

**East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust
Company Limited by Guarantee**

Annual Report

Year Ended 31 March 2021

**Company Registration Number 5413877
Charity Number 1109514**

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

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East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Trustees Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report for the Purposes of S415 Companies Act 2006) (*continued*)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

The Trustees present their Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 31 March 2021. They are satisfied that the Financial Statements comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011, the governing document as described below and 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 2015) – (Charities SORP (FRS 102)).

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the charitable company are to promote, for the benefit of the public, the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment within the area of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths and the Otter Estuary. Our vision is for the Pebblebed Heaths and the Otter Estuary to be places whose special qualities and rich history are understood by all, places where rare species can flourish, and where society's ever changing needs for recreation, health and learning can be fulfilled.

In planning our activity, the Trustees kept in mind the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.

The East Devon Pebblebed Heaths and the site of special scientific interest along the River Otter Estuary are managed by the charitable company to provide public access for walking, rambling and other controlled purposes, public education, and conservation of the land for the benefit of future generations. As part of this work, the charitable company arranges:

- Public education through website content, books, information boards and leaflets about the area, the Countryside Learning Project and public meetings with the heathland wardens, the conservation manager and the education officer.
- Protection, monitoring and enhancement of wildlife habitats on the heathlands and estuary.

The primary aim of practical conservation work at both sites is to deliver 'Favourable Condition Status' (as defined by Natural England), with each site quinquennially assessed against key conservation criteria including habitat quality and population numbers of key wildlife groups. On the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, practical conservation work is guided by a ten-year management plan approved by Natural England, with visitor management guided by a visitor management plan.

Achievements and Performance

The principal activity of the Charitable Trust for the year ended 31 March 2021 was the day to day maintenance, conservation and improvement of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the River Otter Estuary SSSI. The work was contracted out to the charitable company's wholly owned subsidiary, East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited, which received partial funding from the Natural England Higher Level Environmental Scheme (HLS). Works of particular note during the year included:

Conservation Management

Ecological Management Plan

All work follows the prescriptions of the Ecological Management Plan. This plan will be reviewed during 2021. The majority of this work is being funded by a Countryside Stewardship agreement which started January 2017, running for 10 years. We were granted a further one-year HLS extension to the non SSSI areas of Dalditch Plantation and Mutters Moor.

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A close operational partnership has been formed to take a strategic approach to management of the entire reserve with an advisory National Nature Reserve ("NNR") board also established. As part of this work an overarching master plan will be created within the first year.

In autumn 2020 an SSSI condition assessment was carried out by Natural England across the dry heath units. The wet heath/mire are due for assessment summer 2021. The combined results from the assessment are expected summer 2021.

Heathland Management Operations

As in previous years, our conservation work during the reporting period has focused on addressing outstanding issues related to those areas not yet viewed as being in favourable condition. Unfavourable status largely relates to the significant size of even-aged heathland and the presence of too much scrub.

Scrub and tree management during the winter period targeted Woodbury Common, East Budleigh Common and Dalditch Plantation. This was a combination of scattered trees within these areas and dense clumps of regeneration with birch and pine the focus of the work.

Pine generated was sold as chip wood while birch will be sold as firewood. In a trial to reduce the need to burn brash on site, whole tree material was stacked to be removed by merchants in bulk. Follow up spot spraying of regeneration from felling in the previous season also took place.

Ash trees have also been removed in line with Clinton Devon Estate's programme to address ash dieback across its land holdings.

Bare ground was created across the heaths with more planned for the next four years informed by site visits with monitoring volunteers. The objective of this work being to create a greater differentiation in heathland structure in those locations but also to tie into management for silver studded blue butterflies.

Vegetation management in the form of mowing and raking off of arisings, and cutting back by hand, was also carried out on a number of known silver studded blue colony locations to ensure that the habitat remains in an appropriate condition to sustain this species.

During spring 2021 swailing was not undertaken due to the weather and change in working practices due to Covid-19. It is planned to resume swailing in the next winter season, likely spring 2022.

Grazing

During summer 2020 Bicton Common was grazed with three ponies and 20 cattle (108ha). The lower three grazing loops on Colaton Raleigh Common were grazed with 29 cattle (68ha). Hawkerland Common was grazed with 29 cows (plus 12 calves) and 13 ponies (75ha). Dalditch Plantation was not grazed (24ha).

This is a reduction in grazing from the previous year both in terms of hectareage and headage of stock. This was deemed appropriate due to the uncertainty regarding impact on staff cover and Estate priorities in relation to Covid-19. Following stock escaping from the Hawkerland block in 2019 additional work was carried out on this entire fence line in March 2020 prior to the coming grazing season to resolve this issue.

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Year Ended 31 March 2021

Fire Management

Firebreaks have been maintained across the Commons. A small number of minor wildfires occurred during 2020/21, one on Hawkerland roadside and one linked to MOD training on Colaton Raleigh Common, both were dealt with promptly by the fire service. Due to the dry and hot conditions we operated under high fire risk for extended periods during the summer. A number of members of the public have been spoken to in relation to BBQs.

Heathland Creation

A heathland creation area adjacent to Blackhill Quarry continues to undergo restoration as part of the mitigation package linked to planning permission for part of the quarry area to be retained for commercial use. Reserved soil from the quarry area is due to be spread on the area to establish heathland vegetation.

