

# THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING

England & Wales · Charity number 1147925

## Details

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<b>Other names</b>	MDNIA, THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING LIMITED, THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NIA, MDNEP, Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Partnership
<b>Status</b>	Registered
<b>Legal form</b>	CIO
<b>Registered</b>	2012-07-03
<b>Register</b>	<a href="#">View on the Charity Commission register</a>

## Contact

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<b>Address</b>	Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage Arnolds Hill Wingfield Trowbridge Wiltshire BA14 9LD
<b>Phone</b>	07855 506112
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:MarlboroughDowns@gmail.com">MarlboroughDowns@gmail.com</a>
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.spacefornature.net">www.spacefornature.net</a>

## Activities

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**Objects:** TO PROMOTE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIROMENT. TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT.TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC BY THE PRESERVATION, CONSERVATION AND THE PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE PRUDENT USE OF RESOURCES. THE PROMOTION OF SUSTAINABLE MEANS OF ACHIEVING ECONOMIC GROWTH AND REGENERATION.

**Activities:** Promotion of the improvement of the physical and natural environment of sustainable development for the benefit of the public by the preservation, conservation and protection of the environment through prudent use of resources. Education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment. Promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration.

## Classification

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- **How:** Provides Other Finance, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Environment/conservation/heritage, Economic/community Development/employment, Recreation
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

## Geography

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- Wiltshire

## Finances

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Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£4,165	£5,354	-	-
2024-03-31	£22,436	£40,514	-	-
2023-03-31	£25,677	£33,419	-	-
2022-03-31	£31,571	£14,373	-	-
2021-03-31	£10,074	£26,273	-	-

## Trustees

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Name	Role	Appointed
Chris Musgrave		2012-06-21
Gillian Carter		2019-11-26
Matthew Warren Roman Moore		2014-10-02
Peter John Lawson		2019-11-26
Piers Graham Boutflower Maynard		2020-11-19
Robin Edward Butler		2016-09-13
Victoria Scarlett Lowes		2018-11-28

**THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING**

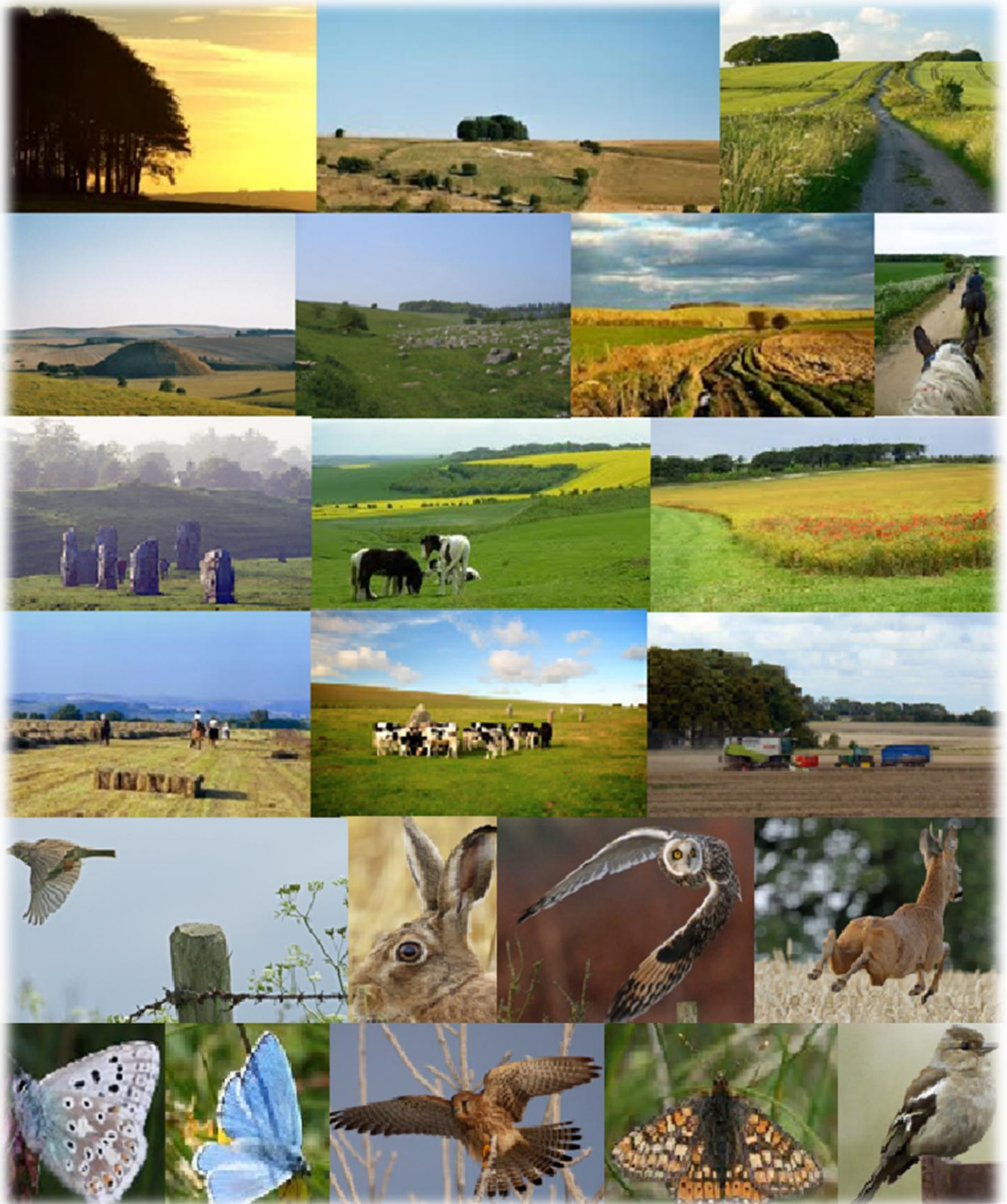
England & Wales - Charity number 1147925

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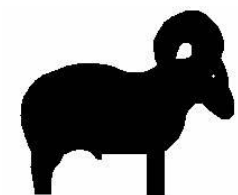
# Accounts

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# The Marlborough Downs: Space for Nature



Thirteenth Annual Report



Dr Jemma Batten  
Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Project Manager  
Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage  
Arnolds Hill – Wingfield – Trowbridge – Wiltshire BA14 9LD

☎ 07855 506112

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**The Marlborough Downs  
Nature Enhancement Farming Group**  
(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

Report and Unaudited Financial Statements  
for the year to 31st March 2025

Registered Charity Number: 1147925

# **The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Group**

(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

The trustee board presents its annual report and unaudited financial statements for year to 31 March 2025.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS**

Charity Registration No: 1147925

Principal Address: Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage, Arnolds Hill, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LD

Registered address: Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage, Arnolds Hill, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LD

Trustees that served during the period:

- Christopher Musgrave – Chair
- Marcus Robert Cooper
- Robin Butler
- Gillian Carter
- Peter Lawson
- Victoria Lowes
- Piers Maynard
- Matthew Moore

Project Management: Black Sheep Countryside Management – Lead Dr Jemma Batten

### **Independent Examiner**

Not required as income was less than £25,000

### **Bank**

Barclays Bath Branch, 4-5 Southgate Street, Bath BA1 1AQ

# The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Group

(A Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

### 1. Chairman's Introduction

As we mark our thirteenth year since the inception of our farmer-led group, it is with immense pride that I reflect on our journey and the progress we have made together. This year has been a pivotal one, as we transitioned from a Charitable Company limited by guarantee to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This structural shift not only enhances our operational efficiency but also strengthens our commitment to our mission.

It has been both a pleasure and an education to meet up at our seasonal events, where experts and group members have shared invaluable insights on relevant issues related to farming, wildlife, the landscape, and the environment in a broader context. These talks have sparked meaningful discussions, igniting a collective drive for change among our members and the wider community.

One of the most heartening developments has been the continued commitment of local farmers to the concept of working together as a cohesive group. In a world increasingly challenged by environmental crises, this solidarity among farmers showcases our collective commitment to sustainable practices and shared goals. Together, we are tackling the significant challenges posed by climate change and biodiversity loss, demonstrating that collaboration can lead to impactful solutions.

As we look to the future, I am excited about the possibilities that lie ahead. With our new structure and the continued support of our dedicated members, I am confident that we will carry our mission forward and make an even greater difference in the years to come.

Thank you for your unwavering commitment and passion for our cause. Together, we can forge a sustainable path for our community, our landscape, and our planet.

Chris Musgrave  
Chair

## **2. Structure, governance and management**

### **Governing Document**

The charity became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 8 November 2024, converting from a charitable company limited by guarantee which was originally incorporated on 12 January. The company first registered as a charity on 3 July 2012.

The CIO is governed by an 'Association' model constitution (with voting members other than its charity trustees) which establishes the objects and powers of the CIO. In the event of the charity being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £10.

### **Organisational Structure**

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Group has a board made up of farming and non-farming trustees and invited associates. Chris Musgrave is the chair of the charity board.

Projects are a collaboration between the farmers of the Marlborough Downs (who are members of the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming CIO), Black Sheep Countryside Management (responsible for project delivery), and various other stakeholders. Board meetings are run as project board meetings and for this purpose representatives from the non-farming community and partner organisations have been co-opted to the board. They are:

- Victoria Lowes and Christopher Musgrave (non-farming representatives)
- Jemma Batten, Senior Consultant, Black Sheep Countryside Management (project director)

Other key stakeholders may be invited to attend board meetings from time to time. All strategic decisions are taken at these properly constituted project board meetings. All agenda items are supported by board papers, which include a risk analysis and clear recommendations to be discussed and considered. The decisions are clearly recorded, and meeting minutes with actions are circulated and made available to all members via the website.

### **Recruitment & Training**

This is the thirteenth year of the charity, and this report covers the year ended 31st March 2025. The charity continues with the same overall aim as in previous years. All bar one of the trustees are currently or have previously been farmers and represent the farming community in the Marlborough Downs area. Some have been on the board from the start of the charity and others have joined since. No new trustees were appointed in the year to 31st March 2025.

The skills of the project board and their advisers are considered to be appropriate for the requirements of the charity's objectives and have been able to meet the project targets over the year. Trustees are offered training to fill any further gaps identified and if required additional trustees with new skills would be recruited.

### 3. Financial Review

This has largely been a year of reflection, redefining the structure of the partnership and the Space for Nature project, and as such has been a quiet one in terms of activities delivered. Income has been generated through one-off donations, with bi-annual group events being self-funded through ticket sales. Overheads appear disproportionately high this year, due to the amount of work required to achieve the conversion from charitable company to CIO, and the fact that regardless of the level of activity, there are certain administrative tasks that remain a legal requirement (for example, an AGM, annual report and accounts).

Activities	Income	Spend	Under/over-spend
Community	£250	£202	£48
Landscape	£2,321	£1,720	£601
Overheads	£1,594	£3,432	(£1,838)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£4,165</b>	<b>£5,354</b>	<b>(£1,189)</b>

*Please note: All figures are rounded to the nearest £1. Numbers in brackets are negative, i.e. overspend.*

£21,259 of restricted funding was brought forward (Landscape).

#### **Reserves Policy**

The policy on reserves is accepted as being minimal as offices are virtual and all work is undertaken by volunteers or contractors. In the past, a reserve of £4,000 for unforeseen events has been considered adequate as this could cover half a year's management costs in an emergency. As of 31 March 2025, we had £1,636 unrestricted funds in reserve which was considered sufficient at the time as we were about to collect subscriptions from members which would significantly boost this figure.

#### **Donations In Kind**

In addition to the actual management of the budget, the charity benefits from items and services donated as 'in kind'. As in previous years, much of this has been in the form of pro bono staff time to support the project, habitat management activities undertaken by members, and free venue and facility use. Volunteer time accounted for a proportion of activities undertaken including additional project management time. However, the majority of this was not recorded due to the lack of reporting and paid support time to record and collate.

### 4. Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others

The trustees function as custodians and ultimately the controlling group of the funds held. This was limited during the year as explained above. Otherwise, no funds are held on behalf of others.

## **5. Public benefit statement**

Through the Space for Nature project, the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Partnership aims to deliver a more biodiverse, more attractive, and more accessible landscape. Alongside these obvious, tangible benefits come a suite of gains that may be more difficult to quantify but are known collectively as ecosystem services. Such gains include improved water quality due to reduced agricultural inputs; a contribution towards the physical and mental health of residents and visitors through access to green spaces and fresh air; mitigation against climate change through building robust ecological networks; better crop pollination; support for a strong rural economy via agriculture, tourism and recreation; and the social, cultural and educational benefits that are a result of interaction with nature.

The partnership is driven by the fact that despite decades of conservation effort, many of our habitats and species are at best stable and at worst in decline and while most of the farmers in the area have long been involved in environmental schemes, we have shown that the farmer-led, bottom-up approach of this initiative can lead to far greater and more wide-reaching benefits as a result of the 'ownership' conferred on us by the Space for Nature project. We have also demonstrated that the longevity of this project exceeds that of others that rely upon financial incentives rather than personal commitment.

As well as environmental and conservation benefits there is an emphasis on education of the public through volunteer opportunities to support the project as well as direct educational activities provided by the project. We work to provide better public access and information to encourage people to enjoy and understand the landscape while improving their health and wellbeing.

## **6. Objectives and activities**

The objectives of the charity are:

- To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment.
- To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection, and improvement of the environment.
- To promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by the preservation, conservation and the protection of the environment and the prudent use of resources.
- The promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration.

We understand that a landscape-scale approach cannot succeed without widespread farmer involvement, and we have ensured that all farmers in the area have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the project, and this year have welcomed members from farms that were previously outside the project boundary. Members have access to high quality, relevant workshops,

advice, and information on a wide range of topics which enable them to collectively deliver the aims and objectives of the Space for Nature project across the Marlborough Downs.

We also encourage local people to get more involved in the countryside, and promote greater awareness of landscape, wildlife, and farming. We are keen to enthuse people about the countryside and get the non-farming community involved with activities on and about the Downs through events and activities, workshops, and work parties. We work with other grass-roots groups to promote community effort and cohesion, as groups and individuals are brought together with a common aim.

## **7. Achievements and performance Year 13 (April 2024 to March 2025)**

As stated in the previous annual report, in January 2024 members came together to review and update our project aims and objectives. We identified new goals and aspirations and agreed that once the conversion to CIO was completed, the project team would use these goals and aspirations to prepare a new three-year project plan to identify activities and apply for funding.

Conversion to CIO took rather longer than expected but to keep the organisation active, several events were planned for the spring and summer of 2024 (see overleaf).

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Venue (and number attending)</b>
Apr 17	Spring Celebration with presentations on The Southern Streams Farmer Group and Farmland Birds on the Marlborough Downs	Marlborough Golf Club (32)
May 17	Trees, woodland, and agroforestry workshop	Cancelled due to lack of uptake
May 23	Foraging with Fred	Cancelled due to lack of uptake
Jun 6	Photography Masterclass	Avebury (5)
Jun 19	Summer Farm Walk	Temple Farm (30)
Oct tbc	Pasture for Life workshop	Cancelled by Pasture for Life
Nov 20	AGM and Seasonal Supper with presentations on Project Peewit and Elm Trees, Past, Present and Future	Marlborough Rugby Club (35)
Dec 4	Trustees meeting	Online (9)

The events that did go ahead were very well attended, and members remained keen to get together and to re-launch the project in the new year.

## 8. Progress Planned for future Years

We remain committed to the aspirations and goals identified last year (see overleaf) and will use the next Spring Celebration to encourage members to sign up to the CIO, commit to an annual subscription to ensure the financial security of the organisation, and identify specific activities that they will support in order to achieve the agreed objectives.

### **Board Statement**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued March 2005).

It was approved by the trustee board on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



Christopher Musgrave

Chair

Date: 30<sup>th</sup> October 2025

2025-2028

# Aspirations and Goals



## Environmental planning & delivery

Baseline surveys and opportunities mapping  
Small actions, big scale



## Representation & advocacy

Better use of social media  
Share achievements  
Case studies



## Links with other groups

Field trips to landscape projects  
Invite other groups to visit  
Mutual learning



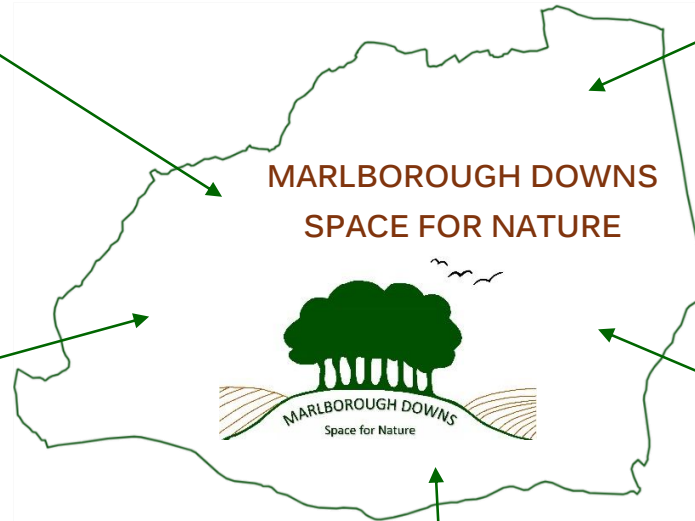
## Partnership Working

Shared resources  
Advice and funding  
Joint projects



## Community & Outreach

Varied events programme  
Build public support  
Focus on schools



**THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS**  
**NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING CIO**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**  
***FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025***

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2025 £	Restricted funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	3	2,532	531	3,063	19,190
Charitable activities	4	1,102	0	1,102	3,246
<b>Total income</b>		<b>3,634</b>	<b>531</b>	<b>4,165</b>	<b>22,436</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities	6	4,294	1,060	5,354	40,514
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>4,294</b>	<b>1,060</b>	<b>5,354</b>	<b>40,514</b>
<b>Net income/expenditure for the year/ Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(660)</b>	<b>(529)</b>	<b>(1,189)</b>	<b>(18,078)</b>
Fund balances at 1 April		2,296	21,259	23,555	41,634
<b>Fund balances at 31 March</b>		<b>1,636</b>	<b>20,730</b>	<b>22,366</b>	<b>23,556</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

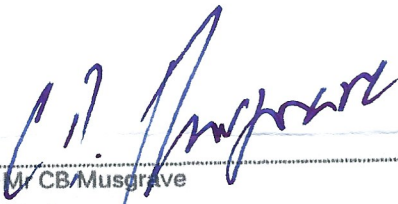
THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS  
 NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING CIO  
 BALANCE SHEET  
 AS AT 31 MARCH 2025

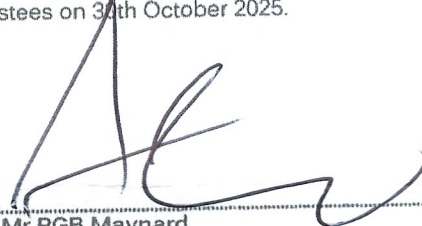
	Notes	2025		2024	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors		0		3,397	
Cash at bank and in hand		24,517		24,498	
			24,517		27,895
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	10	2,151		4,399	
<b>Net current assets</b>			22,366		23,555
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds			20,730		21,260
Unrestricted funds			1,636		2,296
			22,366		23,556

As the gross income for this financial year was less than £25,000, the Trustees have agreed that there is no requirement for any external scrutiny of their charity's accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small charities in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 30th October 2025.

