

THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
31 March 2025



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Registered Charity No. 1111939

Registered Company No: 05547805

THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE

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**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE 13-MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

The Directors have pleasure in presenting their report and the unaudited financial statements of The Friends of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum ('The Friends'), a company limited by guarantee and registered charity, for the 13-month period ended 31st March 2025.

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Registered charity name:	The Friends of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum
Charity number:	1111939
Patron:	His Royal Highness, King Charles III
President:	Lord Hague of Richmond
Constitution:	Memorandum and Articles of Association
Company registration number:	05547805
Registered and administrative office:	Oxford Botanic Garden Rose Lane Oxford OX1 4AZ Telephone: 01865 286690 Email: friends.administrator@obg.ox.ac.uk Web: www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk
Secretary:	Professor Simon Hiscock
Accountants:	Wenn Townsend, 30 St Giles', Oxford OX1 3LE
Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd, West Malling, Kent HSBC, Oxford

DIRECTORS

The Directors who served on the Board of the company during the year were as follows (note that changes to the Board were made at the AGM on 24th September 2024 – see below):

Professor Simon Hiscock, Director and Secretary (Appointed 7 July 2023 – active)
Professor John Geddes, Director and Acting Chair (Appointed 7 July 2023 – active)
Mr Marius Apetrei, Treasurer (Appointed 7 July 2023 – active)
Dr Janita Clare Good, Director (Appointed 22 September 2024 – active)
Mr John Percival Leighfield (Appointed 22 September 2024 – active)
Professor Sally Shuttleworth (Appointed 22 September 2024 – active)
Mr Richard George Deverell (Appointed 22 September 2024 – Resigned 8 October 2025)

The administrators to the Directors of The Friends of Oxford Botanic Garden & Harcourt Arboretum were:
Heidi El-Megrissi and Matthew Gill (March 2024 - June 2024)
Anne Marie Lo (June 2024 – Feb 2025)
Becky Don (June 2024 – active)

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13-MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

Details of the Directors of The Friends are set out below:

Simon Hiscock, appointed in 2018, is Director of the Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum and since July 2023, has been serving as Company Secretary. Simon read Botany at Worcester College Oxford and gained his DPhil at Oxford in 1993. In 2000 he moved to the University of Bristol as a lecturer in Plant Sciences. He was subsequently promoted to Reader (2003) and Professor of Botany in 2007 and served as Director of the Bristol Botanic Garden from 2000-2015. He returned to Oxford in July 2015 to take up his current post and a Fellowship at Christ Church. Simon is a trustee and Scientific Secretary of the Linnean Society of London and a trustee of the New Phytologist Trust. He is Editor in Chief of Plants, People, Planet, an open-access interdisciplinary plant science journal.

John Geddes, appointed in July 2023 and served as Chairman until January 2025. He is WA Handley Professor of Psychiatry and a former Head of the Department of Psychiatry, University of Oxford, where his research focuses on the development and evaluation of treatments for people with bipolar and mood disorders. He is Director of Research and Development for Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, for which he has senior budgetary responsibility, provides strategic direction and is accountable to both University and Trust. He is Chair of the Visitors to Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum.

Marius Apetrei, appointed in July 2023, is since July 2023 responsible for financial administration as Treasurer. He is a Chartered Certified Accountant and currently works as Divisional Financial Controller (UAS & GLAM) for the University of Oxford.

Dr Janita Clare Good FRSB, appointed September 2024 is currently serving as a director; in January 2025 became Chairman. She is co-head of Fieldfisher's International Life Sciences and Healthcare Group, where she is a transactional lawyer advising on both corporate and IP deals, including: venture investment, joint ventures, pharma asset divestment and in particular cross-border structured M&A deals. In the transactional intellectual property field deals include: structured licensing, strategic partnering, co-operative research and development and drug supply. Previously, she spent 14 years at the international law firm Osborne Clarke, where she was head of their UK life science and healthcare group. She was educated at the University of Durham and studied for a biochemistry DPhil in the Department of Botany, University of Oxford. She has been a Friend of OBGA for many years and recently joined the Danby Group of patrons.

