

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
(A company limited by guarantee)

UNAUDITED

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
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**REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Trustees	Steven Eling, Chair Katherine Slade Alan Reynolds Elizabeth Coleman Arthur Ward Barbara Platts Christopher Ashford David Read Patricia Marsh (Resigned 14 October 2023) Michael Talbot Lisa Burrows John Newman Lynda Wagstaff Clive Heywood Tom Keir Grosvenor (appointed 14 October 2023) Dr Emma Louise Login (appointed 14 October 2023)
Company registered number	04214547
Charity registered number	1092754
Registered office	The Pavilion Lightwoods Hill Smethwick West Midlands B67 5ED
Company secretary	Michael Talbot
Accountants	Crowe U.K. LLP Chartered Accountants Black Country House Rounds Green Road Oldbury West Midlands B69 2DG
Bankers	Unity Trust Bank Birmingham B1 2HB

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**CHAIR'S STATEMENT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

The chair presents his statement for the year.

The 2023/24 year has been one of overall success for the Trust and Warley Woods. Our membership remains strong at over 1,500 with volunteer support for the park and events involving more than 300 people. All this helps to keep Warley Woods looking great, providing the best for its users and being rooted in the community.

The year has seen some significant investment to improve conditions and facilities. Many of improvements and renewals have been carried out by our own staff. These included more drainage improvements on the golf course greens, renewed litter bins and a new trip rail along the Barclay Road boundary to replace the rotten wooden bollards. Our staff have also had to repair damage including vandalism to the bears in the children's playground. Biodiversity in the Wilderness continues to increase. The establishment of the pond since it has been fenced is now attracting ducks with ducklings, newts and diverse insect species; all good for the woods.

Planned improvements included renewing the driveway from the Grove Road entrance, which was an expensive job and made possible by two legacies. Patching works were also done to the car park (sadly, the car park is going to need some further repairs).

Golf has continued to be very popular. The course has been busy throughout the year despite the extensive levels of rainfall, especially through the winter. New golfers continue to come to Warley Woods and visiting golfers playing against Warley Woods Golf Club in competitions have been very complimentary about the course. We have to thank our staff for their dedication to keeping things in the best condition.

We ran the full range of events over the year, which were as popular as ever. Many events which require booking, like guided walks sell out. We have also seen the start of the Artisan Market on the first Sunday of the month. They began in October and are now a fixture March to December. They certainly seem to be popular and provide an outlet for local traders and crafts people and are an opportunity for the Trust to raise awareness of what it does.

We reported in the last Annual Report about issues with the Council's grant funding contribution and funding agreement with a proposed review and intention to totally cut funding support within two years. This major problem rumbled on for the whole of 2023/24. At the high point of bad relations in September I formally complained to the Commissioners then running the Council about the professional conduct of their officers. The relationship has since been on an improving trajectory following a change of council staff. However, the funding agreement was not concluded by the end of the year in time for 2024/25 and there is still a funding reduction for 2024/25 and 2025/26. To give balance, at the time of writing this report, the grant funding agreement has since been concluded. However, other commitments that were given to the Trust about a review and removal of some restrictions in the Trust's lease of the park have not yet been delivered on. We will need to continue to pursue these issues. Hopefully, we can go forward with a positive relationship with the Council again and hopefully never have a repeat of the frustrating issues that took staff time and effort away from what are the priorities for Warley Woods.

A major development we have been working on for some time is a new building to replace the Pavilion. I have written before about the Pavilion being erected as a temporary building in 1957. It really is now existing on borrowed time. A new building cannot just provide better facilities, but must also be environmentally friendly, which the Pavilion certainly isn't. Planning work got underway in earnest during the year with some designs produced and initial public consultations. A subgroup of the Board is driving the project, which will be a multiyear task of design, approvals and fundraising.

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CHAIR'S STATEMENT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Board of Trustees continues to meet each month to receive reports from our staff including finance and park users' feedback. The Board's subgroups of Resources, Site, Communications, Communities, Environment, and New Building meet each month and report to the Board with any recommendations for decisions. The Board has continued to hold its annual planning day in February to set the main priorities for the coming year and run through the budget in detail. In February 2024, the Board reviewed and agreed a new five year Management Plan. All of this happens behind the scenes, but is essential to the Trust being a well-run and viable organisation.

Board membership in the year saw Pat Marsh retire and Emma Login and Tom Grosvenor join. We are pleased that Pat and her family continue to be strong supporters of the Trust and are seen volunteering at many events. It's important to remember whilst we have paid staff, all the Board and subgroup members, along with many people doing jobs in the park and at events, are volunteers.

The work of everyone was recognised again in 2023 with the award of Green Flag status for the 15th year running. We also made the top ten again in the vote for Britain's favourite parks. Finally, the year involved planning for celebrating 20 years of the Trust running Warley Woods. We are unique and despite all those who said it wouldn't work, we are still here. We will be reporting all of that in our forthcoming celebratory book and in next year's annual report.

Chair
Date:


19/9/2024

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

The Trustees present their annual report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The Annual report serves the purposes of both a Trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The Trustees confirm that the Annual report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102).

Since the company qualifies as small under section 383, the strategic report required of medium and large companies under The Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Director's Report) Regulations 2013 is not required.

Objectives and activities

Policies and objectives

The charitable objectives of the Trust are as follows:

To promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical, natural and historic environment of the area known as Warley Woods.

Vision

The vision of Warley Woods Community Trust Limited is: -

To ensure the long-term restoration and sustainability of Warley Woods Park and to develop its facilities and events as a central focus for the local community, thus encouraging greater numbers and diversity of people to enjoy this unique environment.

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. The rest of this report demonstrates the many works delivered by Warley Woods Community Trust for the public benefit. Warley Woods is free to enter, open to all, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

In setting objectives and planning for activities, the Trustees have given due consideration to general guidance published by the Charity Commission relating to public benefit, including the guidance 'Public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE
REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES

It has been another busy year at Warley Woods Community Trust. Many of the Trust's activities fall under the responsibility of one of the subgroups, whose reports follow, but there are some things which are solely undertaken by the Trust's staff teams and these first reports share some aspects of this work in 2023-24.

Report from the Trust Manager

The office takes care of a lot of the communications and marketing of the Trust. This includes updating and creating material for our website. It is amazing how quickly things become out of date. We added information on Wilder Warley and our sustainability work. We lead the charge on promoting the UK's Favourite Park vote and sending out the news emails. We look after the official facebook groups and page. We create posters for all of our events, activities and our fundraising initiatives.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

We manage the fundraising and membership administration, which thanks to our supporters generosity is very time-consuming. Thank you for keeping us so busy. We keep gift aid records and submit claims. We introduce new ideas for fundraising which last year involved our first lottery. After years of receiving grants from the National Lottery it is quite interesting to receive funds directly from our own involvement in a scheme. It has attracted completely new supporters to us with monthly contributions. It raised £3,700 from just half of the year. Doug also created his first appeal for funds to buy bluebells and this was incredibly popular.

We submit funding applications and appeals for support and we write reports to funders on the work that has been achieved with their grants. Many have been supporting us for many years now. We had a fantastic visit to The Turner Trust in Arley to learn about what they do. They may have grant monies to give out, but they are also, like us, a small organisation managing a green space involving members and volunteers. We always have to apply to all potential supporters on each occasion. We don't have any guaranteed grant funding year on year – other than our support from Sandwell Council.

