

**REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1028121**

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES AND  
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2022  
FOR  
THE CHISLEHURST & ST. PAUL'S CRAY  
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

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

**CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

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	<b>Page</b>
<b>Report of the Trustees</b>	<b>1 to 11</b>
<b>Independent Examiner's Report</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Statement of Financial Activities</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Balance Sheet</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Notes to the Financial Statements</b>	<b>15 to 19</b>
<b>Detailed Statement of Financial Activities</b>	<b>20 to 21</b>

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

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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)  
Peter Hedges  
Ian Leonard  
Alan Porter  
Christine Wearn  
Mary Wheeler  
Margaret Yardley -resigned 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2022  
Patrick Phillips  
Brian Knights  
Joanna Friel – appointee of the Lord of the Manor  
Sarah Harris

**Staff**

The Board employs two members of staff:

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

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

---

**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 6 occasions. 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, the maintenance of monuments on the Commons and the management of vehicles 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 4 consecutive years the Commons have been awarded a Green Flag award.

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

---

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. 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 and variants**

Restrictions were removed in the spring of 2022. Our volunteer groups which work outdoors had been managed so that they could operate effectively within any COVID regulations. Consequently the maintenance of the Commons was not unduly affected during the year. However, the overall duration of the COVID restrictions has disrupted some specific aspects of the Commons work, most notably tree safety work.

**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. From January to April 2022 funds were raised towards a new truck via crowdfunding. The order was placed in June 2021 with delivery expected March 2022. This was delayed to June 2022 and delayed again with a forecast delivery date now of January 2023. This has been reported by us on social media and our monthly newsletters.

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:**

Our total incoming resources for the accounting year 2022 were £115,642 (2021: £115,943). After expenditure of £95,527 (2021: £114,308) a surplus of £20,115 for the year was recorded. (2021: £1,635). Capital Resources accordingly increased to £197,830 (2021: £177,715).

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

---

**Income:**

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

The Income figure for Donations of £114,872 includes:

- A Grant from the London Borough of Bromley of £36,100.
- Specific donations totalling £9,663 which includes £5,000 from the Chislehurst Society for dealing with the consequences of ash tree dieback, £2,337 from the W H Allen Trust for Story Boards at the Prince Imperial Monument site, £1,192 for a commemorative bench and a £1,134 payment for damage to stone bollards.
- Contributions of £13,129 towards our new truck from many donors including £1,000 from Chislehurst Rotary. Delivery is now forecast for January 2023.
- One-off donations of £3,853. This includes Retailers Charity schemes of £1,392 and donations from a funeral of £390
- Regular donation income received from periodic committed payments of £40,366. The equivalent figure for 2021 was £36,416.
- Gift Aid of £11,760 on relevant donations.

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 much reduced sum of £442 compared with 2021 (£1,349) and 2020 of £1,623. We have, since September 2022, taken advantage of higher interest earning deposit accounts.

**Expenditure:**

Total costs were £95,527 (2021: £114,308. 2020: £97,445). 2021 was exceptional as it bore the cost of the Prickend Pond Project and other exceptional costs totalling £29,351. This year there were no big project items, the largest being the Prince Imperial Monument story boards which is included in General Maintenance. No monies were expended on oak processionary moth treatment, but we incurred tree costs totalling £6,750 mostly associated with ash tree dieback. Premises costs rose following our lease payments on our premises being increased by 14% by the LBB, and us having to pay 'back rent' of £942. In addition, there was the cost of £1,134 for replacing damaged stone bollards.

Tree costs were as follows; **2022: £6,750 2021: £5,254 2020: £2,250 2019: £8,586 2018: £19,008 2017: £1,514. 2016: £920 2015: £3,158 2014: £5,197 2013: £520.**

The tree costs are 28.5% above the figure for 2021 which reflects the increasing impact of ash dieback. Affected trees in most cases are large and have to be felled requiring external contractors. We are grateful to the Chislehurst Society for giving us a grant of £5,000 towards these costs. This issue will, unfortunately, only become bigger with the first 4 months of the financial year 2022/23 incurring costs of £9,436 for tree work.