John Percival Leighfield CBE, appointed September 2024 is currently serving as a director. He is a British IT industry businessman and was previously chairman of RM plc from 1993 until 2011. Currently John Leighfield is a Director of Getmapping, a UK supplier of aerial photography, mapping products and data hosting solutions. He was educated at Magdalen College School and Exeter College Oxford. He holds Honorary Doctorates from the University of Central England, Birmingham, De Montfort University, Wolverhampton University and the University of Warwick. At the University of Warwick, he has been a member of council and chairman of the advisory board; he was pro-chancellor and chairman of the council from 2002 to 2011. He is a member of the Danby Group of patrons of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum.

Sally Shuttleworth CBE FBA, appointed September 2024 is currently serving as a director. She is a Senior Research Fellow at St Anne's College, Oxford. Recently retired, Sally was Professor of English Literature at the University of Oxford specialising in Literature and Science. From 2006 to 2011, she was Head of the Humanities Division, University of Oxford. She has also held academic posts at the Universities of Princeton, Leeds and Sheffield, and fellowships at Harvard, Cornell, Otago, and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin. She is a Fellow of the British Academy, and has just stepped down from being Vice-President and Treasurer of the British Academy, and also as Chair of the Research Advisory Awards Committee of the Leverhulme Trust. From 2015-2021 Sally was Chair of the Board of Visitors of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum. She is currently on the Advisory Board of the Science Museum, London.

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13-MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

Richard George Deverell CBE, appointed September 2024 served as a director until he resigned on 8th October 2025. He has been Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew since 2012. He was previously Controller of CBBC, the department within the BBC responsible for output aimed at children, which he revamped with a mission to raise the quality and impact of programming. He then became the BBC's programme director for the W12 project, responsible for the sale of the BBC's property in West London including Television Centre. Since joining Kew, he has led the refresh of Kew's strategy, bringing expertise from Kew's global science into sharper focus and more actively engaging the public with contemporary science and conservation in Kew's beautiful historic gardens. Richard was a member of the Board of Visitors of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum from 2014-2024, advising on all aspects of the strategic development of the department.

AIMS

The aims of The Friends of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum are to support and assist the work of the Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum (OBGA, sometimes 'The Garden'). OBGA/The Garden, part of Oxford University, has objectives which benefit both the University, the wider academic community, international plant conservation and the general public. These are to make the plant collections:

- a focus for research, teaching and collections-based scholarship within the University;
- a research resource for a wide range of external scholarly users, nationally and internationally;
- a facility for communication and interaction between the University and the public;
- an educational resource for schools and for tertiary educational institutions;
- a focus for plant conservation, both nationally and internationally in accordance the Garden's commitment to the Global Strategy for Plant Conservation;
- a catalyst for lifelong learning and cultural recreation in the immediate region, and for national and international visitors; and
- an active contributor to the cultural and economic development of the region.

The Garden was formed as a 'Physic Garden' in 1621 and is the oldest botanic garden in the UK. It has a long history of serving both the University and the public with its research, teaching, plant conservation, educational and recreational themes. The Arboretum at Nuneham Courtenay became part of Oxford Botanic Garden in 1963, hence the department is known as Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum (OBGA).

OBGA participates in a global strategy for plant conservation with other leading botanic gardens around the world, through a programme of propagation and distribution of rare plants. At the Arboretum, the woodlands and wild flower meadows are managed to ensure these habitats are conserved for future generations. Through its apprenticeship scheme OBGA makes a major contribution to the creation of the next generation of horticulturalists and arboriculturalists for the UK and overseas. In addition, both the Botanic Garden and the Arboretum provide recreational facilities for the public to enjoy throughout the year. During the period Mar-24 to Mar-25 there were 241,402 visitors to the two facilities (2023/24: 231,774) – an increase of (4%) and above pre-pandemic highs. Since March, visitor numbers have continued to increase at both the Garden and Arboretum.