The new year saw a new force in the office – that of our new Administrator, Mae Eastwood. She is a gentle but powerful addition to our team and has had a great impact already. Taking on and learning all of our systems and events, including the massive undertaking that is the Picnic, and our many quirks, she was soon finessing and creating in her own right. As just three examples she has significantly reduced our use of paper, introduced a new way for us to deliver our User Survey (without any charges either) and she has created a whole world of loveliness and potential in the Artisan Market. This started as a trial in the Autumn, but has already established itself as a fixture – enabling us to give space to local traders, something interesting in the calendar, a new income stream and the opportunity for the Trust to meet park visitors who never stray up to the Pavilion end of the site. Just fantastic from every angle and we look forward to seeing what she comes up with next.

We organise the Volunteer Thank You night each year which was again held at the Pavilion and is, we hope, a lovely evening for everyone who chooses to come. We also stepped in to organise the unexpected visit from the BBC to record Gardeners Question Time – you never know what is going to come your way. We also co-ordinated the visit of a Deputy Lord Lieutenant who came to assess us for Kings Award for Volunteering.

We made and maintained new partnerships, by following up offers of help from community groups and organisations and also individuals who want to use the park for their own events. These have become increasingly important to the Trust to increase what is on offer in Warley Woods without increasing our need to directly create and manage things. They do need liaison and comms which we are able to do.

We support the site staff by dealing with some issues to keep them free to focus on the practical side of things whenever possible. We look after things such as dealing with quotes for repairs, ordering trees and park furniture, tree inspections, health and safety and waste management issues. One of the loveliest aspects is being a cog in the wheel of the celebratory tree adoptions. It only happens once a year, but is very special for everyone involved. Mae also took on getting the Padgham Room (meeting room) refreshed. Sometimes you don't always see how shabby something has become and fresh eyes help.

We do a lot of the background, but essential work. We sort out insurance, refuse, dog bin emptying service level agreements and negotiate energy contracts. We open and manage bank accounts. We started work with a new accounting company, following our long term Accountant Helen Blundell to a new firm. This has proved a great move already and we have been working with their VAT specialists on a new approach to VAT which could result in a big change and a legitimate rebate from HMRC. This work will continue into 24-25. We also had a big change moving all of our telephone systems onto digital services. This was greatly helped by a friend of the Trust and while we have kept our three different phone numbers we are much better able to provide support between teams at busy times and when the office is not staffed.

We deal with many of the health and safety issues and this year it involved dealing with a significant accident on site and its aftermath. Of course it was a great shock to know someone had been badly hurt in a space we manage and we are very pleased to know that the injured person has been able to return to the Woods once again. We thank everyone for their kindness, sensitivity and true partnership through this situation.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

A large task in the Autumn was creating our next five year Management Plan. The plan is a big document which covers so many aspects of how we manage the site and our organisation and it need a complete rewrite – as well as involving and co-ordinating the contributions of others who are invested in how our operation works and moves forward. This was agreed by the Board in February 2024 and gives us the basis for our future work but with scope for new innovations as the time goes forward.

Another major piece of work for me has been taking on more of a project management role for the new building work. The time has come when this needs more staff focus to give it some momentum and to ensure there is a fundraising plan in place.

Sadly, as Steve has mentioned, we continued to have difficulties with the local authority, and this involved the submission of formal complaints but we are starting to rebuild that relationship now. We accepted the recognition of a need for a cut in our grant but were extremely heartened by quickly our amazing supporters helped plug that financial gap, ready for the new financial year. We do not know if we can repeat that in 25-26 when the larger compounded cut takes effect, but it is encouraging.

It was a good year of positive change with a new Administrator, a stable staff team in all areas, new accountants and new Trustees. We continue to love being the supportive backbone of the day to day world of Warley Woods and whatever it needs from us. We did work on planning for our Anniversary celebrations and we look forward to delivering on those plans.

Viv Cole, Trust Manager

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Golf Reports

The golf course is not managed separately to the rest of the site and is mentioned throughout the rest of the report, but with the golf course being a significant part of our operation we feel it should have a special focus in our annual report. We have asked the Golf Course and Park Manager and the Retail and Golf Development Manager to share some of their last year with you. Like all staff, they work on both park and golf aspects of our work, but in this section they will just cover golf related work in 23-24

Working on The Golf Course

A golf course's reputation often rests on the quality of its greens. We carry out major greens maintenance twice a year to remove as much thatch as possible with a tractor mounted scarifier – thatch is a barrier between the grass and the soil which can stop air and moisture getting to the roots leading to a unlevel playing surface. We over seeded twice; once in the spring and once in the autumn with fescue seed as this is cheaper than bent grass seed. The greens were aerated every 3-4 weeks which helps to get water and air to the roots – happy roots happy greens.

We only fertilise twice a year to give them a kick start in the spring then once the greens are growing, I keep them healthy with seaweed, iron and then wetting agents to stop the greens from getting dry patches. 40 tons of sand are applied to the greens each year to improve drainage and trueness.

Greens are mowed daily during the growing season at 4mm and up to 7mm in wetter conditions. The pin (flag) positions are moved once a week to spread the wear and give golfers variety.

At the start of 2024 we installed 50 metres of drains to the 7th green. We removed the turf then dug to a depth of 1.5 metres installing 160mm pipe and back filling the drain with 10mm gravel, 20cm of topsoil. We re-laid the turf that was removed at the start of the process. We also installed drainage sumps to the front left of the 8th green as the rest of the green is very good and most likely not needing the more heavy duty drains that we have installed on the other greens.

Bunkers are edged, strimmed and weeded once a month during the growing season.

Raked 4 times a week unless it's raining heavily and stones removed. They are topped up with 10-20 tons of sand each year. The bunkers will often have a lot of paw prints in them from dogs and this continues to be a problem.

Fairways are mowed once a week during the growing season at 17mm. We would like to mow them twice a week but fuel costs, environment (diesel emissions), and staff time are all factors. We use a slitter once a year to improve the drainage.

Tees and collars can grow very fast during the growing season as they get overspray from the maintenance of the nearby green. Tees are mowed twice a week during the growing season at 12mm – 15mm and are mowed with a pedestrian mower during the wetter months as they become too boggy for a ride-on mower.

Tee markers are painted twice a year and are moved twice a week to spread the wear across the tee. We use a slitter 3-4 times a year to improve the drainage.

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Trees We prune the lower branches so that golfers can play their shots from under them and so that a mower can be manoeuvred around the tree without causing harm to staff. We spray weedkiller around the base of trees once a year. This is a considered decision which helps save a lot of time for staff and does prevent any damage to the bark from strimming and saves fuel and emissions. Fallen trees and branches will be cleared by staff. Every two years trees are surveyed for safety and any large work is contracted out. With such a beautiful tree lined site it is inevitable that in the autumn staff are fully occupied blowing and clearing leaves.

Irrigation we have a watering system which is primed up in the spring and drained down in the autumn. This used to be done by an outside company but is now done by staff, as are small repairs which are often replacing irrigation heads on the greens. We have bought 36 brand new irrigation heads in the last year (4 per green) and replacing these is ongoing.

One part of the system that is still not working is the 7th green irrigation which does not come on automatically and must be switched on manually which can be a pain on some days.