  
 Mr C B Musgrave  
 Chair

  
 Mr PGB Maynard  
 Trustee

Charity number 1147925

# NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

*AS AT 31 MARCH 2025*

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## 1 Accounting policies

### Charity information

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Limited is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, charity number 1147925. The registered office is Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage, Arnolds Hill, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LD.

### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Group ("the CIO")'s Constitution 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)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The CIO has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the CIO. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the CIO has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are as follows:

Restricted fund	Purposes	Uses in 2024/25
Bybrook Trust	Conservation agriculture	Best practice workshops

### 1.4 Incoming resources

Income is recognised when the CIO is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the CIO has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business.

### **1.5 Resources expended**

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the CIO to pay out resources.

There are no costs for accountancy, governance or trustee meetings or constitutional matters.

### **1.6 Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

### **1.7 Financial instruments**

The CIO has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the CIO's balance sheet when the CIO becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

#### *Basic financial assets*

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

#### *Basic financial liabilities*

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

#### *Derecognition of financial liabilities*

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the CIO's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

## 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

3	Donations and legacies	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		funds	funds		
		2025	2025		
		£	£		
	Donations and gifts	890	-	890	1,769
	Gift Aid	48	-	48	-
	Subscriptions	-	-	-	-
	Donated goods, facilities and services	1594	531	2,125	6,815
		<u>2,532</u>	<u>531</u>	<u>3,063</u>	<u>8,584</u>

4	Charitable activities	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		funds	funds		
		2025	2025		
		£	£		
	Sales within charitable activities	-	-	-	20
	Grants	-	-	-	10,606
	Other income	1,102	-	1,102	3,226
		<u>1,102</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,102</u>	<u>13,852</u>

5	Raising funds	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		funds	funds		
		2025	2025		
		£	£		
	Fundraising costs	-	-	-	-
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

6 Charitable activities	Charitable expenditure	Charitable expenditure
	2025	2024
	£	£
Best practice: wildlife and countryside	1,480	15,823
Best practice: agriculture	240	1,020
Farmland bird programme	-	137
Community events	-	13,970
Outreach/promotion/printing	202	622
Bank charges	-	156
Insurance	93	377
Office expenses	-	5
Meeting expenses	-	55
Employee travel	58	459
	<u>2,073</u>	<u>32,623</u>
Share of governance costs (see note 7)	<u>3,281</u>	<u>7,891</u>
	<u>5,354</u>	<u>40,514</u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	4,294	8,739
Restricted funds	<u>1,060</u>	<u>31,775</u>
	<u>5,354</u>	<u>40,514</u>
7 Support costs	Governance costs	Governance costs
	2025	2024
	£	£
Legal and professional	3,281	7,826
Accountancy	-	65
	<u>3,281</u>	<u>7,891</u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	2,461	7,321
Restricted funds	<u>820</u>	<u>570</u>
	<u>3,281</u>	<u>7,891</u>
8 Trustees		
None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the charity during the year.		
9 Employees		
There were no employees during the year.		
10 Creditors	2025	2024
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>	£	£
Trade creditors	<u>2,151</u>	<u>4,339</u>
	<u>2,151</u>	<u>4,339</u>

**THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING**

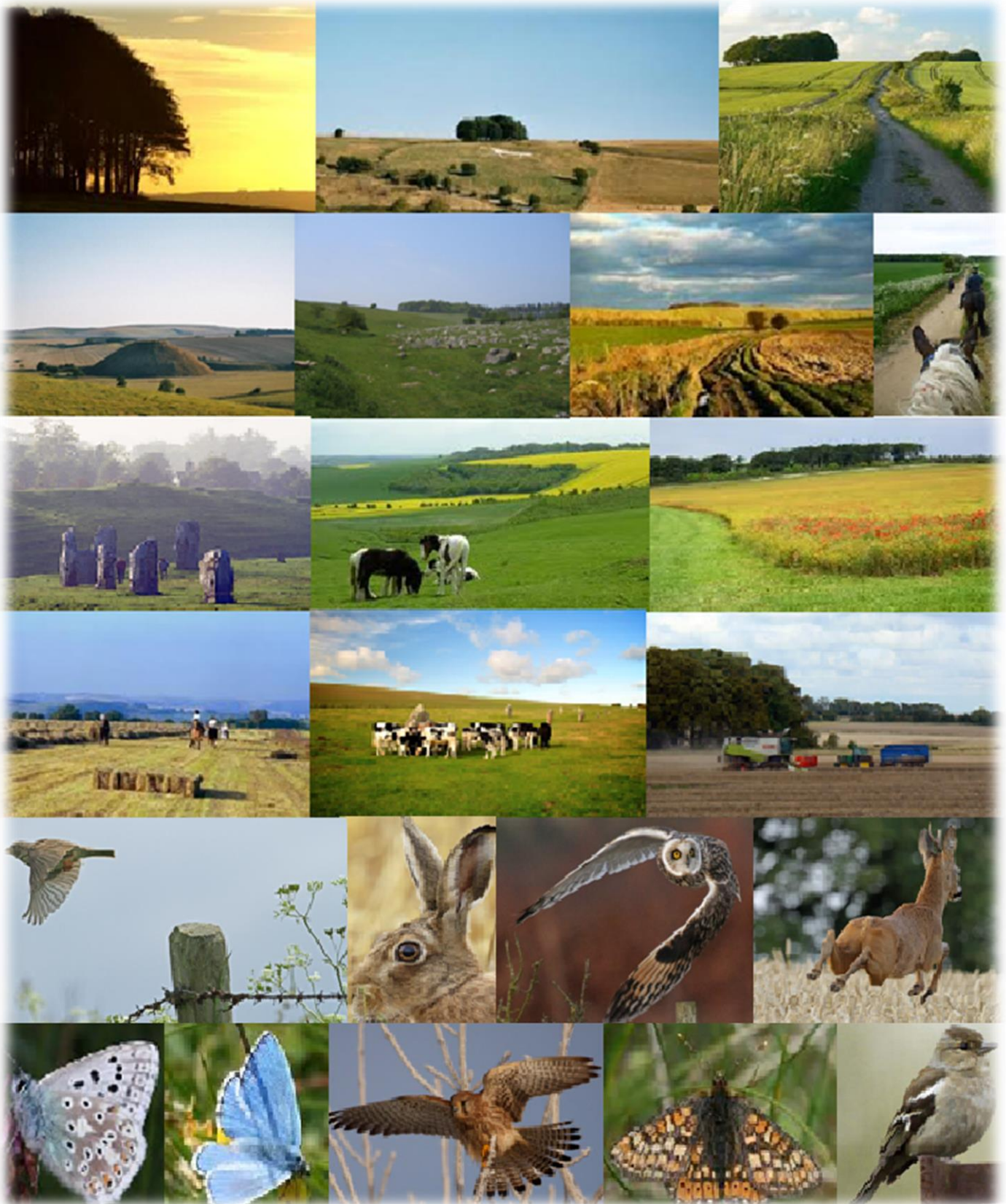
England & Wales - Charity number 1147925

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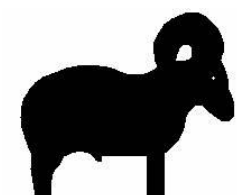
# Accounts

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# The Marlborough Downs: Space for Nature



Twelfth Annual Report



Dr Jemma Batten  
Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Project Manager  
Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage  
Arnolds Hill – Wingfield – Trowbridge – Wiltshire BA14 9LD

☎ 07855 506112

✉ [jemma.batten@blacksheepcountryside.co.uk](mailto:jemma.batten@blacksheepcountryside.co.uk)



**The Marlborough Downs  
Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd**  
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report and Unaudited Financial Statements  
for the year to 31st March 2024

Company Number: 7907437  
Registered Charity Number: 1147925

# **The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd.**

(A company limited by guarantee)

The trustee board presents its directors' report and unaudited financial statements for year to 31 March 2024.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS**

Company Registered No: 7907437

Charity Registered No: 1147925

Principal Address: Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage, Arnolds Hill, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LD

Registered address: Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage, Arnolds Hill, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LD

Trustees that served during the period:

- Christopher Musgrave – Chair
- Marcus Robert Cooper
- Robin Butler
- Gillian Carter
- Peter Lawson
- Victoria Lowes
- Piers Maynard
- Matthew Moore

Project Management: Black Sheep Countryside Management – Lead Dr Jemma Batten

### **Independent Examiner**

Not required as income was less than £25,000

### **Bank**

Barclays Bath Branch, 4-5 Southgate Street, Bath BA1 1AQ

# The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd.

(A company limited by guarantee)

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

### 1. Chairman's Introduction

For anyone who only knows about farming through the press, it may be difficult to understand the benefit that farmers can and are bringing about for the environment and what the potential value of this is to other people - especially when health & wellbeing are uppermost in a lot of people's minds. Once again, we've promoted farming, conservation, and rural priorities through our very successful public events programme and are grateful to the North Wessex Downs Farming in Protected Landscapes fund for providing us with the resources for this for another year. We could not have done it without the tireless commitment of Janinka Diverio, whose imagination, resourcefulness and dedication made the programme such a hit. Janinka has now moved on, but we hope to maintain ties with her and who knows, maybe work together again in the future.

Once again, one of the highlights of the year was Open Farm Sunday, which in 2023 was held at the Space for Nature Reserve on Maisey Farm, hosted by farmer member Jilly Carter. We saw over 500 visitors on the day, who enjoyed meeting the animals, exploring machinery, finding out about farm habitats, learning about metal detecting and the history it unearths, and, of course, taking a tractor ride!

Within the group, we've benefited from continuing support from the project team on all things environmental, from advice on delivering elements of our Stewardship agreements to learning from one another on farm walks. We've also embraced the concepts of regenerative farming, having hosted a full day workshop on soil health, and shared details of many other events via our valued WhatsApp chat.

The most significant thing that has happened this year though has been the reignition of our enthusiasm for the concept of working together to deliver for the environment. After virtually shutting down through covid lockdowns the group struggled to regain momentum, to the extent that the board questioned the validity of continuing. However, when put to the members, we found that there remains overwhelming support, and consequently in the second half of the year our project manager has worked with members to review the structure and governance of the organisation as well as the purpose of the group and future priorities. We look forward to becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in 2024, and kicking off a new programme of activities once this happens.

All of this could not have happened without the tireless support and encouragement of our group's Director – Dr Jemma Batten. She has been at the forefront of everything that has taken place throughout the year and without her we would not have the drive, nor the ambition, that still burns firmly within the collective group – thank you Jemma, and here's to many more successful years ahead.

Chris Musgrave  
Chair

## **2. Structure, governance and management**

### **Governing Document**

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 January 2012 in preparation for the potential success of a bid application submitted to Natural England, which was then awarded in March 2012, and registered as a charity on 3 July 2012. The company was established as 'The Marlborough Downs NIA' under a standard Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £10. On 16th December 2015 the Charitable Company was renamed as 'The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming'.

### **Organisational Structure**

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming charity has a board made up of farming and non-farming trustees and invited associates. Chris Musgrave is the chair of the charity board. The board delegates operational activities to two delivery groups: the Biodiversity and Landscape Group and the Community Outreach Group.

Projects are a collaboration between the farmers of the Marlborough Downs (who are members of the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming charity), Black Sheep Countryside Management (responsible for project delivery), and various other stakeholders. Board meetings are run as project board meetings and for this purpose representatives from non-farming members and partner organisations have been co-opted to the board. They are:

- Victoria Lowes, Piers Maynard and Christopher Musgrave, Associate Member representatives
- Jemma Batten, Senior Consultant, Black Sheep Countryside Management

Other key stakeholders may be invited to attend board meetings from time to time. All strategic decisions are taken at these properly constituted project board meetings. All agenda items are supported by board papers, which include a risk analysis and clear recommendations to be discussed and considered. The decisions are clearly minuted and these minutes with actions are circulated and made available to all members via the website.

### **Recruitment & Training**

This is the twelfth year of the charity, and this report covers the year ended 31st March 2024. The charity continues with the same overall aim as in previous years. All but one of the trustees are currently or have previously been farmers and represent the farming community in the Marlborough Downs area. Some have been on the board from the start of the charity and others have joined since. At the 2018 AGM it was agreed that non-farmer associate members should also be allowed to vote and to stand as trustees as long as the majority of the board remains as farmer members. No new trustees were appointed in the year to 31st March 2024.

The skills of the project board and their advisers are considered to be appropriate for the requirements of the charity's objectives and have been able to meet the project targets over the year. Trustees are offered training to fill any further gaps identified and if required additional trustees with new skills would be recruited.

### **3. Financial Review**

The majority of this year's income was derived from a Farming in Protected Landscapes grant for community events and outreach activities. Additional income has been generated through

- Fundraising events including Open Farm Sunday
- One-off donations

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Spend</b>	<b>Under/over-spend</b>
Community	£17,650	£15,025	£2,624
Landscape	-	£18,392	(£18,392)
Overheads	£4,787	£7,097	(£2,310)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£22,436</b>	<b>£40,515</b>	<b>(£18,078)</b>

Please note: All figures are rounded to the nearest £1. Numbers in brackets are negative, i.e. overspend.

£39,577 of restricted funding was brought forward (Landscape).

### **Reserves Policy**

The policy on reserves is accepted as being minimal as offices are virtual and all work is undertaken by volunteers or contractors. Generally, a reserve of £4,000 for unforeseen events is considered adequate as this could cover half a year's management costs in an emergency. As of 31 March 2024, we had £2,296 unrestricted funds in reserve which is not considered adequate, hence the decision to introduce an annual membership subscription.

## **Donations In Kind**

In addition to the actual management of the budget, the charity benefits from items and services donated as 'in kind'. As in previous years, much of this has been in the form of pro bono staff time to support the project, donated items including plants and plant protection, habitat management activities, and free venue and facility use. Volunteer time accounted for a high proportion of activities undertaken including project management time. However, the majority of this was not recorded due to the lack of reporting and paid support time to record and collate.

## **4. Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others**

The trustees act as custodians and ultimately the controlling group of the funds held. This was limited during the year as explained above. Otherwise, no funds are held on behalf of others.

## **5. Public benefit statement**

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farmers Ltd and Charity aims to deliver a more biodiverse, more attractive and more accessible landscape. Alongside these obvious, tangible benefits come a suite of gains that may be more difficult to quantify but are known collectively as ecosystem services. Such gains include improved water quality due to reduced agricultural inputs; a contribution towards the physical and mental health of residents and visitors through access to green spaces and fresh air; mitigation against climate change through building robust ecological networks; better crop pollination; support for a strong rural economy via agriculture, tourism and recreation; and the social, cultural and educational benefits that are a result of interaction with nature.

The partnership is driven by the fact that despite decades of conservation effort, many of our habitats and species are at best stable and at worst in decline and while most of the farmers in the area have long been involved in environmental schemes, we have shown that the farmer-led, bottom-up approach of this initiative can lead to far greater and more wide-reaching benefits as a result of the 'ownership' conferred on us by this project. We have also demonstrated that the longevity of this project exceeds that of others that rely upon financial incentives rather than personal commitment. We understand that a landscape-scale approach cannot succeed without widespread farmer involvement, and we have ensured that all farmers in the area had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the project, and this year have agreed to extend the project boundary to cover farms that were previously excluded.

As well as environmental and conservation benefits there is an emphasis on education of the public through volunteer opportunities to support the project as well as direct educational activities provided by the project. These activities are community based and work with existing groups so also

promote community working and cohesion as groups and individuals are brought together with a common aim. We work with local communities to encourage more involvement in the countryside and to promote greater awareness of landscape, wildlife and farming. We are keen to enthuse people about the countryside and get the non-farming community involved with activities on and about the Downs through events and activities, workshops and work parties. We work to provide better public access and information to encourage people to enjoy and understand the landscape while improving their health and wellbeing.

## **6. Objectives and activities**

The objectives as laid out for the Company in the initial incorporation document were:

- To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment.
- To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment.
- To promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by the preservation, conservation and the protection of the environment and the prudent use of resources.
- The promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration.

## 7. Achievements and performance Year 12 (April 2023 to March 2024)

Month	Meetings		Date and event	Venue (and number attending)
	Board	Delivery Group		
Apr	✓	COG	6 <sup>th</sup> Nests and Clay Eggs	SfN Reserve (23)
			13 <sup>th</sup> Wildlife Food Chains	Manor Farm, Berwick Bassett (21)
			24 <sup>th</sup> Foraging with Fred	East Farm (13)
			30 <sup>th</sup> Bee Senses	Weir Farm (11)
May			14 <sup>th</sup> Dawn Chorus Walk	Manor Farm, Berwick Basset & Avebury (20)
			20 <sup>th</sup> Nuffield Scholars	Weir Farm (25)
			21 <sup>st</sup> Ponds and Worms	Weir Farm (11)
Jun			11 <sup>th</sup> Open Farm Sunday	SfN Reserve (450 est.)
			20 <sup>th</sup> Arval Volunteers	Weir Farm (17)
			20 <sup>th</sup> CLA Farm Walk	Maisey Farm (8)
			23 <sup>rd</sup> Summer Farm Walk	South Farm (17)
Jul		COG	8 <sup>th</sup> Sketchbook Nature Walk	SfN Reserve (6)
Aug	✓		8 <sup>th</sup> Design a Nature Trail	Barbury Castle Estate (27)
			15 <sup>th</sup> Pond Exploring	Fiddlers Hill (13)
			22 <sup>nd</sup> Transient Art	SfN Reserve (21)
Sep	✓		8 <sup>th</sup> Bat Walk	Avebury (27)
			19 <sup>th</sup> Soils Workshop	South Farm (16)
Oct			16 <sup>th</sup> Night Safari	East Farm (4)
			18 <sup>th</sup> Night Safari	Manor Farm, Avebury Trusloe (4)
			20 <sup>th</sup> Night Safari	Maisey Farm (4)
			24 <sup>th</sup> Hibernation & Migration	SfN Reserve (21)
Nov			2 <sup>nd</sup> AGM	SfN Reserve (24)
			18 <sup>th</sup> Willow Wreath Making	Broad Hinton Village Hall (22)
			11 <sup>th</sup> Volunteer Scrub Planting	Various (25)
Dec			16 <sup>th</sup> Volunteer Scrub Planting	Various (15)
			10 <sup>th</sup> MDSfN Review	Broad Hinton Village Hall (24)
Mar			16 <sup>th</sup> Saturday Farm Walk	SfN Reserve (15)

COG = Community and Outreach Group

More details can be found under the relevant objective headings that follow.

## OBJECTIVE 1 – To deliver evidence-based conservation activities on a landscape scale

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### 1.1 Biodiversity tailoring

The Project Director continues to advise members on environmental delivery within the context of what's happening beyond individual farm boundaries, which enables us to deliver on a landscape scale.

#### 1.1.1 Stewardship agreements

The majority of members are in one or more of the following schemes:

- Environmental Stewardship
- Countryside Stewardship
- Sustainable Farming Incentive

#### 1.1.3 Dissemination of best practice

In June, members were invited to a farm walk at South Farm to learn about how members Gary and Sarah McMurray are delivering habitat for farmland birds and invertebrates in the form of:

- A crop that will be left unharvested specifically to provide winter seed for farmland birds
- A legume fallow mix that is full of nectar-producing flowers, and also draws nitrogen down into the soil
- A cereal crop grown without chemicals
- A plot full of wildflowers

We also learnt how converting arable land to unfertilised grassland is helping to reduce diffuse pollution and flooding.