The Directors (Trustees) have a duty to ensure that the charity's activities exist for the public benefit. They have considered Charity Commission guidance in section 17(5) of the 2011 Charities Act, and are satisfied that the performance and achievements of the charity during the year, as outlined below, are consistent with this duty.

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13 MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT

The Friends of the Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum is a registered charity and a company limited (by guarantee). The Friends are governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association and managed by a Board of Directors. The Directors are charity trustees as defined by Section 177 of the Charities Act 2011.

The Directors are elected for three years by members of The Friends at the Annual General Meeting. A third of the Directors must retire each year, but may stand for re-election. Separately, the University of Oxford is entitled to appoint an additional Director for a three-year term of office. Since September 2018, this post is held by Professor Simon Hiscock; Director of the University of Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum. Under the Articles of Association, other Directors shall include the officers of The Friends, namely Professor John Geddes (Chairman until January 2025) and Mr Marius Apetrei (Treasurer). At the September 2024 AGM new Directors Dr Janita Good, John Leighfield, Professor Sally Shuttleworth, and Richard Deverell were elected.

The Directors have the power to co-opt members during the year. Board meetings are held at least three times each year. Management of membership recruitment and publicity, special events and visits to private gardens is delegated to small groups of volunteers. During the year all the members of these small groups met three times with the Directors as the Forum of The Friends. An administrator who is a University employee supports The Friends on a full time or part time basis.

The accounts are examined each year by an independent firm of chartered accountants. The major risks to which the charity is exposed have been reviewed. The Directors are satisfied that procedures are in place to mitigate the risks so far as is possible.

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13 MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

It has been a successful year for the Friends with preparation and planning for the merger of the Charity's operations with those of OBGA/Oxford University proceeding smoothly. At the EGM held March on 24th 2025 (see Future Plans below) members voted unanimously for the merger and subsequent transfer of the Charity's assets to OBGA/Oxford University.

The Friends continued to provide financial and volunteer support to the Botanic Garden and Arboretum during the year and benefit from close relationships with OBGA staff and from enthusiastic help from many members.

Friends funding has supported the development and enhancement of the collections of both the Botanic Garden and the Arboretum. Friends funding has also supported the educational activities of the Education Officers in their work with schools (both primary and secondary) and with the Public Education Programme (PEP).

Friends membership has remained stable at approx. 3000 members. The decision to appoint a new Friends and Patrons Manager as part of post-merger operations was taken with a view to developing a new strategic approach to grow the membership, especially by attracting younger members and diversifying the membership.

Programme and events

Friends of OBGA receive membership benefits unrivalled by other UK botanic gardens. Over the past years all of the normal activities, including events for the Friends and Patrons' groups, garden visits and fund-raising activities and events such as May Morning, an opera, and seasonal parties, as well as drinks receptions linked to botanical highlights were well-supported by the members.

Administration

Since the Friends of OBGA charity merged with the University, all active memberships have been transferred to the University CRM, where membership communications and sales are now managed to ensure GDPR and financial compliance. The former Raiser's Edge database is maintained solely as an archive and will be phased out over time.

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13 MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

Fund-raising

The Friends raise funds from membership subscriptions, special events, visits to third party gardens, legacy donations and from occasional appeals for specific OBGA projects for which alternative funding is not available.

During 2019 the Friends launched an appeal to improve the paths at the Arboretum to make this more accessible for all. This appeal was launched to mark the 400th anniversary of the Botanic Garden, which was celebrated under pandemic restrictions in 2021 (including a visit from the Patron, HRH Prince Charles, now King Charles III) and celebrated fully in 2022. The appeal also supports the Garden and Arboretum's wider strategy for a visitor centre at the Arboretum. To date the appeal has raised £610,424 (including £87,205 raised through the University of Oxford's Development Office) towards its target of £750,000. As well as asking Friends for donations, applications have been and are being made to grant making trusts for funds.

