
THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

(A CHARITABLE COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

Annual report and financial statements

for the year ended

31 March 2021

Company number 04429778
Charity number 1095919

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ANNUAL REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

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THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

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CONSTITUTION

The Farming Community Network ("FCN") is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its memorandum and articles of association dated 2 May 2002. In the event of the organisation being wound up each trustee agrees to contribute £1 towards the costs of dissolution. The company is also registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales. Charity number 1095919. Company number 04429778.

DIRECTORS

The directors of the charitable company are its trustees for the purposes of charity law. The directors serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Mark A E Suthern (Chairman)
Brian C Warren (Vice Chairman) (resigned 28 October 2020)
Sally Steadman (Vice Chair from 28 October 2020)
Giles Bowring
The Revd Canon Barbara Clutton
Peter Havers
David Lodder (Treasurer)
Bishop Mark Rylands
Olivia Seccombe
Sir Mark Hudson
Bishop Dr Helen-Ann Hartley

SECRETARY

Deborah Roe

REGISTERED OFFICE AND OPERATIONAL ADDRESS

Manor Farm
West Haddon
Northamptonshire
NN6 7AQ

AUDITORS

Guest Wilson Chartered Accountants
8 Wolverton Road
Snitterfield
Stratford upon Avon
Warwickshire
CV37 0HB

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STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

"The Objects of the Charity are the relief of hardship and distress, amongst persons living and working in the agricultural, horticultural and related communities, by the provision of pastoral and practical support underpinned by a Christian ethos."

All services are made available to those in need from all faiths and none in a non-judgemental, non-proselytising but supportive way.

Public Benefits

1. **National Helpline:** The national confidential helpline is open from 7 am to 11 pm every day of the year, staffed by a team of volunteers. Talking with someone who understands farming but is not directly involved in the situation can be a real support in itself, but when appropriate, callers are offered a visit from an FCN volunteer by referral through the co-ordinator local to the caller
2. **Volunteers:** Around 400 volunteers who are 'in sympathy' with the Christian ethos, suitably experienced and in-touch with rural and farming issues, are recruited, DBS checked and appropriately trained to 'walk with' farmers and their families through times of stress and personal difficulty. Referrals to individual volunteers are made through the local FCN County Co-ordinator who is also responsible for the co-ordination and training of volunteers within their Group and liaison with their Regional Director and Head Office for all administrative and policy issues.
3. **Christian ethos:** The Charity has a clear Christian ethos which is inherent within its foundation, board of trustees and charitable objects, which is reflected in its published Vision and Ethos Statements, whilst sustaining the principle that all services are made available to those in need from all faiths and none in a non-judgemental, non-proselytising but supportive way.
4. **Partnerships:**
 - To ensure national coverage, and to respect the territories of other independent farming and rural support services, FCN has 'memoranda of understanding' with those organisations that facilitate cross referrals of clients, access to the FCN Helpline, sharing of expertise and experience and consortia bidding from national funding sources
 - 'Farming Help' has been established and underpinned with a 'memorandum of understanding' between the FCN, Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI), Royal Scottish Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RASBI) and the Addington Fund, to ensure that the specialist remits of each charity are fully recognised, cross referrals can flow easily, joint funding proposals to national bodies can be co-ordinated and clients are exposed to a seamless service of support.
5. **Uptake:**

The demand for FCN's services fluctuates with the level of causal factors within the industry, so that through a national crisis such as the foot and mouth epidemic in 2001, the scale can be almost overwhelming. However the nature of farming is such that even when the industry is operating under 'normal' conditions, individual businesses and families will experience periods of significant stress because of circumstances specific to the family or business so that a steady demand on FCN volunteers to manage between 1,500 and 2,500 cases per year is typical.

Further statistical details of uptake, nature of the difficulty and routes of referral are described later in this document.

Details of FCN's services, operations and policies are available on the website at:

www.fcn.org.uk

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Introduction from FCN's Chairman – Mark Suthern

2020 was a year like no other. Against a backdrop of Covid-19 and Brexit, the UK's farming community has faced uncertainty and disruption whilst continuing to keep the nation fed and maintaining world-leading standards. We owe our farmers a great deal for their hard work and resilience during this time.

With considerable changes in domestic agricultural policy underway, the work of FCN and our dedicated volunteers supporting rural communities remains vital. This year we have seen an increase in calls to our Helpline which have contained a mental health component, such as stress or anxiety. Each week we hear from farming families across the UK who are concerned about the future and worried about how they will adapt their farm businesses to endure the changes ahead.

But we should not focus solely on the challenges. There is great cause for optimism and a renewed sense of hope for the future as we leave lockdown. This year FCN has found novel and innovative ways to continue to engage with our farming community. Whether through Zoom calls, digital events, new sponsorships, professional relationships, training opportunities or campaigns, FCN's name has been on the tip of people's tongues, and many have been keen to work with us to support farmers' mental health and wellbeing and business resilience. We have seen excellent feedback across our industry and we have been humbled by the number of supporters who have continued to fundraise for FCN during this time, working within the confines of Covid-19 restrictions. FCN has a bold vision for the future. We strive to create a resilient farming future for everyone. We wish for farming to be an attractive industry to work in, whether you're from a farming background or new to the profession. Farming is open to everyone with a passion for the countryside and its unique way of life. Over the past 12 months, when people have had time to focus on what truly matters in our lives, many have experienced a new-found appreciation for the work our farmers do and the beauty of the countryside, which we perhaps take for granted sometimes. FCN plays a vital role walking alongside our farming community, listening, supporting and connecting them with further help to overcome any challenges they may be facing.