The first units within Blackhill Quarry which underwent restoration following mineral extraction are due to come back to the Estate from Aggregate Industries in 2021/22. These blocks will be managed by the Conservation Trust and so will be included in the revised management plan. Our approach to both habitat and people management is currently being discussed in the team.

Invasive Species Control

During 2020 clearance activities of balsam and other invasive species have been undertaken across Estate land, often in partnership with other groups including the Otter Valley Association. Himalayan balsam is generally not found on the heaths but remains adjacent to them.

There are several scattered populations of *Crococsmia* on East Budleigh and Bicton Commons. These continue to be targeted in the spraying programme. Buddleia remains a problem on East Budleigh Common where historical disturbance and significant inputs of lime created ideal conditions for its growth. There are scattered plants in other areas that are due to be targeted for removal. Rhododendron on Dalditch Common, and buddleia on Bicton Common, have been identified for removal next year, this was delayed due to reduced volunteer capacity due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Management of Heritage

The CS agreement provided funds for a project to remove Woodbury Castle hillfort scheduled monument off the Heritage at Risk Register. The main works were completed in 2017/18 but further tree management has been carried out on the western side of the road. There is further tree removal planned for 2021/22. The steps and erosion repairs from the restoration project are working well. There are some small areas of erosion from persistent public access, however, these are discrete areas rather than the widespread damage that was seen before the project. Volunteer sessions planned with DCC Historic Environment team were curtailed due to lockdown restrictions. These were due to tackle scrub in the interior and top up areas with grass seed. This work will take place at a later date.

Reports of worked flint in a layby on Hawkerland were investigated with DCC Historic Environment team. These were deemed to be modern and so planned boundary work on the roadside was able to proceed.

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Year Ended 31 March 2021

Ecological Monitoring

Dartford Warbler

Numbers in the year were up from 61 in 2019 to 104 singing males with a further 14 outside the SSSI boundary. This gives the highest total since before the cold winter of 2010/11. The ringing study continues by members of BTO, though their surveys were limited due to Covid-19 restrictions. Full details of the ringing study are available in a separate report covering the five years to date.

Nightjar

Almost complete survey coverage was attained by volunteers of all SSSI and surrounding suitable sites with the exception of Bicton Common. Numbers remain relatively stable on the SSSI, with 72 churring males recorded where surveys took place. This annual monitoring represents a significant citizen science and partnership programme.

Southern Damselfly

On Colaton Raleigh only 1 male was recorded on two dates (25th May and 1st June) in the same area of the bog bean. The Pebblebed Heaths overall exceed the favourable condition target which is that the total population must not fall below 80 for four successive years, with evidence of breeding from all sites. Colaton Raleigh remains a cause of significant concern.

Adjustments in management have been made to address the low numbers. Grazing pressure was increased over the whole grazing loop, with 29 stock from 11th May to 13th August. This served to further open the vegetation. Ponies are being trialled in early spring 2021 for the first time.

The water flow from the reservoir pipe was also reinstated from April 2021, with a valve to control the flow rate. Historically the colony were associated with a runnel resulting from a leak in the pipe until it was mended in the late 1990s. It is suspected that they then moved to suboptimal habitat. The water from the reservoir that ran from the leak provided clear water, possibly with a stable temperature, throughout the year. The impact of this reinstatement will be monitored and flow manipulated as required.

Sliver Studded Blue Butterfly

A poor year following the very wet though mild winter. Overall figures for EDPH continue to be boosted by the colonies on Harpford (RSPB). Management work has been carried out as detailed, though will take time to deliver results.

Bats

Bats are monitored in the military buildings by the Devon Bat Group. Great and Lesser Horseshoe and Long eared are present. Monitoring stopped during the pandemic due to risk of cross species contamination in line with DBG policy.

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Other Species of Interest

Hen harrier: were not recorded at the traditional roost site on Colaton Raleigh during winter season.

Curlew: None were recorded.

Reptiles: Not recorded this year. The Snakes in the Heather project run by ARC was due to start monitoring in spring 2020. This project will greatly improve our understanding of reptiles on the heaths. However, the fieldwork was delayed due to Covid-19.

Harvest Mice: Surveys with Devon Harvest Mouse project were cancelled during winter 20/21 due to the pandemic.

Bees and wasps: No new species were added. The total list remains at 135. Survey work was stopped due to Covid-19, but we anticipate that it will restart in summer 2021.

Visitor Management

Visitor Management

Visitor management remains a key challenge with the site already receiving in excess of 400,000 visits/year. Funding overseen by the South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership (SEDHRP) is available to implement the recommendations of the Visitor Management Plan for the Pebblebed Heaths that has been in place since 2016. This document identifies the risks to the Heaths from increased recreational pressure over the coming decade and identifies, costs and provides funding to implement measures to mitigate these.

The two Mitigation Wardens employed by the SEDHRP, the staff member who runs Devon Loves Dogs, and the project manager faced furlough for a time in summer 2020. This reduced our support on the ground and in delivering projects such as the car park strategy. This coupled with an increased footfall of over 65% made managing visitors particularly challenging. Many new visitors lacked an awareness of appropriate use of the site but most were interested to hear about our work and were generally happy to engage. This has been identified as an ideal opportunity to strengthen our reach.