The Directors continue to make increasing subscription income a priority. Efforts to recruit at Garden events and to encourage Friends to introduce new members, either directly or by gift subscriptions, are being increased.

Visits to other gardens by members of The Friends and by the Bobarts Patrons' Group are very popular with many being fully booked and there is often a waiting list. May Morning and New College Opera are also well supported.

Grant making

Funds generated, net of costs, are transferred to OBGA to support the strategies and priorities of the Director and the Board of Visitors. The exact purpose and timing of the transfer of funds is agreed between the Directors of The Friends and the OBGA Senior Team from time to time. Subscription income, net of administration costs, is allocated to minor projects and funding needs of the Botanic Garden and Arboretum. During the year 2024/2025, new grants were awarded to OBGA in the amount of £55,000 (2023/2024: £0) and awards made in previous years are still active and used to support collections development at the Botanic Garden and Arboretum and in support of education.

Volunteers

In addition to the considerable voluntary input to the work of The Friends, volunteers play an increasingly large role at both the Botanic Garden and Arboretum in gardening and other tasks.

Administration and Communication:

The Friends Charity has a very happy and fruitful working relationship with the Director of OBGA, Professor Simon Hiscock and has been pleased and excited to support his ambitious plans for both the Botanic Garden and Arboretum. To help reduce costs, Friends are encouraged to pay by Direct Debit and to receive communications, including the Newsletters, by email rather than post. Over 74% of Friends now pay by Direct Debit and 90% have authorised communication by email, including the e-bulletin. The Friends continue to benefit from the very considerable work of its volunteers.

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13 MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

Benefits to Friends:

Friends benefit from unlimited access to the Botanic Garden and Arboretum as well as the opportunity to join specially organised visits. Three high quality, 16-page A4 Newsletters are sent to the Friends each year, electronically and/or in hardcopy. Whilst these Newsletters are produced primarily for the Friends, they are also available to the public in hard copy at the Garden shop and through The Friends' website. Those Friends who have registered their email address with the Garden office receive e-bulletins three times a year between issues of the Newsletters. The Friends' website is part of the Garden website and continues to be enhanced. The Friends also have reciprocal visiting rights at certain other UK gardens. The monthly Coffee Mornings incorporating tours of the Garden or Arboretum led by OBGA staff are very popular and attract 60-80 people per session depending on the weather.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Income:

Subscription income, excluding Gift Aid tax refunds, amounted to £143,117 (2023-24: £122,386). Revenue from garden visits and special events, excluding running costs, was £47,919 (2023-24: £54,158). Other income, including donations and claimable Gift Aid, totalled £27,130 (2023-24: £28,702). Additionally, investment income was £24,052 (2023-24: £20,800).

Expenditure:

Governance and communication costs were £92,892 (2023-24: £66,183) for the year. Material items include £63,998 relating to administrative support services provided by OBGA for the Friends, of which £25,055 represents professional fees to provide counsel on the merger between the Friends Charity and the University, £10,900 in independent examiner's fees, while £12,178 supported the IT functions and £3,070 to produce and circulate the Friends Newsletters to its members three times a year.

Grants:

£55,000 of new pledged funds were agreed to the Oxford Botanical Garden and Arboretum during the course of the financial period. £20,000 was awarded to each curator along with £15,000 to the Education team.

Cash:

The total cash held at the time of the merger (31 March 2025) was £938,004 (2023-24: £849,067) of which £523,219 continues to be ringfenced to fund the Arboretum Paths while a further £119,366 is expected to match-fund costs incurred by OBGA that is associated with various OBGA activities. As agreed, The Friends maintain a minimum of £30,000 under the reserves policy as set out in the next paragraph.

Reserves policy:

It is the policy of The Friends to maintain unrestricted general funds, which are the free reserves of the company, in excess of £30,000 at all times. The minimum level of these reserves should be available as accessible cash deposits. This allows The Friends to be able to respond immediately to requests by OBGA for grants in order that it may secure third party matching funds. This minimum level of unrestricted funds should also allow all commitments to be met in the unlikely event of The Friends ceasing to exist. Unrestricted funds were maintained above this level throughout the year.

