity is to protect and maintain the Commons for public use. All the resources of the charity are used to satisfy these aims. The Commons are open to all members of the public without charge and, subject to the bye laws, provide much needed open space for recreation and leisure. The Commons are situated in a predominately suburban setting and are therefore an important amenity for local residents. The Commons also connects together two other large areas of green space, Scadbury Park and Petts Wood to create an interconnected green space of over 250 hectares.

If the charity did not exist, the Commons would quickly become unusable in that they would be subject to uncleared fly-tipping and litter, illegal parking and would overgrow rapidly. There is also strong evidence that encroachment from some adjoining properties would take place with the permanent loss of land. For 3 consecutive years the Commons have been awarded a Green Flag award.

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The Trustees carry out between them all the administrative, regulatory, financial and public relations tasks. External paid auditors are appointed and recourse to paid external legal assistance and administration occurs when necessary. The Trustees believe the organisation could not be leaner nor more cost effective and are satisfied that the work of the charity meets the requirements of current legislation relating to public benefit.

3.Trustees

Trustees are appointed to the Board for a period of three years and may be re-appointed for subsequent periods of 3 years' duration. Trustees are appointed by the London Borough of Bromley after consultation with local organisations and the Board about skill requirements.

All Trustees give of their time voluntarily and receive no emoluments.

We continue to seek additional Trustees who are keen supporters of the Commons and its protection and who can offer relevant skills, enthusiasm and their time.

4.COVID-19

As for 2020, COVID-19 impacted on the management of the Commons from December 2020 to May 2021. There were no physical meetings of the Board of Trustees during this period, although 2 remote meetings were held. Greater use was made of outdoor venues for committee and other meetings. On the positive side, the benefits experienced in 2020 from greater use of the Commons continued, albeit in a more moderate way, with a high level of recognition by residents, stable donation levels and positive comments on social media of the amenity value of the Commons and, fortunately, without the challenges of anti-social behaviour.

5. Fundraising Statement

The charity receives donations of funds from residents and businesses in the local community by way of regular donations and one-off voluntary donations, some of which are related to exceptional operational expenditure and through support of events that are managed by the Trustees and its volunteers. It also engages in raising funds through retailers via their charity support programmes and bids for funds from other non-local bodies for specific projects.

All fundraising has to receive the approval of the Board and be compliant with data protection. All fundraising activity is monitored by the Board through the provision by the Treasurer of spreadsheet monthly reviews of income and expenditure.

Major fundraising takes place on an 'as required' basis and only after approval by the Board of the method of approach to potential donors. This will recognise the need to be clear about who we are, what we do, how any funds donated will be used and the methods by which donors can make a gift and amend a regular commitment. No undue pressure is applied and any decision to cease giving is respected and acted upon promptly. Only standing order arrangements are used for regular donations, allowing the payer to cancel at will.

We aim not to cause offence or nuisance and respect the choice of method of contact.

No professional fundraisers or commercial participators are used.

6. Financial Report:

Summary:

Notwithstanding the potential of a continuing negative impact on Income from the COVID-19 pandemic, our total incoming resources for the accounting year 2021 were £115,943 (2020: £105,872). After expenditure of £114,308 (2020: £97,445) a surplus of £1,635 for the year was recorded. (2020: £8,427). Capital Resources accordingly increased to £177,715 (2020: £176,080).

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As was forecast in our last annual report, costs were incurred in the year on the project for improvements to the Prickend Pond site of £24,796. We held at the start of the financial year £19,148 of a grant for such expense from the HB Allen Trust. The difference was more than covered by a successful bid for a grant from The Rose Foundation of £5000 and from the Chislehurst Society of £10,000. So, our net cost was £9,798 leaving £9,350 of monies available for other projects.

Other Expenditure during the year included one offs totalling £4,555, being principally exceptional costs relating to a now-discontinued project for bunding the May Queen site, and an unsuccessful application for a Countryside Stewardship Grant. It is important to note that one-off donations for general use have increased from £4,599 in 2019 to £10,257 in 2020 and now are £14,236 as more particularly set out below.