A repeat visitor survey funded by SEDHRP was due to take place in summer 2020. This was postponed and will happen during 2021. This survey is designed to monitor the effectiveness of the mitigation measures that have been implemented to date. Additional questions have been added to explore change in use linked to the pandemic and gain insight into spirit of place.

Visitor Infrastructure

The first phase of delivery of the car park strategy was delayed due to furlough of SEDHRP staff. The increased pressure on the heaths during the pandemic has highlighted the importance of this work to limit the impact of visitors on the heaths and making our points of contact simpler and our communication more efficient. The project is now underway with external project management support. The designs for phase one (Joney's Cross, Four Firs, Stowford and Frying pans) have been finalised with work due to start autumn 2021. All plans have been reviewed in light of any change in use during the pandemic.

New signage and trails are being developed to encourage responsible access to the heaths. A contractor that specialised in outdoor interpretation has been appointed. This is due for completion summer 2021. A map leaflet created as a trial in 2019 was updated and reprinted for summer 2020 to help engage with new visitors. It

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continues to be well received by the public showing that there is an audience for this type of traditional interpretation material.

Maintenance has been on-going of all vehicle barriers across the SSSI. Four new barriers at problem locations on bridleways on Woodbury Common have been installed. The usual ongoing maintenance of tracks and car park surfacing has also taken place. The heathland boundary along the road at Hawkerland has been strengthened to prevent encroachment of vehicle parking on to the heath.

Tree safety management has been carried out as required.

Heathland Education

Due to Covid-19 our education work was much reduced. We did not host any of the usual local primary schools. Site visits with colleges was also much reduced and limited to 20 students from Exeter College and 16 students from Bickton College Countryside Management course.

Public Engagement

Organised events were cancelled with engagement generally limited to talking to people for short periods while out on site. During summer 2020 we ran '#TheHeathsAndMe', a virtual community photography project which saw over 300 entries. A series of short films have been created from this work to explore the heaths 'spirit of place'.

Our monthly guided dog walks with Devon Loves Dogs were cancelled from March 2020. Staff also delivered no presentations to local groups and organisations.

A public launch for the NNR was planned for spring/summer 2020. This was been postponed due to Covid-19 and rescheduled as a virtual launch for the 13th May 2021.

Heath Week

In 2020 the Heath Week festival was cancelled due to Covid-19. During what would have been Heath Week we arranged a self-led trail with a volunteer photographer. This was seen as the most appropriate and Covid-19 secure way to mark the week.

Friends of The Commons

As of start April 2021 we have 570 email subscribers, to whom we are sending out quarterly newsletters.

Our annual forum was not possible due to Covid-19 restrictions. Instead, we created a series of films of staff talking about the highlights from their year, this was sent out to the entire email list before being shared on social media.

Volunteering

We now have groups of volunteers with different skills to help with management and monitoring. The Friends of the Commons practical volunteer work parties meet on alternate Wednesdays. Work parties were impacted by Covid-19 restrictions, but Covid-19 secure sessions were held when able to do so to carry out tasks. These included tree planting and removing old fencing on the boundaries between the plantations and the heath. A small number of volunteers were also able to work independently or in bubbles to carry out tasks such as managing the silver studded blue sites. Over the year people volunteered over 420 hours, we recognise this is likely an underestimate and are looking to collect more accurate data in future.

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We are looking at how we can grow our volunteering offer over the coming years as we have identified opportunities particularly for young people and families. However, we are restricted by staff capacity. We have applied to the HLF Green Recovery Challenge Fund with a project targeting this and other work supporting connecting people with nature.

Website Communications

We are investing time into building our online presence. This includes regularly posting on Facebook (1178 followers) and Instagram (338 followers). We continue to add content and promote our website (pebblebedheaths.org.uk) and have built an allied launching webpage for the Pebblebed Heaths NNR (pebblebedheathsnnr.co.uk) which will link to our main website.

Media

From April 2020 to April 2021, there were 28 mentions of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, the Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust or Woodbury Common in regional media and sector publications. Stories covered included an increase in visitors to the heaths during the pandemic, The Heaths and Me project, injured swans prompting 'take your rubbish' home plea and Kate Ponting's regular column in the Exmouth Journal.

Coverage has included BBC Spotlight, BBC Radio Devon, Western Morning News, Exmouth Journal, Sidmouth Herald, Midweek Herald, Exmouth Nub News and the InYourArea community website. The articles and broadcasts achieved a combined print coverage circulation of 208.4k, an estimated broadcast reach of 1.2million and combined estimated online coverage views of 309.6k.

Research and Knowledge Exchange

Research

Staff continue to work with Exeter Uni Wildfire Lab who are studying fire severity modelling.

In partnership with the Westcountry Rivers Trust a carbon storage project has been established with soil cores taken from a representative habitat. These are currently being analysed. This work complements sustainability work related to Trust activities, including understanding our carbon footprint.

Site Visits and Sharing Best Practice

A number of site visits that were planned for spring/summer 2020 were cancelled due to Covid-19.

External Use

External Events

Many external events were cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions, including the Commando Challenge. Only two events took place in the autumn 2020, the Devon Girt MTB (250 participants) and part of the Bicton Arena Horse Trials. Time is being invested into publicising the fact that permission is required for all events as there is still a lack of awareness. A live events calendar is maintained on the website that shows external as well as our own events.