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13 MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

FUTURE PLANS

At the July 2023 AGM members voted that it would be in the best interests of the Friends (and OBGA) for the Friends Charity to merge its operations with OBGA/The University of Oxford. It was considered that this move, in line with previous decisions taken by the Friends of the Ashmolean Museum and Bodleian Library, would improve the efficiency and effective operations of the Friends for the benefit of the membership and its core objectives in support of OBGA. At that meeting new University Directors Professor John Geddes and Marius Apetrei were elected to join Professor Simon Hiscock.

Since then, and through 2024, the Directors have overseen preparations for the merger and eventual transfer of the assets of the Friends Charity to OBGA/The University of Oxford taking legal advice on behalf of the Friends Charity from BDB Pitmans LLP to ensure that the merger proceeds in line with Charity Commission and Companies House rules and in the interests of the membership. At the same time OBGA/the University of Oxford took legal advice from University Legal Services to ensure the merger proceeds in the interests of the University. Based on this legal advice new 'independent' Directors (i.e. non-University employees) Dr Janita Good, Professor Sally Shuttleworth, John Leighfield and Richard Deverell were elected at the AGM in September 2024. In the months that followed both legal teams agreed on a process for the merger and on that basis the Directors called for an EGM to be held in early 2025 to vote on the transfer of Friends assets to OBGA/the University of Oxford.

The EGM was held on March 24th 2025 and members of the Friends of OBGA voted in favour of entering into the agreement to transfer its assets to OBGA/the University of Oxford ("Asset Transfer Agreement"). The transaction was completed on 31st March 2025 and the membership scheme transferred to OBGA/the University of Oxford who now fully administer the Friends of OBGA membership scheme. As a consequence, the Friends Charity became a 'shell company' but its constitution (Memorandum and Articles of Association ("Articles")) remained unchanged. The Articles require that an AGM is held this year (2025). This AGM is scheduled to take place on December 1st 2025 at which under the terms of the Asset Transfer Agreement the Friends Charity will vote to adopt new Articles in line with it being a 'shell company'. The new articles are in very similar format to those adopted by the Friends of the Bodleian in March 2018 and remove the requirement for holding AGMs going forward and that the only members are the Directors/Trustees. Like the Friends of the Bodleian shell company OBGA will continue to receive legacies in the name of the Friends charity.

Instead of a formal AGM in subsequent years the members of the Friends (now administered by OBGA/the University of Oxford) will be invited to an informal meeting to share feedback and ideas to develop the membership and the patron groups.

The Directors continue to be pleased with the fundraising campaign to raise £750k towards improvements to the paths (see above) at the Arboretum and former Director and Chair of the Board, Sarah Taylor, will continue to lead the campaign to its completion.

Vigorous efforts continue to be made to increase membership income. The realisation of present plans and a higher public profile will provide opportunities to increase membership and income. Directors are working very closely with OBGA staff on ideas to increase income from all sources and to give cost effective support to the evolving strategies for the Botanic Garden and Arboretum.

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13 MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

GOING CONCERN

The Directors of The Friends of Oxford Botanic Garden & Arboretum transferred the operational activities of the charity to the Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford ("the University") on 31 March 2025. The Directors expect to transfer the charity's remaining assets and liabilities to the University within the next 12 months. After this transfer, the charity will be dormant, without ongoing activities, save for potentially receiving future legacies.

As the charity has ceased its operations and will not continue as a going concern, the Directors consider that the going-concern basis of preparation is not appropriate. However, no adjustments have been made to the carrying values of assets and liabilities, as these are expected to be transferred at their existing book values, with no fair value adjustments required. Details of the transfer, which will take place for £nil consideration, are provided in Note 20.