Income

Income is derived mainly from Local Authority Grants, regular donations, one-off grants, donations given at events and a small income from events supplemented by Gift Aid where applicable.

Within Donations of £77,857 is included our regular donation income including gift aid assessed at £45,520. This figure had been declining slowly since the last major appeal in 2010 but in 2020 and 2021 we have acquired new donors and so the decline has been arrested.

The balance of £32,337 including associated Gift Aid is comprised of what we term one-off donations, where there is no commitment to make future donations.

This is made up of donations for general use of £14,237 including Gift Aid (2020: £10,257). The underlying strength in this figure we believe is due to the continued positive feeling that the community has experienced towards the Commons, sustained by the highly-regarded weekly newsletters. The increase is attributable to the implementation of our commemorative bench policy, a bequest, and donations generated by our annual newsletter.

Donations for specific use totalled £18,100 (2020: £6,473) which included £10,000 from The Chislehurst Society, £5,000 from the Rose Foundation, £2,000 from Chislehurst Rotary and £1,100 to cover the cost of commemorative benches.

Trading activities from sales of cards, publications, teas and Holly, continue at a modest but useful level. No major revenue-generating events have taken place since 2018. Interest on our cash deposit balances provided a useful sum of £1,349 (2020 £1,623)

Expenditure:

Total costs were £114,308 (2020: £97,445). The increase from last year is mainly due to the Prickend Pond Project and other exceptional costs totalling £29,351 and Tree management costs of £5,254 (2020: £2,250). No monies were expended on oak processionary moth treatment, but we incurred costs associated with ash tree dieback. All other heads of costs were stable.

Prior years' Tree costs were as follows; 2020: £2,250 2019: £8,586 2018: £19,008 2017: £1,514. 2016: £920 2015: £3,158 2014: £5,197 2013: £520.

Notwithstanding the costs being just above the average of £5,144 for the previous 8 years, we are not complacent, as one large tree in an awkward position can cost £4,000 to remove, and we do not know how invasive and damaging ash dieback will be to our woodlands.

We also reduced our insurance premium costs by 14.4% without a diminution of cover from our existing insurers, and have fixed our Utility costs until 2023.

We are extremely grateful to all those who have responded to our fundraising requirements whether by giving a single contribution or by pledging a regular sum. Without this help the charity would not survive.

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Net Cash Position

As we do not take more than 30 days' credit and our debtors arise from accrual accounting, then Cash at Bank of £179,141 is a good measure of our financial solvency. This figure has benefited from the inclusion of a net unused donation of £9,350.48. Whilst the project to which this relates has completed, we have committed to replacing our 15-year-old truck with delivery due circa March 2022 at a cost of approx £32,000. Allowing for this amount, the cash balances not so committed would reduce to £147,142. After dealing with the net negative effect of debtors and creditors of £1,426, then uncommitted cash balances would reduce to £145,716.

We manage our cash reserves to provide us with 9 months' cover for operating expenses to allow us time to replace the loss of our grant and find other sources of funds. This may seem an exaggerated concern as we continue to receive, albeit declining, financial support from The London Borough of Bromley, but we live in strange times. We also wish to hold a contingent reserve for possible legal expenses and other capital items should we not be able to find additional sources of funding.

Our cash is held in operating accounts with Barclays Bank, in a 100 day Notice account with Shawbrook Bank and a 120 days' notice account with Hampshire Trust Bank. All investments which are in the form of cash deposits are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

With the generous donations of so many local residents, grants from community focussed organisations, revenue from events, our efforts to raise discrete funds to match capital expenditure and the continuing support of the London Borough of Bromley, the Trustees are confident that they can continue to operate satisfactorily.

Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC
7 High Street
Chislehurst
BR7 5AB

7. Risk Management

The Board annually reviews the Key Risks to which the Charity is subject. In addition we aim to meet 'best practice' requirements of the Charities Commission by having in place policies with a nominated responsible Trustee for Financial Investment, Volunteers, Conflicts of Interest, the Safeguarding of Children and Vulnerable Adults. Added to these are those specific to our situation such as 'Tree Inspection policy', 'Events Policy' and 'Advertising by 3rd parties on the Commons.'

Practical examples of policies in action are;

Our volunteer procedures where staff and volunteers are informed of the risk assessments which have been conducted for the various tasks they undertake. They are not allowed to use any equipment for which they have not been properly trained or covered by insurance.

For events that take place on the Commons we require risk assessments and Public liability insurance cover.

Insurance cover for risks associated with our operational activities is provided by Zurich Municipal Insurance. This provides employer's liability and public liability insurance and Trustees' indemnity insurance. The principal risk factors outside the Board's control are accidents to members of the public arising from falling trees or branches, and trips due to exposed tree roots. We endeavour to mitigate these risks by means of our Tree Inspection policy, with appropriate action taken, and path improvement programmes.

For Financial risks, the Board is reliant upon the continuation of financial support from the London Borough of Bromley of a 5 year grant of £36,310 per annum. This Grant was due for renewal in April of 2021 and whilst it has continued to be paid there is no formal agreement to this effect. The Board has a policy of having at least nine months' expenditure in reserve to meet its obligations in the event of a substantial loss of income.

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The Board receives a monthly spreadsheet including income and expenditure, bank balances and proposed expenditure. The annual accounts are audited by external accountants. All funds are controlled by the Treasurer and the Chairman.

Climate Risk; We recognise the impact to climate change upon the Commons, and address this within our 10-Year Management Plan with progress and relevance being reviewed annually, including our Tree Inspection Programme. Our knowledge is enhanced and broadened through representation on various London Borough of Bromley and other environmental green space and ecological organisations.

8. Tree Safety Management Policy Year Ending 31 August 2021

The tree safety management policy was formalised in 2013 and has been reviewed annually since then to reflect best use of resources and changes in legal and good practice requirements. It is clear that a regular inspection routine is vital, particularly where the major public roads cross the Commons.

A revised tree inspection schedule was completed in 2019 for the years up to 2025 to accommodate an alternating spring/ autumn inspection schedule for the 'A' roads that cross the Commons. This was to allow trees to be checked under different growth conditions in line with the recommendations arising from a recent court case. The revised inspection schedule has been incorporated into the Tree Inspection Policy for 2020.

Last year, 2020, was the first year that we carried out inspections in the springtime in accordance with the updated policy. We have continued this in 2021. Carrying out inspections in this way has been very beneficial in spreading the inspection workload better throughout the year and in providing an early opportunity to look for signs of oak processionary moth.

However, inspecting early in the year was problematic in that with different species of trees coming into leaf at different times it was difficult to identify an optimum time to do the inspections. Also, inspections carried out early in the year do not offer the same opportunity to identify trees that would otherwise show fungal growth if inspected later in the year. Furthermore, having to inspect trees along the major roads every 18 months is having a major impact on our ability to inspect trees elsewhere. It is very resource heavy and with the increasing need to also check for ash dieback and oak processionary moth (see below) in early summer very difficult to justify. We are therefore considering whether to revert to a two-year cycle for inspecting trees on major roads rather than 18 months and with inspections only carried out in the Autumn.

To complete the inspection work during this reporting period, a total of 8 work sessions were completed from October to November 2020 and a further 2 during May 2021. Each work session consisted of 2 people for a morning. In excess of 1000 trees were inspected.

A consequence of these inspections is that necessary tree work is identified. Where we are unable to do this ourselves, we appoint approved tree surgeons. During this reporting period the cost of such tree work was £5,254. Whilst this was higher than for the previous year, which was a low-cost year, it was close to the average for the last 8 years. Future years may well see increases of two times or more due to the onset of ash dieback on the Commons (see below).