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Licencing Organised and Commercial Activities

Businesses and groups known to be operating on the heaths are licenced to ensure that they operate in line with our conservation objectives. A significant ongoing effort has been made to ensure all that require a licence are approached. Particular effort was invested to engage with commercial dog walkers. This licencing scheme has been well received. We currently have 22 businesses on board. We liaise with them regularly, although the usual annual forum was postponed. Other businesses linked to recreation are also licenced, covering mountain biking, horse riding, outdoor education, yoga and mindfulness. We continue to approach other groups such as running and walking clubs to ensure they have the correct permission for running organised activities.

MOD

All of the 750 recruits that pass through CTCRM Lymstone each year are given a lecture on the conservation and cultural significance of the Pebblebed Heaths SSSI prior to training. Visiting MOD units receive a briefing from DIO.

The live firing range on Colaton Raleigh Common requires further refurbishment to enable it to come back into use. This is planned for autumn 2021.

Illegal Activity

Illegal activity has taken place throughout the reporting period on an irregular basis, with occasional motorbike encroachment and regular and generally low levels of fly-tipping. Reports of quieter electric powered motorbikes have been raised as a further concern with the local police. Fly tipping was a particular issue during the first lockdown due to the closure of the local recycling centre. Overnighting in vans was more apparent during the year. As part of the car park strategy measures have been identified to deter anti-social behaviour. These include lockable barriers, changing of car park layouts and improving the visibility in to parking areas.

Otter Estuary

Lower Otter Restoration Project

A full planning application for the Lower Otter Restoration Project was submitted to East Devon District Council in September 2020. During the public consultation phase there were 221 comments objecting to the scheme and 291 comments in support.

Strong backing for the scheme was provided by the RSPB, the National Trust, and the Devon Wildlife Trust. Objections from the public were numerous in theme with reasons cited including loss of existing habitat and landscape; exacerbating car parking issues at Otterton and South Farm Road; concerns about location of construction material storage areas and construction traffic; insufficient public consultation; increasing flood risk; mosquitoes; aquifer salinisation; erosion of Granary Road risks.

The planning committee met to determine the application on the 6 January 2021 and was approved unanimously.

The first scheduled on-site work planned for 2021 in addition to ground investigation works is vegetation clearance in May. This non-ideal timing (due to presence of breeding birds) is related to a number of project constraints including the time-limited availability of funding, tight project phasing and the constraints of dormice licensing work. Working protocols have been established to ensure that no breeding birds are disturbed. The forthcoming period of May 2021 to September 2021 is likely to be the most difficult part of the scheme from a communications and PR perspective.

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Good progress has been made with the allied Interreg-funded initiative (PACCo). This has included: recruiting Kendal Archer to the position of part time Project Manager for EDPHCT (from December 2020); instructing Michelmores to act on the Estates' behalf to secure the necessary agreements with the Environment Agency to allow the scheme to progress; receiving legal advice on Public Rights of Navigation related to estuarine habitat.

The first communication outputs for the scheme including an information pack and a website are nearing completion, with a tender brief to develop socio-economic valuation protocols awarded. Work has also begun to look at how schemes such as LORP can facilitate change management / behavioural change when progressing coastal climate adaptation schemes. An important component of the PACCo model is as a best practice guide to enable other communities to benefit from our experiences.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the support of the many organisations and individuals who have helped us during the reporting period. The Conservation Trust works with a broad variety of conservation partners. These include Natural England, Historic England, the Environment Agency, the RSPB, the Devon Wildlife Trust, South East Devon Habitat Regulations Partnership, the East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, local schools and community groups, including the Otter Valley Association. The Royal Marines and the Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service are additional long-term partners who assist with essential conservation work. A team of volunteers has assisted the Conservation Trust annually to undertake wildlife surveys, archaeology monitoring and habitat management work.

In particular, we would like to thank Doug and Joan Cullen, volunteer wardens on the Otter Estuary, and Lesley Kerry and Pete Gotham whose support and advice on all aspects of heathland management and wildlife is invaluable. Peter Bennet's ringing working has provided additional insight into some of our most important birdlife. The enthusiasm and photographic support from Andy Thatcher was instrumental in making #TheHeathsAndMe project so successful in a particularly challenging year for engagement.

Financial Review

The charitable company raised £388,900 of income during the year (2020: £353,576). Income received during the year relating to restricted funds was £282,419, of which £246,800 related to Lower Otter Restoration Project. Unrestricted income received during the year was £106,481, of which £57,934 was a Gift Aid receipt from the charitable company's subsidiary.

Details of resources expended during the year can be found in note 6.

The statement of financial activities shows total net surplus of £322,920 for the year (2020: net loss of £14,516). This net includes a net gain on investments of £316,207 (2020: net loss of £89,624).

The balance sheet shows total funds of £1,884,317 (2020: £1,561,397).

Reserves Policy

The Trustees and the officers responsible for day-to-day operations continually monitor the level of free reserves (unrestricted income funds including fixed asset investments which are held to provide on-going income) of the charitable company, and ensure that they are sufficient to meet the payment obligations of the charitable company as they fall due. At 31 March 2021, the charitable company had free reserves of £1,810,312 (unrestricted income funds per note 14 excluding tangible fixed assets).