The putting green outside the Pavilion does not have irrigation heads so this also must be done manually. During a drought we have to go around all the greens with a hose pipe and water the dry areas on the greens as we don't get 100% coverage from the irrigation.

Staff

I joined Warley Woods in February 2014 and was promoted to the golf course and park manager in January 2015. I have over 20 years green keeping experience. Daryl Jones joined the team in December 2019 and was promoted to deputy course manager in 2023 and has over 12 years green keeping experience. Guiseppe Sannio joined the team in April 2023 and is learning on the job. Gary Parker joined in January 2024 on a temporary basis which we are hoping will become permanent should finance over the next financial year allow.

Alan Merricks, Head Greenkeeper and Park Manager

Inside the Shop at The Pavilion

During this year golfers have played over 25,000 rounds of golf on the course and after welcoming 1,800 new golfers we currently have in excess of 14,000 golfers on our records. Many are regular golfers on the course and as a result the golf club has also seen an increase in their membership numbers.

From 1st April the shop team was strengthened by welcoming Lynn Richardson and Linda McLeod to the team, along with Don Gribben, Nicolas Burrows, Nicola Clark and myself we cover the 77 hours a week during the summer.

During the annual review of the green fees we make every effort to remain competitive compared to other local courses and offer a range of deals, including Free Birthday Round, Twilight Discount after 4pm and Free Junior with an adult after 12pm on weekends and school holidays. The popularity of our Annual Season Ticket and Pay Monthly Direct Debit schemes continue to grow with 54 Annual Passes purchased this year and in the summer of 2023 the Pay Monthly peaked at 21 players in July.

Highlights through the summer season included an additional bank holiday in May for the King's Coronation, June saw the annual Warley Day competition hosted by the golf club and in September the Ryder Cup took place with Europe winning and golfers were offered a Ryder Cup discount, £1 off their round on Friday 29th September.

The golf club held an EGM in November to share details of a new club membership format. Members voted in favour of the change from an annual membership to a yearly rolling membership meaning players can join the club at any time through the year.

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In December golfers were offered a Santa Special Season Ticket: 14 months for the price of 12 if purchased over the weekend that Santa visited Warley Woods. 13 golfers took advantage of this great deal.

Overall a good year for golf with the total income of £193,430 exceeding the target of £175,000. Apart from Golf Hire which finished short of target by £137 (£6,400 - £6,253) all other income streams managed by the shop exceeded their targets: Golf Accessories £6000 - £8,904 and Trust Stock £24,000 - £26,501.

In addition to the Trust stock we offer a rent a shelf space for local crafters and income from the commission raised from these sales was £1,041.

In March I liaised with the officers of the golf club to review and update the Memorandum of Understanding between Warley Woods Community Trust and Warley Woods Golf Club. The final draft was agreed and signed off and will be reviewed again in March 2026.

Popular Warley Woods non golf stock items are our range of open gift cards, Christmas cards and a calendar. The images are captured by local supporters who are always happy support us in our fundraising efforts. We are looking forward to introducing some new limited edition items to celebrate 20th Anniversary in 2024.

Sharon Simpson, Retail and Golf Development Manager

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Site Subgroup

The Site Subgroup members are staff, trustees and volunteers: Steve Cemm, Diane Douglas, Clive Heywood, Alan Merricks, Mick Guy, John Reeves and Arthur Ward (Chair).

It supports the Community Trust in meeting its strategic objectives, one of which is the attainment of Green Flag status, by the active management of the Trust's physical resources. The subgroup met monthly on Zoom to discuss the management of the park, woodland and golf course areas. The group supports and plans significant projects together with other subgroups and the Trust Manager, particularly in the creation of our next five-year Management Plan.

The Site Subgroup would like to express their great appreciation to all those who supported the Community Trust to care for the site over the last year.

1. Pavilion and Car Park: We continued our incremental environmental improvements to the Pavilion by replacing more fluorescent light fittings with LED alternatives. As fluorescent light fittings are no longer available this process may accelerate in the future. Minor felt roof repairs were undertaken and gutters and UPVC facias cleaned. The Padgham room was redecorated.

2. Woodland Management: Fifteen large container grown trees (beech, oak, lime and sweet-chestnut), sponsored by supporters and members of the public, were planted out on site in late January. The locations within the woodland followed our woodland management plan advice. This is becoming a very significant event in our calendar supported by the combined efforts of our admin and ground-staff teams together with volunteers. Standing deadwood safety issues were discussed with our arboriculturist. Our biannual tree safety inspection was commissioned and will be undertaken early in the next financial year. The improved ecology of the site continues to be a significant area of volunteer and staff directed work. Laying dead hedges, removing invasive and non- natural species and replanting with woodland flora such as blue bells and wild garlic. Meadow creation and management in various areas of the site continues.

3. Tree Nursery: Thirty small leaved lime whips were added to our tree nursery this year and forty sweet chestnut seeds were potted up. Volunteers continued to maintain the nursery and water the trees over the growing seasons. The site's legionella risk assessment was reviewed and expanded to include the water tanks in the tree nursery. Two hundred hedge whips were purchased and planted out on site by volunteers to beef up our previously installed hedges.

4. Golf Course: The ground-staff installed fifty metres of new drainage to the seventh green this year, continuing our rolling programme of irrigation improvements to our greens. The expert care of our greens and their almost continuous playability throughout the whole year is a credit to our staff and we receive many compliments throughout the year from our golfers. Sadly, as in other years, we have suffered some vandalism to the greens when they are ridden over with motor bikes. The staff team deal with these incidents quickly and they are reported to the police

5. Park and Meadow: A significant section of the back drive was resurfaced this year at a cost of £43K. This section of the back drive was becoming very worn and difficult for buggies and wheelchairs to use. Ten tons of gravel was purchased to repair storm damage to the winter garden paths.

Damage to the perimeter fence was repaired. New replacement rubbish bins were installed at Abbey Road gate and the Upper St Mary's Road entrance. A new galvanised trip rail was installed along a section of Barclay Road to replace rotten wooden perimeter bollards. Replacing the wooden bollards like for like would have been three times as expensive and their life expectancy is much shorter..

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6. Wilderness: Improvements to The Wilderness this year included installing a farm style fence around the pond to keep people and dogs out of the water. This has proved very successful and significant wildlife has been attracted to the water. The pond has held sufficient water over the summer for aquatic species to thrive. The bank behind the pond has been seeded by volunteers. A second information board was installed at the bottom of The Wilderness steps. Grass in The Wilderness is being cut and removed to impoverish the area ready for wild meadow plants to be introduced. Significant repairs to the boardwalk were undertaken this year.

7. Health and Safety and Staffing: There have been a small number of minor H&S issues this year and one serious incident that was reported to RIDDOR and our insurers. The latter was a branch falling and injuring a worker who required hospitalisation. The area was immediately reassessed and the location of the group using this space was moved. After an investigation no further action was required of us. Two new members of the ground-staff team joined us this year Pepe and Gary. First aid and refresher courses were undertaken by all ground staff this year.

8. Compound and Equipment: A new covered area and robust work bench were created in the compound this year to provide dry conditions for staff working on machinery during servicing and repairs. The compound has been resurfaced with ten tons of new gravel. All of the servicing of our machine fleet is now carried out in house with the exception of mower blade sharpening which requires specialist equipment.