The extent of oak processionary moth nests on St Paul's Cray Common which have public health implications has not got worse and, if anything, may well have reduced. It was found to be necessary to remove only one nest situated low down on a tree near a public highway. No nests have been found on Chislehurst Common which would represent a bigger problem because of its greater use by the public.

The appearance of ash dieback (ADB) on the Commons during this year is of concern for reasons of both safety and financial. We have approached a number of bodies to get advice on the management of ADB and we are in the process of developing a policy that is informed by such advice. Already a schedule has been developed of well over 100 ash trees that we consider to be located in high-risk areas (particularly along the main roads and footpaths) that cross the Commons, so that we can monitor these trees in the coming months and years. These trees need to be dealt with in a timely way once they show significant signs of ADB to prevent them becoming dangerous. Their locations mean that this work will of necessity often need to be done by external tree surgeons at potentially very substantial cost.

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9. Management of natural environments, biodiversity and amenity

We continue to manage the Commons to balance their natural environmental and amenity values and public expectations, guided by the Natural Environment Committee (NEC). Extra resources have been devoted throughout 2021 to maintain public access and safety to meet the high public demands for green space recreation and exercise during the Covid epidemic and lockdowns. Surveys, guided tours and similar public events were, however, often not possible because of Covid.

We have excellent relationships with the London Borough of Bromley (LBB) and idverde, their parks and green spaces contractor. We are represented on the Bromley Friends Forum and Bromley Biodiversity Partnership and have contributed to the Borough Biodiversity Plan and Open Space Strategy. We were again awarded Green Flag Award status during the year.

We are in year 3 of the 2018-2028 Woodland Management Plan agreed with English Forests, providing an overarching document guiding our approach to the natural woodland environment and our core roles and responsibilities. We consider we are performing to the plan.

On our behalf, idverde prepared an application in 2021 for a Countryside Stewardship Scheme grant for woodland management work but this was unsuccessful because our work was not of sufficient size. As a consequence, we were unable to meet their requirements to make more use of commercial forestry contractors. Our policy is to use and rely on volunteers' help because we do not have the resources to manage contractors and contract work on the scale needed.

The NEC continues to develop and update policies and management plans, including the over-arching 10-Year Management Plan and other ancillary ones such as a 5-year Tree & Woodland Management Policy. A Mowing Policy and Schedule has been developed, supported by grassland surveys, to help balance competing demands of maintaining acid grassland biodiversity and public amenity, taking into account human, equipment and cost restraints.

Our 2 major ponds, Prickend Pond and Rush Pond, are prominent features of Chislehurst, with positive amenity value for residents and visitors. They are notable for their wide variety of ducks, geese and other aquatic birds and for other pond life. Early in 2021 we completed, with grant monies from the HB Allen Charitable Trust, The Rose Foundation and The Chislehurst Society, the Prickend Pond Project. This provides a new access path near to the High Street, a public seating area and a bird-feeding beach, together with ancillary planting and in-pond and island planting. Regular water quality and biological surveys have helped inform the management of the pond and also nearby Rush Pond.

As in past years, the management of and improvements to the Commons have relied on the work of the Head and Assistant Keepers and on the essential additional inputs of our Volunteers, to whom we continue to be very grateful.

For a number of years, we have had regular volunteer work sessions on a Wednesday morning. A variety of work from scrub removal to footpath maintenance is carried out at these work sessions. Typically, in the past these sessions have been attended by approx. 10 volunteers.

During lockdown there has been a significant increase in the number of people asking to join our volunteer sessions, with the number of volunteers attending each session doubling. Whilst very welcome, for safety reasons we have had to re-organise how we manage the increased number with smaller groups working in different locations, enhanced procedures, risk assessments to cover each location and planning for each session. Our ability to deal with any further increases in volunteers is now constrained by the lack of group leaders.

10. Litter, Fly-Tipping, Vehicle trespass, Roads

The use of the Commons was greater than pre COVID-19 times but was not as busy compared with 2020. As Public Houses and restaurants opened up, then mass gatherings did not take place and anti social behaviour was greatly reduced. However the incidence of litter did not reduce.