The Trustees have plans to use these funds in pursuit of the charitable company's objects and are satisfied that they are sufficient to meet its financial obligations. Planned works over the coming decade include the delivery

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of the ten-year Ecological Management Plan of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, including delivery of a vehicle succession strategy, the implementation of the Visitor Management Plan of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths, and improving the extent and quality of the intertidal habitats and access facilities of the Otter Estuary, including through the delivery of the Lower Otter Restoration Project.

Investments

The investments held by the charity were acquired in accordance with the powers granted to the Trustees in the Settlement Deed and are managed on a discretionary basis by a firm of professional stockbrokers. The performance of investments is reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis.

Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Trustees identify and review from time to time the risks to which the Trust is materially exposed and the action to be taken to mitigate them. Presently, they are seen as:

- a lack of funds adequate to support the Trust's activities
- a lack of public support to enable the planned restoration and education projects to go ahead

In respect of the former, Trustees raise as much money as they are able and have in place safeguards to ensure they do not commit funds in excess of those available.

In respect of the latter the Trust operates a proactive policy of public engagement through its website, social media and consultation with community groups when considering new projects and ensures that relevant and appropriate surveys and applications for permission are received before a project is started. One of the greatest challenges the Trust faces is securing income streams post Brexit which will require diversifying income streams so there is less reliance on agri-environment schemes. To address this, the Trust is working on developing a Fund Raising Strategy, in addition to seeking to secure existing agri-environment scheme opportunities whilst such sources of income last. Public support is being specifically addressed through constant updating of the website, the creation of a Friends of the Commons group (now with 400+ members), and delivering annual education and engagement programmes.

The Trustees recognise that the Covid-19 pandemic has increased the Trust's exposure to the risks identified above as the economic impact could pose a threat to future funding, and government imposed restrictions on social distancing could impact visitor levels and the trusts ability to carry out its charitable activities. The safety of our staff and wider community remains the key priority, and we have been able to continue operations where appropriate to do so, acting in accordance with government guidance and our own risk assessments. The Trustees will continue to monitor the evolving Covid-19 position, ensuring appropriate actions are taken to mitigate the potential impact on the Trust, as well as using this as an opportunity to focus on how we can improve our engagement on site to capitalise on a new visitor audience that is being seen since the recent government relaxation of restrictions on outdoor exercise.

Plans for Future Periods

The Trustees are committed to building on the achievements of the year in future periods.

Structure, Governance and Management

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust was incorporated on 5 April 2005, as amended by special resolution on 4 January 2006, as a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales, number 5413877, and governed under a Memorandum and Articles of Association. It has the registered charity number 1109514.

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Trustees Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report for the Purposes of S415 Companies Act 2006) (*continued*)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

The Trustees confirm that the financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, with the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the recommendations of the Statement of Recommended Practice.

The principal address of the charitable company is Rolle Estate Office, Bicton Arena, East Budleigh, Budleigh Salterton, Devon, EX9 7BL.

Governance

The four subscribers to the Memorandum and Articles of Association were the initial Members and Trustees. Further Members are appointed at the discretion of the Trustees and further Trustees may be elected at Annual General Meetings of the Members. Further Trustees may also be co-opted by the Trustees at any time, but co-opted Trustees hold office only until the next Annual General Meeting. A minimum of 3 and a maximum of 10 Trustees are required.

A newly appointed Trustee will be asked to meet the Head of Wildlife and Conservation and operational staff of the Land Management Company and employees of Clinton Devon Estates finance and property departments responsible for the Conservation Trust's administration. The Trustee will also be given the following documents; Heaths Management Plan, Health and Safety Protocol and latest Annual Report. The Trustee will also be given a summary of the responsibilities attached to the position as defined by The Charities Commission and Company Law.

The Members and Trustees meet at an Annual General Meeting. They also meet periodically throughout the year as required to receive and review reports on management matters and financial status.

The day to day operation of the charitable company is undertaken by officers of Clinton Devon Estates and a management charge is paid for this. The responsibilities of the officers include property, financial and general administrative duties for the charitable company. The management charge for the year ended 31 March 2021 is disclosed in note 15.

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Report for the Purposes of S415 Companies Act 2006) (*continued*)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

Reference and Administrative details

Registered charity name East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust

Charity number 1109514

Company registration number 5413877

Registered office Centenary House
Peninsula Park
Rydon Lane
Exeter
EX2 7XE

Trustees The Rt Hon Lord Clinton
Mr D J R Robinson
Mr J C Varley OBE TD
Mr P J Gotham
Mr A C J Cooper
Mr M Williams MBE
Mr N G H Manns
Mrs C Walliker
Mr P Nixon

Secretary Mr D J R Robinson

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Trustees Annual Report (Incorporating the Directors' Report for the Purposes of S415 Companies Act 2006) (*continued*)

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Responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees (who are also the directors of East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees Annual Report (incorporating the Directors' Report for the purposes of s415 Companies Act 2006) and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the charity Trustees to prepare financial statements for each year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees 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 material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Small Company Provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed on behalf of the Trustees

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J C Varley OBE TD

Date: 24 June 2021

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Independent Examiners Report to the Members

Year Ended 31 March 2021

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Company for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's Trustees of the Company (and also 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 Company 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 your charity's accounts as 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

I have completed my examination. Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in 5.145 of the 2006 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 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 Company 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.