I would like to thank our volunteers who give their time freely and work tirelessly to support farming families. I would also like to give thanks to everyone who works with FCN, supports us, raises awareness and shares our messages. We value collaboration and coming together as a community during this time of immense transformation across our industry.

We will continue to do our part in supporting our great British farming community and creating a sustainable future for the next generation of farmers. We welcome all those who choose to join us on this journey.



Mark Suthern
6 July 2021

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Looking to the future with FCN's CEO, Dr Jude McCann

I took up my role as Chief Executive Officer with FCN in January 2020, before we knew the pandemic would spread as far and wide as it has and before we could have predicted how it would impact our day-to-day lives and the global economy.

So much can change within the space of a year, and we've all had to adapt and make difficult decisions for the greater good of society. Now, as we are finally leaving lockdown and seeing life return to some degree of normalcy, we are all re-evaluating the things that are important to us. I think it is safe to say that none of us will be taking things for granted that we perhaps once did, such as meeting friends or visiting family. This ordeal has reminded us of the importance of friends, of family and of looking out for one another. We have seen this year in particular how faith can provide guidance during challenging times and give people hope and comfort. With renewed optimism for the future, we must not forget that there is still great uncertainty in farming, and many farmers and their families are facing a challenging road ahead during this period of transition and transformation. FCN is implementing our new five-year strategy to ensure we're changing to meet the needs of our industry. While there is little doubt that the farming community will continue to experience significant change and restructuring in the coming years, FCN remains steadfast in supporting those in need. Together we face the future with hope, optimism and a renewed commitment to serve those who seek our support.

Having seen the amazing things our farming community and the wider public have achieved over the past year, it has become increasingly clear that there are few limits to what communities can accomplish when we come together. This is demonstrated through the generosity of those who support FCN and the dedication of those volunteering with our charity. We have a great team of volunteers, staff and trustees; an excellent reputation in our pastoral and practical support to the farm community; and an increasing national profile.

Demand on our services is expected to increase further in response to transition plans, reductions in BPS payments, ELMs and other environmental initiatives, as well as climate change and market volatility. During this difficult period we have been reminded of the need to listen to others. FCN's volunteers provide this essential service, offering empathy and support to those in need.

I am delighted with the successes FCN has seen this year. We have been working in a very different way, but as you will see from the above report, we have been doing anything but standing still – we've been involved in so many projects, campaigns and initiatives and have worked closely with a broad array of organisations all united by a common interest in supporting our great farming community. There is further change on the horizon, but by working together, I am confident we can manage it. Farmers are some of the most resilient people you can meet, and I have confidence we will weather this storm and emerge from the other side ready to farm another day.

I would like to give my sincere thanks to all our staff, volunteers and board members for their time, effort and vital support and to all our generous donors and funders. I would also like to thank all those who submitted the photos for inclusion in this report, helping to showcase agriculture across England and Wales. I hope you enjoy reading this report.



Jude McCann

6 July 2021

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DIRECTORS' REPORT

The directors, who are also the trustees, present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021.

OUR MISSION

Our mission is to provide pastoral and practical support to the farming community.

OUR APPROACH

We offer independent, objective and personal support to build resilience and stay strong through changing times. We aim to provide help before problems arise, as well as supporting those who are experiencing difficulty or crisis.

We do this in four ways:

1. Through our confidential Helpline, open every day from 7am – 11pm
2. Through our wide network of local volunteers and partners
3. Through our FarmWell initiative – an information resource on all aspects of personal and farm business resilience
4. Through highlighting the issues being experienced by our farming communities and increasing awareness of FCN

OUR ETHOS

FCN is a voluntary organisation and charity founded on Christian principles. We walk with farmers and members of the farming community in times of difficulty. We are here to support and work with everyone who seeks the help of FCN.

Our strategic priorities

Helping to improve the health and wellbeing of our farm community

This year FCN has helped to support the health and wellbeing of the farm community in a wide variety of ways.

During the early stages of lockdown, we supported farmers through a 'Time to Talk' campaign, encouraging those feeling isolated or lonely to call FCN for a friendly chat with our volunteers. At that point we had little idea of how long the pandemic would last, and people living in rural communities – particularly those living on their own or unable to see family - appreciated this opportunity to talk to someone with the time to listen.

We have launched a range of helpful resources this year, including a document designed to support farming families who may have a loved one with dementia. The resource provides useful information about where to get help on the farm and how FCN can support families in this situation.

We led on the launch of two powerful short films, both featuring farmers who have experienced depression and other forms of mental ill-health. The films demonstrate the importance of asking for help and speaking to friends, neighbours, fellow farmers and charities such as FCN during challenging times. The films have been widely circulated and praised for their honest and down-to-earth approach.