In September, members attended a full day workshop led by soils expert Niels to discover how regenerative agriculture practices can help to weatherproof our farms. Good soil structure and biology is the key to protecting crops and grasslands against both flood and drought, and everyone went away keen to put some of the learning into practice.

We also hosted two groups – one of Nuffield scholars and one of the local Country Land and Business Association team leaders – to share our experiences of delivering nature conservation and land management good practice at a landscape scale.

### 1.2 Supporting local conservation businesses

We continue to have excellent relationships with many local businesses and other organisations involved in farming, conservation, land management, and other countryside activities, and communicate and collaborate on an *ad hoc* basis.

## OBJECTIVE 2 – To enable appropriate management of semi-natural wildlife habitat

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### 2.1 Wildlife corridors and stepping stones

#### 2.1.1 On-farm delivery

With over three-quarters of the land covered by the Space for Nature project in some kind of Stewardship agreement, it's not surprising that there's an immense amount going on across the Downs in terms of environmental activities. The focus is very much on providing habitat and foraging sites for wildlife, with grassland and hedgerow management, along with the provision of rough grass margins, plots of seed-bearing crops for farmland birds, and areas nectar-rich plants for invertebrates being most popular.

#### 2.1.2 Space for Nature Reserve

We continue to make good use of the SfN Reserve where a whole range of features are in place, including

- Species-rich grassland
- Tree sparrow village
- Woodland and scrub
- Hedges
- Fruit trees
- Wildlife pond
- Chalk pit
- Bug hotel, bird, bat and invertebrate boxes
- Stumpery and log piles
- Wild bird mix
- Nectar mix
- Fallow plots
- Arable crops
- Tussocky grass margins

We have held several events at the Reserve throughout the year, including visits from Nuffield Scholars and the CLA during which the close proximity of the various habitats and structures allowed us to demonstrate our work.

We also held our 2023 Open Farm Sunday event at the Reserve.

#### 2.1.3 Scrub planting

In December, we co-ordinated around 40 volunteers to plant pockets of scrub on ten farms belonging to members. The species planted were selected to provide food in the form of flowers (pollen and nectar), fruit, berries and nuts for a range of wildlife. As the stands mature, they will also become valuable for nesting, shelter and/or songposts in our very open landscape.

## **OBJECTIVE 3 – To consolidate populations of species of national and local importance**

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### **3.1 Space for Birds: Marlborough Downs farmland bird project**

Our volunteer farmland bird adviser, Matt Prior, of Wiltshire Ornithological Society, continues to coordinate our three-pronged approach to farmland bird conservation:

1. Year-round feeding opportunities for adults and spring/summer insect food for chicks
2. Nesting habitat
3. Protection from predators where predation significantly threatens breeding success

#### **3.1.1 Feeding and foraging habitat**

As in previous years, most of our members continue to provide overwinter stubbles and/or cover crops, sown wild bird mixes and/or nectar mix plots via Stewardship agreements, and/or on a voluntary basis.

#### **3.1.2 Supplementary feeding**

Members continue to feed over 20 tonnes of seed annually to our farmland birds over winter, either scattered on the ground or through giant bird feeders purchased by the charity at a reduced rate.

#### **3.1.3 Farmland bird events**

We have hosted a Dawn Chorus Walk and three nighttime safaris with an infrared camera, led by Matt Prior. These events were attended by both MDNEP farmers and members of the public.

### **3.2 Widespread species**

As always, our autumn Bat Walk was very well attended, and everyone learnt a lot about managing habitat for the various species.

We continue to manage ponds and tree sparrow villages to provide wildlife habitat across the Downs, and the scrubby areas created during our planting campaign in December will in time support many different species.

**OBJECTIVE 4 – To offer a range of opportunities for people to engage with the landscape of the Marlborough Downs**

**OBJECTIVE 5 – To provide high quality access for all**

**OBJECTIVE 6 – To increase local and national awareness of the work, achievements and impact of the Space for Nature Project**

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## **4.1 Marlborough Downs SfN events**

### **4.1.1 Public events**

Our events co-ordinator, Janinka Diverio, curated and executed our exciting and broad programme of events highlighting nature, farming, wellness and the arts whilst making Space for Nature. The programme was again very successful and well-supported by the local community – full details at Annex 1.

In addition to public and special interest events, the programme has delivered three volunteer workshops, one with Arval Car Leasing staff and the other our scrub planting campaign already mentioned above. Member Jilly Carter has also hosted visits to the Space for Nature Reserve by residents of a local care home.

### **4.1.2 Space for Nature WILD**

Our monthly forest school offers themed morning sessions at Weir Farm and has covered a whole range of activities aimed at children aged six years and over. Topics have included composting, autumn, PoeTREE, and bugs.

## **4.2 Outreach**

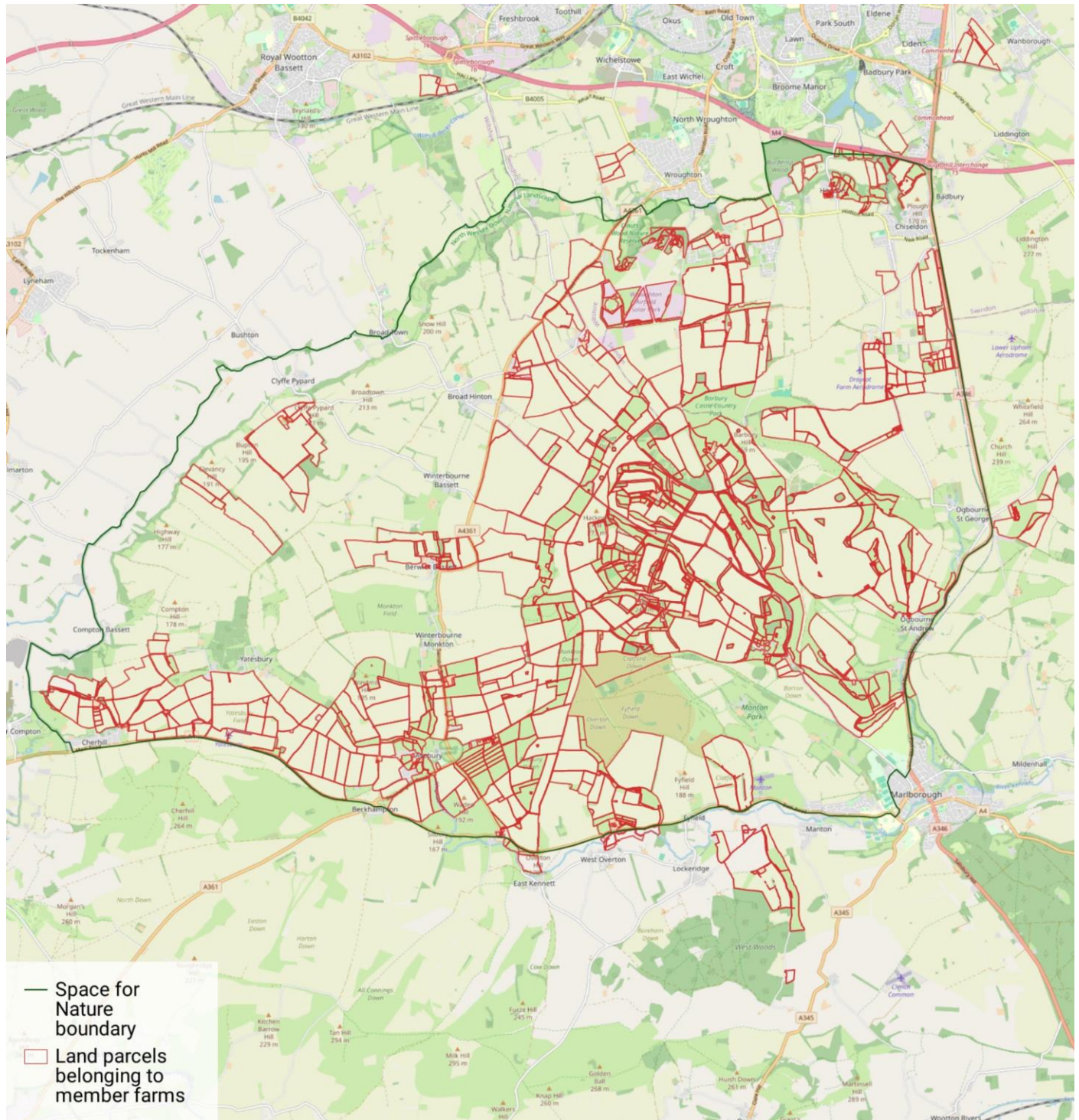
Janinka continued to be very active on our behalf on social media, and we now have almost 4,000 followers on Facebook and 1,000 on Instagram. Group members David White and Angela Norman also post beautiful photos of the landscape and wildlife of the Downs, with informative posts that are very well received by our followers.

Unfortunately, at the end of 2023 personal circumstances meant that Janinka had to resign as our event co-ordinator. She is much missed, but as the programme only had a couple of months' worth of funding left, we took the decision not to replace her, and delivered the last few events ourselves.

## 8. Progress Planned for future Years

Between November 2023 and January 2024, a full review of the future of the partnership and project was undertaken.

It was agreed to extend the project boundary to the west, to align it with the boundary of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and to recruit farmers in this area as new members.



This will also allow some farmers who were previously associate members to become full members.

## **8.1 Organisational structure**

At the AGM on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023, it was agreed that we should change our organisational structure to something more appropriate which, it turns out, is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Association Model). The CIO is a new legal form for a charity crafted in response to requests from charities for a new structure which provides some of the benefits of being a company but with a reduced administrative burden. The Association Model allows members who are not trustees to vote and is thus the most appropriate for our purposes. It is intended that we apply to the Charity Commission to convert from a charitable company to a CIO in 2024.

## **8.2 Governance**

Converting to a CIO will require that we review and update our Constitution. At that point we will re-elect the board of Trustees and invite all farmers within the new boundary to become a member of the new organisation.

## **8.3 Project aims and objectives**

In January, members came together to review and update our project aims and objectives. We identified new goals and aspirations as shown overleaf and in Annex 2. Once the conversion to CIO is completed, the project team will use these goals and aspirations to prepare a new three-year project plan to identify activities and apply for funding.

## **8.4 Day-to-day project management**

It was agreed that we should continue with the current organisational structure, i.e. a board of Trustees with a strategic overview, delivery groups to develop ideas for activities, and a project management team to facilitate.

Black Sheep will continue to manage the project on behalf of the members.

## **8.5 Funding**

It is anticipated that Black Sheep will apply for grant funding to deliver specific projects but recognised that funding for overheads is difficult to achieve and so an annual membership fee will be charged to cover this and to bolster our reserves.

2024-2027

## Aspirations and Goals



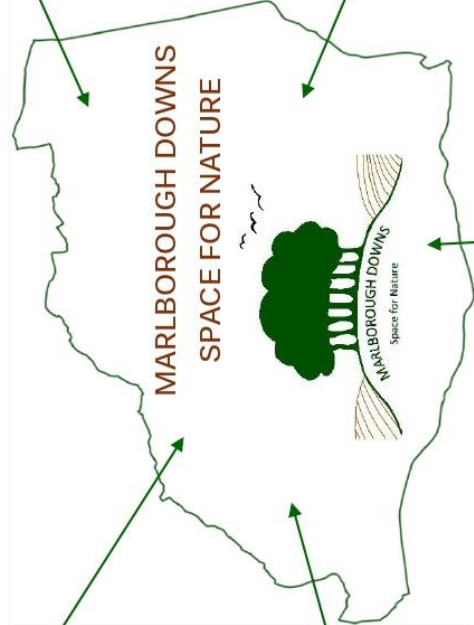
**Environmental planning & delivery**

- Baseline surveys and opportunities mapping
- Small actions, big scale



**Representation & advocacy**

- Better use of social media
- Share achievements
- Case studies



**Links with other groups**

- Field trips to landscape projects
- Invite other groups to visit
- Mutual learning



**Community & Outreach**

- Varied events programme
- Build public support
- Focus on schools



**Partnership Working**

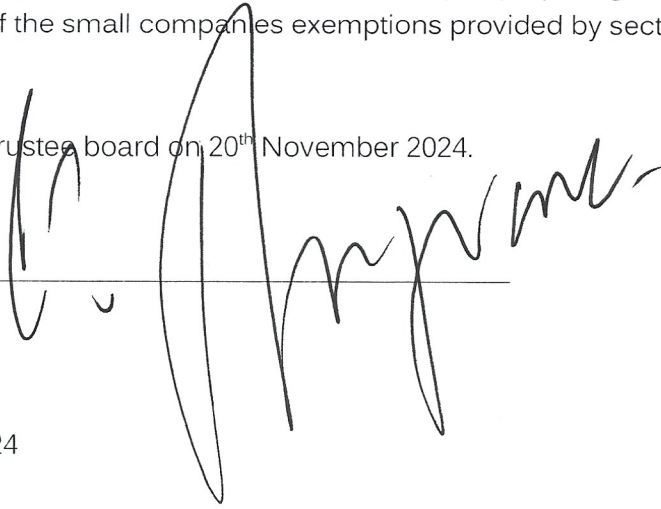
- Shared resources
- Advice and funding
- Joint projects

## Board Statement

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued March 2005). In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 419 (2) of the Companies Act 2006.

It was approved by the trustee board on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christopher Musgrave', written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'C'.

Christopher Musgrave  
Chair

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024

**THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT  
FARMING LIMITED**

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

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	3	5,732	13,458	19,190	20,313
Charitable activities	4	3,246	0	3,246	5,364
<b>Total income</b>		<b>8,979</b>	<b>13,458</b>	<b>22,436</b>	<b>25,677</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	5	-	-	-	605
Charitable activities	6	8,739	31,775	40,514	32,813
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>8,739</b>	<b>31,775</b>	<b>40,514</b>	<b>33,419</b>
<b>Net income/expenditure for the year/ Net movement in funds</b>		<b>239</b>	<b>(18,317)</b>	<b>(18,078)</b>	<b>(7,742)</b>
Fund balances at 1 April		2,057	39,577	41,634	49,376
<b>Fund balances at 31 March</b>		<b>2,296</b>	<b>21,260</b>	<b>23,556</b>	<b>41,634</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

# THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING LIMITED

## BALANCE SHEET

*AS AT 31 MARCH 2024*

	Notes	2024		2023	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors		3,397		7,070	
Cash at bank and in hand		24,498		36,917	
			27,895		43,987
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	<b>10</b>	4,339		2,353	
Net current assets			23,555		41,634
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds			21,260		39,577
Unrestricted funds			2,296		2,057
			23,556		41,634

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2024.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476. However, the accounts have been reviewed by the independent examiner and, separately and independently, compliance checked before submission to Companies House and the Charities Commission.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 20th November 2024.

Mr CB Musgrave  
Chair

Company Registration No. 07907437

# THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

*AS AT 31 MARCH 2024*

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### 1 Accounting policies

#### Charity information

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage, Arnolds Hill, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LD.

#### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd ("the company")'s Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 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)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The company has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

#### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

#### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are as follows:

Restricted fund	Purposes	Uses in 2023/24
Kilcreggan Trust	Creation of nature reserve	Sowing wildflower seed; creation of woodland garden and sarsen pile; fencing
	Farmland bird project	Bird seed
Bybrook Trust	Conservation agriculture	Best practice workshops

Restricted fund	Purposes	Uses in 2023/24
Farming in Protected Landscapes	Public event programme	Community and volunteer events; forest school; outreach
Other restricted	Winter bird seed	Bird seed

#### 1.4 Incoming resources

Income is recognised when the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the company has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business.

#### 1.5 Resources expended

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the company to pay out resources.

This includes £65 for accounts examination. There are no costs for governance or trustee meetings or constitutional matters, and this year the accounts were entirely prepared in-house.

#### 1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

#### 1.7 Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

##### *Basic financial assets*

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

##### *Basic financial liabilities*

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

*Derecognition of financial liabilities*

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the company's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

**2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements**

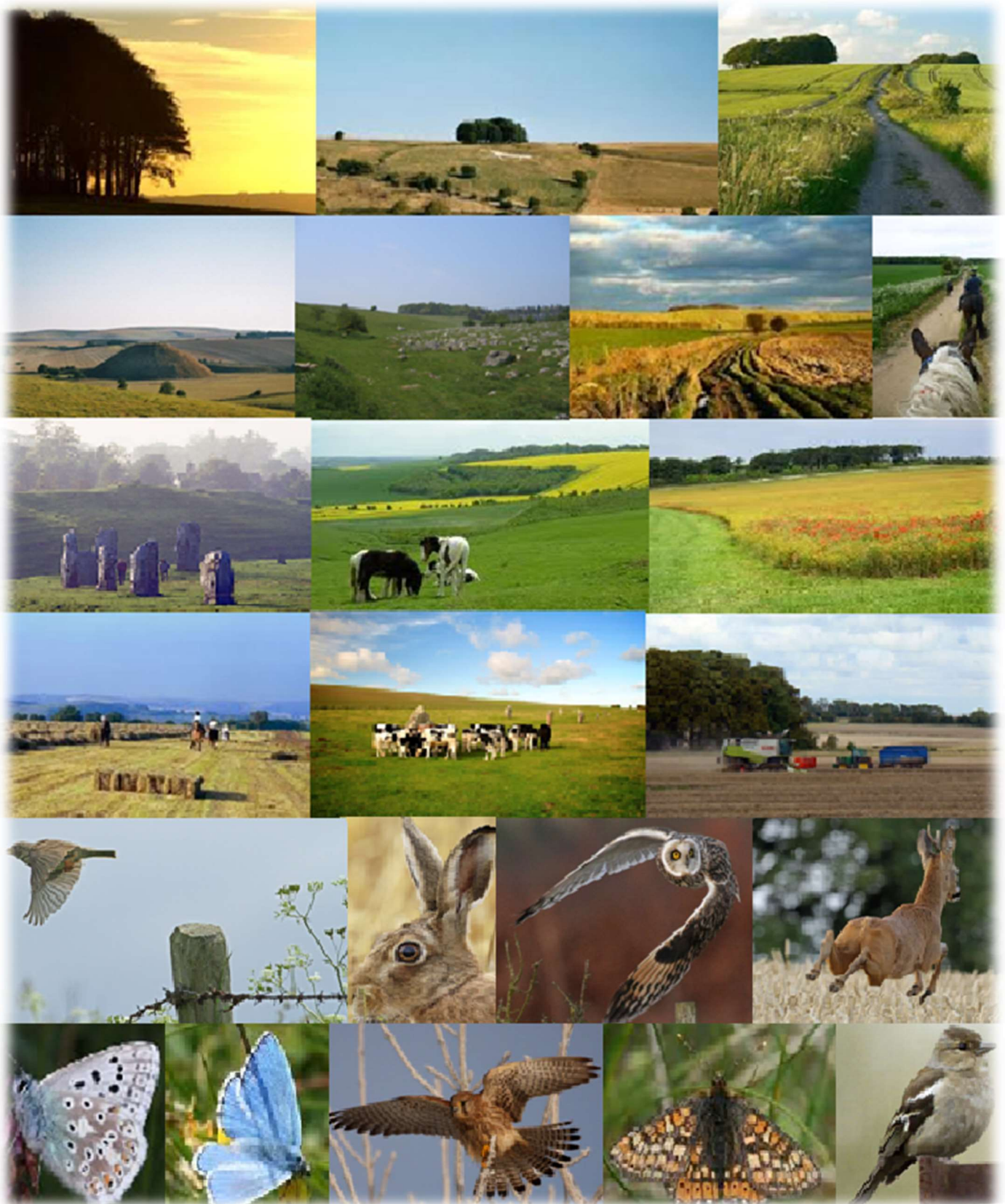
In the application of the company's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience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