Stephanie Henshaw FCA
Francis Clark LLP
Centenary House
Peninsula Park
Rydon Lane
Exeter, EX2 7XE

Date: 6 July 2021

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (incorporating the income and expenditure account)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Restricted Funds £	Unrestricted Funds £	Total Funds 2021 £	Total Funds 2020 £
Income:					
Donations and Legacies	3	151,875	60,129	212,004	296,782
Income from Charitable Activities	4	130,544	-	130,544	8,768
Income from Investments	5	-	46,352	46,352	48,026
Total Income		282,419	106,481	388,900	353,576
Expenditure:					
Charitable Activities	6	248,520	133,667	382,187	278,468
Total Expenditure		248,520	133,667	382,187	278,468
Net Gains/(Losses) on Investments	9	-	316,207	316,207	(89,624)
Net Income/(Expenditure) and Net Movement in Funds		33,899	289,021	322,920	(14,516)
Reconciliation of Funds:					
Total Funds Brought Forward	13	40,106	1,521,291	1,561,397	1,575,913
Total Funds Carried Forward	13	74,005	1,810,312	1,884,317	1,561,397

The notes on pages 17 – 26 form part of these financial statements

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Balance Sheet
Company Registration Number: 5413877

Year Ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets	8	13,279	23,626
Investments	9	1,793,983	1,429,942
		<u>1,807,262</u>	<u>1,453,568</u>
Current Assets			
Stocks	10	-	-
Debtors	11	130,687	9,710
Cash at bank		105,577	106,968
		<u>236,264</u>	<u>116,678</u>
Liabilities			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	12	(159,209)	(8,849)
		<u>77,055</u>	<u>107,829</u>
Net Current Assets			
		<u>1,884,317</u>	<u>1,561,397</u>
Net Assets			
		<u>1,884,317</u>	<u>1,561,397</u>
The Funds of the Charity:			
Unrestricted Funds	13	1,810,312	1,521,291
Restricted Funds	13	74,005	40,106
		<u>1,884,317</u>	<u>1,561,397</u>
Total Funds		<u>1,884,317</u>	<u>1,561,397</u>

For the financial year ending 31 March 2021 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2016 relating to small companies.

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

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small company's regime.

The financial statements on pages 15 to 26 were approved by the Trustees on 24 June 2021 and signed on their behalf by:-

Mr P J Gotham

J C Varley OBE TD

The notes on pages 17 – 26 form part of these financial statements

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 March 2021

1) General information

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust is a company limited by guarantee and therefore has no share capital. Under the Memorandum of Association, each member is required, in the event of a dissolution of the company while they are a member or within 12 months afterwards, to contribute up to £1 toward the company's liabilities and dissolution costs.

The charity was incorporated in England and Wales and details of the registered office can be found in the reference and administrative section of the Trustees report.

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The functional currency of East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust is considered to be pounds sterling because it is the currency of the primary economic environment in which the charitable company operates.

2) Accounting policies

(a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice' applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (March 2018) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

(b) Going concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis and the Trustees are not aware of any material uncertainties that would cast doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. The trustees have considered the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and are satisfied that the charity has sufficient unrestricted reserves to meet the charity's obligations for the next 12 months and therefore consider that the going concern assumption remains appropriate.

(c) Consolidation

In the opinion of the members of the committee, the charity and its subsidiary undertakings comprise a small group. The charity is not required to prepare group accounts under the SORP and has chosen not to take up the option under Section 398 of the Companies Act 2006 to prepare group accounts.

The accounts present information about the charitable company as an individual undertaking and not about its group. Note 9 provides adequate details relating to the nature of the trading subsidiary.

(d) Cash flow statement

The Trustees have taken advantage of the exemption in FRS 102 from including a cash flow statement in the financial statements on the grounds that the charity is small.

(e) Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included in the Statement of Financial Activities when the charitable company is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

- Grant income is recognised in the accounts when the qualifying conditions for the grant have been satisfied and there is reasonable certainty that the funding will be received.
- Income from donations is recognised on receipt.
- Donations received for specific purposes are identified as restricted funds income. Other grants and donations are identified as unrestricted funds.

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

2) Accounting policies (continued)

(f) Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised on an accruals basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered, and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates:

- Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charitable company in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries.
- Governance costs include those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charitable company, including costs linked to strategic management.

(g) Investment

Investments include the investment in the wholly owned subsidiary company, East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited, which is stated at cost. Investments also include stock market investments, which are carried at fair value. Gains or losses on disposals and changes in fair value are credited or charged in the Statement of Financial Activities. Dividends and interest receivable are shown in the Statement of Financial Activities.

All fixed assets are initially recorded at cost.

(h) Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of a fixed asset, less its estimated residual value, on a straight line basis over the estimated useful economic life of that asset, at the following rates:

Buildings	-	10% and 20%
Equipment	-	20% to 50%

(i) Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value, after making due allowance for obsolete and slow moving items.

(j) Funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charitable company.

Restricted funds are subject to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

(k) Financial instruments

Financial assets and liabilities are recognised/(derecognised) when the charity becomes/(ceases to become) party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. The charity holds the following financial assets and liabilities:

- Equity investments are measured at fair value with movements being recognised in income and expenditure.
- Short term debtors and creditors with no stated interest rate and receivable or payable within one year are recorded at transaction price and carried thereafter at amortised cost

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

3) Donations and Legacies

	2021 £	2020 £
Donations	154,070	93,230
Gift aid receipts from subsidiary	57,934	203,552
	<u>212,004</u>	<u>296,782</u>

The income from donations and legacies was £212,004 (2020: £296,782) of which £60,129 was unrestricted (2020: £214,657) and £151,875 restricted (2020: £82,125).