To support the wellbeing of the next generation of farmers, we developed new Rural+ training modules with The DPJ Foundation and National Federation of Young Farmers' Clubs. These modules have been developed with young farmers, for young farmers, and help to raise awareness of how to manage mental health and wellbeing and how to support others.

We partnered up with Farmers Weekly as part of the Britain's Fittest Farmer competition. We offered the 'FCN FarmWell Award' – awarded to the competitor who could raise awareness of positive mental health in the most innovative way. This award has been warmly received and will be offered again later this year, ensuring the competition retains a focus on mental health as well as physical health.

- More than 50 Rural+ trainers have been recruited to support young farmers' mental health and wellbeing
- Over 25,000 views on short films launched by FCN
- 6,000 farmers and farming families benefit from FCN's help each year

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Supporting farm businesses through change and building resilience

This year our Time to Plan campaign has supported farmers in planning ahead for the future and managing change. We worked with a wide variety of organisations and thought leaders to create content around topics such as succession planning, diversification, preparing for change and more. We welcomed the opportunity to work with stakeholders across our industry to support farmers.

We are now developing a booklet using this content to highlight some of the positive and proactive ways the farming community can prepare for change.

We also teamed up with The Nuffield Farming Scholarships Trust and Focussed Farmers through a grant provided by The Garfield Weston Foundation to develop a programme offering business and mental resilience support to the UK farming community. As part of the project, we have conducted interviews with Nuffield Scholars around topics including diversification and planning for the unexpected.

As part of Time to Plan...

- We worked with 42 organisations and thought leaders...
- Creating 70 separate items of content...
- Securing 30 articles of media coverage...
- Receiving over 3,500 engagements on social media
- We conducted 6 long-form interviews with Nuffield Scholars

Connecting the farming community to appropriate support

Demand on FCN's services has been high this year. We have received calls about a wide range of issues, including Covid-19, financial issues and family disputes. For the first time, mental health concerns, such as stress and anxiety, have been the most common factor in calls to FCN's Helpline for much of the past year on a month-to-month basis, caused by issues such as anxiety about the future, Brexit uncertainty and concern for family members' wellbeing.

FCN's FarmWell platform - a free online resource hub designed as a 'one-stop-shop' for those working in agriculture and living in rural communities - continues to be used by farmers and farm workers. During the early stages of lockdown, we saw a significant increase in website traffic on the FarmWell platform, with visitors looking up information around Covid-19 relief funds and other information relating to the pandemic.

We continue to support the FarmWell Wales and FarmWell Cymru platforms, launched last year with the Wales Farm Support Group, which tailor information for audiences in Wales and have been widely accessed throughout the year.

FCN has made significant progress in increasing our service offering in Wales, including the appointment of a new Development Officer, a focus on creating bilingual content and developing our FCN Cymru brand through social, digital and print media.

- Over 8,000 volunteer hours spent on our Helpline
- 2,200 Helpline shifts saw us helping over 1,300 callers
- 18,500 unique visits to the FarmWell platforms
- 400 updates uploaded across the FarmWell platforms

Informing future policy decisions by being a champion for the farming community

We have championed the farming community in a number of key ways this year. We've taken part in a wide variety of campaigns to raise awareness of mental health within our industry, such as the Five Nations' Run 1000 campaign, and have shared media releases which have provided insights into the nature of calls we have received to demonstrate some of the key issues being faced by members of the farming community.

We're involved in vital research with the University of Exeter exploring farmers' experiences of managing isolation and loneliness to better understand the support that may be required. This research has seen farmers across the South of England sharing experiences and providing first-hand accounts of some of the challenges of working in

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remote or isolated environments. This research will help to create a picture of farmers' experiences at this time which will help to inform policy decisions.

We sit on many stakeholder groups including the Wales Farm Safety Partnership and Rural Services Network, informing leading conversations around topical issues. We contribute our expertise and knowledge on the national stage with organisations such as the Institute of Agricultural Management and British Guild of Agricultural Journalists, alongside the NFU and other influential voices in agriculture.

- We are represented on 50 external stakeholder groups

Developing the skills, support and duty of care for volunteers delivering our front-line services

This year we rolled out a suite of training opportunities for volunteers, staff and external organisations. FCN volunteers have received training in areas including suicide awareness and bereavement, supporting those with dementia, managing case files, mental health awareness and more. This training has upskilled our team, helping us to respond professionally and appropriately to the wide variety of calls we receive from members of the farming community. FCN's volunteers are trusted due to our knowledge of farming and our ability to listen and ensure confidentiality.

Through the development of strong internal communications, FCN has created a weekly newsletter that keeps all FCN volunteers and those within our network informed about the latest developments within the charity, including ongoing campaigns and training opportunities, as well as other topical news across our industry.

Training has been delivered by staff and volunteers as well as by external trainers. Our partnership with YANA and the Wellbeing Portal on MAP Suicide Prevention training has been significant as a farming-focused suicide intervention training course.

FCN staff have also delivered a number of external training sessions, including Mental Health Awareness, MAP+, FarmWell training and training around media relations and responsible social media use.