We have benefitted from fixing of a discount on our insurance costs with Zurich Insurance and have until November 2023 before we need to renegotiate our Gas and Electric supply costs.

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.

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

---

**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 £202,429 is a good measure of our financial solvency. This figure has benefited in 2022 from donations received of £13,129 towards the replacement of our Truck. The Truck is now forecast to be delivered in January 2023 at a cost of approximately £32,000. Allowing for this amount, the cash balances would reduce to £170,429. After dealing with the net negative effect of debtors and creditors of £4,599, then uncommitted cash balances would reduce to £165,830.

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 in real terms, financial support from The London Borough of Bromley, but we live in uncertain 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 day Notice Account with Hampshire Trust Bank. Post the balance sheet date, and to take advantage of higher deposit rates, we have closed the Shawbrook Account and opened deposit accounts with Cambridge and Counties Bank and Redwood Bank. All investments are in the form of cash deposits which are protected by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme.

With the generous donations and support of so many local residents, grants from community focussed organisations, revenue from events, our self-imposed discipline of raising 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 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

---

**For Financial risks**, the Board is reliant upon the continuation of financial support from the London Borough of Bromley (LBB) 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 but at an amount last set in 2010, there is no formal agreement to this effect. The Board has held meetings with the responsible parties at the LBB to provide certainty of the grant's continued provision, but so far to no 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.

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 that of 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 2022**

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. This is however very resource dependant, particularly in respect of volunteer time to carry out and record the inspections and manage the tree works resulting from the inspections. The ongoing availability of this level of volunteer support is not certain.

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 was incorporated into the Tree Inspection Policy for 2020.

The year 2020, was the first year that we carried out inspections in the springtime in accordance with the updated policy. We have continued this for the tree inspections in the autumn of 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. As anticipated in last year's annual report we have now reverted to a two-year cycle for inspecting trees on major roads, with inspections only carried out in the autumn.

To complete the inspection work during this reporting period, a total of 16 work sessions were completed from October to November 2021. Each work session consisted of 2 people for a morning. In excess of 1,000 trees were inspected.

A consequence of these inspections is that necessary tree work is identified. Where we are unable to do these ourselves, we appoint approved tree surgeons. During this reporting period the cost of such tree work was £6,750. 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. But any complacency would be dangerous as during the first 4 months of the new financial year costs of £9,436 have already been incurred. The expectation that future years may well see increases of



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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

---

two times or more due to the onset of ash dieback on the Commons (see below) does not seem far-fetched.

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 increasing appearance and significance of ash dieback (ADB) on the Commons during the second half of the year is of growing concern for both safety and financial reasons. We have continued to approach a number of bodies to get advice on the management of ADB and we are in an ongoing process of developing a policy that is informed by such advice. A schedule has been developed of approximately 200 ash trees that we consider to be located in high-risk areas (particularly along the main roads) 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.

**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.

The NEC continues to develop and update policies and management plans, including the overarching 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. The Prickend Pond Project completed in 2021 has provided a new access path from the High Street, a public seating area and a bird feeding beach all of which have proven to be very popular. Ancillary planting and in-pond and island planting continues, guided by biological surveys by Volunteers. 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, holly clearance, drainage maintenance to footpath maintenance is carried out at these

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

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work sessions. Typically, in the past, these sessions have been attended by approximately 10 volunteers.

During lockdown we experienced 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 reorganise 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 continues to be constrained by the lack of group leaders.

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

The use of the Commons continues at a greater level than pre COVID-19 times. For the period September 2021 to August 2022 18,160 kgs of rubbish were collected represented by 70 trips to the council refuse tip. (2020/21 18,820kgs. 2019/20 18,500 kgs.) We are most grateful to those who regularly go out on the Commons to pick up litter. Household rubbish and dog faeces continues to represent unacceptable deposits in our bins this year and so we embarked on a review of our bins and ways to improve their management to comply inter alia with public health guidelines.