4) Income from Charitable Activities

	2021 £	2020 £
Grants and contracts	130,544	5,391
Prospectus book and leaflet sales	-	-
Sundry receipts	-	3,377
	<u>130,544</u>	<u>8,768</u>

The income from charitable activities was £130,544 (2020: £8,768) of which £nil was unrestricted (2020: £3,377) and £130,544 restricted (2020: £5,391).

5) Investment income

	2021 £	2020 £
Income from:		
UK Investments listed on a recognised Stock Exchange	46,352	47,549
Cash held as part of the investment portfolio	-	477
	<u>46,352</u>	<u>48,026</u>

All investment income received in 2021 and 2020 represents unrestricted funds.

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

6) Resources Expended: Charitable Activities

	Restricted Funds	Unrestricted Funds	Total Funds 2021	Total Funds 2020
	£	£	£	£
Repairs and maintenance	-	74,000	74,000	78,000
Depreciation of equipment	-	3,024	3,024	3,024
Public interpretation	-	15,265	15,265	16,519
Lower Otter Restoration	222,149	-	222,149	96,151
Countryside learning	12,000	10,606	22,606	22,276
Habitat mitigation works	3,744	-	3,744	10,826
Woodbury Castle Steps	7,323	-	7,323	7,323
National Nature Reserve	3,304	-	3,304	4,379
Insurance	-	179	179	268
Bank charges	-	538	538	437
Other administrative expenses	-	(1,376)	(1,376)	4,272
Legal and professional fees	-	-	-	780
Governance costs				
Management	-	26,751	26,751	29,677
Accountancy & Independent examination	-	4,680	4,680	4,536
	248,520	133,667	382,187	278,468

The expenditure from charitable activities was £382,187 (2020: £278,468) of which £133,667 was unrestricted (2020: £193,815) and £248,520 restricted (2020: £84,653).

7) Staff Costs and Emoluments

During the year, the company paid salary, employers NI and pension contribution costs totalling £63,778 (2020: £38,184) for an Education Officer and a Head of Wildlife and Conservation. These costs are funded through donations received by the charity.

The Trustees received no remuneration or reimbursement of expenses within the year.

Key management of the charity is considered to be the Trustees only.

No staff members were paid over £60,000.

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

8) Tangible fixed assets

	Short leasehold improvements £	Equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1 April 2020	58,606	63,423	122,029
Additions	-	-	-
At 31 March 2021	<u>58,606</u>	<u>63,423</u>	<u>122,029</u>
Depreciation			
At 1 April 2020	43,962	54,441	98,403
Charge for the year	7,323	3,024	10,347
At 31 March 2021	<u>51,285</u>	<u>57,465</u>	<u>108,750</u>
Net book value			
At 31 March 2021	<u>7,321</u>	<u>5,958</u>	<u>13,279</u>
At 31 March 2020	<u>14,644</u>	<u>8,982</u>	<u>23,626</u>

9) Investments

Investment in Subsidiary

	2021 £	2020 £
Cost at 1 April 2020 and 31 March 2021	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

The investment comprises 100% of the ordinary share capital (equity) of East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited, a company incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office of this company is the same as the registered office of the Trust which can be found in the reference and administrative section of the Trustees report.

East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited is contracted by the charitable company to undertake the physical management of the East Devon Pebblebed Heaths and Otter Estuary land.

As at 31 March 2021, East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited had assets of £554,323 (2020: £631,187), liabilities of £230,982 (2020: £419,413) and capital and reserves of £323,341 (2020: £211,774). Its total turnover and other income for the year ended 31 March 2021 was £464,339 (2020: £475,855), expenditure was £294,838 (2020: £266,500) and its profit for the year was £169,501 (2020: £209,355).

The profit for the year ended 31 March 2021 was stated before charging company gift aid donations totalling £57,934 (2020: £203,552) to East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Charitable Trust, which were included in expenditure.

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

9) Investments (continued)

Stock Market Portfolio

	2021 £	2020 £
UK investments listed on a recognised stock exchange:		
900,000 Sarasin Endowments Fund Class A	1,075,500	890,640
100,000 Sarasin Income and Reserves Fund Class A	114,000	108,000
39,400 Sarasin Global Higher Dividend	68,320	54,451
213,063 Sarasin Global Dividend	333,018	237,140
150,000 Sarasin Climate Active Endowments Active Class A	182,550	75,675
Cash held as part of the investment portfolio	20,495	63,936
Total investments at 31 March 2021	<u>1,793,883</u>	<u>1,429,842</u>
Reconciliation		
Market value at 1 April 2020	1,429,842	1,470,792
Additions	91,275	227,610
Disposals	-	(57,530)
Net gain/(loss) on investments	316,207	(89,624)
Increase/(decrease) in cash held as part of the investment portfolio	(43,441)	(121,406)
Investment management fees	-	-
Market value at 31 March 2021	<u>1,793,883</u>	<u>1,429,842</u>