- 65 training sessions delivered to FCN volunteers
- Over 220 volunteers attended training sessions
- 30+ external training sessions delivered to more than 700 individuals

Ensuring the financial sustainability of FCN

Though this last year has presented a challenge to fundraising efforts, we have found novel ways to continue to raise funds during this time. Grassroots initiatives such as the Five Nations' Run 1000 campaign earlier this year raised £20,000 for FCN through the generous donations of members of the public. Crop protection company ADAMA supported Team England as part of this and donated in support of FCN.

P.D. Hook production director Adrian Rushby raised £19,000 for FCN as part of a virtual London Marathon run. Working with the National Farmers' Union, we also hosted a series of online Q&A events with well-known farming celebrities Julian Norton and Amanda Owen. Proceeds from ticket sales went to FCN, and the events were also sponsored by Arla and ASDA.

A wide range of organisations have supported FCN through sponsored walks, team activities and internal events. We're very grateful for everyone's support during this difficult year

We've received funding from organisations including DEFRA, The National Lottery Community Fund, The Westminster Foundation, The Garfield Weston Foundation, The Cumber Family Charitable Trust, The Wates Foundation, The Betty Lawes Foundation, The Tanner Trust, The Bridgwater Agricultural Society and many others to support our core services as well as a wide range of projects and training initiatives.

We give special thanks to the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust for their continued and generous support of our work. We thank everyone who supports FCN and the work we do helping farming families.

- 28 ongoing partnerships
- 400+ attendees across online events

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Building awareness and engagement of FCN in the farm community

We have worked hard this year to develop our digital offering and to raise awareness of the charity. We have created new FCN literature to promote our focus on the future and supporting farmers' resilience during this period of immense change. This literature has been requested by a wide range of organisations, businesses and professional bodies to help share FCN's messages with farmers on the ground.

We have revitalized our social media channels, leading to significant growth in engagement. This has led to an increase in individuals sharing FCN messages and organisations approaching FCN to work with us. We have developed more video content as well as engaging graphics through a mixture of in-house and external design. We have led on the communications of a wide range of projects and campaigns, resulting in significant media coverage for FCN and the work of our volunteers.

We have developed an initiative called Reconnecting our Farm Community, supporting our local groups of volunteers in developing activities and projects to reengage with farmers and families in their counties as lockdown restrictions lift. This project will help to raise awareness of FCN and allow us to play a key role in the post-Covid recovery effort, helping to address isolation and loneliness in rural communities.

This year we have created links with universities to take on interns and support graduate employability through initiatives such as the Employ Autism scheme. We are continuing to nurture these relationships, as well as to investigate other ways in which we can support those hoping to enter the charity and farming sectors.

A wide variety of events and meetings were attended by our CEO this year, including with The Welsh Government, the NFU, Lloyds Bank, DEFRA, IAgRM, ACA, Barclays, the CLA, the Agricultural Law Association, Natural England, NFYFC, the University of Exeter and many others.

We are proud to have presented at the Natwest Women in Agriculture event in February 2021.

- 600+ articles of media coverage including print, online, radio and TV
- 2,200+ followers gained on Facebook
- 1,400+ followers gained on Twitter
- 900+ followers gained on Instagram
- 1,200+ followers gained on LinkedIn

Refining our operations and organisation to stay relevant in a changing industry

Farming is changing – and so are we. We've been making a number of key decisions over the past year to ensure the sustainability and relevancy of FCN in the years to come. By working more flexibly, we've been able to continue to provide the best possible support to the farming community during this difficult and uncertain period. Our new five-year strategy, Fit for a New Farming Future, sets out the key ways we're developing our services, including greater training for FCN volunteers and with it heightened professionalism across the charity and our network.

We've been recruiting a steady stream of new volunteers over the past year from a range of farming backgrounds and with specialisms in a broad number of areas. We are ensuring FCN has the expertise internally to equip those who seek our support with the necessary knowledge and skills to thrive in a changing landscape and to better understand the options available to them.

We're also making a number of key changes internally in relation to staff responsibilities to ensure we're best representing the wide geographical spread of FCN's volunteer network and showcasing the unique forms of support we can provide.

Collaborating to shape and develop future farming support services in the UK

Collaboration is key to ensuring we provide the best possible support to our farming community now and into the future. We work alongside a wide range of charities and organisations to share expertise and knowledge and to highlight the individual support we provide farming families across the UK.

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Farming Help is an alliance between FCN, The Addington Fund, Forage Aid, RABI and RSABI, supported by the Prince's Countryside Fund. We regularly meet with the heads of these charities to discuss how we are adapting our service models to best support farmers through the changes ahead in agriculture. Earlier in the year we ran Farming Help Awareness Week as a joint campaign between our charities to highlight this spirit of unity and collaboration. This will become an annual celebration of our ongoing alliance.

We work closely with local charities such as Gloucestershire Farming Friends, Shropshire Rural Support and the Lincolnshire Rural Support Network and redirect calls from farmers in these counties to ensure the best local help is made available. This year Beds and Cambs Rural Support Group and Nottinghamshire Rural Support wound down their operations, with FCN working with them as part of this process and establishing volunteer groups in these counties to ensure a consistent level of service is maintained. We're also providing back office support to Forage Aid, who we work with closely.