9. Play Area and Gym Equipment: Significant repairs to the play area fence were undertaken this year after a bout of vandalism and rotting of a number of posts. Corporate volunteers painted the whole fence during the summer. All ground-staff completed a play and gym equipment inspection course this year. A small number of minor repairs were undertaken to the gym equipment as recommended by our annual external inspection.

10. Volunteers: As in previous years volunteers have been extremely active in helping to care for the site. We have several regular litter pickers who between them keep the site largely litter free. The well established Sunday and Monday groups have met regularly and larger corporate groups have offered a significant number of all day sessions throughout the year. We regularly support young people undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh award in their volunteering element who join us on our Sunday sessions. Tasks have been very varied ranging from hedge planting to litter picking, bluebell planting to cutting back overgrown vegetation, to tidying our many entrances to the site. We are extremely grateful to all our volunteers young and old who make such a big contribution to the care of Warley Woods.

Arthur Ward

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
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Communications Subgroup

Members of the group: Viv Cole; Katy Holmes, Debra Howls, Sue Maguire, Kate Slade (Chair), Jane Taylor, Sarah Wagstaff. The group remained stable throughout the year but Sarah has now resigned due to work commitments. We'd like to thank her for managing the Trust's Twitter (X) and Instagram accounts for the last 2 years – sometimes a thankless task!

The ongoing activities of the group include:

- Production of the quarterly LEAFlet newsletter
- Scrutiny of publications:
- Website, Facebook, Twitter (X), Instagram and notice board management
- AGM
- Annual Report
- Recruitment of Members and Volunteers
- Apart from the above activities there were two main areas of work which took up much of the group's time this year:- Planning for the 20th Anniversary of the Trust running the site, and preparing the submission for the Award for Volunteering.
- The plan for the Anniversary was agreed and was to focus on four Trust events throughout the year as well as new merchandise and additional publicity. We decided that the events concerned would be the Easter Egg Roll, The Picnic, Volunteer Thankyou night and the launch of a new book. Ideas about merchandise and a special logo were also discussed and agreed – mugs, badges and the new history book being the main offerings.
- The application for the King's Award was discussed and refined. Sue Maguire did a lot of the work in preparing this, and special thanks go to her. The application was submitted by Kate Organ, a former trustee who has moved away from the area, and letters of support were provided by Sally Taylor from the Bearwood Hub and Stuart Maconie one of our patrons. We will not hear the result of this until November 2024.
- The bi-annual User Survey was undertaken in the autumn of 2023. The previous survey questions were reviewed and some changes made. This was an online survey for anyone who uses the site and there were 413 responses. Some of the main findings included the importance of the site being run by local people; the top priorities for funding being the woodland and a new building; and nature, fresh air and trees being major reasons for visiting the site. We added a question asking if visitors felt safe on the site so that we could understand if there were particular measures that we needed to take to address safety. What surprised us was that half of the respondents had felt unsafe but this was mainly to do with dogs, not other people or risky conditions and was often related to a single incident over a considerable period of time. The full findings are available on the website [User Survey Results 2023 | Warley Woods Community Trust](#).
- In 2018 we applied to be hosts for Gardeners' Question Time on Radio 4 in the year of the bi-centenary of Repton's death. We heard nothing until July 2023 when they contacted us to ask if we were still interested! We said we were and two programmes were recorded at Abbey Junior School and broadcast towards the end of 2023. Although it is difficult to know the impact of this it did tell another audience about the Trust and Warley Woods.
- A recent addition, coming towards the end of the year was the establishment of a monthly Artisan Market on the site. The Trust has had a stall at this and we have been pleased with the number of people interested in the work we do, and still not being aware that the site is managed by the Trust and not the local Council. It has provided a new opening to talk to visitors and encourage them to become members and/or get involved with the Trust activities.
- Finally, we have produced a new welcome entrance sign at the main gates on Lightwoods Hill. We hope that this is more informative and attractive than the previous one.

Kate Slade

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Resources Subgroup

Members: David Read (Chair), Steve Eling, Mike Talbot, Arthur Ward, Viv Cole. Resources is a subgroup which meets as and when to discuss organisational and financial matters. It met nine times during the financial year 2023/2024.

We keep a keen eye on our revenue accounts, reporting back and advising the Board so that all trustees are fully aware of the situation on a month by month basis with significant variances highlighted to the Board.

Throughout the financial year, we have been in discussions with Sandwell MBC regarding both the incorrect report which was commissioned by the lead officer at Sandwell and the proposed grant reduction. Members of Resources met with the lead officer on several occasions but without progress. At the end of the financial year we were still in discussion with the same officer, but they have now left the local authority and the relationship shows signs of improving.

We investigated further revenue streams to both help to compensate for the reduction on Council grant but also to fund further the development of Warley Woods and its infrastructure. We considered the introduction of a dog wash station and while we believed it might be of benefit to some visitors the financial cost and logistical changes needed would far outweigh any income so this was not proceeded with. However, we did instigate the Unity Lottery which is known as 'our lottery' and this is proving to be a good financial move with a regular income and a different way of attracting supporters.

The new building project was also always within our sight as the New Building Group started to firm-up initial costings for work to be done prior to moving on to raising bids for funding for the next stages. We also requested the Board for costs related to the submission of planning advice and planning permission.

We looked at the Articles of the Association and noted that we will need to bring some revisions to an AGM to allow us to set up a trading company to run the new building.

The Park Manager had requested additional labour for the winter months. The reasoning behind this was discussed and following this, a proposal was made to the Board for additional funding to cover a temporary post.

It was noted that our Conservation Manager, Doug, was on a temporary contract until 2024 but that he had become a very important member of staff and, following detailed discussion, we proposed to the Board that Doug become a permanent member of staff and a full contract be issued.

We examined the accounts provided for the Café concession and agreed an increase in rent which was accepted and a new contract agreed.

Discussions were held around the draft Budget for 2024/5 and changes incorporated before presenting to the Board at the Annual Planning Day. A significant increase in costs was the increase in the level of the minimum wage and the knock-on effect for staff over this level. The agenda for Planning Day was discussed and agreed.

A new Memorandum of Understanding with the Golf Club had been drawn up and we reviewed this and agreed for this to be submitted to the Golf Club for agreement.

Many other smaller items were discussed including preliminary work on Biodiversity Net Gain, were resolved and submitted to the Board over the year with all meetings being fully reported to the Board at the next monthly Board Meeting.

A revised policy on Safeguarding was worked on and is ongoing at accounts date.

David J Read

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
(A company limited by guarantee)

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Communities Subgroup

Communities Subgroup Members: Kate Slade, Liz Coleman (Chair), Barbara Platts, Chris Ashford, Pat Marsh, Lynda Wagstaff. We welcomed new Trust Administrator, Mae Eastwood, to the group in April 2023.

The key focuses of the group are:

1. Planning and Organising events including vetting external requests
2. Schools Liaison
3. Community Engagement

The Trust offered a varied programme of events throughout 2023-2024. The Trust appointed a new Trust Administrator, Mae Eastwood, in April 2023, following the retirement of Kathy Hodgkinson. Mae has brought her energy, organisational skills and local connections to her work with the Trust and works closely with the Communities Subgroup, attending subgroup meetings as well as planning and coordinating events.