STATEMENT OF DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

The Directors are responsible for preparing the Directors' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the Directors to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under that law they have elected to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities and applicable law (UK Generally Accepted Accounting Practice applicable to Smaller Entities).

Under company law the Directors must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss of the company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The Directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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 FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REPORT (continued)
FOR THE 13 MONTH PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

REPORTING ACCOUNTANTS

At the Annual General Meeting held on 24th September 2024, Wenn Townsend were appointed to act as reporting accountants for the accounts to 31 March 2025.

SMALL COMPANY PROVISIONS

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime under the Companies Act 2006.

Registered office:
Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum
Rose Lane
Oxford
OX1 4AZ

Signed by order of the Directors

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hiscock', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Professor Simon Hiscock
Director and Secretary

Date: 12 December 2025

THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDENS & ARBORETUM

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT
TO THE TRUSTEES OF FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANICAL GARDEN & ARBORETUM**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the period ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 13 to 20.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the 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, other than the disclosures within note 20.

A Rodzynski

Andrew Rodzynski ACA
Wenn Townsend
Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
30 St Giles
Oxford
OX1 3LE

15 December 2025

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
For the 13-month period ended 31 March 2025**

(including Income and Expenditure Account)

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and subscriptions	2	167,660	20,401	188,062	151,088
Charitable activities	4	13,126	16,978	30,104	54,158
Investment income	5	-	24,052	24,052	20,800
Total income		180,786	61,432	242,218	226,046
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	6	(14,633)	(6,877)	(21,510)	(27,570)
Charitable activities	7	(55,000)	-	(55,000)	-
Other	8	(92,892)	-	(92,892)	(66,183)
Total		(162,525)	(6,877)	(169,403)	(93,753)
Net income / (expenditure) before transfers		18,261	54,555	72,816	132,293
Transfers between funds		(10,800)	10,800	-	-
Transfer of net assets to:					
The Chancellor Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford	20	(291,064)	(223,219)	(514,283)	
Net income / (expenditure) for the period		(283,602)	(157,865)	(441,467)	132,293
Net movement in funds		(283,602)	(157,865)	(441,467)	132,293
Reconciliation of Funds					
Funds brought forward at 1 March 2024		283,602	157,865	441,467	309,173
Funds carried forward at 31 March 2025		-	-	-	441,466

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the period.
All income and expenditure derives from continuing activities.

**THE FRIENDS OF OXFORD BOTANIC GARDEN & ARBORETUM
COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
For the 13-month period ended 31 March 2025**

The Friends of Oxford Botanic Gardens & Arboretum

Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £	2024 £
Current assets					
Debtors	10	-		56,883	
Cash at bank and in hand		-		849,067	
		-		905,950	
Liabilities					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	-		(435,210)	
Net current assets			-		470,741
Total assets less current liabilities			-		470,741
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	12		-		(29,274)
Net assets			-		441,467
Total net assets			-		441,467
Funds:	13				
Restricted funds			-		157,865
Unrestricted funds			-		283,602
Total funds	20		-		441,467

For the 13 month period ended 31 March 2025, the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

No members have required the company to obtain an audit of its accounts for the period in question 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 the accounts.

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

The financial statements were approved by the trustees and authorised for issue on 12 December 2025 and are signed on their behalf by:

Janita Good

Dr Janita Clare Good
Director

Simon Hiscock

Professor Simon Hiscock
Director and Secretary

The Friends of Oxford Botanic Gardens & Arboretum

Notes to the accounts

For the 13-month period ended 31 March 2025

1 Statement of Accounting Policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Accounting Standards, in particular 'FRS 102: The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (FRS 102).

The Friends are a public benefit entity for the purposes of FRS 102 and a registered charity and have therefore also prepared the financial statements in accordance with 'The Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements in accordance with FRS 102' (The Charity SORP (FRS 102)).

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis and on the historical cost basis; the principal accounting policies adopted are set out below and have been applied consistently throughout the year.

Cash Flow Statement

The Trustees are exempt from producing a cash flow statement under section 7 of FRS 102.