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

<b>3</b>	<b>Donations and legacies</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Donations and gifts	5,732	2,852	8,584	5,574
		<u>5,732</u>	<u>2,852</u>	<u>8,584</u>	<u>5,574</u>
		<u><u>5,732</u></u>	<u><u>2,852</u></u>	<u><u>8,584</u></u>	<u><u>5,574</u></u>
<b>4</b>	<b>Charitable activities</b>	<b>Charitable income</b>		<b>Charitable income</b>	
		<b>2024</b>		<b>2023</b>	
		<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>	
	Sales within charitable activities	20		-	
	Grants	10,606		14,738	
	Other income	3,226		5,364	
		<u>13,852</u>		<u>20,103</u>	
		<u><u>13,852</u></u>		<u><u>20,103</u></u>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Raising funds</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Fundraising costs	-	-	-	605
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>605</u>
		<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>605</u></u>

6 Charitable activities	Charitable expenditure	Charitable expenditure
	2024	2023
	£	£
Habitat creation/management	15,673	3,076
Farmland bird programme	137	-
Community events	13,970	15,347
Workshops	1,170	3,111
Access infrastructure	-	290
Outreach/promotion/printing	622	1,124
Bank charges	156	490
Insurance	377	389
Office expenses	5	93
Meeting expenses	55	69
Employee travel	459	524
	<u>32,623</u>	<u>24,514</u>
Share of governance costs (see note 7)	7,891	8,299
	<u>40,514</u>	<u>32,813</u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	8,739	10,898
Restricted funds	31,775	21,915
	<u>40,514</u>	<u>32,813</u>
	<u><u>40,514</u></u>	<u><u>32,813</u></u>
7 Support costs	Governance costs	Governance costs
	2024	2023
	£	£
Legal and professional	7,826	7,884
Accountancy	65	415
	<u>7,891</u>	<u>8,299</u>
	<u><u>7,891</u></u>	<u><u>8,299</u></u>
<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
Unrestricted funds	7,321	7,281
Restricted funds	570	1,019
	<u>7,891</u>	<u>8,299</u>
	<u><u>7,891</u></u>	<u><u>8,299</u></u>
<b>8 Trustees</b>		
None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the company during the year.		
<b>9 Employees</b>		
There were no employees during the year.		
10 Creditors	2024	2023
<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>	£	£
Trade creditors	4,339	2,353
	<u>4,339</u>	<u>2,353</u>
	<u><u>4,339</u></u>	<u><u>2,353</u></u>

# Annex 1: The Marlborough Downs Space for Nature 2023-24 Public Event Reports



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Nests and Clay Eggs
<b>Event date:</b>	6 April 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter, Space for Nature Reserve
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	23 total (7 adults/ 16 children/ 6 no shows)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>A lovely session exploring the nature reserve with three key activities. First, we made our own mini nests using found materials and talking about how a bird might make a nest and what they might look for. We discussed migrating birds returning now it's warmer here in the UK. Our second activity was making clay eggs for our nests or a flat decorated egg to hang in readiness for Easter. Clay play is always popular with young children.</p> <p>Finally, I gave the children the task of finding 12 objects to place in large egg boxes. Each object's name was written on a bunny paw print and stuck to a tree. The children had to find the paw prints then find the named object (i.e find something with 5 points, find something soft, hard, yellow, green, spiky). The children loved running around the woods exploring and were rewarded with mini chocolate eggs. They also loved the tree house and the zipwire.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Very positive feedback. I felt the session was pitched just right for the ages we had and despite horrid weather everyone coped really well. One family left early as she had a toddler. Some no shows which was disappointing. Followed up and no response so have soft barred them for now. Will give them one more chance. The nature hunt was really good fun, and the children loved the site and activities.</p>



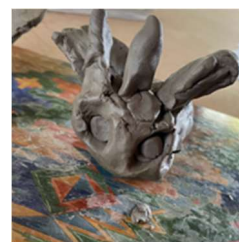
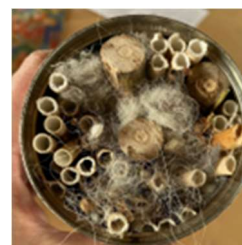
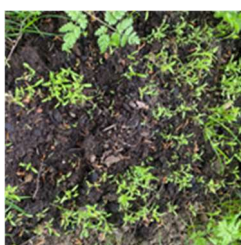
## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Wildlife Food Chains with the National Trust
<b>Event date:</b>	13 April 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	David White
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio and Lorretta Waters
<b>Attendees:</b>	21 (13 children and 8 adults/ 7 no shows)
<b>Overview:</b>	We offered three activities at this session and rotated them. Children enjoyed bug hunting and identifying them. We found centipedes, wood lice, worms and snails. We discussed what the farmer was growing. We walked up to the tip of the farm and discussed what plants we could see (nettles, dandelions and their properties). We talked about the tree sparrow corridor and the MDNEP work. Our main activities however were owl pellet dissection with the National Trust at Avebury. The children did this in groups of 3 or 4 whilst the others coloured in food chain paper chains and linked them together. There were lots of opportunities to chat to the families about a range of themes and Space for Nature in general.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	A lovely session where we were joined by the National Trust for owl pellet dissection. Alongside we made paper chain food chains where the children had to link in order who eats what and who. This triggered lots of conversation. Quite a few new families which was nice.



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Exploring the Senses as a Bee
<b>Event date:</b>	30 <sup>th</sup> April 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	The Hut, Weir Farm
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	Total attended 11 (6 children and 5 adults) One family of 3 children and 2 adults didn't show.
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>Today we explored the senses as a bee which started with a conversation around the senses and what a bee might do to utilise the senses. We played a sensory finding game and also played a game where the children wrapped sticky tape to their knees and had to go and find the flowers (bowls of polenta) and gather them with their knees (like a bee). I was very happy with how this demonstrated how bees have to travel from flower to flower to collect pollen and it was fun!</p> <p>We finally got round to making a bug and bee hotel fit for a king. I think we shall call it The Kings Hotel. Sweet morning session today at Space for Nature Wild with an underlying senses and bee theme. We made mini bee tins to hang on the trees, made clay bees and had honey and lemon to drink. We enjoyed finding old rotten sticks for our hotel and planted some bowls of wildflowers for it too.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>An enjoyable session again but in much need of new people. I think we have just had a spate of bad luck with weather, clock changes, bank holidays and hope that with brighter days ahead we can really establish this session. I'm going to try different advertising methods and would welcome some offline advertising too so will reach out to village magazines etc</p> <p>From Instagram:          "That's absolutely incredible! Without a doubt the best I've ever seen. So creative. Well done and thank you from me, because we won't have life without our precious 🐝❤️" - Maizey84</p>

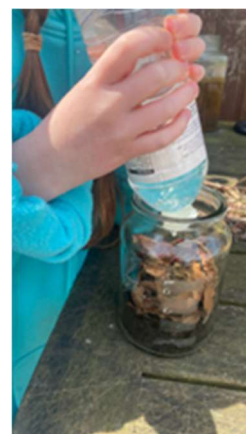
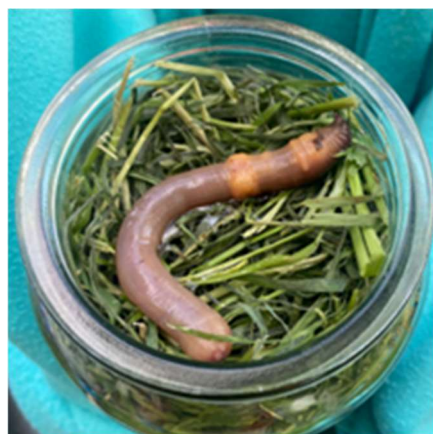


## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Dawn Chorus Walk
<b>Event date:</b>	14 <sup>th</sup> May 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	David White
<b>Event lead:</b>	Nigel Pease and Helen Llewellyn
<b>Attendees:</b>	20
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>“We had a fantastic Dawn Chorus walk on Sunday. It was misty and cold to begin with but 20 of us all delighted in spotting 40 different species (see below). We then continued after teas and coffees with croissants, to Avebury where Robin Nelson joined the group to show us his patch.” - David White</p> <p><u>BIRD LIST FOR 14th MAY Berwick Basset/Avebury Dawn Birdwatch:</u> Red Kite, Buzzard, Pheasant, Stock Dove, Woodpigeon, Collared Dove, Swift, Green Woodpecker, Great-spotted Woodpecker, Skylark, Swallow, House Martin, Yellow Wagtail, Wren, Dunnock, Robin, Blackbird, Song thrush, Common Whitethroat, Blackcap, Chiffchaff, Willow Warbler, Goldcrest, Long-tailed tit, Blue tit, Great tit, Treecreeper, Magpie, Jackdaw, Rook, Carrion crow, Starling, House sparrow, Tree sparrow, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Linnet, Yellowhammer, Corn bunting</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p><u>Feedback from Facebook:</u> “What a fantastic early morning adventure, many thanks to Nigel, Helen and Robin for sharing their wealth of knowledge. “Also a huge thanks to David and Diana for their hospitality, we had a wonderful morning and look forward to future events”. - Nigel Randall “Brilliant session and many thanks for the cracking opportunity and a huge thanks to David and his wife for a generous breakfast too!” - Chris Stuart</p> <p><u>Email feedback form:</u> “Brilliant session and the experts were very generous with their knowledge and time. The only thing was to add what we can do to help our birds in our gardens.” “Fabulous morning with such knowledgeable guides.”</p>
	
Photos: David White	

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Pond Pottering and Worm Worth
<b>Event date:</b>	21 <sup>st</sup> May 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	The Hut, Weir Farm
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio and Richard Cripps
<b>Attendees:</b>	Total attended 11 (6 children and 5 adults) One family of 3 children and 2 adults didn't show.
<b>Overview:</b>	Richard took half the group to the pond. He waded in and got specimen trays for the children where they spotted tadpoles, water boatmen etc. The pond isn't very well developed so pond life is not rife. Meanwhile I ran a worm session where we made worm observatories and looked for worms too. We explored diagrams of their bodies and learned some fun worm facts. We then swapped and rounded up the session with marshmallows around the fire.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	A busy session with a lovely varied group of ages. We had 12 children and 9 adults. It's much better to have a larger group. We split the families into 2 and half did pond exploring and half did worm activities then we swapped. This worked well. Feedback that Richard was too 'talky'. The kids would have loved to have done more rather than just look and listen.



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Open Farm Sunday 2023
<b>Event date:</b>	11 <sup>th</sup> June 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter Maisey Farm
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	418 + guests, walk ups, volunteers and workers
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>A wonderful day overall. The stall holders, helpers and volunteers were all fantastic.</p> <p>We held butterfly, foraging and pond walks and talks, play and natural crafts in the Nature Reserve. We had donkeys, horses, chicks, geese, an owl and sheep with shearing demos. The tractor rides took visitors around the perimeter of the arable farm and we had a straw stack for the children to climb.</p> <p>2nd Marlborough Scouts ran the cafe and Devizes Young Farmers helped with parking and had a stall doing hook a duck with a digger.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Facebook comments:</p> <p>“We have been to lots of open farm Sundays, and this was definitely the best! Thank you to everyone involved.” Nicola Spurling</p> <p>“Thank you very much, my two children really enjoyed it” Eleanor Jane</p> <p>“We had great fun, thank you so much to all who took part and helped in making it a great day!” Sue Marie Davis</p>



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Summer Farm Walk
<b>Event date:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> June 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	Gary and Sarah McMurray
<b>Event lead:</b>	Jemma Batten
<b>Attendees:</b>	17
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>A very interesting evening learning about how Govt. schemes are supporting the farm environment. We looked at several areas that provide forage and habitat for farmland birds and invertebrates including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A crop that will be left unharvested specifically to provide winter seed for farmland birds</li><li>A legume fallow mix that is full of nectar-producing flowers, and also draws nitrogen down into the soil</li><li>A cereal crop grown without chemicals</li><li>A plot full of wildflowers</li></ul> <p>We also learnt how converting arable land to unfertilised grassland is helping to reduce diffuse pollution and flooding.</p> <p>At the end of the evening we enjoyed a lively discussion over a picnic.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>“A fascinating evening learning about how a previously conventional farm has, with Defra support, been able to afford to change direction and is now farming in a more environmentally-friendly way.”</p>

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Sketchbook Nature Walk with Jo Beal
<b>Event date:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter (moved from Nikki Hussey's due to bad weather)
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio with Jo Beal
<b>Attendees:</b>	6 (1 canceled, 1 no show)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>I invited Jo Beal to run a walk and sketch activity to the tree sparrow village in Rockley. Unfortunately, on the day it was torrential rain and so I quickly called Jilly who lovingly obliged and we hot footed it over the road and up the hill to her lovely tin hut. It was disappointing to not visit the tree sparrow village, but we had a lovely time exploring the reserve and drawing the views, wild grasses and flowers and talking about the project around a big table (with a cup of tea).</p> <p>This was a lovely activity and drew people in from as far as Salisbury. I think this has been one of our events that has attracted the furthest travellers which confirms that partnership expands your reach.</p> <p>We had one cancellation due to the weather and one no show that I followed up (due to the weather).</p> <p><a href="http://www.jobeal.net">www.jobeal.net</a></p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>This event reached 4,023 people in spite of only 6 attending. Everyone had a lovely morning, and the feedback was very positive, wanting to do more.</p> <p>I did wonder whether I should have sourced a venue with a wet weather option, but I concluded I did the right thing and that we should take risks. With James', Jilly's and Vicki's close by I knew we would have an escape route.</p>

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Design a Nature Trail
<b>Event date:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	Barbury Castle Estate
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	27 (18 children, 9 adults and one cancellation on the day)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>What a lovely morning we had at Barbury Castle Estate. The lucky families were treated to puppy, baby turkey and chicken viewings as well as seeing the horses come back and forth from their daily walks.</p> <p>Once we'd said hello to all the animals we set off on our walk to the pond and with our nature notebooks, compasses and binoculars enjoyed a nature amble taking notes of observations en route. We saw two giant puff balls and found two small skulls too. Someone even spotted a wild sloe bush.</p> <p>Throughout the walk we kept a watch on where North was which was lots of fun using the compasses. On returning we set about drawing our maps and nature trails in the barn and said hello to the sheepdogs at the end.</p> <p>Thanks so much to Simon, Gary and Clive at Sharpridge Yard for being so accommodating and letting us see behind the scenes.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Feedback was great and a lot of children were accompanied by very appreciative grandparents who were also able to impart their knowledge. Everyone took part in all aspects of the activities.</p> <p>My first event at this estate and it went really smoothly. An in depth recce facilitated this and contributed to my knowledge.</p> <p>Really successful and will definitely repeat this theme.</p> <p><u>From the feedback form:</u></p> <p>"A really relaxed morning, not too structured, really lovely!"</p> <p>"Loved that it was relaxed and not too structured, the children were able to explore and learn but very much child directed. Lovely event!"</p> <p>"Really like how well communicated the directions etc are and what we need to bring. Also love that it is so relaxed and nobody is forced to join in or do any activity they don't want to. Lovely to be able to see parts of Marlborough Downs that we wouldn't otherwise go to. Thank you!"</p> <p>"Really appreciate that it was a free event. We learnt to use a compass and were leant binoculars. Unfortunately few birds around because of wet weather, nor were there any damselflies etc at the dew pond. Children had plenty of time to look for things on the walk e.g. giant puffballs, bones under the trees and beehive (again few bees about as too damp). Saw chicks and puppies in barn. Designing a trail was demanding for some in the age group - my 5 yr old just drew a few things but that didn't matter. Leader was enthusiastic and we enjoyed seeing the racing horses in their stables.</p> <p>Advance warning to bring folding chairs and waterproof blanket to sit on was very helpful."</p>

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Pond Exploring
<b>Event date:</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> August 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	Fiddlers Hill
<b>Event lead:</b>	Richard Cripps and Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	13 (7 children, 6 adults and one no show family on the day)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>What an adorable session we had pond dipping at Broad Hinton under the Hackpen white horse. First of all, we met Tracey the Turkey then we headed round to the pond for some lovely plant talks and pond walks with expert Richard Cripps.</p> <p>As we were walking we made weeping willow crowns and played with leaf swords.</p> <p>A slide down the edge into the shallow waters we were able to scoop up trays of pond life! We found water boatmen, leeches and a very sweet newt!</p> <p>Alongside we made critter wings and emulated the water creatures and fauna in clay.</p> <p>Richard seemed to understand the children more this time. Getting into the edges of the pond with them and tailoring some of the knowledge so it was more reachable for them.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>"Both the children and the accompanying adult enjoyed the experience and are looking forward to their next event, always 'a positive' when it comes to little children." - Gerald Long</p>



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Transient Art
<b>Event date:</b>	22 <sup>nd</sup> August 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	The Reserve, Rockley
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	21 (11 children, 10 adults and one no show family on the day)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>My favourite session so far. We had a lovely morning in the woods at Rockley. The theme was temporary art, and the children loved creating patterns with leaves, twigs, wheat, other fauna and a few old bouquet petals I had at home as well as flour. We explored the site looking for natural materials to use and found flint, wheat, pinecones, thistles and an array of greenery. The children designed patterns and using their imagination pictures of rabbits, a leopard and faces.</p> <p>We then enjoyed visiting our art gallery and admiring each other's work. To end we created two floating willow circles for the pond and discussed whether they would float or sink.</p> <p>Inspired by Andy Goldsworthy we enjoyed exploring textures, colour, patterns and even made a burial mound for a rabbit we found who had died.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>I was really pleased with all aspects of this event which I had given a lot of thought to. I realise it isn't a typical "in nature" activity but sometimes that's the best way to engage children as reiterated by the lovely comment below.</p> <p>"Not many of the children had considered making art from nature and I believe this idea challenged their creative abilities and directed their attention to trees, grasses and a variety of plants both growing and dying. Once the children got going, they became totally absorbed with the task and a diverse selection of art was created in lovely surroundings. The swings, zip wire and climbing items provided a pleasant diversion giving the children a break from the focused activity - all out in the fresh air. It could not have been better! Thank you" - Glynis Long</p>



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Avebury Bat Walk
<b>Event date:</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	Avebury National Trust
<b>Event lead:</b>	Ali Rasey (WC) and Lorretta Waters (NT)
<b>Attendees:</b>	27 (5 no shows)
<b>Overview:</b>	Thanks to everyone who attended the SfN bat walk at Avebury on Friday, kindly hosted by Lorretta and the National Trust. A lovely warm evening, as darkness fell the stars of the night were of course the bats; noctule bats who came out early and could easily be seen flying high in the sky and heard on our bat detectors 'chip-chopping' as they ducked and dived to catch their supper. Then in front of the Manor were the serotines, loud as anything and putting on a fabulous display as they swooped in front of us. Then the agile little pipistrelles – our smallest UK bat working hard to catch their 3,000-midge supper. It was a fun evening, and we hope everyone enjoyed it!
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	"Brilliant event. Thank you." Julia Haskell via Facebook