Easter Monday saw the return of the Easter Egg Roll and Trail which was well-attended, providing a fun activity for families. Liz Coleman and Doug Barber led a Dawn Chorus Walk on International Dawn Chorus Day 7th May. This was followed by the volunteer-led bring-and-buy Plant Sale on May 20th. Thanks to the generosity of donors and purchasers this event raised over £2,000 for the Trust.

The Trust's flagship event Picnic in the Park took place in July, once again we were blessed with excellent weather. This was Mae Eastwood's first Picnic and she worked brilliantly with the Picnic Group and many Trust volunteers to plan and organise the event. Chris Ashford once again booked and compered a talented programme of musicians, all of whom gave their time for free. Thousands of visitors experienced live music, a range of craft and food stalls, games and children's activities.

Heartbreak Theatre Company returned in August, staging an excellent open-air theatre production of Sense and Sensibility. Experts from Brum Bats led the ever-popular Bat Walk later in the month. The Communities Subgroup, Trust staff and volunteers support the planning of these events and staffing on the day.

Mae worked with local businesses to trial Warley Woods Artisan Markets. This has now become a regular monthly event with local traders offering quality products including handmade jewellery, gifts, crafts, garden products and a wide range of delicious food. The Artisan Markets are held on the first Sunday of every month March – December. The Trust regularly has a stall at the Artisan Market which helps raise awareness of the Trust's role in managing Warley Woods as well as gaining new members and supporters.

The Trust's Halloween event in 2023 was The Grey Lady Spooky Trail where visitors encountered a host of gruesome and ghoulish characters in the Woods. Volunteers from Sandwell Lions as well from the Trust played the roles enthusiastically. This continues to be a popular event with families. St Hilda's Church Hall was the venue for the volunteer-led Fundraising Quiz in November. Both events help to generate income for the Trust. Santa In the Woods was back in December and proved very popular with families once again. The Christmas Craft Fair went ahead despite the rain, but visitor numbers were lower due to the weather. The weather was colder, but kinder, for the Annual Big Garden Bird Walk in January 2024.

2. Schools Liaison - Ongoing liaison has continued with local schools many of which the Trust has close relationships with. Members of the Communities Subgroup have communicated with different local schools about events, information and opportunities to be involved in, competitions, Wild Warley information and volunteering.

3. Community Engagement:

The Communities Group were pleased to be able to work once again with two local music groups this year who generously offered to run fundraising gigs for the Trust. Bearwood Ceilidh Band organised a New Year's Eve Dance which was a sell-out and much enjoyed. Dynamix, close harmony group, are long-time supporters of the Trust and held a benefit concert for Warley Woods in October, as well as performing at the Santa Event.

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Wild Warley Project Manager, Doug Barber, has continued to deliver training in wildlife surveying, tree ID and runs regular group practical habitat management sessions. The Communities Subgroup has worked closely with him to provide support and promote further community engagement.

Warley Woods continues to benefit from working with over 50 other groups in the community including community and voluntary groups, local businesses, sports and cultural organisations.

Environment Subgroup

Members: Liz Coleman (Chair), Lise Burrows, Alan Reynolds, Kate Slade, Lynda Wagstaff, Emma Login (from April 2023), Clive Heywood, Jo James (from October 2023) and Doug Barber.

The Environmental Task Group was formed in 2020 to carry out an overview of the Trust's Environmental policies and procedures following the guidance in the Green Flag Handbook. As a result of this the Environmental Policy and Management Group has become a subgroup of Warley Woods Community Trust, contributing to the Trust's Five Year Management Plan. The Environment Group meets monthly to consider the environmental impact of projects, reducing energy and chemical use and promoting good management of waste.

Doug Barber, Conservation Manager attends the monthly meetings and reports on the work he and the Wild Warley Conservation Volunteers carried out to maintain and improve the biodiversity of Warley Woods. We also welcomed new members, Emma Login and Jo James during 2023-2024 who bring their knowledge and experience to the group.

In 2023-24 the group continued to seek ways to reduce waste and single-use plastic. This included working with Sharon Simpson, Golf Course and Retail Manager, to reduce plastic packaging in the Trust Shop and to stock sustainable alternatives such as wooden golf tees, compostable cups and bamboo products. The Trust staff also committed to reducing paper-usage and printing with a move towards more online communications.

Members of the group worked closely with the Communities Group to audit current practice at Trust events and to find ways to reduce their environmental impact. Emma, Lynda and Liz carried out a thorough environmental impact audit for The Picnic. Positives were the use of solar-powered stage, range of locally produced products and sustainable packaging, 99% of the 46 stallholders were local, travelling from within 10 miles. There were some areas for improvement in the future identified. Although there was a good range of stalls there were none from environmental organisations. Volunteers had planned to separate waste for recycling on site but industrial action by local authority refuse collectors meant that this was not possible. As with other events, volunteers collected waste or encouraged attendees to take it home to recycle. 33% stalls used single-use plastics, including one stall giving away free plastic carrier bags. We also ran a survey to find out how people travelled to The Picnic, but this was a self-identified survey and the number of participants was relatively low (206); 66% of respondents walked, 23.3% came by car, 5.85 by bus and 2.9% cycled.

The Environment Group worked with the Trust Manager and Communications Group to ensure that the Trust's Environment Policy and key environmental messages were more easily accessible on the Trust's website.

Doug 'Wild Warley' Barber organised regular walks and talks about the flora and fauna of Warley Woods, throughout the year. These continue to be popular with locals and people from further afield.

Management of Warley Woods for biodiversity and climate change benefits has also been part of the group's discussion and planning. It was decided to fence in the pond to reduce disturbance to the eco-system from dogs. The impact of this measure will be seen within the next year. The 'Buy a Bluebell Appeal' was a great success, with more than £2,000 donated. This enabled the Trust to plant 3,000 bluebells and other woodland species including cuckoopint, guelder rose and sweet woodruff. Dead-hedging and signs have been put in place to protect newly-planted species. In addition, grass was allowed to grow in areas identified for meadow creation and seeding and native flower seeds were sown at the right time of year. This has some success and further monitoring and trials of this approached are planned for 2024-25.

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

It is important for the Trust to have up-to-date information on the flora and fauna of Warley Woods. Volunteers carried out a Breeding Bird Survey March to June. Doug had analysed the data, noting trends such as the increase in Greenfinches and Parakeets and reduction in numbers of Woodpigeons. These trends are in line with national data. The bat survey confirmed that there were Soprano Pipistrelles on site as well as Common Pipistrelles. Bio-Blitz Challenge in July and the August moth survey identified several additional invertebrate species including Lattice Heath and Blue Underwing and Orange Sallow moths. This information helps to guide the Trust's management of the park for nature. Data from the 2023 tree survey indicated that 25% of the trees surveyed had sustained visible damage from squirrels. The Trust continues to monitor squirrel damage and seek solutions to this problem.

The Environment Subgroup continues to work with other subgroups and staff teams to oversee progress on environmental issues. We are working with the Golf Course and Park Manager on sustainable practices for golf course management. Environment Champions in each of the subgroups have been effective in ensuring environmental considerations are a part of continued best practice. The Trust is also starting to look at opportunities through Biodiversity Net-Gain with a specialist advisor.

Liz Coleman

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

New Building Group (NBG)

Members: Arthur Ward (Chair), Emma Login, Tom Grosvenor, Ron Williams, Alan Reynolds, John Newman and Viv Cole. The NBG is made up of trustees, volunteers, and staff. The group met frequently throughout the year and reported to Board regularly.