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For the period September 2020 to August 2021, 18,820 kgs of rubbish were collected represented by 73 trips to the council refuse tip. For the same period in 2019/2020 18,500kgs were collected. We are most grateful to those who regularly go out on the Commons to pick up litter and to those who rallied round to collect rubbish after particularly busy weekends. We have experienced more household rubbish and dog faeces deposited in our bins this year. In consequence and to comply with public health guidelines we are reviewing the number and type of bins so such deposits are reduced.

Fly-tipping took place, and we continue to be grateful to the LBB for their assistance in removing those fly-tips which are beyond our capabilities, including dangerous waste that has been fly-tipped.

Following an incursion onto the Commons by members of the Travelling community on the 6th August 2019 the area known as the May Queen site was bollarded. During this year we had hoped to replace these bollards with bunding which we felt would have provided a more aesthetic and sustainable long-term solution. However, complications with the planning process and the associated increase in costs made this unviable. We are now investigating replacing the existing bollards with more durable ones.

As with last year, there have been very few incidents of illegal parking of vehicles by residents, or of vehicles driving across the Common, in contravention of the bye laws. We suspect this is due to the schools continuing to be closed for much of the year rather than any major behavioural change.

The reduction of travel on the Transport for London network and thus reduction in revenues has meant there have been no funds available from TFL for the type of road improvement schemes under discussion with LBB Highways department in 2019 and early 2020. There were initiatives by the LBB to create one way and no through roads around the Village Green to assist walking and cycling upon which we were asked to comment. Such schemes were not pursued.

11. Utilities/ Requests for Access/Boundaries

A number of utilities such as telecoms, electricity and water are routed across the Commons. These utilities need to be accessed for a variety of reasons, such as inspection, installation of new cables or pipes to connect to the existing network, repairs, the addition of new telecom boxes, or emergency work. We require such work to be licenced by us to ensure that it is only done under controlled conditions, that the work does not damage or adversely affect the Commons, and proper re-instatement will take place. We had hoped that discussions with UK Power Networks, to regularise their access to Extra High Voltage cables which supply South London, which started in 2018 would be concluded in 2021 but this has not proved possible partly due to Covid but also partly due to delays with legal support. Difficulties with legal support, following the retirement of the acting solicitor in the spring, also inhibited the resolution of some Licences and Way-leaves which, towards the end of August, appeared to be back on track.

12. Commons Community Events:

In normal times there is a list of events that regularly take place, and which we organise to increase an awareness of the Commons and its amenity value, to foster a community spirit, to raise our profile and to seek additional financial support for our work. Before lockdown we organised events such as the Chislehurst Chase, Bat walks, an annual exhibition showcasing the biodiversity of Chislehurst Commons, talks to local groups, and took part in community events such as the Rotary Summer Fair and the Christmas Market.

Lockdown brought its own challenges to maintaining a profile in the community. Our specialist volunteers were keen to maintain some survey work within the constraints of the government restrictions, and monitored amphibian and reptile refuges, bird boxes, undertook a monthly bird count at the ponds and updated our flower and butterfly records. Not forgetting the very important water quality monitoring of the ponds and the establishment and maintenance of a flower garden for the pupils at St Nicholas Primary School.

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In September 2020, we were very pleased when a local artist offered to paint a set of plaques depicting native wildlife for a Wildlife trail across the Commons. These were much appreciated by families, but also by other visitors to the area.

In December 2020, we contributed to a Community Christmas Pop-up Shop where we offered our cards, holly and pinecones for sale.
Our cards are also available throughout the year at a local card shop in the High Street.

In the latter months of 2020 and the early part of 2021, as we could not continue with our programme of regular walks, story boards and information boards relevant to sites on the Commons were installed along footpaths, to engage the community. Our information leaflets, which contain a map of the Commons, are available in the community telephone box, along with those of other local groups.

In August 2021, we took part in the first Chislehurst Big Picnic. This was organised as a community event and held on the Common, where we had a stall and a children's activity.