We have a strong relationship with support networks in farming, as well as with organisations complementary to our work, such as Samaritans, Dementia UK, The Alzheimer's Society and Mind.

On a local level, we work closely with County Councils, NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups and more to highlight the support available to those in rural areas.

FINANCIAL REVIEW 2020-21

This past year has been a difficult and challenging for FCN and indeed society as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. While at the beginning of this financial year we were unsure how the year would progress, FCN finished the financial year with a healthy surplus. As the coming months will continue with uncertainty this surplus will be invested back into the charity activities that for most of 2020-21 were prohibited. To also further assist with the development of the Charity as it continues with the 5-year strategy, launched in 2020 and to sustain the running of the Charity as we envisage an increase in demand for our services. Of some of the obstacles the farming community will be expected to overcome, will be a transition as a result of Government policies, reductions in BPS payments, impacts of trade deals and climate change. FCN will be helping build resilience to enable those who seek help to adapt to such changes.

Income

Income for the year 2020-21 reached £786,921, a decrease of approximately 19% based on the previous year but given the circumstances a - successful achievement.

Trust funding has been the most significant increase for FCN this year with two significant donations of £100k from the NFU Mutual Charitable Trust. In total FCN received £320,487 during the year from trust funding.

A further increase came in Public/Government funding of 5% based on the previous year, with FCN receiving £126,526 including funding from Defra and The National Lottery.

FCN unsurprisingly experienced a decrease in income in a few areas due to lockdown restrictions. These included Church donations with a decrease of 58% in income compared to the previous year, (£32,645 received). Events and activities income saw a fall of 54% (£70,087 received). External groups saw a fall of 15%, (£70,117 received), along with a decrease of 51% from Individuals, (£83,090 received). Income from Legacies also fell in the year, these are in themselves unpredictable and whilst we expect further residual income from an ongoing legacy, we suspect that this may be in the coming financial year. A fall of 68% (£15,775 received). Corporate income fell by 80% based on the previous year (£51,141 received).

Expenditure

Because of the uncertainty generated by Covid we were cautious in relation to expenditure for 2020-21 which came to £601,007, a decrease of 22% compared to the previous year. This is explained by lockdown restrictions, a lack of face-to-face contact and regular events also being cancelled.

The result in the aforementioned decrease in income and expenditure, is that FCN finished with a net income of £185,914 for the year. This positive result combined with previous years produced a cash balance of £1,171,401. Though some of that surplus is allocated to restricted funding and to designated projects, FCN has a policy of protecting core activities to ensure that it can continue to provide support, even if the project funding falls short of expectations.

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While the improvement of FCN's financial position is appreciated, and we are extremely grateful to all donors for their continued generosity, this must not lead to an over reliance on certain funding streams. FCN will need to continue to generate funding to enable it to operate, though this will pose a challenge following the economic impact of Covid-19. The need for FCN to strive to connect with those most difficult to reach, still remains paramount as we begin 2021-22 reconnecting with the farming community in a more traditional manner, filled with hope and optimism for the future.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

The Farming Community Network is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its memorandum and articles of association dated 8 May 2013. In the event of the organisation being wound up each trustee agrees to contribute £1 towards the costs of dissolution. The company is also registered with the Charity Commission for England & Wales.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The company limited by guarantee now known as The Farming Community Network took over the assets and activities on 1 June 2002 of the unincorporated charity Farm Crisis Network which was founded in 1995 by the Arthur Rank Centre and Agricultural Christian Fellowship.

The Memorandum of Association states:

"The objects of the charity are the relief of hardship and distress, amongst persons living and working in the agricultural, horticultural and related communities, by the provision of pastoral and practical support underpinned by a Christian ethos."

The activities of FCN are available to all in the agricultural and related spheres of life providing the following services:

- Pastoral and practical support, care and listening to people in crisis (by phone, face to face or through the internet)
- Information and networking service to people, primarily through on-farm visiting with a holistic approach to both farm household and business
- Advocacy on behalf of such people (e.g. for tenant farmers in discussion with landlords' agents or for farmers in discussion with banks, creditors or regulatory agencies)

APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTORS

The maximum number of directors is 12. The Articles of Association were amended by Special Resolution on 30th October 2019 to reduce the maximum length of continuous service to 9. One of the directors should be nominated by the Agricultural Christian Fellowship and 2 nominated by the Arthur Rank Centre. One third of the Board of Directors should retire at each Annual General Meeting.

DIRECTOR INDUCTION AND TRAINING

New directors undergo training as to their legal obligations under charity and company law and are presented with copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association as well as FCN policy documents which have been approved by the Board. The induction process involves meeting the national staff and other directors. Directors are encouraged to attend training events every 3 years.

ORGANISATION

The Board of Directors meets quarterly to administer the charity and receive reports on finance, activities and fundraising. Other items are reported as necessary. Day to day management of FCN is delegated by the Board to the Chief Executive.

RELATED PARTIES

FCN has no related parties; however close working relationships are maintained with the Arthur Rank Centre and the Agricultural Christian Fellowship. Two directors are nominated by ARC and one by ACF for representation on the Board of FCN.