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Night Safaris
<b>Event date:</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> , 18 <sup>th</sup> & 20 <sup>th</sup> October 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	Locations: East Farm, Manor Farm. Avebury Trusloe, Maisey Farm
<b>Event lead:</b>	Matt Prior
<b>Attendees:</b>	12
<b>Overview:</b>	Matt Prior escorted 3 small groups on a late evening safari across farmland to capture and ring birds.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>The events were very well received. Quite a lot of juggling and rearranging due to a period of horrendous weather and flooding bi everyone involved wanted to make it work.</p> <p>Matt and Co. ringed:</p> <p>Night 1: 12 Skylark and a Stock Dove. We saw field mouse, a bat, hedgehog, badger, hares and a Barn Owl</p> <p>Night 2: 10 Skylarks, saw lots of hares, mice and deer. Very close view of a gorgeous leveret</p> <p>Night 3: Skylarks, Grey partridges, a corn bunting and a fieldfare</p> <p>“Just wanted to say what a FANTASTIC time we had on Monday's Night Safari! Many would think we were bonkers to still be up on the Downs at midnight in October, but we were in our element, and Matt's enthusiasm is so infectious! The whole experience felt like a real privilege and we will treasure our memories and photos for years to come. Many thanks for your wonderful organisation (and for letting the girls come - they absolutely loved it!)” - Andie Bright &amp; family</p> <p>“Last evening I went bird ringing. It was a m a z i n g !!!!! We caught skylarks and grey partridge and a corn bunting and a fieldfare. Weight and measurements taken and rings fitted. Thank you to Matt Prior for being so skilled, knowledgeable and good fun.” - Emma Lane</p>



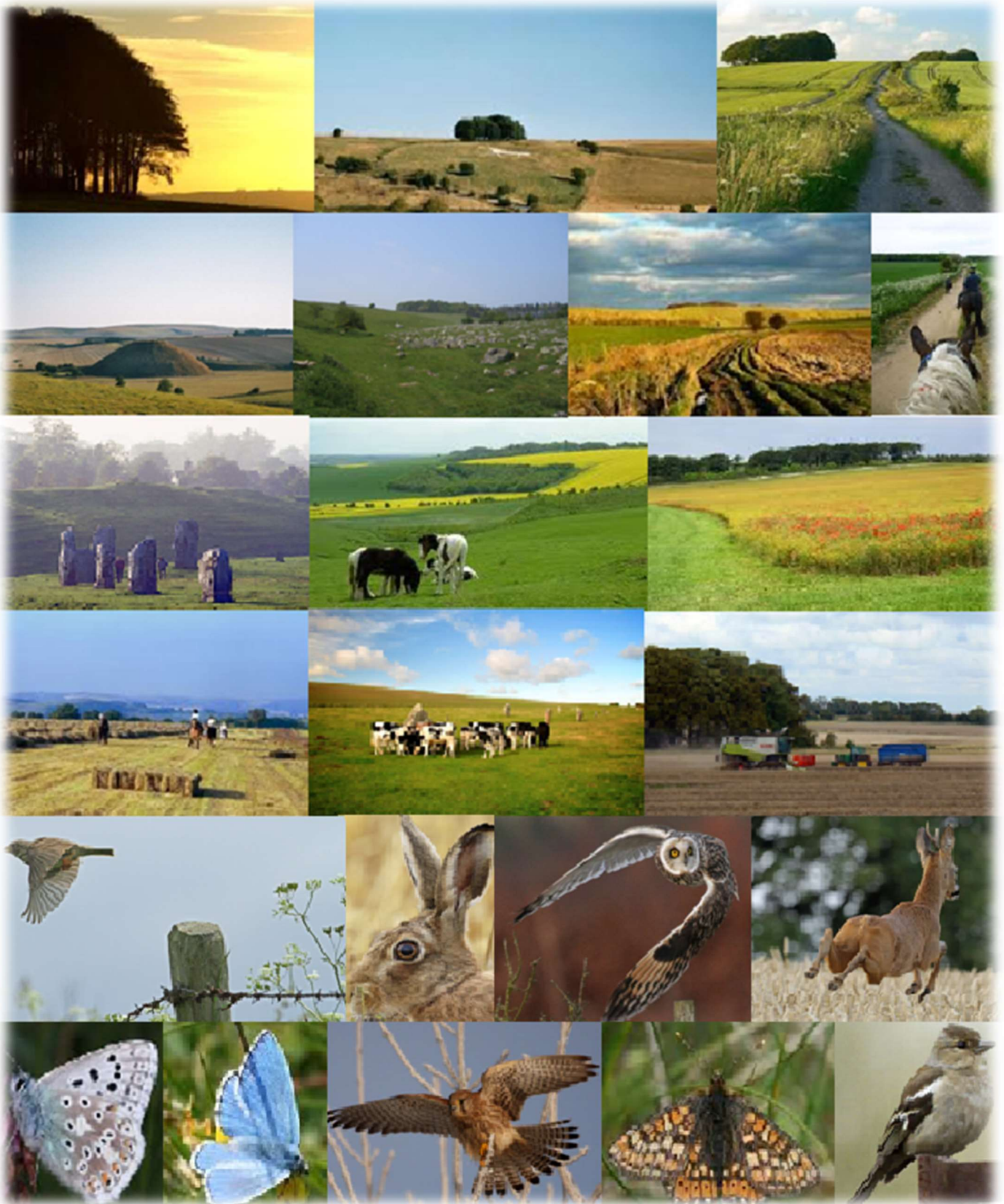
## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Hibernation and Migration
<b>Event date:</b>	24 October 2023
<b>Event host:</b>	The Reserve
<b>Event lead:</b>	Jemma Batten and Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	13 children 8 adults (2 no show)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>What a gorgeous time we had in the half term autumn sun learning about which animals hibernate and which animals migrate delivered by Jemma Batten. We reinforced this message by making cute conker spider webs and cardboard bat wings which the children loved decorating.</p> <p>We had a little tour around the reserve looking for mini beasts and Jemma explained a little about how and where bats might sleep for the winter. The children and adults loved it and the message really sunk in. It's so great that we are raising children with a passion and thirst for nature and its wonderful secrets. We also found a near perfect decomposed hare.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Feedback was very positive. The setting and sunshine always helps but the quality of the content and the activities are really strong. Parents were really happy and impressed.</p> <p>This is the second time we have run this topic and it was nice to focus on other wildlife this year. The children seemed to really grasp the facts and I think it was pitched perfectly.</p> <p>“It was a brilliant day for my four grandchildren. Lovely staff. Amazing place. So much to do. Beautifully organised.”</p> <p>“Well put together session, very informative and interational. We had a great time.”</p>

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Saturday Farm Walk
<b>Event date:</b>	16 March 2024
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter
<b>Event lead:</b>	Jilly Carter
<b>Attendees:</b>	15
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>We had a really lovely time; the sun came out and the wind dropped and everyone turned up (no dogs though which was odd!)</p> <p>Henry Hitchcock (Weir Farm) came along and gave us a very interesting talk about the Stewardship arable options and ploughing vs direct drilling on our chalk with the clay cap. We went to see the owl box, the ponds, the bird feeders, the graves, and we even saw the lapwings which was magical.</p> <p>And then right at the end the older lady on her own said we had cleared up a 50-year-old mystery.... way back in 1974/75 when she was looking for a house in the area, she met a woman who told her she had buried three husbands on top of the Downs, and today she saw those very graves and discovered she must have met Nora Laye (who died in 1976). Weird and incredible that for 50 years she never forgot what an old woman had told her.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>From participants:</p> <p>“How lovely to get a chance to see first-hand what interesting things are happening on the Downs!”</p> <p>“Really enjoyed Saturday’s Walk, keep up the good work!”</p>

# Annex 2: The Marlborough Downs Space for Nature 2024-27 Smart Goals



AIM:	PARTNERSHIP WORKING	
Specific goals	To extend and increase engagement and knowledge/time/finance from partnerships	Work with accredited organisations who can quantify our environmental goals
Measurement	How many new partners can we work with? Needs to be a two-way process	Environmental gain
Actions	Identify partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental</li> <li>• Financial</li> </ul>	Baseline Follow-up surveys / measurements Monitoring
Relevance	Landscape scale delivery of environmental gain Funding opportunities	Wildlife and habitats, pollinators, soil health (carbon), connectivity, water quality
Timeline	Year 1 Identify Year 2 Interact Years 3-5 Implement	Baseline surveys to be carried out in first three years Follow-up as appropriate
People	Delivery group	Carbon footprint partner

AIM:	LANDSCAPE-SCALE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND DELIVERY	
Specific goals	Increase amount of bramble across the landscape, especially along linear features (eg Ridgeway)	Encourage members to deliver environmental actions through SFI / CS agreements
Measurement	75% of farms to commit to planting and/or managing bramble patches	95% of group in SFI
Actions	Training workshop to explain why and how Farmers to commit and plant/manage	Training workshops on what's available, how to apply, how to deliver
Relevance	<p>Good habitat for pollinators</p> <p>Shelter, nesting and foraging habitat for wide variety of wildlife species</p> <p>Landscape connectivity</p> <p>Community event - planting/education</p>	<p>Wildlife and habitats</p> <p>Air and water quality</p> <p>Landscape connectivity</p> <p>Historic environment</p> <p>Pollinators</p> <p>Community</p> <p>Soil health</p>
Timeline	Three years	By the end of the first year
People	Farmers and volunteers	Farmers

AIM:	LANDSCAPE-SCALE ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING AND DELIVERY	
Specific goals	Double drilling for corn bunting	Replace dead elms (and ash?) with disease resistant species
Measurement	Two 6m wide strips per farm	X number planted per farm
Actions	Campaign Demonstration Walk and talk Count singing males and report	Research (and grants) Training Source plants and sundries Planting and maintenance
Relevance	Wildlife and habitats Landscape connectivity	Pollinators Wildlife and habitats (planting) Landscape connectivity Air quality (carbon) Community
Timeline	Year 1 - 25% of members Year 2 - 50% of members Year 3 - 75% of members	
People	Farmers and volunteer surveyors	Farmers and volunteers

AIM:	COMMUNITY EVENTS AND OUTREACH	
Specific goals	Recruit a new event co-ordinator	Engage with local schools
Measurement	No. of people No. of events No. of visits	Five local school visits
Actions	Work with LEAF/FWAG/schools Approach local schools Funding	Transport Programme Connect with FWAG/LEAF/local schools (and further afield) Investigate transport options (community buses?)
Relevance	Showcase MDNEP achievements Connect people with countryside/nature	Showcase MDNEP achievements Connect children with countryside/nature
Timeline	Plan programme	Dependent upon recruiting co-ordinator
People	Is there anyone in the group who could run the programme?	Fiona Norse

AIM:	COMMUNITY EVENTS AND OUTREACH	
Specific goal	Build public support for farmers and farming	
Measurement	No. people attending How many people engage online, other ways	Engage with local politicians/council, etc. All age groups
Actions	Open Farm Sunday Find funding for co-ordinator Find funding for trailer	Make good use of the Reserve Engage with schools, parish magazines, QR codes on the Downs
Relevance	Long term Perception that farming is good / beneficial, and that Marlborough Downs are worth protecting	
Timeline	2024	
People	David White - trailer	

Aim:	LINKS WITH OTHER FARMER GROUPS
Specific goal	<p>Learnings from: Different skill sets, different contacts.</p> <p>Learnings to: Different landscapes, sharing cost base. e.g. sharing Janinka with local groups; opening up existing events to other groups e.g Farm walk.</p>
Measurement	<p>One visit out /one visit in per annum.</p>
Actions	<p>Go and see the recently awarded Landscape Recovery II projects at Durdle Door/the Brit Group /Luppitt Group</p>
Relevance	<p>Farmers working together on the most up to date Government Landscape scheme worth £.75M/Group. Would we want to consider this?</p>
Timeline	<p>Year one – visit another local group Year one – invite local groups to Summer Farm Walk Year two – visit a group further afield, with overnight stay</p>
People	<p>Identify members who have or are willing to make contacts in other groups</p>

AIM:	REPRESENTATION / ADVOCACY	
Specific goals	Promote Marlborough Downs and our work to a wide audience via social media	Respected, broader, louder voice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help our farmers</li> <li>• Help our wildlife</li> </ul>
Measurement	Quarterly engagement reports, eg Facebook insights	Members report on progress they have experienced
Actions	Allocate budget for boosting fb posts Increase number of admins who can post to fb Investigate Instagram Members to send content to admins via WhatsApp	Case study for eg OFC, farming press Remind other organisations we are at the coalface
Relevance	Community engagement and outreach	Promote farming as a good thing Generate funding for projects Promote the work of the group
Timeline	Ongoing	Ongoing
People	David White to co-ordinate	Trustees

**THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING**

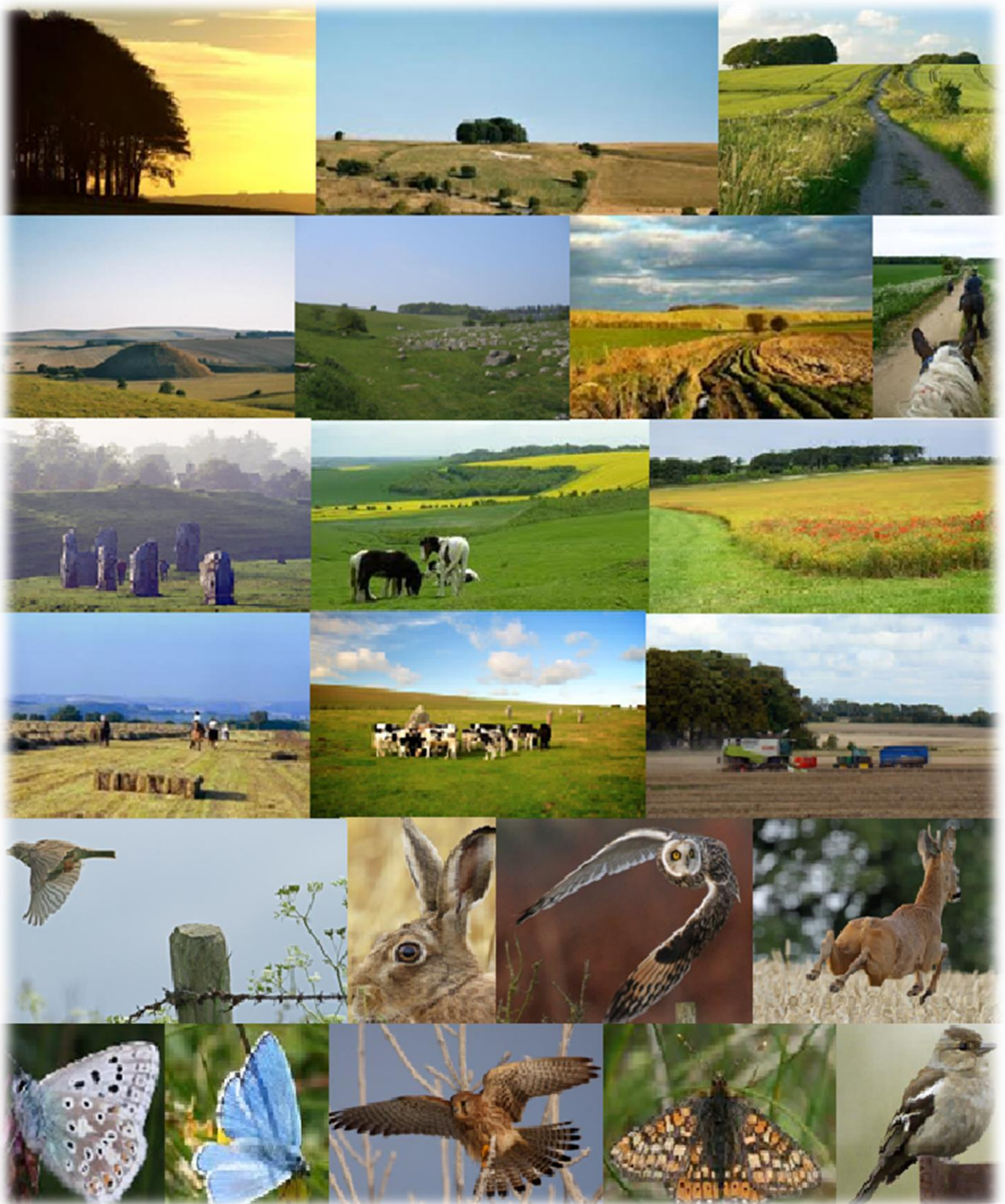
England & Wales - Charity number 1147925

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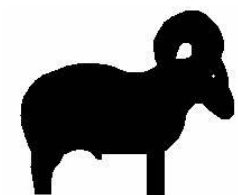
# Accounts

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# The Marlborough Downs: Space for Nature



Eleventh Annual Report



Dr Jemma Batten  
Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Project Manager  
Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage  
Arnolds Hill – Wingfield – Trowbridge – Wiltshire BA14 9LD

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**The Marlborough Downs  
Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd**  
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report and Unaudited Financial Statements  
for the year to 31st March 2023

Company Number : 7907437  
Registered Charity Number : 1147925

# **The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd.**

(A company limited by guarantee)

The trustee board presents its directors' report and unaudited financial statements for year to 31 March 2023.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS**

Company Registered No : 7907437

Charity Registered No : 1147925

Principal Address: Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage, Arnolds Hill, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LD

Registered address: Arnolds Hill Farm Cottage, Arnolds Hill, Wingfield, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 9LD

Trustees that served during the period:

- Christopher Musgrave – Chair
- Marcus Robert Cooper
- Robin Butler
- Gillian Carter
- Peter Lawson
- Victoria Lowes
- Piers Maynard
- Matthew Moore

Project Management: Black Sheep Countryside Management – Lead Dr Jemma Batten

### **Independent Examiner**

Helen Frost, HF Bookkeeping Plus, 1 Forest Hill Cottages, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 3HN

### **Bank**

Barclays Bath Branch, 4-5 Southgate Street, Bath BA1 1AQ

# The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd.

(A company limited by guarantee)

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

### 1. Chairman's Introduction

The group has now been together for almost twelve years and we've done a lot, first with NIA funding, then with various grants from the Science Museum, FiPL, Thames Water, the North Wessex Downs Sustainable Development Fund, as well as donations from the Kilcreggan and ByBook Trusts, not to mention, of course, subscriptions from members and ad hoc donations from other supporters. However, we are now at the stage where our financial situation demands that we review the future of the partnership so that we can decide how we want to take things forward.

Covid lockdowns and restrictions had a big impact on everyone's life, and the group suffered from not being able to get together for workshops, visits and other activities. Post Covid, engagement hasn't really picked up and we've had to cancel several events due to poor uptake or last minute drop outs.