Incoming resources

Incoming resources are included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified within reasonable accuracy. No amounts are included in the financial statements for services donated by volunteers or donated facilities. Fees received for life membership are released in equal amounts to incoming resources over 20 years, commencing in the year of receipt of the subscription.

Other membership fees are recognised in the year of receipt. Income and expenditure related to fund raising activities are recognised in the year that the activity occurred.

Interest receivable for the year on bank deposits is based on accrued interest during the financial year. Tax refunds are included on the basis of the gift aid claim submitted to HMRC after the end of the year for which the accounts are being prepared.

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Fixed assets and depreciation

The Charity has no fixed assets.

Taxation

The Friends is a registered charity and is exempt from tax on income and gains. It is not registered for Value Added Tax (VAT).

Funds accounting

General funds are classed as unrestricted which are available for use at the discretion of the Directors in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and have not been designated for other purposes. Designated funds comprise of unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the Directors for particular purposes. The aim and use of any designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements. Restricted funds are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or have been raised by the charity for particular purposes.

The Friends of Oxford Botanic Gardens & Arboretum

Notes to the accounts (continued) For the 13-month period ended 31 March 2025

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted 2025 £	Restricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Donations	627	18,260	18,887	5,053
Legacies	2,000	-	2,000	-
Membership subscriptions (excl gift aid)	143,117	-	143,117	122,386
Gift aid	21,917	2,141	24,058	23,649
	<u>167,660</u>	<u>20,401</u>	<u>188,062</u>	<u>151,088</u>

The membership subscriptions include an additional month's subscription due to the extended financial period. Restricted donations include £14,815 received from the *Horticulture and Harmony* event and £3,000 donation towards the Opera.

3 Membership

	Total 2025 number	Total 2024 number
Single	1,023	1,093
Joint	1,536	1,518
Single + 1	43	42
Bobart Single	30	38
Bobart Joint	48	44
Life Single	100	99
Life Joint	96	98
Danby Single	4	4
Danby Joint	10	10
	<u>2,890</u>	<u>2,946</u>

4 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted 2025 £	Restricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Visits to gardens	12,920	-	12,920	30,983
Concerts, opera	-	8,214	8,214	13,320
Other activities	206	8,764	8,970	9,855
	<u>13,126</u>	<u>16,978</u>	<u>30,104</u>	<u>54,158</u>

5 Income from investments

	Unrestricted 2025 £	Restricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Bank interest	-	24,052	24,052	20,800

The Friends of Oxford Botanic Gardens & Arboretum

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the 13-month period ended 31 March 2025

6 Raising funds

	Unrestricted 2025 £	Restricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Visits to gardens	14,633	-	14,633	16,908
Concerts, opera	-	5,257	5,257	5,618
Other activities	-	1,620	1,620	5,003
Plant sale	-	-	-	41
Danby Group	-	-	-	-
Paths appeal	-	-	-	-
	14,633	6,877	21,510	27,570

7 Other expenditure

	Unrestricted 2025 £	Restricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Grants to Oxford Botanic Garden & Arboretum				
Curator of the Garden	20,000	-	20,000	-
Curator of the Arboretum	20,000	-	20,000	-
Education team	15,000	-	15,000	-
	-	-	-	-
	55,000	-	55,000	-

8 Other costs

	Unrestricted 2025 £	Restricted 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Newsletters	3,070	-	3,070	4,385
General postage	141	-	141	3
Printing and stationery	2,605	-	2,605	3,723
Software fees and IT support	12,178	-	12,178	7,015
Administration & other costs	63,998	-	63,998	49,177
Governance - independent examination fee	10,900	-	10,900	1,880
	92,892	-	92,892	66,183

9 Staff Costs

	2025 £	2024 £
Staff costs during the period were:		
Wages and salaries	-	-
Social security costs	-	-
Defined contribution pension costs	-	-
	-	-

The trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during the year (2024: £0).