The Community Trust, almost from its inception, has wanted to replace its current premises which were constructed as a temporary replacement for the Abbey which was demolished in 1957, that once was the centre of our historic landscape.

The current Pavilion is long past its use by date despite our many attempts to improve its carbon footprint and keep it looking presentable. It is no longer fit for purpose and is seriously limiting the Trust's activity and ability to generate funds to maintain and improve the site.

We have become increasingly aware that our current building simply cannot sustain and support the site into the 2030s. The costs of maintaining and improving the whole site for the local community, into the next century requires a building that reflects our desire to be a proper resource centre for the whole community and significantly increase our ability to generate the sort of income that this beautiful site will need into the future, especially when external funders become less reliable.

The NBG group recommended to Board a little while ago that the Trust needed to invest some of our own money (£33K) in this planning process to demonstrate our seriousness to other possible funders. We therefore decided to fund the whole cost of the project to RIBA stage 2 in the planning process. The plan then would be to use this work and detailed information gained, to submit funding applications for resources to take us to the next stage for a full planning application or even further.

In May 2022 John Newman architect was appointed to help us draw up possible building and landscape plans for pre planning application to be formally submitted to SMBC planning department.

Over the last year the NBG and John have updated the Board regularly and helped them confirm many decisions such as the exact location of the new building, compound, and car park and how these elements might sit in the landscape adjacent to the Abbey Road gate and next to a newly created play area overlooking the meadow. The Board also approved the essential community consultation exercises that took place in September and October 2023 when we offered four events intended to engage and seek the opinions of our major stakeholders, our members, our Golf Club, our staff, our volunteers, and our supporters as well as the public. These events were supported by detailed large scale plans showing various options around our proposals and how they would sit in and be part of the landscape. Feedback from these stakeholder meetings was broadly very positive and we received useful feedback about what was liked and what was of concern. We will, where possible address these concerns as we move forward.

In early April the NBG produced the first draft for the pre planning application to be put to SMBC planning department in May 2024. The group also started work on developing a costings and risks profile for the whole project including rewilding of the current site, biodiversity net gain and ecological considerations such as bat and tree protection. A quantity surveyor has been appointed to help us understand the building and other related costs. These interconnecting issues are complex and sensitive and will require additional expert staffing resources such as a project manager to ensure we get this right. Work has also started on the changes needed to other aspects of the site for example the layout of the golf course.

Recent update: Our pre application submission to SMBC planning department was broadly well received with good feedback and guidance for the submission of a full planning application. We are moving forward steadily with our plans.

Arthur Ward

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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Wild Warley and Conservation Work

The Wilderness

The Wilderness hedgerows are ready to be re-laid in a process that stimulates the rejuvenation of the hedge from the base. Preparatory works were undertaken in the Winter of 23/24, removing overhanging branches (crown lifting) from the thin band of willow-dominated woodland bordering the hedge line. The Wild Warley Conservation Volunteers also thinned within the woodland strip with the aim to eventually reduce the height of the willows. These will be managed on a short rotation to improve the vigour of the hedge creating a more effective barrier around The Wilderness perimeter. This has an additional benefit as it allows extra light into the flower rich grasslands contained within.

The annual task of removing bramble and tree scrub from The Wilderness interior was also carried out, keeping the mosaic of habitats found within open and biologically diverse areas. The back bank which was dominated with brambles was cut outside of bird nesting season with an aim to return this bank to wildflower rich grassland.

In the late summer parts of the established grassland were cut and the material removed reducing the nutrients in the soil giving more space for floral diversity.

Woodland Thinning in Glades

Part of the Wild Warley Conservation Volunteers Winter programme of works involved thinning out woodland glades which had previously been created in the canopy under advice from Chris Shortis. After around 15 years the glades were due thinning and were enveloped in bramble. Brambles were cut back allowing access and volunteers thinned out glades giving preference to future canopy trees such as beech and oak and removing non-native or short-lived species such as sycamore and goat willow. The cut materials were used to create dead hedges around the edge of the woodland glade to try and reduce ingress of people into the area. These areas were underplanted with native broadleaved trees to increase both the stand age and species diversity. These areas were also receptor sites for our Buy a Bluebell campaign.

Buy a Bluebell

The Buy a Bluebell campaign was launched in January 2024 aiming to raise £800 to purchase English bluebells to start the large task of restoring our woodland to their former glory. For its inaugural year the campaign surpassed all expectations, raising to date £2,568 (with gift aid).

Buy a Bluebell has three facets hoping to maximise the effectiveness of our woodland restoration: Funding, Education and Community Involvement. In truth one of the largest barriers to success is trampling damage, educating our site users to what we are trying to achieve and how they can help is possibly more important than the money the campaign raised. All donors were invited to a community planting day, where they could plant out some of the bluebells they bought.

Doug Barber, Conservation and Engagement Manager

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Financial review /reserves policy

The Trustees have undertaken an analysis of future needs, opportunities and contingencies or risks, which could not be met out of income when and if they arise. It has also taken account of forecasts for income levels in future years, on the basis of planned activity and the reliability of various income streams, and made forecasts of future expenditure. Accordingly the management committee has developed a policy on reserves for the following reasons:-

- To respond to changes or loss of generated income or grants.
- To invest in advance in potential new areas of work such as training or other new sources of income.
- To enable the community trust to honour its contractual obligations to staff, contractors, suppliers and funders.

The Trustees have considered the level of reserves that it needs in order to ensure the long term sustainability of the organisation and the work that it delivers. The Trustees are aware of the large liability of a site open for public use 24 hours a day and the potential expense which might arise through vandalism. It also has many aspirations for future investment. The charity's current reserves are considered adequate for the sustainability and operation of the organisation, but the Trust would like to increase these to provide a stronger financial buffer for the organisation. Each year the Trust plans a budget to ensure reserves are not needed for general expenditure and with the hope that with prudent financial management reserve levels can be increased slightly. Reserves are only drawn upon to meet an emergency, unforeseen need which goes beyond any contingency in the budget, or to make an investment in equipment or facilities for which grant funding could not be secured.

In order to plan responsibly for future needs, since 2022-23 some of the unrestricted cash reserves are now being held in designated funds, beyond the levels needed to ensure the general financial viability of the organisation. One fund has been allocated to support the long term aspiration of the Trust to replace its aging building and to allow for development work to take those plans forwards. This will be added to and drawn from within a two year timescale. A second fund has been created to allow for the uninsurable risks of property within the site which could be damaged by third parties/natural disasters and allow for timely replacement without the need for delays through needing to specifically fundraise. This fund also includes savings towards replacing the fleet of vehicles (mowers, utility vehicles and specialist golf and woodland management equipment) which need replacing on a 4-6 yearly basis. A third fund has been created to hold any funds left as legacies to the Trust to ensure that they are used, as mentioned by the Trust in its legacy promotions materials, towards improvement works on site and kept separately from general expenditure. It is the Trust's intention to use these as match funding, whenever possible, for grant funding bids, to maximise the gifts that have been given. The Trustees feel that the use of these three designated funds is the right course of action for a small charity with potential heavy liabilities and a mission to be custodians of Warley Woods for the long term.

The current funds stand at £449,068 (2023: £441,662) of which £90 (2023: £7,340) is restricted, £112,901 (2023: 149,102) is designated and £336,077 (2023: £285,220) is general unrestricted funds.