FiPL funding has meant that one area that has grown since Covid has been the community and outreach programme led by Janinka. This funding will come to an end in March 2024, and Janinka has given notice that she will be moving on to something new at that point. We have always had an active outreach programme, of which we should be very proud, but it was intended as a showcase for the work the Partnership is doing to support the landscape and wildlife of the Downs, and with the recent lack of group activity, it's difficult to justify the work that would be required to apply for further funding and deliver a new outreach programme.

This group was set up to be farmer-led, and was ground-breaking in that context back in 2011. However, without more input, support and engagement from the members, it's difficult to envisage how it might continue in its current form. The board is therefore now in the process of consulting with the membership to find out how they would like to take the group forwards, and we very much hope that we will continue to function in some form for many years to come.

Chris Musgrave  
Chair

## **2. Structure, governance and management**

### **Governing Document**

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 January 2012 in preparation for the potential success of a bid application submitted to Natural England, which was then awarded on March 2012, and registered as a charity on 3 July 2012. The company was established as 'The Marlborough Downs NIA' under a standard Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £10. On 16th December 2015 the Charitable Company was renamed as 'The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming'.

### **Organisational Structure**

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming charity has a board made up of farming and non-farming trustees and invited associates. Chris Musgrave is the chair of the charity board. The board delegates operational activities to two delivery groups: the Biodiversity and Landscape Group and the Community Outreach Group.

Projects are a collaboration between the farmers of the Marlborough Downs (who are members of the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming charity), Black Sheep Countryside Management (responsible for project delivery), and various other stakeholders. Board meetings are run as project board meetings and for this purposes representatives from non-farming members and partner organisations have been co-opted to the board. They are:

- Victoria Lowes, Piers Maynard and Christopher Musgrave, Associate Member representatives
- Jemma Batten, Senior Consultant, Black Sheep Countryside Management

Other key stakeholders may be invited to attend board meetings from time to time. All strategic decisions are taken at these properly constituted project board meetings. All agenda items are supported by board papers, which include a risk analysis and clear recommendations to be discussed and considered. The decisions are clearly minuted and these minutes with actions are circulated and made available to all members via the website.

### **Recruitment & Training**

This is the eleventh year of the charity and this report covers the year ended 31st March 2023. The charity continues with the same overall aim as in previous years. All bar one of the trustees are currently or have previously been farmers and represent the farming community in the Marlborough Downs area. Some have been on the board from the start of the charity and others have joined since. At the 2018 AGM it was agreed that non-farmer associate members should also be allowed to vote and to stand as trustees as long as the majority of the board remains as farmer members. No new trustees were appointed in the year to 31st March 2023.

The skills of the project board and their advisers are considered to be appropriate for the requirements of the charity's objectives and have been able to meet the ever increasing challenging project targets over the year. Trustees are offered training to fill any further gaps identified and if required additional trustees with new skills would be recruited.

### **3. Financial Review**

The majority of this year's income was derived from a Farming in Protected Landscapes grant for community events and outreach activities. Additional income has been generated through

- Fundraising events including Open Farm Sunday
- Subscriptions from farmer members
- One-off donations

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Spend</b>	<b>Under/over-spend</b>
Community	£18,910	£17,866	£1,044
Landscape	£1,921	£8,400	(£6,479)
Overheads	£4,846	£7,153	(£2,307)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£25,677</b>	<b>£33,419</b>	<b>(£7,742)</b>

Please note: All figures are rounded to the nearest £1. Numbers in brackets are negative, ie overspend.

£49,376 of restricted funding was brought forward (Landscape).

### **Reserves Policy**

The policy on reserves is accepted as being minimal as offices are virtual and all work is undertaken by volunteers or contractors. Generally, a reserve of £4,000 for unforeseen events is considered adequate as this could cover half a year's management costs in an emergency. As of 31 March 2023 we had £2,057 unrestricted funds in reserve which is not considered adequate, hence the decision to review the future of the organisation.

## **Donations In Kind**

In addition to the actual management of the budget, the charity benefits from items and services donated as 'in kind'. As in previous years, much of this has been in the form of pro bono staff time to support the project, donated items including seed, habitat management activities, and free venue and facility use. Volunteer time accounted for a high proportion of activities undertaken including project management time. However, the majority of this was not recorded due to the lack of reporting and paid support time to record and collate.

## **4. Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others**

The trustees act as custodians and ultimately the controlling group of the funds held. This was limited during the year as explained above. Otherwise, no funds are held on behalf of others.

## **5. Public benefit statement**

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farmers Ltd and Charity aims to deliver a more biodiverse, more attractive and more accessible landscape. Alongside these obvious, tangible benefits come a suite of gains that may be more difficult to quantify but are known collectively as ecosystem services. Such gains include improved water quality due to reduced agricultural inputs; a contribution towards the physical and mental health of residents and visitors through access to green spaces and fresh air; mitigation against climate change through building robust ecological networks; better crop pollination; support for a strong rural economy via agriculture, tourism and recreation; and the social, cultural and educational benefits that are a result of interaction with nature.

The partnership is driven by the fact that despite decades of conservation effort, many of our habitats and species are at best stable and at worst in decline and while most of the farmers in the area have long been involved in environmental schemes, we have shown that the farmer-led, bottom-up approach of this initiative can lead to far greater and more wide-reaching benefits as a result of the 'ownership' conferred on us by this project. We are also convinced that the potential for the long term delivery of this project is far higher than for others that rely upon financial incentives rather than personal commitment. We understand that a landscape-scale approach cannot succeed without widespread farmer involvement and we ensured that all farmers in the area had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the project.

As well as environmental and conservation benefits there is an emphasis on education of the public through volunteer activities to support the project as well as direct educational activities provided by the project. These activities are community based and work with existing groups so also promote community working and cohesion as groups and individuals are brought together with a common

aim. We are working with local communities to encourage more involvement in the countryside and to promote greater awareness of landscape, wildlife and farming. We are keen to enthuse people about the countryside and get the non-farming community involved with activities on and about the Downs through events and activities, workshops and work parties. We are working to provide better public access and information to encourage people to enjoy and understand the landscape while improving their health and wellbeing.

## **6. Objectives and activities**

The objectives as laid out for the Company in the initial incorporation document were:

- To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment.
- To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment.
- To promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by the preservation, conservation and the protection of the environment and the prudent use of resources.
- The promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration.

## 7. Achievements and performance Year 11 (April 2022 to March 2023)

Month	Meetings		Funding applications	Date and event	Venue (and number attending)
	Board	Delivery Group			
Apr	✓		Countryside Stewardship	21 <sup>st</sup> Bird feeder crafts	Fiddlers Hill (20)
May		COG B&L		14 <sup>th</sup> Dawn Chorus	Berwick Bassett (36)
				11 <sup>th</sup> Spring Celebration	Avebury Social Club (20)
				18 <sup>th</sup> Soilmentor training	Weir Farm (9)
Jun				2 <sup>nd</sup> Jubilee Beacon	SfN Reserve (100+)
				6 <sup>th</sup> Tree sparrows	Manor Farm, Berwick Bassett (7)
				12 <sup>th</sup> Open Farm Sunday	East Farm (500+)
				24 <sup>th</sup> Farm walk & picnic	Parsonage Farm (34)
Jul	✓			12 <sup>th</sup> Volunteer event	SfN Reserve (26)
				16 <sup>th</sup> Butterfly Walk	SfN Reserve (18)
Aug		COG		2 <sup>nd</sup> , 9 <sup>th</sup> , 16 <sup>th</sup> , 23 <sup>rd</sup> & 30 <sup>th</sup> School holiday events	Various (64)
				6 <sup>th</sup> Permaculture Group	Manor Farm, Berwick Bassett and East Farm (9)
			23 <sup>rd</sup> Ukrainian tea party	SfN Reserve (51)	
Oct	✓		7 <sup>th</sup> Bat walk	Avebury (20)	
			24 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> , 28 <sup>th</sup> Night safaris	Various (12)	
			27 <sup>th</sup> Hibernation & Migration	SfN Reserve (23)	
Nov			3 <sup>rd</sup> Seasonal Supper	Marlborough Golf Club (29)	
			19 <sup>th</sup> Willow wreaths	Broad Hinton (22)	
			22 <sup>nd</sup> Soilmentor training	Online (6)	
Dec		COG	6 <sup>th</sup> Natural Capital Forum	Marlborough Golf Club (34)	
			14 <sup>th</sup> Weed control talk	Online (12)	
			17 <sup>th</sup> Seasonal crafts	East Farm (25)	
Jan			12 <sup>th</sup> Volunteer event	Bay Bridges/Barbury Castle Estate (4)	
			29 <sup>th</sup> Volunteer event	Maisey Farm (12)	
Feb			14 <sup>th</sup> Wood crafts	SfN Reserve (30)	
			18 <sup>th</sup> Bird ringing for Kids	Bedwyn Common (14)	
Mar			12 <sup>th</sup> Spring Clean	The Ridgeway (6)	
			18 <sup>th</sup> Willow wreaths	Broad Hinton (17)	

COG = Community and Outreach Group; B&L = Biodiversity and Landscape Group

More details can be found under the relevant objective headings that follow.

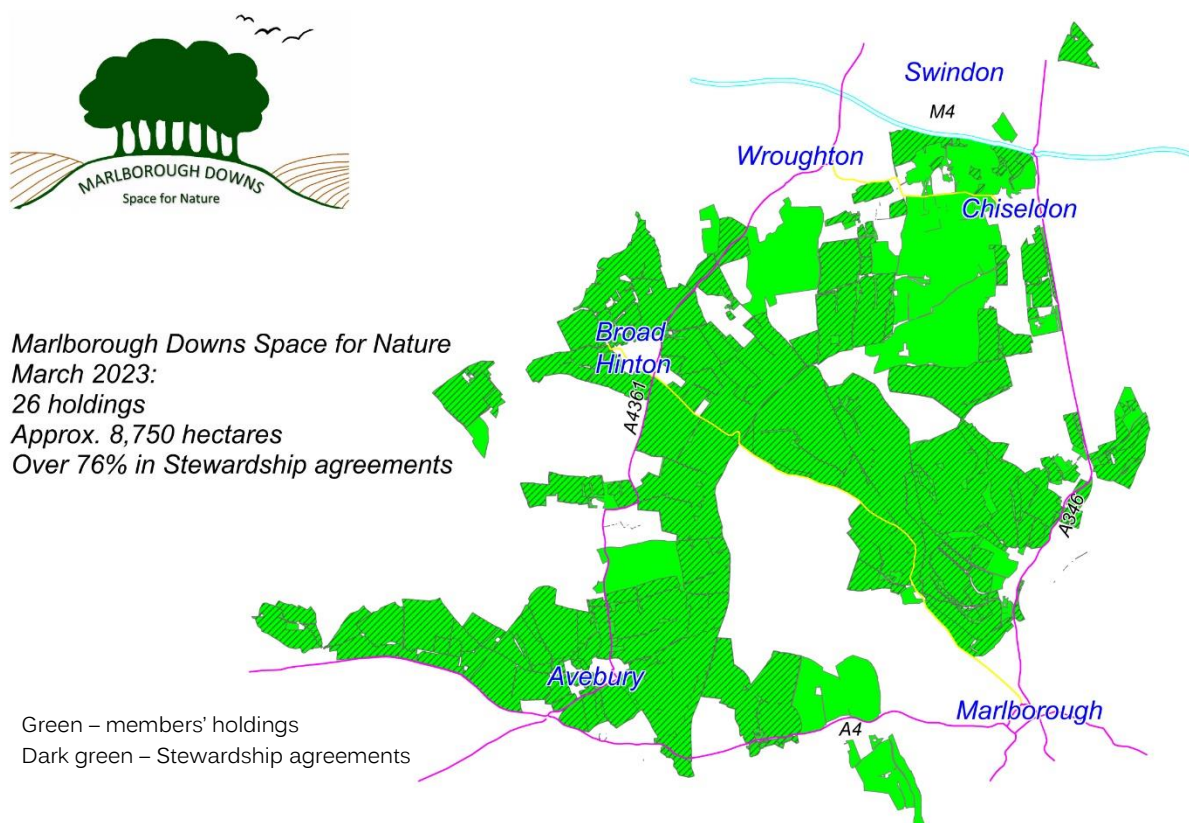
## OBJECTIVE 1 – To deliver evidence-based conservation activities on a landscape scale

### 1.1 Biodiversity tailoring

Detailed knowledge of what's happening beyond individual farm boundaries enables us to deliver on a landscape scale.

#### 1.1.1 Existing Stewardship agreements

The project management team continues to support members in their delivery of individual Environmental Stewardship (ES) and Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreements. At the beginning of 2023, these covered over 76% of the 8,768 hectares farmed by members which is significantly more than the national average (the most recent published figures (2020) indicate that just 20% of land in England was covered by an ES or CS agreement).



#### 1.1.2 New Stewardship agreements

Two higher and two mid tier applications were supported in 2023, all of which were successful. The resulting agreements include activities to create habitat for pollinators and farmland birds, manage hedgerows, species-rich and semi-improved grassland, protect archaeology, improve soil health, mitigate against diffuse pollution, preserve genetic diversity in traditional breed livestock, and deliver environmental education.

### **1.1.3 Dissemination of best practice**

The group registered for a Soilmentor account which enabled members, via a Smartphone app to record observations and photos, which are visualised to spot trends, refer to benchmarks and make comparisons. The package is designed to encourage groups of farmers to monitor soil health and biodiversity together, making it easy to see headline numbers, compare data and get tailored advice for different soil types. The initial response from members was positive, with representatives from eight holdings attending training on how to carry out and record the results of various tests to assess soil health and wildlife. Unfortunately though, the weather through late spring and summer was so dry that it was virtually impossible for individuals to replicate those tests on their farms. A refresher training session was offered in the autumn but cancelled due to lack of uptake, and an online session arranged to demonstrate data collation and comparison. However, by the end of the year's subscription, only a couple of members had uploaded any data so the account was allowed to lapse.

Members also received training on another app that can be used to upload and collate all the records that are required for Countryside Stewardship agreements. This is now being used to good effect by several members with multiple and/or complex agreements.

Our events and outreach co-ordinator has set up Space for Nature LIVE, an online library of behind-the-scenes footage of farming life and snippets of our diverse wildlife, linked to our social media accounts. This is aimed at encouraging members to share best practice via video clips and photos but so far participation has been minimal.

Other best practice events offered to members included an online talk by John Pawsey, organic farmer, on weed control in minimal and no tillage cultivation systems, and a trip to Pipers Farm in Devon (cancelled twice due to lack of uptake). More successful was a Natural Capital Forum, at which farmers heard from expert speakers on how to measure, monitor and monetise natural capital, including via biodiversity net gain, carbon markets, and other local schemes.

Additional 'best practice' activities associated with particular habitats and/or species are detailed under the relevant Objective headings below.

## **1.2 Supporting local conservation businesses**

We continue to have excellent relationships with many local businesses and other organisations involved in farming, conservation, land management, and other countryside activities, and communicate and collaborate on an *ad hoc* basis. For example, we collaborated with another local

charity, Action for the River Kennet, to create a new area of wetland, and have used local contractors, Wessex Woodland and James Vigor-Smith, to carry out establishment and maintenance work at the Space for Nature Reserve.

### 2.1 Restoring Resilient Ecosystems

We continue to contribute to the Restoring Resilient Ecosystems (RestREco) project, which is a collaboration between Cranfield University, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, University of Stirling, National Trust and Forest Research. The aim is to determine the most efficient approaches to restore complex, multifunctional and resilient ecosystems, thus securing net environmental gain, and following on from last year's floral and invertebrate diversity surveys, CEH researchers have erected a rainfall exclusion shelter on one of the sites to explore the impact of drought on the flora and fauna of species-rich grassland. At the annual Seasonal Supper, members were given a comprehensive and fascinating summary of the initial flora and invertebrate survey results by Dr Ben Woodcock from CEH.

### 2.2 Wildlife corridors and stepping stones

#### 2.2.1 On-farm delivery

With over three-quarters of the land covered by the Space for Nature project in some kind of Stewardship agreement, it's not surprising that there's an immense amount going on across the Downs in terms of environmental activities. The focus is very much on providing habitat and foraging sites for wildlife, with grassland and hedgerow management, along with the provision of rough grass margins, plots of seed-bearing crops for farmland birds, and areas nectar-rich plants for invertebrates being most popular.

#### 2.2.2 Space for Nature Reserve

Major works on the Reserve were all more-or-less completed by the end of 2022 and the site now boasts a whole host of features including:

- Species-rich grassland
- Tree sparrow village
- Woodland and scrub
- Hedges
- Fruit trees
- Wildlife pond
- Chalk pit
- Bug hotel, bird, bat and invertebrate boxes
- Stumpery and log piles
- Wild bird mix
- Nectar mix
- Fallow plots
- Arable crops
- Tussocky grass margins

The Reserve has been put to good use, with several events being held there throughout the year during which the close proximity of the various habitats and structures have allowed us to demonstrate our work to visitors.

### **2.2.3 New wetland complex**

In partnership with Action for the River Kennet, we have created a wetland complex in an area close to parking and accessed via a public footpath. The site provides a series of pools of varying depths, extensive planting of wetland vegetation, and scrubby areas for farmland birds and terrestrial invertebrates. Although still in the early stages of establishment, the site's proximity to an adjacent Reserve belonging to the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust makes it an important element in the wider landscape.

## **OBJECTIVE 3 – To consolidate populations of species of national and local importance**

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### **3.1 Space for Birds: Marlborough Downs farmland bird project**

Our volunteer farmland bird adviser, Matt Prior, of Wiltshire Ornithological Society, continues to coordinate our three-pronged approach to farmland bird conservation:

1. Year-round feeding opportunities for adults and spring/summer insect food for chicks
2. Nesting habitat
3. Protection from predators where predation significantly threatens breeding success

#### **3.1.1 Feeding and foraging habitat**

As in previous years, most of our members continue to provide overwinter stubbles, sown wild bird mixes and/or nectar mix plots via Stewardship agreements, and/or on a voluntary basis.

#### **3.1.2 Supplementary feeding**

Members continue to feed over 20 tonnes of seed annually to our farmland birds over winter, either scattered on the ground or through giant bird feeders purchased by the charity at a reduced rate.

#### **3.1.3 Farmland bird events**

We have hosted several events throughout the year, aimed at both members and the wider community. These included a Dawn Chorus walk, a workshop on best practice management for tree sparrows, and three night safaris with an infrared camera, led by Matt Prior, who also spent a morning trapping and ringing farmland birds with local children.

### **3.2 Widespread species**

Our regular butterfly and bat walks proved as popular as ever, though number were down on the former because of the extremely hot weather.

**OBJECTIVE 4 – To offer a range of opportunities for people to engage with the landscape of the Marlborough Downs**

**OBJECTIVE 5 – To provide high quality access for all**

**OBJECTIVE 6 – To increase local and national awareness of the work, achievements and impact of the Space for Nature Project**

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## **4.1 Marlborough Downs SfN events**

### **4.1.1 Public events**

Our events co-ordinator, Janinka Diverio, has proved to be a great success and has curated and executed our exciting and broad programme of events highlighting nature, farming, wellness and the arts whilst making Space for Nature. The programme has thus far proved very successful and has been well-supported by the local community – full details at Annex 1.