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RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board has undertaken a review of risk and the identified causes have been categorised as relating to:

People
Property & finance
Reputation

The review of risks has led to the implementation of policies aimed at lowering the risks to which FCN is exposed as well as designated procedures should an incident occur. The Risk Management policy document is reviewed regularly and updated to ensure it is as up to date as possible.

LOOKING AHEAD: OUR FUTURE STRATEGY 2020-2025

FCN is currently developing a five-year strategy for the organisation. While there is little doubt that the farming community will continue to experience significant change and restructuring, FCN remains steadfast in supporting those who need help in the farming community. While farming families will have to adapt and change so too will FCN. Together we face the future with hope, optimism and a renewed commitment to serve those who seek our support.

Our strategic priorities:

External:

- Improve the health and wellbeing of the farming community
- Support farm businesses through change and build resilience
- Connect the farming community to appropriate support
- Inform future policy decisions by being a champion for the farming community

Internal:

- Develop the skills, support and duty of care for volunteers delivering our front-line services
- Build awareness and engagement of FCN in the agricultural community
- Ensure the financial sustainability of FCN
- Refine our operations and organisation to stay relevant in a changing industry

Be a catalyst for shaping future agricultural support services in the UK

DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE ACCOUNTS

The Directors are required to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the surplus or deficit for that period. In preparing those accounts the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011 and other applicable law and regulations. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Directors are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

GOING CONCERN

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After making enquiries, the directors have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in note 1 of the financial statements.

STATEMENT AS TO DISCLOSURE OF INFORMATION TO AUDITORS

So far as the directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information (as defined by Section 418 of the Companies Act 2006) of which the company's auditors are unaware, and each director has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company's auditors are aware of that information.

Signed on behalf of the Directors on 6 July 2021.



D Roe
Secretary

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

to the members of The Farming Community Network

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Farming Community Network (the 'company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice)*.

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its surplus for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the directors have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the company's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other information

The directors are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the strategic report and the directors' report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the strategic report and the directors' report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the strategic report or the directors' report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of directors' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of directors

As explained more fully in the directors' responsibilities statement set out on page 12, the directors are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the directors are responsible for assessing the company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the company's members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the company and the company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.



NEIL WILSON (SENIOR STATUTORY AUDITOR)

FOR AND BEHALF OF GUEST WILSON LIMITED, STATUTORY AUDITOR
8 Wolverton Road, Snitterfield, Stratford upon Avon, CV37 0HB
6 July 2021

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT for the year ended 31 March 2021

	Notes	General Unrestricted funds £	Designated Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
INCOME						
Donations and legacies	3	274,130	-	431,267	705,397	813,036
Income from charitable activities						
Resourcing programmes		64,152	-	5,935	70,087	153,190
Income from other trading activities						
Investment income		11,437	-	-	11,437	8,822
Total income		349,719	-	437,202	786,921	975,048
EXPENDITURE						
Cost of raising funds	6	37,004		14,055	51,059	54,271
Charitable activities		128,956		281,651	410,607	523,840
Governance		79,162		60,179	139,341	192,825
Total expenditure		245,122	-	355,885	601,007	770,936
Net income/(expenditure)		104,597	-	81,317	185,914	204,112
Net transfers between funds		22,400	(22,750)	350	-	
NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS		126,997	(22,750)	81,667	185,914	204,112
Fund balances brought forward	15	496,203	317,313	160,694	974,210	770,098
FUND BALANCES CARRIED FORWARD	15	£ 623,200	£ 294,563	£ 242,361	£ 1,160,124	£ 974,210

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

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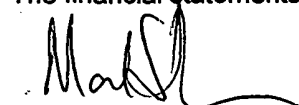
BALANCE SHEET as at 31 March 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	10	5,634	9,834
CURRENT ASSETS			
Debtors	11	13,850	72,122
Bank and cash balances		1,171,401	919,028
		1,185,251	991,150
CREDITORS: amounts falling due within one year	12	(30,761)	(26,774)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		1,154,490	964,376
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		1,160,124	974,210
CREDITORS: amounts falling due after more than one year	13		
		£ 1,160,124	£ 974,210
INCOME FUNDS			
Unrestricted funds			
General	15	623,200	496,203
Designated	15	294,563	317,313
Restricted funds	15	242,361	160,694
		£ 1,160,124	£ 974,210

The Trustees have acknowledged their responsibilities for: selecting suitable accounting policies and then applying them consistently; observing the methods and principles in the Charities SORP; making judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; stating whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and preparing the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention, in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2015)" applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), effective 1 January 2015 and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements were approved by the Directors on 6 July 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



M A E Suthern
Director

THE FARMING COMMUNITY NETWORK

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NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

at 31 March 2021

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Company and charitable status

The Farming Community Network, a public benefit entity, is incorporated in England and Wales as a company limited by guarantee not having a share capital. Each member has undertaken to contribute to the assets in the event of winding up a sum not exceeding £1. The charity is a registered charity. The registered office is given on page 2.

Basis of preparation and assessment of going concern

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention, in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2015)" applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable to the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), effective 1 January 2015 and the Companies Act 2006.