Structure, governance and management

Constitution

Warley Woods Community Trust Limited is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and was set up by a Memorandum of Association.

Methods of appointment or election of Trustees

The charity was established under a Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. Under those rules, the Board has a membership of between 10 and 15. Members are appointed for a three year term and can restand again at the end of this term. Up to 4 members can be co-opted.

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
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TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

Trustees are asked to submit a resumé of their interests and abilities in support of their election, and on appointment are supported through induction to help them become fully effective. Trustees are encouraged to attend seminars and training events to update their skills and knowledge.

All Trustees participate in monthly business meetings, and an annual planning and team building day, to agree the strategy and priorities for the forthcoming year. Trustees also take part in sub-groups described elsewhere in this report, and from time to time the board will hold additional meetings for planning and training.

Organisational structure and decision-making policies

The role of the Board is to give direction and guidance to paid staff and volunteers and to take strategic and resource decisions to ensure the Trust is effective.

The Board takes responsibility for all strategic management issues and operates through sub-groups who carry out the implementation of strategy and report back to the Board on progress and make recommendations to inform future decisions.

For specific projects, including the Picnic in The Park, working or task groups are convened to manage and monitor the progress of the specified project. At least one member of the Board is involved in these groups and reports regularly to the full Board.

Some Board Members take on particular roles which can give a level of responsibility outside of the subgroup structure. These are the Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Company Secretary, Health and Safety Manager. One Trustee is nominated by the Chair as the line manager for the Trust Manager.

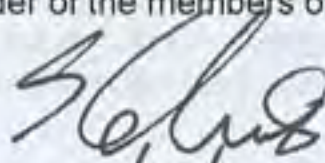
Future Plans

The Board of Trustees met in February 2024 to agree the next five year Management Plan and the detail of the year ahead. This gives guidance to staff and to subgroups. Some of the key areas of work planned are:

- Achieving Green Flag Award
- A full programme of events
- Celebrating our 20th Anniversary with publicity, events, special products and a new history book.
- Continuing to progress our plans for a new building and to submit for planning advice and initial funding bids
- Celebratory Tree Planting
- Investing in improvements on the golf course over the winter period including drains for the 3rd green.
- Continuing our conservation work and making improvements for humans and wildlife and developing plans for offering Biodiversity Net Gain credits.
- Rework and rebrand citizen science initiative as Naturally Curious
- Form a historical research group
- Continue incremental environmental improvements to events and operations
- Build on the pilot of the Artisan Market
- Proactively invite more partners to the Picnic in the Park
- Pilot Q&A schools visits supplements on history and wildlife
- Rebuild a positive partnership-relationship with Sandwell MBC
- Begin negotiations for changes to our lease
- Work on all aspects of income generation to ensure funding to replace council grant cut is in place

Approved by order of the members of the board of Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Steven Eling
Chair
Date:


19/9/2024

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
(A company limited by guarantee)

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Warley Woods Community Trust Limited ('the charity')

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

As the Trustees of the charity (and its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

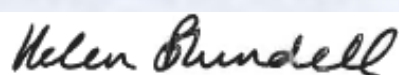
Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

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.

This report is made solely to the charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity and the charity's Trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.



Signed:

Helen Blundell

Crowe U.K. LLP
Chartered Accountants
Black Country House
Rounds Green Road
Oldbury
West Midlands
B69 2DG

Dated: 23 September 2024

LLB FCA FCIE DChA

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
(A company limited by guarantee)

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES (INCORPORATING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	204,531	4,000	208,531	206,256
Charitable activities	4	209,598	-	209,598	186,419
Other trading activities		54,697	-	54,697	44,630
Investments		16,854	-	16,854	5,298
Total income		485,680	4,000	489,680	442,603
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds		12,580	-	12,580	21,065
Charitable activities	5	458,445	11,250	469,695	446,779
Total expenditure		471,025	11,250	482,275	467,844
Net movement in funds		14,655	(7,250)	7,405	(25,241)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward		434,322	7,340	441,662	466,903
Net movement in funds		14,655	(7,250)	7,405	(25,241)
Total funds carried forward		448,977	90	449,067	441,662

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 24 to 37 form part of these financial statements.

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
(A company limited by guarantee)
REGISTERED NUMBER: 04214547

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	9	35,735	47,338
Current assets			
Stocks	10	8,621	4,209
Debtors	11	51,210	32,681
Cash at bank and in hand		392,665	386,086
		<u>452,496</u>	<u>422,976</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(39,163)	(28,652)
Net current assets		<u>413,333</u>	<u>394,324</u>
Total net assets		<u><u>449,068</u></u>	<u><u>441,662</u></u>
Charity funds			
Restricted funds	13	90	7,340
Unrestricted funds	13	448,978	434,322
Total funds		<u><u>449,068</u></u>	<u><u>441,662</u></u>

The charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

.....
Steven Eling
Chair

Date:

19/9/2024

The notes on pages 24 to 37 form part of these financial statements.

WARLEY WOODS COMMUNITY TRUST LIMITED
(A company limited by guarantee)

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. General information

Warley Woods Community Trust Limited is a charitable company limited by guarantee in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is given in the charity information on page 1 of these financial statements. The nature of the Charity's operations is to restore and sustain Warley Woods Park and develop its facilities and events for the use of the local community in the interests of social welfare and to promote education.

2. Accounting policies

2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements 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), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements are presented in British pound sterling and rounded to the nearest £.

Warley Woods Community Trust Limited meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

2.2 Income

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

The recognition of income from legacies is dependent on establishing entitlement, the probability of receipt and the ability to estimate with sufficient accuracy the amount receivable. Evidence of entitlement to a legacy exists when the charity has sufficient evidence that a gift has been left to them (through knowledge of the existence of a valid will and the death of the benefactor) and the executor is satisfied that the property in question will not be required to satisfy claims in the estate. Receipt of a legacy must be recognised when it is probable that it will be received and the fair value of the amount receivable, which will generally be the expected cash amount to be distributed to the charity, can be reliably measured.

Grants are included in the Statement of financial activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the Balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of entitlement of receipt, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

Gifts in kind donated for distribution are included at valuation and recognised as income when they are distributed to the projects. Gifts donated for resale are included as income when they are sold. Donated facilities are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified and a third party is bearing the cost. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers.

Income tax recoverable in relation to investment income is recognised at the time the investment income is receivable.

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2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.3 Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

All expenditure is accounted for on an accrual basis. All expenses including support costs and governance costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure headings.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the charity's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

2.4 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

2.5 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £1,000 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives as shown below .

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Plant and machinery	-	25% Reducing balance
Fixtures and fittings	-	33% Straight line
Other fixed assets	-	10% Straight line

2.6 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value after making due allowance for obsolete and slow-moving stocks. Cost includes all direct costs.

2.7 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

2. Accounting policies (continued)

2.8 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

2.9 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the Balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charity anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation.

2.10 Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

2.11 Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme and the pension charge represents the amounts payable by the charity to the fund in respect of the year.