In addition to public and special interest events, the programme has delivered four volunteer workshops, one with Arval Car Leasing staff and Buglife (habitat for pollinators), one with friends of the partnership (welcome to Ukrainian refugees), and two with Action for the River Kennet volunteers (installation of kissing gate and finger post, and shrub planting at the wetland complex). Member Jilly Carter has also hosted visits to the Space for Nature Reserve by residents of a local care home.

### **4.1.2 Space for Nature WILD**

In January 2023 we launched a new venture - Space for Nature WILD. This is a monthly forest school hosted at Weir Farm and offers themed morning sessions with a whole range of activities aimed at children aged six years and over.

## **4.2 Access improvements**

As has been mentioned (section 2.2.3), a new wetland complex has been created in a publicly accessible area. As well as having access to the site, people can find out more about the River Kennet and its flora and fauna from a newly installed information panel. In addition, a new kissing gate and finger post have been put in by volunteers at the point where the footpath to the wetland site starts from a local parking area.

### **4.3 Outreach**

Janinka has been very active on our behalf on social media, and we now have over 3,200 followers on Facebook and 1,000 on Instagram. She also distributed Space for Nature 2023 calendars featuring wildlife photographs of the Downs by local farmer and group member David White.

### **4.4 Partnership working**

As has been mentioned, we have started to build relationships with other local organisations after the hiatus in activities necessitated by Covid restrictions. We have particularly strong ties to Action for the River Kennet, the Woodland Trust, Farming in Protected Landscapes and the North Wessex Downs AONB, Buglife, Arval Car Leasing, the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, and Wiltshire Ornithological Society.

## **8. Progress Planned for future Years**

As has been stated, although we have activities and events planned for the first half of the year 2023-24, the board intends to undertake a full review of the future of the partnership and project, to include

- Organisational structure
- Governance documents
- Project aims and objectives
- Day-to-day project management
- Funding

Members will be asked to contribute their opinions and aspirations, and to actively re-engage with the partnership.

## Board Statement

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued March 2005). In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 419 (2) of the Companies Act 2006.

It was approved by the trustee board on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Musgrave', written over a horizontal line.

Christopher Musgrave

Chair

Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023

# Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd

(A Company limited by guarantee)

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2023, which are set out on the following pages.

## Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under part 16 of the 2006 Act and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

## Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records are not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 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
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice), FRS102.



**THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT  
FARMING LIMITED**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES  
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT  
*FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023***

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
<b><u>Income from:</u></b>					
Donations and legacies	3	5,214	15,098	20,313	29,799
Charitable activities	4	5,076	288	5,364	1,772
<b>Total income</b>		<b>10,290</b>	<b>15,386</b>	<b>25,677</b>	<b>31,571</b>
<b><u>Expenditure on:</u></b>					
Raising funds	5	605	-	605	1,935
Charitable activities	6	10,898	21,915	32,813	12,438
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>11,503</b>	<b>21,915</b>	<b>33,419</b>	<b>14,373</b>
<b>Net income/expenditure for the year/ Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(1,213)</b>	<b>(6,529)</b>	<b>(7,742)</b>	<b>17,198</b>
Fund balances at 1 April		3,270	46,106	49,376	32,178
<b>Fund balances at 31 March</b>		<b>2,057</b>	<b>39,577</b>	<b>41,634</b>	<b>49,376</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

**THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT  
FARMING LIMITED**

**BALANCE SHEET**

**AS AT 31 MARCH 2023**

	Notes	2023		2022	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors		7,070		1,050	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>36,917</u>		<u>52,507</u>	
			43,987		53,557
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	10	<u>2,353</u>		<u>4,180</u>	
Net current assets			<u>41,634</u>		<u>49,376</u>
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds			39,577		46,106
Unrestricted funds			<u>2,057</u>		<u>3,270</u>
			<u>41,634</u>		<u>49,376</u>

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2023.

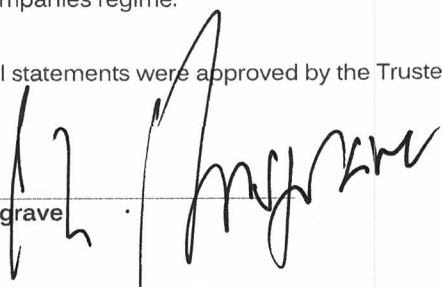
The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476. However, the accounts have been reviewed by the independent examiner and, separately and independently, compliance checked before submission to Companies House and the Charities Commission.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 2nd November 2023.

Mr C B Musgrave  
Trustee



Company Registration No. 07907437

# THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

*AS AT 31 MARCH 2023*

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### 1 Accounting policies

#### Charity information

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Jindabyne, Great Hinton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6BT.

#### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd ("the company")'s Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 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)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The company has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

#### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

#### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are as follows:

Restricted fund	Purposes	Uses in 2022/23
Kilcreggan Trust	Creation of nature reserve	Livestock field shelter; woodland management; event resources; wildflower seed and establishment costs
	Farmland bird project	None

Restricted fund	Purposes	Uses in 2022/23
Bybrook Trust	Conservation agriculture	Soil health training, monitoring and evaluation; best practice workshops
Farming in Protected Landscapes	Public event programme Access infrastructure	Community events and outreach Kissing gate
Other restricted	Winter bird seed	None

#### 1.4 Incoming resources

Income is recognised when the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the company has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business.

#### 1.5 Resources expended

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the company to pay out resources.

This includes £415 for accounts preparation and examination. There are no costs for governance or trustee meetings or constitutional matters.

#### 1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

#### 1.7 Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

##### *Basic financial assets*

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

##### *Basic financial liabilities*

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable

within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

*Derecognition of financial liabilities*

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the company's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

**2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements**

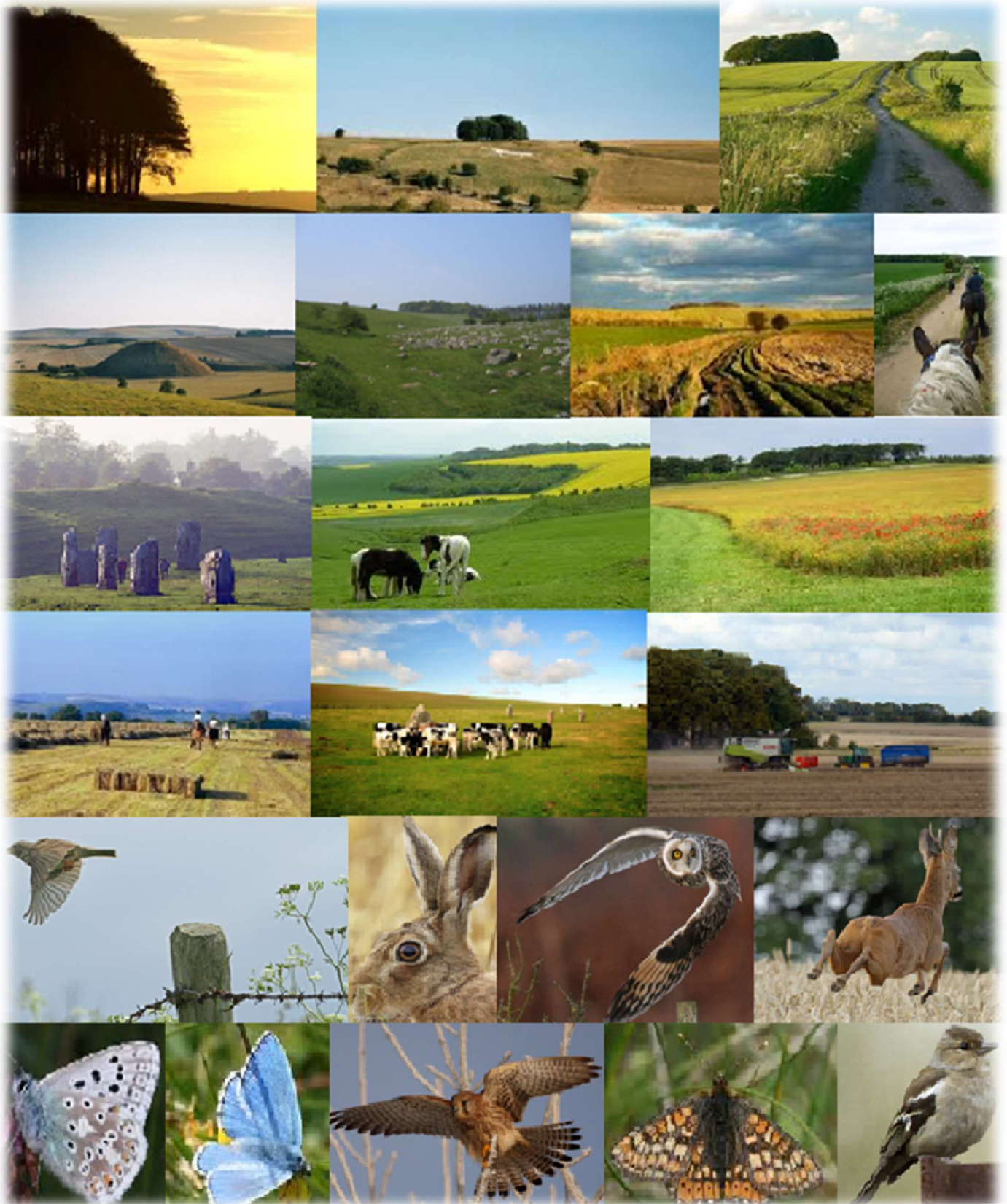
In the application of the company's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience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

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

<b>3</b>	<b>Donations and legacies</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Donations and gifts	5,214	360	5,574	29,799
		<u>5,214</u>	<u>360</u>	<u>5,574</u>	<u>29,799</u>
		<u><u>5,214</u></u>	<u><u>360</u></u>	<u><u>5,574</u></u>	<u><u>29,799</u></u>
<b>4</b>	<b>Charitable activities</b>	<b>Charitable income</b>		<b>Charitable income</b>	
		<b>2023</b>		<b>2022</b>	
		<b>£</b>		<b>£</b>	
	Sales within charitable activities	-		-	
	Grants	14,738		1,050	
	Other income	5,364		722	
		<u>20,103</u>		<u>1,772</u>	
		<u><u>20,103</u></u>		<u><u>1,772</u></u>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Raising funds</b>	<b>Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>Restricted funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
		<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
		<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
	Fundraising costs	605	-	605	1,935
		<u>605</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>605</u>	<u>1,935</u>
		<u><u>605</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>605</u></u>	<u><u>1,935</u></u>

6	Charitable activities	Charitable expenditure	Charitable expenditure
		2023	2022
		£	£
	Habitat creation/management	3,076	1,926
	Farmland bird programme	-	492
	Community events	15,347	710
	Workshops	3,111	540
	Access infrastructure	290	-
	Outreach/promotion/printing	1,124	102
	Bank charges	490	1
	Insurance	389	86
	Office expenses	93	48
	Meeting expenses	69	31
	Employee travel	524	163
		<u>24,514</u>	<u>4,099</u>
	Share of governance costs (see note 7)	8,299	8,339
		<u>32,813</u>	<u>12,438</u>
	<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
	Unrestricted funds	10,898	8,385
	Restricted funds	21,915	4,053
		<u>32,813</u>	<u>12,438</u>
		<u><u>32,813</u></u>	<u><u>12,438</u></u>
7	Support costs	Governance costs	Governance costs
		2023	2022
		£	£
	Legal and professional	7,884	7,394
	Accountancy	415	945
		<u>8,299</u>	<u>8,339</u>
	<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
	Unrestricted funds	7281	6,769
	Restricted funds	1019	1,570
		<u>8,299</u>	<u>8,339</u>
		<u><u>8,299</u></u>	<u><u>8,339</u></u>
8	Trustees		
	None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the company during the year.		
9	Employees		
	There were no employees during the year.		
10	Creditors	2023	2022
	<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>	£	£
	Trade creditors	2,353	4,180

# Annex 1: The Marlborough Downs Space for Nature 2022-23 Public Event Reports



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Bird Feeder Crafts
<b>Event date:</b>	21st April 2022, 10am to noon
<b>Event host:</b>	Vicki Lowes, Fiddlers Hill
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio, Vicki Lowes and Jemma Batten (all MDSfN)
<b>Attendees:</b>	20
<b>Overview:</b>	Lovely drop-in event held at Vicki Lowes house. Families made a variety of different feeders from cardboard plant pots, wire, skewers and bird seed. Vicki and Jemma also took families for a walk to visit the fowl and pond and talk about the wildlife in the area.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	Very positive. MDSfN's first event post Covid.



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Dawn Chorus Walk
<b>Event date:</b>	1st May 2022, 5:30 to 8:00 am
<b>Event host:</b>	David White, Manor Farm, Berwick Bassett
<b>Event lead:</b>	Robin Nelson; Helen Llewellyn and Nigel Pleass (Wiltshire Ornithological Society)
<b>Attendees:</b>	36
<b>Overview:</b>	David held a very successful dawn Chorus event and provided breakfast too. The event was over-attended with a surplus of 8 people which shows the demand. The group split in three, each with an expert bird-watcher and learnt how to identify different species by sight and song, and found out something of their habits.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Very positive. Unfortunately there was a binocular mix up and David's went missing.</p> <p><i>Many thanks for a wonderful morning today. Well worth getting up early.</i></p> <p><i>Must thank David and wife for sharing their home for a lovely surprise breakfast too.</i></p> <p><i>Keep up the conservation, it's certainly paying off on the Marlborough Downs.</i></p> <p><i>Best wishes</i> <i>Kelvyn and Anna Shantry</i></p>



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Open Farm Sunday
<b>Event date:</b>	12th June 2022, 11am to 4pm
<b>Event host:</b>	East Farm, Winterbourne Monkton
<b>Event lead:</b>	Laura Corbett and Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	500+
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>The event was very successful indeed in excess of 500 people attending. The Cooper family were the hosts and the location worked extremely well offering easy parking, visits to the goats, tractor rides and a pets corner to include dog walking, chicks, sheep shearing and ponies.</p> <p>There was also a free play area of hay bale stack and exhibitors, including Wiltshire Ornithological Society and the National Trust, as well as demonstrations of sheep shearing, spinning and weaving.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Feedback was generally very positive. Please see the link herewith. The organisers felt the staggered ticket system worked particularly well enabling a quality event with no queuing or crowds.</p> <p>Note: Mics needed for tractor rides.</p> <p>Visitor feedback and survey results are filed and can be provided.</p>



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Summer Farm Walk
<b>Event date:</b>	24th June 2022, 6:30 to 8:30 pm
<b>Event host:</b>	Adrian Bowles, Parsonage Farm
<b>Event lead:</b>	Adrian Bowles and Jemma Batten
<b>Attendees:</b>	34
<b>Overview:</b>	A lovely walk on a semi-natural habitat near Chiseldon. Adrian and Jemma took us on a walk and talk through the valley demonstrating how nature was reclaiming the site with minimum intervention. We covered the different start points of the various areas of the site (arable, pasture), the plants and trees that were colonising, the management principles, and the traditional breeds of livestock being used to graze the site. The evening ended with a picnic.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	Very positive but as it was such a large group it was hard to hear what was being said from the back. We would need to remedy this moving forward. The weather just about held out but the picnic was dampened by drizzle.




## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Arval Volunteer Event
<b>Event date:</b>	12th July 2022, 1:30 to 3:30 pm
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter, Maisey Farm
<b>Event lead:</b>	Kaitlyn Elverson ( <i>Buglife</i> )
<b>Attendees:</b>	26
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>We were very lucky to be joined by a lovely bunch of volunteers from Arval, a car leasing firm in Swindon. Organised through <i>Buglife</i>, The Invertebrate Conservation Trust, we ascended on Maisey Farm like intrepid explorers for a couple of hours of survey work, with a practical task to end. Volunteers were asked to take part in a FIT count survey led by Kaitlyn. We firstly assessed the newly-established wildflower meadow of the lower slopes of this farm near Rockley and then the chalk grassland on the bank before surveying a third site of herbal ley. To end, volunteers assisted with the removal of 115 spiral guards on a patch of roadside land where we have planted hazel, blackthorn, rowan, lime, chestnut and wild privet with five minutes to spare for an impromptu drop-in talk about our nesting birds from our farmland bird guru Matt Prior, who just happened to be passing through.</p> <p>We had a lovely time examining these areas and recording the wildlife observed. Thanks to Arval for their help...many hands make for light work, to <i>Buglife</i> for partnering with us and our hostess Jilly Carter. It was a lovely afternoon.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	Very positive.



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

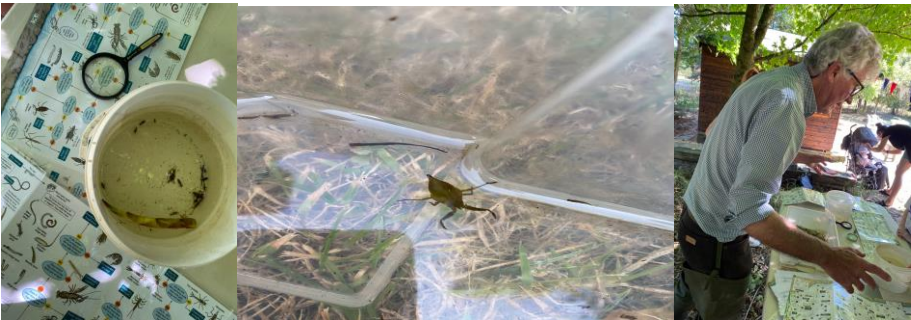
<b>Event name:</b>	Butterfly Walk
<b>Event date:</b>	16th July 2022, 11:00 am to 1:00 pm
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter, Space for Nature Reserve
<b>Event lead:</b>	Maurice Avent (Butterfly Conservation Trust)
<b>Attendees:</b>	18
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>The evening before, Maurice had set a moth trap so we started the session by looking at and identifying the various specimens captured - 30 different species in total. Maurice then led a walk around the Space for Nature Reserve and adjacent field, searching for butterflies along the way, discussing identifying features and other interesting facts.</p> <p>We also stopped off at a barn where a resident owl and chicks are currently resident which was a real bonus.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Feedback was very positive. The weather on the day was very hot, so whilst 34 were booked only 18 attended. This was followed up and the feedback was mixed from it being too hot to attend, to people saying they didn't think it would be on. This is disappointing but given the demographic that this type of event attracts, it's possible that they aren't so au-fait in using technology to cancel at short notice. As with all walk and talk events the group did get divided, though those at the back seemed content to chit chat and enjoyed the scenery. One child attended.</p>
	

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report


<b>Event name:</b>	Shoebox Farms
<b>Event date:</b>	2nd August 2022, 10:00 am to noon
<b>Event host:</b>	John White, Overtown Farm
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	21
<b>Overview:</b>	Making miniature farms inside a shoebox. Using an array of materials provided, the children imagined and crafted their very own farm thinking about shelter, food, water and safety when fashioning their miniature worlds.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Facebook reach: 1026</p> <p>The mums and dad loved the event. They all said it was a great idea and the children fully embraced it. Most were from Wroughton Primary School and said a mum had shared our events to their Facebook group.</p> <p>At first I was worried about the location as it was a windy day and quite open to the elements but it was really secluded and warm in the front of the barn. I was also anxious about people finding the site but the large banner helped.</p> <p><i>“Thank you very much, it was a lovely morning”</i></p>