In preparing the accounts, the Directors have considered whether in applying the accounting policies required by FRS 102 and the Charities SORP FRS 102 the restatement of comparative items was required. At the date of transition in applying the requirements of FRS 102 no adjustments were required.

The Directors consider that there are no material uncertainties about the Charity's ability to continue as a going concern. Free unrestricted reserves of FCN at the year-end amount to £917,763. After consideration of the current business plan to 2021/22 and with a balanced budget planned for the next two financial years, the Trustees consider there is a reasonable expectation that FCN has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. The Trustees are also satisfied with the controls in place for monitoring and flexing the budget throughout the year. There are no material uncertainties that would impact on the charity's ability to continue. Accordingly we continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing this annual report and financial statements.

Funds

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the Directors in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds are unrestricted funds set aside by the Directors out of unrestricted general funds for specific future purposes or projects. 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.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable and when the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The value of unpaid voluntary services provided by individuals has not been included.

Resources expended

Resources expended are recognised in the period in which they are incurred under headings that aggregate all costs related to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they are allocated to activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources. Resources expended include attributable VAT which cannot be recovered.

Taxation

FCN is a registered charity and is not subject to taxation on its income so long as this is used for its charitable activities.

Fixed assets and depreciation

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost. Depreciation is provided on all fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost, less estimated residual value based on prices prevailing at the date of acquisition, of each asset evenly over its expected useful life as follows:

Office equipment - 3 years straight line

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2 CRITICAL ACCOUNTING JUDGEMENTS AND KEY SOURCES OF ESTIMATION UNCERTAINTY

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, which are described in note 1, the Directors are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The Directors do not consider there are any critical judgements or sources of estimation uncertainty requiring disclosure beyond the accounting policies listed above.

3 INCOME – DONATIONS AND LEGACIES

	General Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 £	2020 £
Voluntary income				
From churches	29,612	3,033	32,645	78,602
From individuals and other organisations	133,091	20,116	153,207	250,727
Legacies	15,775	-	15,775	48,889
Gift aid tax refunded	5,616	-	5,616	26,329
Grants received (see note 4)	90,036	408,118	498,154	408,489
	274,130	431,267	705,397	813,036

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4 GRANTS RECEIVED

	General Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 £	2020 £
NFU Mutual Charitable Trust	-	200,000	200,000	-
DEFRA and Regional Development Agencies	-	75,000	75,000	75,000
The National Lottery	-	50,000	50,000	-
Westminster Foundation	-	33,304	33,304	-
Wates Foundation	-	20,000	20,000	-
Arla	13,655	-	13,655	1,055
Hutchinson Charitable Trust	8,000	-	8,000	7,500
Nuffield	-	7,500	7,500	-
Prince's Countryside Fund	-	6,111	6,111	-
Huggate Wold Farms	-	6,000	6,000	-
NFU	5,000	-	5,000	-
Anonymous	5,000	-	5,000	-
Betty Lawes Foundation	5,000	-	5,000	-
Cumber Family Charitable Trust	5,000	-	5,000	-
Tanner Trust	5,000	-	5,000	3,000
Blacks of Bacton	3,500	-	3,500	-
Yeo Valley Farms	-	3,425	3,425	-
The Ticket Shop	3,293	-	3,293	-
NSF Safety & Quality	2,875	-	2,875	-
The Worshipful Company of Farmers	2,750	-	2,750	2,500
AHDA	2,234	-	2,234	10,000
Hampshire Farmers Benevolent Trust	2,000	-	2,000	-
Forest Hill Charity	2,000	-	2,000	2,000
Leicestershire CMF	-	1,844	1,844	-
Bletsoes	1,768	-	1,768	-
Frome Lions Club	1,750	-	1,750	-
Savills	1,500	-	1,500	-
Purple Patch	1,320	-	1,320	-
Warwickshire County Council	-	1,126	1,126	-
Giving.com	1,081	-	1,081	-
Cornus Trust	1,000	-	1,000	-
C P Thackray Trust	1,000	-	1,000	1,000
Bristol Corn & Feed Association	963	-	963	-
Leicestershire Co-Op Community Fund	-	924	924	-
The Fulmer Charity	750	-	750	2,000
Rickerbys Charitable Trust	-	750	750	-
Colman	560	-	560	-
Anonymous	515	-	515	-
Lloyds Bank plc	-	-	-	115,608
John Lewis – Waitrose	-	-	-	100,000
Welsh Assembly	-	-	-	45,133
Farmers Union Wales	-	-	-	9,876
Agri	-	-	-	5,000
P D Hook Ltd	-	-	-	5,000
Duke of Devonshire's Charitable Trust	-	-	-	5,000
EWG Charitable Trust	-	-	-	5,000
Elizabeth Creak Foundation	-	-	-	3,000
Oxfordshire Ag Soc Trust	-	-	-	1,500
Frontier Agricultural	-	-	-	1,250
JC & KC Foundation	-	-	-	1,110
Lewis Business Media	-	-	-	1,005
Volac	-	-	-	1,000
Beviss & Beckinsale	-	-	-	891
Pilkington Settlement	-	-	-	750
Other grants ≤ £500	12,522	2,134	14,656	3,311
Total grants per Note 3	90,036	408,118	498,154	408,489

5 UNPAID VOLUNTARY SERVICES

The value of unpaid voluntary services provided by individuals has not been included within the Statement of Financial Activities as either income or expenditure. In the year under review that value is calculated as £178,638 (2020 - £224,260), representing entirely caseworker costs (please refer to Trustees' Report for further information). If this value was included the Statement of Financial Activities would be revised with both income and expenditure increasing by £178,638.