There are over 40 rubbish bins on the Common and nearly all of them are open concrete bins. These bins have to be manually emptied by the keepers. Apart from the time that it takes to do this, it has never been a pleasant job and became appreciably worse over lockdown as the number of dog walkers on the Commons increased. It is considered to be a poor use of keepers' time, unpleasant and a potential health hazard. Many of the existing open bins are also extensively subject to misuse being regularly filled with domestic waste and easily accessed by rats, foxes and other wildlife. We have this year therefore started a project to replace all of the open bins with modern closed bins to alleviate this problem. Fly-tipping continues to take 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 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.

Road improvement schemes proposed by the LBB that may affect the Commons have been limited to improvements to the Loop Road mini roundabout. Discussions with the LBB started back in 2019 and were revived during the year. The LBB's proposals are, in principle, acceptable to the Trustees and we await information on the final designs. We do not have any start dates. We await proposals from the LBB for improvements to pedestrian safety at the War Memorial junction.

**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 reinstatement will take place. We are also aware that the freeholder of the Commons should require easements to be granted. Progress has been made with British Telecoms and UK Power Networks and we are hopeful that outstanding documentation will be completed in 2023.

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

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**12. Commons Community Events**

This year we were pleased to be able to recommence our regular programme of well-attended walks on the Commons. These have included a visit to sites of interest connected with the First World War, an opportunity to see the work of our Volunteer Working Party, a focus on the four main habitats of the Commons and a look at some of trees of particular interest. These walks have been a valuable means of engaging with the community but have also brought us supporters and some volunteers with particular skills and interests, which has enabled us to extend our survey work.

The Chislehurst Chase took place in September, a 10k race which in 2021 took place entirely on St. Paul's Cray Common.

There are regular community events through the year in Chislehurst where we have taken an active part in promoting interest in the Commons. We had a stall at the Christmas Market where we had cards, decorations made from pinecones and holly on show. At the Rotary Summer Fair our large display stimulated a lot of discussion, and we also offered a children's activity. The Big Picnic was held for the second year running on the Common, this time as part of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations, and we were there with a display and an opportunity for children to make a crown from natural materials.

We were approached by a local Infant School to help with their progress towards Eco status and worked with them on a project to produce duck feeding posters, which were displayed at one of our ponds.

A talk to Chislehurst Townswomen's Guild in September 2021 by one of the Trustees and the Head Keeper was well received.

We are members of Visit Chislehurst and attendance at their monthly meetings gives us links with local businesses. Our cards are on sale in a local shop.

Chislehurst War Memorial is situated on the Common and a local Nursery, Coolings, provides flowers for the base throughout the year.

**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 and/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 and the Trustees contribute 8000 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 was held in July ,the first time since 2019, with 123 attendees. All our visitors were very pleased to attend and look forward to a repeat performance in 2023.

**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 again from our solicitors, Wellers, for the newsletter

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

---

printing costs. Following an increase in postal rates we are reviewing the best approach to delivering our printed newsletter, which remains greatly appreciated amongst donors.

An online Newsletter, with news and photos, is sent out on a monthly basis to our mailing list of over 1,000. The material is provided by 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.

We have 4 Notice Boards situated across the Commons with maps and information which is regularly updated with items of interest for visitors and upcoming events. In addition, leaflets with a map are available in the community ex phone box. Information about the Commons is also available via links to Facebook and Twitter from our website.

Our 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.

**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 many of our projects over many years. In 2022 they donated towards the cost of the Prince Imperial Monument renovations and our ash dieback costs.

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 current and future generations.

**15. The Future**

The financial position of the charity continues to be in good order. We enjoy a 10 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. If the value of the volunteers' and Trustees' time is costed, this rises to 1:4.5. The grant 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 although some have restarted during 2022. 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 the impact of Inflationary pressures, linked to modest increases in 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.