13. Friends of the Commons

The Trustees are fortunate to be supported by a growing group of people, currently numbering about 350, who contribute financially or with their time in maintaining the Commons. Within this number, there is a very active and growing band of volunteers who work in one of our regular volunteer conservation groups and who provide vital help for our various events. We estimate that they contribute 2,000 work hours to our activities. We believe that our Friends group is one of the largest organisations supporting open spaces in the country. We have also enjoyed excellent support from idverde and the LBB for our various funding bids and project development. Without the help of all these members of the local community the charity could not operate. We thank them all.

Our annual Friends' Reception to be held in June was cancelled for the second year running.

Newsletter and website

Our annual newsletter is published each spring. This is distributed in a printed and electronic format to all Friends of the Commons as a way to keep in touch with our supporters and, from feedback, is much appreciated. We were pleased to receive sponsorship from our solicitors, Wellers, for the newsletter costs. An online Newsletter, with news, photos and points of interest for residents and visitors, is sent out on a monthly basis to our mailing list of over 1,000, with support from Trustees, Keepers and volunteers who provide photos and specialist information. All these publications can be accessed via our website, along with the story boards and activities.

Our Notice Boards are updated regularly with items of interest and upcoming events.
The Trustees recognise that people increasingly wish to obtain information about the Commons via the internet and social media. We have added links to Facebook and Twitter from our website.

The website includes a donation facility that allows people to make donations online. We have acquired a card payment facility, and registered with Amazon.Smile.UK and the Co-operative Society community giving to enable their customers to donate to us as they spend. We are now corresponding with over 1,000 donors and interested parties, and hope that these medlums will enhance our profile.

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14. Working with the Freeholder

Since 2017 the freehold of Chislehurst and St Paul's Cray Commons has been owned by the Chislehurst Society. We are pleased to report that our organisations continue to work closely in ensuring the correct legal rights are granted by our respective organisations.

In addition, the Chislehurst Society, both as Freeholder and as the local Civic Society is very supportive of our work, having part-funded our Prickend Pond project, paid for bollarding to protect the Commons from incursions and funded the replacement of our bore hole pump at Rush Pond.

We have been working with the Freeholder on other matters that have benefitted from a dual approach, and, whilst our responsibilities are different, we share the common objective of protecting the Commons for the current and future generations.

15. The Future:

The financial position of the charity continues to be in good order. We enjoy an 11 year lease of our premises at The Old Fire Station from London Borough of Bromley. Whilst it was intended that the Conservators, when established by Act of Parliament in 1888, would be fully funded by the Local Parishes (whose roles are now with the London Borough of Bromley), the reality is that, since 2000, we have been receiving only part of our funding from the London Borough of Bromley. This represents a most valuable and necessary grant from the Borough which we anticipate will continue owing, not least, to the financial leverage of 1 part LBB finance to 2 parts community finance. This is supplemented by donations from residents, local businesses and community organisations such as the Chislehurst Society and Chislehurst Rotary Club.

Unfortunately, we are no longer enjoying material financial surpluses from Events, which have not been staged during 2020 and 2021.

Whilst we aim for such sources of funds to cover our operational expenses, with increasing and volatile tree maintenance costs, increased operating costs due to National Insurance increases, fuel increases and rent increases and static core donor income, this is becoming difficult. It places more emphasis to meet operational costs on our ability to attract other sources of grant income and one-off donations. These raised £32,336 in 2021 helped by the good-will created by weekly newsletters and the community's improved appreciation of the virtues of the Commons. We hope this can be replicated in 2022, but are conscious as any new normality is established that the ability of residents and visitors to use the Commons may diminish their willingness and perceived need to support the Commons. We are also aware that the ability of donors to meet their own financial obligations will be placed under strain.

We cannot be complacent. We are constantly seeking new sources of income and ways of facilitating one-off donations. Although a macabre thought, we would be delighted to be the beneficiaries of any legacy donations.