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

10) Stock

	2021 £	2020 £
Stock of prospectus books	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

11) Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Other debtors	130,687	9,710
	<u>130,687</u>	<u>9,710</u>
	<u>130,687</u>	<u>9,710</u>

12) Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Other creditors	152,699	2,349
Accruals	6,510	6,500
	<u>159,209</u>	<u>8,849</u>
	<u>159,209</u>	<u>8,849</u>

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

13) Funds

	At 31 Mar 2020 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Transfer/ gains & (losses) £	At 31 Mar 2021 £
Restricted Income Funds:					
Habitat Mitigation Grant	9,331	3,744	(3,744)	-	9,331
Woodbury Castle Steps Grant	15,154	-	(7,323)	-	7,831
Countryside Learning	-	12,000	(12,000)	-	-
Lower Otter Restoration Project	-	246,800	(222,149)	-	24,651
National Nature Reserve	15,621	19,875	(3,304)	-	32,192
	<u>40,106</u>	<u>282,419</u>	<u>(248,520)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>74,005</u>
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
General Funds	1,521,291	106,481	(133,667)	316,207	1,810,312
	<u>1,521,291</u>	<u>106,481</u>	<u>(133,667)</u>	<u>316,207</u>	<u>1,810,312</u>
Total Funds	<u>1,561,397</u>	<u>388,900</u>	<u>(382,187)</u>	<u>316,207</u>	<u>1,884,317</u>

	At 31 Mar 2019 £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Transfer/ gains & (losses) £	At 31 Mar 2020 £
Restricted Income Funds:					
Habitat Mitigation Grant	14,766	5,391	(10,826)	-	9,331
Woodbury Castle Steps Grant	22,477	-	(7,323)	-	15,154
Countryside Learning	-	12,000	(12,000)	-	-
Lower Otter Restoration Project	-	50,125	(50,125)	-	-
National Nature Reserve	-	20,000	(4,379)	-	15,621
	<u>37,243</u>	<u>87,516</u>	<u>(84,653)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>40,106</u>
Unrestricted Income Funds:					
General Funds	1,538,670	266,060	(193,815)	(89,624)	1,521,291
	<u>1,538,670</u>	<u>266,060</u>	<u>(193,815)</u>	<u>(89,624)</u>	<u>1,521,291</u>
Total Funds	<u>1,575,913</u>	<u>353,576</u>	<u>(278,468)</u>	<u>(89,624)</u>	<u>1,561,397</u>

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

FRS 102 requires unrealised gains and losses to be included in Net Income/(Expenditure) in the Statement of Financial Activities. This is included within general funds and not in a separate revaluation reserve.

Funds descriptions:

The Habitat Mitigation Grant fund has arisen from the requirements for developers to mitigate the impact of a development to the environment, under s106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This fund will be utilised to provide facilities to dispose of dog waste in the local area and walk leaflets.

The Woodbury Castle Steps Grant fund has arisen due to Historic England offering to finance specific capital improvements to the Scheduled Monument.

Countryside Learning fund has arisen due to The Ernest Cooke Trust giving a £10,000 grant specifically to contribute towards the salary of an Education Officer, and other donations. The donations were freely given by donors for the purposes of education.

The Lower River Otter restoration project fund has arisen as donations have been received to finance the development of Lower Otter Estuary to explore how we can preserve and improve the downstream part of the River Otter, its estuary, and its immediate surroundings for future generations in the face of a rapidly changing climate. The donations were freely given by donors for the purposes of sustainably improving the landscape.

The National Nature Reserve fund has arisen as donations have been received to finance the launch of the National Nature Reserve status and promotion of its values. The donations were freely given by donors for the purposes of promoting the conservation status of the site.

Sufficient liquid resources are held by the charitable company to allow each fund to be applied in accordance with the conditions set by the donor.

East Devon Pebblebed Heaths Conservation Trust Company Limited by Guarantee

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

Year Ended 31 March 2021

14) Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

2021

	Tangible fixed assets	Investments	Current assets	Liabilities	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted Income Funds	13,279	-	60,726	-	74,005
Unrestricted Income Funds	-	1,793,983	175,538	(159,209)	1,810,312
Total Funds	13,279	1,793,983	236,264	(159,209)	1,884,317

2020

	Tangible fixed assets	Investments	Current assets	Liabilities	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted Income Funds	23,626	-	16,480	-	40,106
Unrestricted Income Funds	-	1,429,942	100,198	(8,849)	1,521,291
Total Funds	23,626	1,429,942	116,678	(8,849)	1,561,397

15) Related Party Transactions

Four of the Trustees of the charitable company are members, Trustees or employees of Clinton Devon Estates. During the year, the charitable company was charged £33,821 (2020: £27,306) by Clinton Devon Estates for management services. The charitable company also reimbursed Clinton Devon Estates £4,131 (2020: £5,527) for expenses incurred on its behalf. At 31 March 2021, £nil (2020: £5,408) was due to the charitable company from Clinton Devon Estates.

The charitable company has a wholly owned trading subsidiary, East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited. During the year, the charitable company was charged £73,000 (2020: £77,000) by East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited for land management services. The charitable company also received a loan from East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited of £150,000 during the year. There is no interest payable on the loan. At 31 March 2021, £150,000 (2020: £nil) was due from the charitable company to East Devon Heaths Land Management Company Limited.