In 2022 we did enjoy a modest increase in regular donor income to £40,366 (£3,950 uplift). We also benefited from raising £13,129, via direct requests and crowdfunding, towards our new truck helped by the goodwill created by weekly newsletters and the community's continuing appreciation of the virtues of the Commons. We

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

**REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES  
For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

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hope we can build on this improvement in regular donations, but we are acutely aware that donor's own financial position is under strain as they deal with cost increases and interest rate rises.

We are therefore constantly seeking new sources of income and ways of facilitating one-off donations. We are hopeful that, through an initiative with volunteers, we may restart an arts and crafts event similar to the former Big Draw event and other events with Chislehurst Rotary. 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, and which is proving expensive to address. The costs of dealing with ash dieback, and no doubt some new infestation, remain uncertain. Also, in an effort to create efficiencies we continue to review our working practices, the bin replacement programme being an example. Our grant from LBB has been at the same level since 2010, and the ability of our 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 where a large number of trees are reaching the end of their natural lives.

It would be remiss of me if I failed to mention the reliance we place upon our keepers and our volunteers and Trustees which have been highlighted by events in September 2022 and December 2022. In September our Assistant Keeper Peter Edwards retired. Peter joined the Commons in 2009 and was a loyal and trusted employee. In anticipation of his retirement in September 2022 we had been reviewing our options particularly as seeking a replacement was not proving easy. The industry in which we operate is classified as Agricultural with the wages we can afford reflecting this classification. They are not attractive to those who live in an area influenced by London rates of pay. Fortuitously we were introduced to and able to attract a new Assistant Keeper. We were relying upon our Head Keeper Jonathan to show him the ropes. Unfortunately, Jonathan suffered a stroke in December 2022 and as at February 2023 remains off work. We are managing the situation with the help of our volunteers and Trustees but it is highlighting the strains and risks placed upon a small organisation when 50% of the full time experienced workforce is unavailable.

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 third of three most difficult years owing to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, I offer my personal thanks to those whose efforts go largely unrecognised; 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.

Approved by order of the board of trustees on 24 January 2023 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**

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**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 2022.

**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').

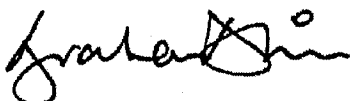
I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under Section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**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: 22nd february 2023

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

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

		2022 Unrestricted funds £	2021 Total funds £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM</b>	Notes		
Donations and legacies		114,872	114,167
Other trading activities	2	328	427
Investment income	3	<u>442</u>	<u>1,349</u>
<b>Total</b>		<u>115,642</u>	<u>115,943</u>
 <b>EXPENDITURE ON</b>			
Raising funds		1,353	1,233
<b>Charitable activities</b>			
Costs of protecting and conserving the woodlands		<u>94,174</u>	<u>113,075</u>
<b>Total</b>		<u>95,527</u>	<u>114,308</u>
 <b>NET INCOME</b>		20,115	1,635
 <b>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</b>			
Total funds brought forward		<u>177,715</u>	<u>176,080</u>
 <b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>		<u><u>197,830</u></u>	<u><u>177,715</u></u>

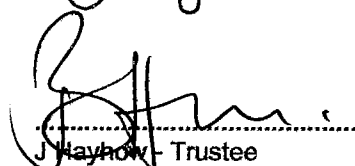
The notes form part of these financial statements

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

**BALANCE SHEET  
31 August 2022**

	Notes	2022 Unrestricted funds £	2021 Total funds £
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Debtors	7	3,416	3,594
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>202,429</u>	<u>179,141</u>
		205,845	182,735
<b>CREDITORS</b>			
Amounts falling due within one year	8	(8,015)	(5,020)
<b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>197,830</u>	<u>177,715</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		197,830	177,715
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<u>197,830</u>	<u>177,715</u>
<b>FUNDS</b>	9		
Unrestricted funds		<u>197,830</u>	<u>177,715</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>		<u>197,830</u>	<u>177,715</u>

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2023..... and were signed on its behalf by:

  
.....  
J. Hayhoe - 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 2022**

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**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 CRAY  
COMMONS CONSERVATORS**

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued**  
**For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

**2. OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES**

	2022	2021
	£	£
Sale of books and cards	<u>328</u>	<u>427</u>

**3. INVESTMENT INCOME**

	2022	2021
	£	£
Deposit account interest	<u>442</u>	<u>1,349</u>

**4. TRUSTEES' REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS**

There were no trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year ended 31 August 2022 nor for the year ended 31 August 2021.