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6 EXPENDITURE	GENERAL UNRESTRICTED				RESTRICTED	2021 £	2020 £
	Local activity & supporting volunteers £	Publicity £	Training £	Direct costs £	Local activity & supporting volunteers £		
Costs of generating funds							
Staff costs (note 7)	-	-	-	27,262	14,055	41,317	40,275
Travel	-	-	-	-	-	-	8,427
Communications	-	-	-	710	-	710	1,696
Fundraising materials	-	-	-	5,776	-	5,776	1,518
Room hire	-	-	-	-	-	-	45
Legal & professional	-	-	-	3,256	-	3,256	2,310
	-	-	-	37,004	14,055	51,059	54,271
	37,004						
Charitable activities							
Staff costs (note 7)		55,567	-	-	232,300	287,867	270,645
Caseworker costs	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,170
Travel	4,121	92	-	-	1,025	5,238	67,520
Communications	15,086	481	-	-	512	16,079	12,334
Legal & professional	1,848	-	-	-	379	2,227	1,061
Room hire and refreshments	58	-	-	-	-	58	38,217
Publicity & training materials	1,807	48,282	-	-	47,435	97,524	129,692
Local office administration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance	1,614	-	-	-	-	1,614	3,201
	24,534	104,422	-	-	281,651	410,607	523,840
	128,956						
Governance							
Staff costs (note 7)	-	-	-	28,720	58,226	86,946	66,418
Travel costs	-	-	-	745	-	745	24,995
Communications	-	-	-	16,310	1,953	18,263	32,244
Legal & professional	-	-	-	11,081	-	11,081	40,661
Insurance	-	-	-	4,707	-	4,707	2,525
Audit & accountancy	-	-	-	5,000	-	5,000	4,200
Premises and depreciation	-	-	-	12,596	-	12,596	20,807
Other	-	-	-	3	-	3	975
	-	-	-	79,162	60,179	139,341	192,825
	79,162						
Total expenditure	24,534	104,422	-	116,166	355,885	601,007	770,936
	245,122						

7 STAFF COSTS	2021 £	2020 £
Wages and salaries	398,946	339,822
Social security costs	26,699	22,887
Other pension costs	18,798	14,629
	447,443	377,339

The average number of employees, including part-time, during the year was 21 (2020: 17).

One employee earned in excess of £60,000 (2020 - Nil).

The company operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The charge for the period was £18,798 (2020 - £14,704). There were outstanding contributions of £2,341 at the year end (2020 - £1,740).

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8 NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR

	2021 £	2020 £
This is stated after charging:		
Directors' emoluments (travel expenses)	-	4,262
Auditor's remuneration	5,000	4,200
Depreciation	4,200	8,439
Directors' indemnity insurance	1,614	1,021

9 DIRECTORS' REMUNERATION

No remuneration was paid to Directors for their services, and no amounts were paid as reimbursement of travel and other expenses.

10 TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office equipment £
Cost or valuation:	
At 1 April 2020	83,775
Additions	-
At 31 March 2021	83,775
Depreciation:	
At 1 April 2020	73,941
Charge for the year	4,200
At 31 March 2021	78,141
Net book value	
At 31 March 2021	5,634
At 1 April 2020	9,834

11 DEBTORS

	2021 £	2020 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade debtors	1,073	500
Prepayments and accrued income	1,166	46,622
Gift Aid tax refund	11,611	25,000
	13,850	72,122

12 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	10,518	10,598
Other taxes and social security	9,815	7,609
Other creditors	2,342	1,740
Deferred income (see also Note 13)	-	-
Accrued expenses	8,086	6,827
	30,761	26,774

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13	CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE AFTER MORE THAN ONE YEAR	2021 £	2020 £
	Deferred income	-	-

DEFERRED INCOME	£
At 1 April 2020	-
Income deferred in year – for release within one year	-
Income deferred in year – for release after more than one year	-
Amount released in year	-
At 31 March 2021	-

14	FUNDS ANALYSIS	General Unrestricted fund £	Designated Unrestricted fund £	Restricted fund £	2021 £	2020 £
	Tangible fixed assets	5,634	-	-	5,634	9,834
	Current assets	648,327	294,563	242,361	1,185,251	991,150
	Liabilities	(30,761)	-	-	(30,761)	(26,774)
	Net assets	623,200	294,563	242,361	1,160,124	974,210

15	MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	At 1 April 2020 £	Transfers £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	At 31 March 2021 £
	Restricted funds					
	Voluntary income	160,694	350	437,202	(355,885)	242,361
	Unrestricted funds					
	Designated	317,313	(22,750)	-	-	294,563
	General	496,203	22,400	349,719	(245,122)	623,200
		974,210	-	786,921	(601,007)	1,160,124