The Friends of Oxford Botanic Gardens & Arboretum

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the 13-month period ended 31 March 2025

10 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Gift aid debtor	-	23,411
Other debtors	-	432
Other Prepayments and accrued income	-	33,040
	<u>-</u>	<u>56,883</u>

11 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Grants payable	-	410,686
Accruals and deferred income	-	24,523
	<u>-</u>	<u>435,210</u>

12 Creditors: amounts falling due in greater than one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Life membership subscriptions	-	29,274
	<u>-</u>	<u>29,274</u>

13 Funds

	Balance at 1 March 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 31 Mar 2025 (before merger) £	Funds transferred to Oxford University £	Balance at 31 Mar 2025 (after merger) £
Restricted funds							
Arboretum Paths	147,865	61,432	(6,877)	20,800	223,219	(223,219)	-
Rock garden	10,000			(10,000)	-	-	-
	<u>157,865</u>	<u>61,432</u>	<u>(6,877)</u>	<u>10,800</u>	<u>223,219</u>	<u>(223,219)</u>	<u>-</u>
Unrestricted funds							
Unrestricted funds	283,603	180,786	(162,525)	(20,800)	281,064	(281,064)	-
Transfer between funds	-			10,000	10,000	(10,000)	-
	<u>283,603</u>	<u>180,786</u>	<u>(162,525)</u>	<u>(10,800)</u>	<u>291,064</u>	<u>(291,064)</u>	<u>-</u>
Total funds	<u>441,467</u>	<u>242,218</u>	<u>(169,403)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>514,283</u>	<u>(514,283)</u>	<u>-</u>

The Friends of Oxford Botanic Gardens & Arboretum

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the 13-month period ended 31 March 2025

Comparative funds

	Balance at 1 Mar 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Gains, losses and transfers £	Balance at 28 Feb 2024 £
Restricted funds					
Arboretum Paths	131,166	23,622	(6,923)	-	147,865
Rock Garden	10,000	-	-	-	10,000
	141,166	23,622	(6,923)	-	157,865
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted funds	168,007	202,424	(86,830)	-	283,602
	168,007	202,424	(86,830)	-	283,602
Total funds	309,173	226,046	(93,753)	-	441,467

Arboretum fund includes specific donations received to support the work of the Arboretum.

None of the unrestricted funds have been designated for specific projects.

14 Analysis of net assets between funds

Fund balances at 31 March 2025 are represented by:

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Current assets	-	-	-
Current liabilities	-	-	-
Non-current liabilities	-	-	-
Total net assets	-	-	-

15 Capital commitments

The Charity has no capital commitments contracted for but not provided in the financial statements (2024: £nil).

16 Commitments under operating leases

The Charity has no lease payments due under non-cancellable operating leases (2024: £nil).

The Friends of Oxford Botanic Gardens & Arboretum

Notes to the accounts (continued)

For the 13-month period ended 31 March 2025

17 Contingent liabilities

There are no contingent liabilities that require disclosure.

18 Members liability

Each member of the charitable company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company in the event of it being wound up while he/she is a member, or within one year after he/she ceases to be a member, such amount as may be required, not exceeding £1 for the debts and liabilities contracted before he/she ceases to be a member.

19 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions during the period (2024: £ nil).

The Charity received £0 donations from trustees during the year (2024: £ nil).

20 Transfer of Activities

	Value reported by transferring company	Transfer out recognised
	£	£
Current assets		
Debtors	48,213	48,213
Cash at bank and in hand	938,004	938,004
Liabilities		
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(445,278)	(445,278)
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	(26,656)	(26,656)
Net assets	514,283	514,283
Net Assets Analysis		
Restricted funds	223,219	223,219
Unrestricted funds	291,064	291,064
	514,283	514,283

On 31 March 2025, the Friends of the Oxford Botanic Garden and Arboretum charity transferred its assets and liabilities to the Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford. The assets and liabilities were transferred with no fair value adjustments, as shown in the table above, for £nil consideration.