**Trustees' expenses**

During the year 3 trustees received reimbursements to the sum of £119.72 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:

	2022	2021
	2	2
Keepers	<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 £
<b>COST</b>			
At 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022	<u>68,591</u>	<u>44,545</u>	<u>113,136</u>
<b>DEPRECIATION</b>			
At 1 September 2021 and 31 August 2022	<u>68,591</u>	<u>44,545</u>	<u>113,136</u>
<b>NET BOOK VALUE</b>			
At 31 August 2022	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
At 31 August 2021	<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 2022**

**7. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2022	2021
	£	£
Prepayments and accrued income	<u>3,416</u>	<u>3,594</u>

**8. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR**

	2022	2021
	£	£
Taxation and social security	833	826
Other creditors	<u>7,182</u>	<u>4,194</u>
	<u>8,015</u>	<u>5,020</u>

**9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS**

	At 1.9.21	Net movement in funds	At
	£	£	31.8.22 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	162,715	20,115	182,830
Contingency reserve	<u>15,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	<u>177,715</u>	<u>20,115</u>	<u>197,830</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>177,715</u>	<u>20,115</u>	<u>197,830</u>

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

	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Movement in funds £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	115,642	(95,527)	20,115
	<u>115,642</u>	<u>(95,527)</u>	<u>20,115</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>115,642</u>	<u>(95,527)</u>	<u>20,115</u>

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

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued**  
**For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

**9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued**

**Comparatives for movement in funds**

	At 1.9.20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.8.21 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
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>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>176,080</u>	<u>1,635</u>	<u>177,715</u>

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

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

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

	At 1.9.20 £	Net movement in funds £	At 31.8.22 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	161,080	21,750	182,830
Contingency reserve	<u>15,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>15,000</u>
	<u>176,080</u>	<u>21,750</u>	<u>197,830</u>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>176,080</u>	<u>21,750</u>	<u>197,830</u>

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

**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - continued**  
**For The Year Ended 31 August 2022**

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**9. MOVEMENT IN FUNDS - continued**

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 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>			
General fund	231,585	(209,835)	21,750
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<u>231,585</u>	<u>(209,835)</u>	<u>21,750</u>

**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 2022**

	2022 £	2021 £
<b>INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS</b>		
<b>Donations and legacies</b>		
Donations	78,562	77,857
Grants	<u>36,310</u>	<u>36,310</u>
	114,872	114,167
<b>Other trading activities</b>		
Sale of books and cards	328	427
<b>Investment income</b>		
Deposit account interest	<u>442</u>	<u>1,349</u>
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	115,642	115,943
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
<b>Raising donations and legacies</b>		
Printing and stationery	678	1,212
Community event costs	<u>675</u>	<u>21</u>
	1,353	1,233
<b>Charitable activities</b>		
Salaries and Nat. Insurance	57,799	58,131
Premises costs	7,444	5,151
Insurance	4,974	5,278
Vehicle and plant maintenance	5,988	4,939
General maintenance	15,649	36,795
Telephone, computer and post.	813	569
Health & Safety	528	1,049
Sundries	<u>139</u>	<u>344</u>
	93,334	112,256
<b>Support costs</b>		
<b>Finance</b>		
Bank charges	-	15
<b>Governance costs</b>		
Accountancy and legal fees	840	804

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 2022**

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	2022 <u>£</u>	2021 <u>£</u>
Total resources expended	<u>95,527</u>	<u>114,308</u>
<b>Net income</b>	<u><u>20,115</u></u>	<u><u>1,635</u></u>

This page does not form part of the statutory financial statements

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