We are faced with an ageing woodland, with many trees reaching the end of their natural lives, that is proving expensive to address. The costs of dealing with oak tree processionary moth, ash dieback and no doubt some new infestation, remain uncertain. And in an effort to create efficiencies we are undertaking a review of such prosaic matters as the number and replacement of rubbish bins we have to empty. We will have to meet the cost of our new truck. All have cost implications. Our grant from LBB has been at the same level since 2010, and the ability of donors to continue their generosity may be under stress. It is our hope that the LBB will continue to appreciate that without the Conservators and its volunteers and supporters the cost burden they would have to bear would be 3 times the level of grant currently provided.

Board members' 'Time resources' will continue to be challenged through dealing with issues arising from the increased pressure on the Commons from traffic and being asked to consider road changes and their impact on the Commons, surrounding development, fly-tipping, other transgressions of the Commons, the increased level of regulation and reporting that is required and, last but not least, the cost and time spent managing woodland which is reaching the end of its natural life.


THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021

Chislehurst is only ten miles from the centre of London, and we are conscious of our responsibilities in maintaining such an important open space so near to a large area of population. The Board remains confident that, so long as such generous support both financial and of skills and talents from individuals and organisations continues, we can meet the challenges presented to us and be confident of carrying on our work for the present and future benefit of the community of Chislehurst.

Finally, in this the second of two most difficult years owing to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, I offer my personal thanks to my Board member colleagues, who give of their personal time and skills so freely, and our volunteers, who apply their expert knowledge and graft, for keeping our Commons in such good order, all of whose efforts go largely unrecognised.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 25th January 2022 and signed on its behalf by:


.....
J Hayhow - Trustee

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF
THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Chislehurst & St. Paul's Cray Commons Conservators

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Chislehurst & St. Paul's Cray Commons Conservators (the Trust) for the year ended 31 August 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust 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 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do 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.



GRAHAM ATKIN FCA
Crane & Partners
Chartered Accountants
Leonard House
5 - 7 Newman Road
Bromley
Kent
BR1 1RJ

Date: 25 January 2022

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021**

	Notes	2021 Unrestricted funds £	2020 Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM			
Donations and legacies		114,167	100,054
Other trading activities	2	427	1,053
Investment income	3	1,349	1,623
Other income		-	3,142
Total		115,943	105,872
 EXPENDITURE ON			
Raising funds		1,233	2,220
Charitable activities			
Costs of protecting and conserving the woodlands		113,075	95,225
Total		114,308	97,445
NET INCOME		1,635	8,427
 RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS			
Total funds brought forward		176,080	167,653
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		<u>177,715</u>	<u>176,080</u>

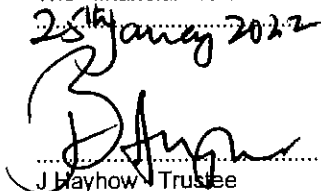
The notes form part of these financial statements

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**BALANCE SHEET
31 August 2021**

	Notes	2021 Unrestricted funds £	2020 Total funds £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	7	3,594	3,977
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>179,141</u>	<u>177,183</u>
		182,735	181,160
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	8	(5,020)	(5,080)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		<u>177,715</u>	<u>176,080</u>
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		<u>177,715</u>	<u>176,080</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>177,715</u>	<u>176,080</u>
FUNDS	9		
Unrestricted funds		<u>177,715</u>	<u>176,080</u>
TOTAL FUNDS		<u>177,715</u>	<u>176,080</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 25th January 2022 and were signed on its behalf by:


J Hayhow Trustee

The notes form part of these financial statements

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021**

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income

All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Plant and machinery	- 33% on cost
Motor vehicles	- 20% on cost

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S GRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021**

2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	2021 £	2020 £
Fundraising events	-	587
Sale of books and cards	<u>427</u>	<u>466</u>
	<u>427</u>	<u>1,053</u>

3. INVESTMENT INCOME

	2021 £	2020 £
Deposit account interest	<u>1,349</u>	<u>1,623</u>

4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 August 2021 nor for the year ended 31 August 2020.