2.12 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

3. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Grants			
Sandwell MBC	72,488	-	72,488
Other	16,725	-	16,725
Subtotal	89,213	-	89,213
Donations	115,318	4,000	119,318
Total 2024	204,531	4,000	208,531

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Grants			
Sandwell MBC	72,488	-	72,488
Other	32,272	3,005	35,277
Subtotal	104,760	3,005	107,765
Donations	88,470	-	88,470
Legacies	10,021	-	10,021
Total 2023	196,001	10,255	206,256

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

4. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Golf and green fee income	209,598	209,598
	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Golf and green fee income	186,419	186,419

5. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £
Charitable Activities	458,445	11,250	469,695
	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Charitable Activities	402,392	44,387	446,779

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

6. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Charitable Activities	407,309	62,386	469,695
	Activities undertaken directly 2023 £	Support costs 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Charitable Activities	385,094	61,685	446,779

Analysis of direct costs

	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Staff costs	260,730	230,368
Property and accomodation	10,217	9,708
Shop stock	3,890	5,143
Site maintenance and upkeep	108,594	111,326
Other projects	16,150	22,562
Direct support costs	7,728	5,987
	407,309	385,094

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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6. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

Analysis of support costs

	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Depreciation	11,603	10,688
Recruitment and training	1,662	1,371
Insurance	9,110	7,689
Finance	6,110	5,267
Office costs	28,557	31,476
Independent examination	4,575	4,186
Volunteer expenses	769	1,008
	<u>62,386</u>	<u>61,685</u>

7. Staff costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	238,285	210,035
Social security costs	11,685	11,338
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	10,760	8,995
	<u>260,730</u>	<u>230,368</u>

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Employees	<u>13</u>	<u>14</u>

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

The aggregate cost to the charity of Key management personnel in the year (being inclusive of employer national insurance and employer pension) was £130,715 (2023: £118,223). Key management personnel are considered to be the trust, retail and golf and park management.

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

8. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2023 - £NIL).

During the year ended 31 March 2024, no Trustee expenses have been incurred (2023 - £NIL).

9. Tangible fixed assets

	Plant and machinery £	Fixtures and fittings £	Other fixed assets £	Total £
Cost or valuation				
At 1 April 2023	172,806	42,696	91,443	306,945
At 31 March 2024	172,806	42,696	91,443	306,945
Depreciation				
At 1 April 2023	147,260	34,621	77,726	259,607
Charge for the year	6,387	2,904	2,312	11,603
At 31 March 2024	153,647	37,525	80,038	271,210
Net book value				
At 31 March 2024	19,159	5,171	11,405	35,735
At 31 March 2023	25,546	8,075	13,717	47,338

10. Stocks

	2024 £	2023 £
Finished goods and goods for resale	8,621	4,209

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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11. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Due within one year		
Other debtors	40,606	22,545
Prepayments and accrued income	10,604	10,136
	<u>51,210</u>	<u>32,681</u>

12. Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	15,554	9,863
Other taxation and social security	8,491	4,879
Other creditors	10,046	9,300
Accruals and deferred income	5,072	4,610
	<u>39,163</u>	<u>28,652</u>

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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13. Statement of funds

Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Unrestricted funds				
Designated funds				
New building development	26,102	-	(3,201)	22,901
Uninsured risks/capital equipment replacement	90,000	-	-	90,000
Park development	33,000	-	(33,000)	-
	149,102	-	(36,201)	112,901
General funds				
General Funds	285,220	485,681	(434,824)	336,077
Total Unrestricted funds	434,322	485,681	(471,025)	448,978
Restricted funds				
Golf	90	-	-	90
Community developments	7,250	4,000	(11,250)	-
	7,340	4,000	(11,250)	90
Total of funds	441,662	489,681	(482,275)	449,068

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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13. Statement of funds (continued)

Designated funds have the following purposes:

NEW BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

There is a long term aspiration to replace the current aging building. This fund, which is expected to be drawn on over the next two years, is to allow for development work to be undertaken to take those plans forward.

UNINSURED RISKS/ CAPITAL EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT

This fund is to ensure that uninsured risks of damage to the site caused by third parties or natural disasters can be rectified on a timely basis. It also includes funds towards the replacement of major plant and equipment which generally has to be replaced every 4-6 years.

PARK DEVELOPMENT

This fund is to hold legacies left to the Trust to be used towards improvement works on site. The funds will be used, whenever possible, as match funding for grant bids in order to maximise the gifts given.

Restricted funds have the following purposes:

GOLF

Golf camps delivery - none in current year, surplus to be used on small golf projects in the coming year.

COMMUNITY PROJECTS

New Building - Grant given to be used against the development work to be undertaken on the new building development.

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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13. Statement of funds (continued)

Statement of funds - prior year

	<i>Balance at 1 April 2022 £</i>	<i>Income £</i>	<i>Expenditure £</i>	<i>Transfers in/out £</i>	<i>Balance at 31 March 2023 £</i>
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds					
New building development	35,000	-	(1,898)	(7,000)	26,102
Uninsured risks/capital equipment replacement	100,000	-	-	(10,000)	90,000
Park development	23,000	10,000	-	-	33,000
	<u>158,000</u>	<u>10,000</u>	<u>(1,898)</u>	<u>(17,000)</u>	<u>149,102</u>
General funds					
General Funds	267,431	422,348	(421,559)	17,000	285,220
	<u>267,431</u>	<u>422,348</u>	<u>(421,559)</u>	<u>17,000</u>	<u>285,220</u>
Total Unrestricted funds	<u>425,431</u>	<u>432,348</u>	<u>(423,457)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>434,322</u>
Restricted funds					
Golf	90	-	-	-	90
Community projects	570	-	(570)	-	-
Wild Warley	40,812	3,005	(43,817)	-	-
Community developments	-	7,250	-	-	7,250
	<u>41,472</u>	<u>10,255</u>	<u>(44,387)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,340</u>
Total of funds	<u>466,903</u>	<u>442,603</u>	<u>(467,844)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>441,662</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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14. Summary of funds

Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Designated funds	149,102	-	(36,201)	112,901
General funds	285,220	485,681	(434,824)	336,077
Restricted funds	7,340	4,000	(11,250)	90
	<u>441,662</u>	<u>489,681</u>	<u>(482,275)</u>	<u>449,068</u>

Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Designated funds	158,000	10,000	(1,898)	(17,000)	149,102
General funds	267,431	422,348	(421,559)	17,000	285,220
Restricted funds	41,472	10,255	(44,387)	-	7,340
	<u>466,903</u>	<u>442,603</u>	<u>(467,844)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>441,662</u>

15. Analysis of net assets between funds

Analysis of net assets between funds - current period

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	35,735	-	35,735
Current assets	452,406	90	452,496
Creditors due within one year	(39,163)	-	(39,163)
Total	<u>448,978</u>	<u>90</u>	<u>449,068</u>

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
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15. Analysis of net assets between funds (continued)

Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	<i>Unrestricted funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Restricted funds 2023 £</i>	<i>Total funds 2023 £</i>
Tangible fixed assets	47,338	-	47,338
Current assets	415,636	7,340	422,976
Creditors due within one year	(28,652)	-	(28,652)
Total	<u>434,322</u>	<u>7,340</u>	<u>441,662</u>

16. Pension commitments

The company operates a defined contributions workplace pension scheme through The People's Pension. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the company to the fund and amounted to £6,074 (2023: £5,660). Contributions totalling £957 (2023: £957) were payable to the fund at the balance sheet date and are included in creditors.

17. Related party transactions

One Trustee was paid £7,590 (2023: £1,898) for architect services during the year.