Trustees' expenses

During the year 2 trustees received reimbursements to the sum of £257.07 in relation to general maintenance, community events and postage and stationery costs.

5. STAFF COSTS

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	2021	2020
Administration staff	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

6. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Plant and machinery £	Motor vehicles £	Totals £
COST			
At 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021	<u>68,591</u>	<u>44,545</u>	<u>113,136</u>
DEPRECIATION			
At 1 September 2020 and 31 August 2021	<u>68,591</u>	<u>44,545</u>	<u>113,136</u>
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 31 August 2021	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 August 2020	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021**

7. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021 £	2020 £
Other debtors	-	151
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>3,594</u>	<u>3,826</u>
	<u>3,594</u>	<u>3,977</u>

8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021 £	2020 £
Taxation and social security	826	831
Other creditors	<u>4,194</u>	<u>4,249</u>
	<u>5,020</u>	<u>5,080</u>

9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1.9.20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.8.21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	161,080	1,635	162,715
Contingency reserve	<u>15,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	<u>176,080</u>	<u>1,635</u>	<u>177,715</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>176,080</u>	<u>1,635</u>	<u>177,715</u>

Net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	115,943	(114,308)	1,635
	<u>115,943</u>	<u>(114,308)</u>	<u>1,635</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>115,943</u>	<u>(114,308)</u>	<u>1,635</u>

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021**

**9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued
Comparatives for movement in funds**

	At 1.9.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.8.20 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	152,653	8,427	161,080
Contingency reserve	<u>15,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	<u>167,653</u>	<u>8,427</u>	<u>176,080</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>167,653</u>	<u>8,427</u>	<u>176,080</u>

Comparative net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	105,872	(97,445)	8,427
	<u>105,872</u>	<u>(97,445)</u>	<u>8,427</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>105,872</u>	<u>(97,445)</u>	<u>8,427</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined position is as follows:

	At 1.9.19 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.8.21 £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	152,653	10,062	162,715
Contingency reserve	<u>15,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	<u>167,653</u>	<u>10,062</u>	<u>177,715</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>167,653</u>	<u>10,062</u>	<u>177,715</u>

A current year 12 months and prior year 12 months combined net movement in funds, included in the above are as follows:

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
Unrestricted funds			
General fund	221,815	(211,753)	10,062
	<u>221,815</u>	<u>(211,753)</u>	<u>10,062</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>221,815</u>	<u>(211,753)</u>	<u>10,062</u>

THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021

10. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There were no related party transactions during the year.

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021**

	2021 £	2020 £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS		
Donations and legacies		
Donations	77,857	63,744
Grants	<u>36,310</u>	<u>36,310</u>
	114,167	100,054
Other trading activities		
Fundraising events	-	587
Sale of books and cards	<u>427</u>	<u>466</u>
	427	1,053
Investment income		
Deposit account interest	1,349	1,623
Other income		
Other income	<u>-</u>	<u>3,142</u>
Total incoming resources	115,943	105,872
EXPENDITURE		
Raising donations and legacies		
Printing and stationery	1,212	1,793
Community event costs	<u>21</u>	<u>427</u>
	1,233	2,220
Charitable activities		
Salaries and Nat. Insurance	58,131	59,505
Premises costs	5,151	6,191
Insurance	5,278	6,167
Vehicle and plant maintenance	4,939	4,292
General maintenance	36,795	9,165
Telephone, computer and post.	569	1,177
Health & Safety	1,049	628
Sundries	344	2,758
Plant and mach. depreciation	<u>-</u>	<u>4,447</u>
	112,256	94,330
Support costs		
Finance		
Bank charges	15	91

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

**THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**DETAILED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
For The Year Ended 31 August 2021**

	2021 £	2020 £
Finance		
Governance costs		
Accountancy and legal fees	<u>804</u>	<u>804</u>
Total resources expended	<u>114,308</u>	<u>97,445</u>
Net income	<u>1,635</u>	<u>8,427</u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements