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Pond Dipping
<b>Event date:</b>	9 August 2022, 10am to noon
<b>Event host:</b>	Vicki Lowes, Fiddlers Hill
<b>Event lead:</b>	Richard Cripps (Lackham College, ret'd.)
<b>Attendees:</b>	8 (of 28 booked)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>A wonderful event at Vicki and Jeremy Lowes pond at Fiddlers Hill. Upon meeting, the children gathered around the water trough in the paddock and looked at Water Boatmen. The children were interested in how the boatmen would arrive here and this was discussed with Richard Cripps. Who knew they could swim and fly? We then went to the pond area where Richard waded into the pond to gather buckets and nets of specimens. The children were delighted when pond life wriggled out of the net into the specimen trays. We saw a leech, water scorpion, non biting mites and more, comparing them to the illustrations on the ID charts.</p> <p>When it all got hot and the children needed some down time we made leaping frogs and raced the ribbiting cardboard creations around the pond. Vicki supplied refreshments which were appreciated all round on such a hot day.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Great feedback from those who attended. Some got a bit lost finding us but the mums really appreciated something different to do and for free too. I have contacted the no-shows and replies have been mixed from I had to work to I didn't know how to contact you. Very disappointing - so from what could have been a very busy event we had a quality over quantity couple of hours really indulging our guests.</p>
	

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report


<b>Event name:</b>	Hapa Zome Japanese Printing
<b>Event date:</b>	16 August 2022, 10am to noon
<b>Event host:</b>	David White, Manor Farm Berwick Bassett
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	11 (19 bookings, 8 cancellations on the day)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>Today we looked at the flora and fauna of the area surrounding Field Barn near Berwick Bassett and utilised various specimens to carry out an ancient Japanese printing practice. The families enjoyed comparing their flower finds with our flower ID charts and we talked about how the edges of the field are such an attraction for birds and insects. Using the petals and leaves of wild flowers we arranged them onto thick paper and then onto small calico bags and covered them with masking tape. We then proceeded to hammer out the pulp of the flowers which imprinted onto the canvas leaving pretty delicate floral patterns. We had a range of ages attend from one adult on her own to a family of three, the youngest being four years old.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Facebook reach: 932 Guests were really excited to visit an off-road site and loved the activity. As it has been so dry a lot of the plants were too dry to get any printing from them but we persevere experimenting with various leaves and even wheat which produced some lovely results. I knew it would be harder at this time of year and in the future I'd like to run this event in early summer and know it would work well as an adult workshop too. I posted the event on Facebook and we have already had positive comments as a result and one email feedback <i>"Thank you for today, Matilda and Vaida really enjoyed the session"</i> - Samantha Hodgeson</p>
	

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Wild Play at the Reserve
<b>Event date:</b>	23 August, 10am to noon
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter, Space for Nature Reserve
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	24 (28 booked and 4 cancellations on the day)
<b>Overview:</b>	Today we held a lovely wild play session at The Reserve on Maisey Farm. Over 20 people joined us for den building, tracking and exploring. The session was intentionally loose exploring the Forest School principles of children determining their own boundaries within a monitored setting but with the freedom to engage with nature at their own pace. Much fun was had on the swing and zip-wire too and it was a great success boding well for future events of this kind.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	Facebook reach: 918 <i>"We had an amazing morning, thank you"</i> <i>"They (the children) had an amazing time, thank you"</i>  Feedback was very positive. Families enjoyed a couple of hours " off the beaten track" and learned about the habitat. Host Jilly Carter gave a talk on the farm and their bio-diversity practices and plans for the future. Our cancellations were reduced for this event due to clearer cancellation policies in the reminder emails.



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Ukrainian Tea Party
<b>Event date:</b>	23 August, 2 to 4:30pm
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter, Space for Nature Reserve
<b>Event lead:</b>	Jilly Carter, Janinka Diverio, Jemma Batten
<b>Attendees:</b>	51 (74 booked)
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>Hostess and idea lead of this tea party Jilly Carter, rallied a host of bakers and makers and worked with us to pull together this unforgettable event. Over 50 guests descended on The Reserve and enjoyed bushcraft, making headdresses, traditional games and an array of cakes and treats all handmade and served with tea. Lifts were organised from Marlborough and many Ukrainians met with each other for the first time, making friends with their fellow citizens and other sponsors. Jemma Batten handed out The Countryside Code leaflets too. It was a very special afternoon attracting lots of attention on social media.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Facebook reach: 5,424</p> <p><i>"Thank you very much for organising this wonderful event"</i></p> <p><i>"You are Incredible, thank you hosts and assistants for a wonderful time"</i></p> <p><i>"It was really wonderful! Having the opportunity to meet all these helpful and kind hearted and nice people! Thank you, our family enjoyed the day"</i></p> <p><i>"It was lovely, thank you to all involved"</i></p> <p>Feedback has been amazing. It was quite hard pulling together the guest list and organising transport and directions but it all came together in the end. We would like to further this relationship with our Ukrainian neighbours living in the local area.</p>
	

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Wellness in the Woods
<b>Event date:</b>	30 August, 10am to noon
<b>Event host:</b>	James Hussey, Weir Farm
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio and Patti Worcester
<b>Attendees:</b>	21
<b>Overview:</b>	A beautiful event with full attendance. We were joined by Patti Worcester who took us through a journey of decorating our setting, discussing trees and leaf types. We then did some yoga poses based on trees and animals living in the woods. We then made headdresses and carried out yoga based on Indians and Indian warriors before making our own lemon and water juice with honey. We discussed bees and also our bodies (lemons are a cleanser and eating pure lemon juice is like having a shower on the inside). We then gathered in a circle and sang songs as a group. This was a really special event for all and much appreciated by all the mums. This event was held in the ancient woods of Hackpen which are burial mounds for the Bronze Age people and otherwise known locally as the hedgehogs. We also fully litter-picked the site.
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	Wonderful feedback. One mum said it really lifted her spirits. This event offered the perfect closure for our summer sessions. Our new blackboards really helped with effectively directing people.



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Avebury Bat Walk
<b>Event date:</b>	7th October, 6 to 8:30pm (postponed twice)
<b>Event host:</b>	The National Trust
<b>Event lead:</b>	Ali Rasey and Peter Oliver
<b>Attendees:</b>	33 booked - 20 attendees
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>Bat talk and walk around Avebury village and stone circle. Bat detectors loaned to attendees, batty literature handed out. Talk at the start of the walk in the car park.</p> <p>National Trust hosted by way of car parking, risk assessments, and as backmarker, very grateful for that!</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Event had to be postponed twice because of the Queen's death and then poor weather, hence the later October date.</p> <p>Evening was dry, calm, and clear so consequently it became cold quite quickly. Bats seen/heard were:</p> <p>Common pip seen/heard by all, noctule heard by a few, serotine heard by a few. Limited numbers of bats because of air temperature/time of year.</p> <p>Attendees seemed to enjoy themselves, questions were asked and discussion had, and the walk ended after 8pm. No incidents/accidents to report.</p> <p>Two bat detectors were swapped out because of low battery power – would be worth purchasing new batteries for next year.</p> <p>Already discussed with Janinka that we'll aim for an earlier date in 2023 so it gives more scope if the walk needs postponing for whatever reason.</p>

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Night safari
<b>Event dates:</b>	24 October - Manor Farm, Avebury 26 October - Weir Farm, Hackpen 28 October - The Reserve, Rockley
<b>Event hosts:</b>	Robin Butler James Hussey Jilly Carter
<b>Event lead:</b>	Matt Prior (supported by Janinka on Mon 24 October)
<b>Attendees:</b>	4 per event - total 12
<b>Overview:</b>	A night safari event exploring the stubble fields with a view to catching and ringing wild birds. Matt prior is a local bird expert. Meeting before the event Matt explained to us what he and we would be doing. The session was aimed to explore what wildlife is about and their behaviour during the night made possible with a thermal imaging camera and app on a phone (so guests could see in detail what Matt was doing up ahead).
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>We were hugely successful in viewing and ringing the following birds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 corn bunting</li> <li>1 fieldfair</li> <li>1 red wing</li> <li>3 grey partridges</li> <li>8 skylarks</li> </ul> <p>It was a long cold session of 4.5 hours in total but much enjoyed by all as we walked a field in Avebury Trusloe, caught and processed the above birds.</p> <p>Feedback from the group was great and positive in spite of the cold and wind. The app didn't work very well and kept buffering and the vision was blurry and grainy so I don't think it added a lot. An ipad would have provided a larger screen to view but the picture quality wouldn't have improved. It didn't matter though as everyone was engaged and enthusiastic in watching what was happening in real time. Matt was never more than a few metres ahead of us.</p> <p>It was a fantastic event and Matt really is an asset to this project.</p> <p>Night #2: Report from Matt Prior Last night went well. We saw 2 Woodcock but did not catch them. We ringed 7 Skylarks and 2 Fieldfares. We saw hares, rabbits, mice and a fox. Plus the guests saw several shooting stars.</p> <p>Night #3: Report from Jilly Cooper Tawny owl, Skylarks, Conr Buntings, Fieldfares, Redwing, Partridge Roe Deer, Hares, Rabbit, Field Mouse, Harvest Mouse</p>
<b>Post event social media reach:</b>	Facebook event report: 1205 + Video 363 with 114 views Insta story:49 / 58 / 45 Post: 32 + video 220

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Hibernation and Migration Family Event
<b>Event date:</b>	27 October, 10am to 12:30pm
<b>Event host:</b>	Jilly Carter, Space for Nature Reserve
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio and Jemma Batten
<b>Attendees:</b>	Booked: 30 Cancelled: 4 No shows: 9 Additions: 6
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>A hibernation and migration themed family event with discussion and activities centred around these seasonal topics. Jemma Batten led the talks whilst Janinka led the activities and Jilly Carter also discussed the Reserve and its purpose. We started by building dens to demonstrate that animals too need homes and in this case winter homes to nestle in over the winter. Jemma Batten discussed which animals might emigrate to warmer climates and what happens to bugs and insects at this time of year and why this important food source dries up over the winter.</p> <p>We then looked at various man-made homes that one can buy to put up in their own gardens and passed these around including hedgehog homes, bat and insect boxes. The families then placed two hedgehog boxes along the hedge line. Jemma discussed how to position facing away from running water and gusty winds. Our final activity was making clay hedgehogs with the children finding cones and sticks to either sculpt or decorate their hedgehogs with. We then finished by toasting marshmallows on the open fire.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	Feedback was very positive. The children learned a lot and easily through play and activities. The event was very well managed with a mix of fact based information and relaxed informal play.

### Photos:



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Seasonal Crafty Fun
<b>Event date:</b>	17 December, 11 am to 3 pm
<b>Event host:</b>	East Farm, Gourmet Goat Farm Larder
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	25
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>A drop-in session masking seasonal decorations using willow, clay, foliage, bird seed.</p> <p>An opportunity to host a drop-in session at the great facilities at East Farm with goats and Freddie the cow for company.</p> <p>Participants could choose a range of items to make from willow wreaths, clay and pinecone hedgehogs and edible tree decorations.</p> <p>We had a mix of ages attend and some repeat visitors. It was really good to engage with people on a more relaxed level.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Lovely feedback. Some chance passers by and some who came intentionally.</p> <p><i>"My boys had a wonderful time today making crafts. Thank you"</i> - Fiona Maynard</p>



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Willow Crafts and Dream Catchers (and journey sticks)
<b>Event date:</b>	14 February, 10 am to noon
<b>Location</b>	The Reserve
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	20 children and 10 adults (2 toddlers) 1 family no show
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>A brilliant morning, Misty, dull and damp at first but most families turned up to enjoy the session in good spirits.</p> <p>The session centred around willow crafts but as we were enjoying them we look for feathers, explored the site for decorations and even found some sheep fleece which we made bug duvets from for the bug hotel. The children made dream catchers and we discussed the reasons behind this lovely ornament. Because it was Valentines the children also made willow hearts.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	Very positive. Some repeat guests from last summer and from SfN WILD. Some people actually booked on future events whilst they were there.



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Bird Ringing
<b>Event date:</b>	18 February, 7:15 to 11 am
<b>Location</b>	Bedwyn Common
<b>Event lead:</b>	Matt Prior
<b>Attendees:</b>	14 children with parents
<b>Overview:</b> by Matt Prior	<p>Another brilliant day yesterday. Members of Wiltshire Ornithological Society gave a bird ringing demonstration specifically for children in Savernake Forest. This is part of a commitment that I have made as Chair of WOS to encourage more youngsters into birdwatching. We had to limit numbers, and 14 children came, joined by their parents, who turned out to be just as enthralled. As it was windy we had to move the event from a lovely farm to a sheltered woodland. Thank you very much to Forestry England for allowing us to use one of their sites. We ringed a good variety of birds including Treecreepers, Nuthatch, Marsh Tit, Chaffinches, Great Spotted Woodpecker and lots of Coal Tits. The level of enthusiasm and engagement was absolutely amazing, both the small kids and big kids were completely focussed right to the end. The ringing team did a fantastic job and their hard work was made worthwhile by seeing so many happy faces.</p> <p>See page 2 for photos</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Very positive:</p> <p><i>Hi Janinka,</i></p> <p><i>Just wanted to feedback about what an amazing morning we had! Emma had such a fantastic time and learnt so much, she hasn't stopped talking about it and couldn't believe she was able to hold and release the birds! A big thank you to Matt and everyone there, they were all so interesting and knowledgeable and it made for a really memorable day. We would def be interested in any future events, em has a real passion and interest in birds and it was lovely to be amongst other children who were equally as passionate.</i></p> <p><i>Big thank you</i></p> <p><i>Alice, Steve and Emma</i></p>

## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report



## Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Event Report

<b>Event name:</b>	Great British Spring Clean
<b>Event date:</b>	12 March, 10 am to noon
<b>Event host:</b>	Hackpen carpark (The Ridgeway)
<b>Event lead:</b>	Janinka Diverio
<b>Attendees:</b>	13 booked. 2 families cancelled. 6 people attended.
<b>Income:</b>	N/A
<b>Overview:</b>	<p>We met at Hackpen Hill car-park and assembled, distributed litter pickers and hoops. It was an incredibly blustery and cold day hence I think the low attendance.</p> <p>We literally did the car park area, the walk to the first clump of beech trees, inside the wooded area and the length of the inside field (top) and managed to obtain 4 bags of rubbish to include over 20 glass bottles, one ball, 2 odd bots, a large plant pot and a large plastic drinking cup.</p> <p>We had lots of fun looking for yellow litter and yellow in nature which was a challenge set for us by Friends of the Ridgeway.</p>
<b>Feedback and evaluation:</b>	<p>Low attendance levels but a really great event with great results and good partnerships with Wilts Council (litter pickers loan), Friends of the Ridgeway (yellow spotting), National Ridgeway Trail (50th anniversary) and The Great British Spring Clean. Good new partnerships beginnings.</p> <p>Definitely worthwhile with brilliant social media post-event comments and reach.</p> <p>Families loved it and “Very satisfying” was the conclusion. One child even made a poster before she came to the event.</p>



**THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING**

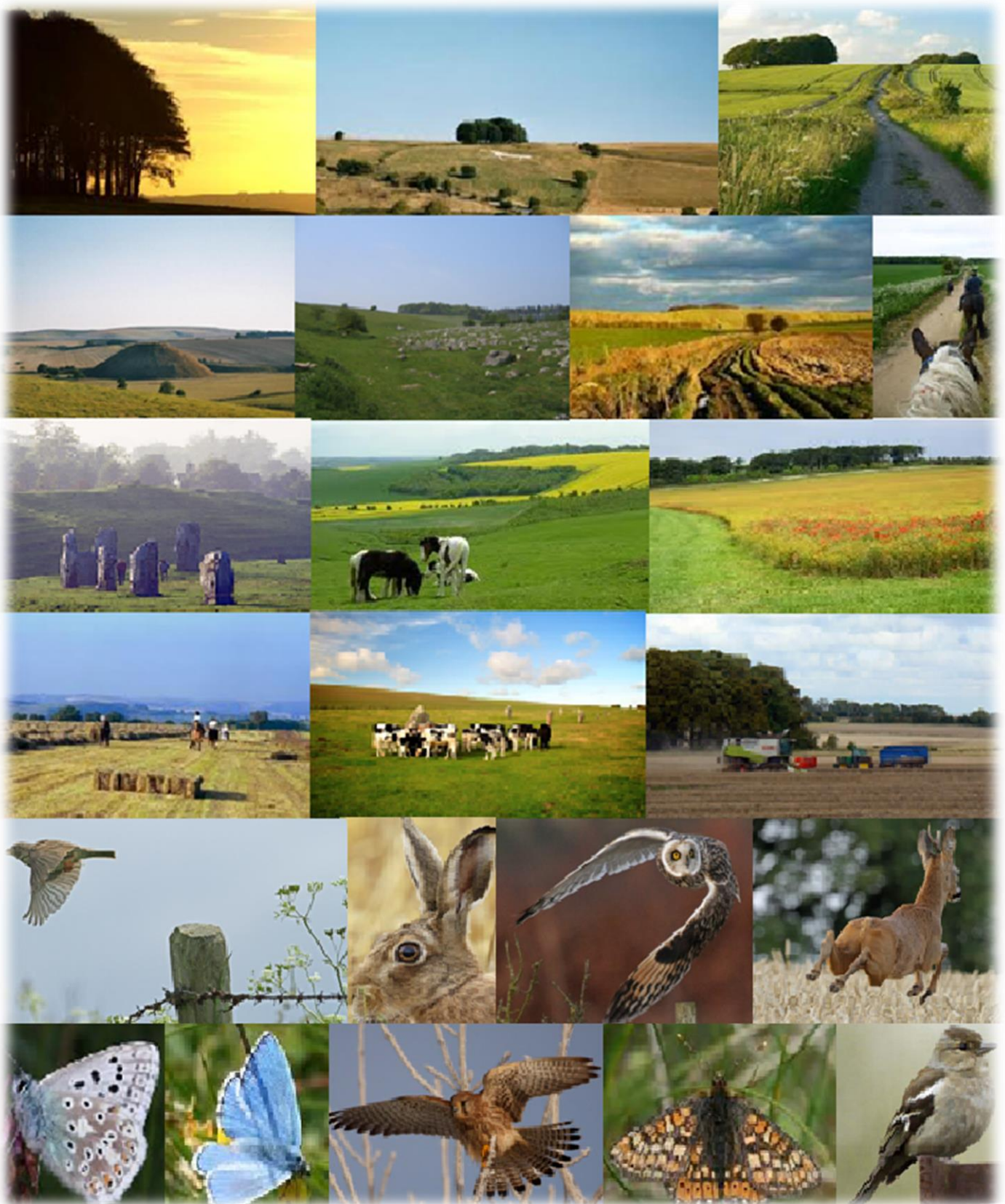
England & Wales - Charity number 1147925

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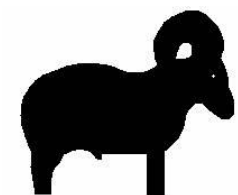
# Accounts

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# The Marlborough Downs: Space for Nature



Tenth Annual Report



Dr Jemma Batten  
Marlborough Downs Space for Nature Project Manager  
Black Sheep Countryside Management  
Jindabyne – Great Hinton – Wiltshire BA14 6BT

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**The Marlborough Downs  
Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd**  
(A company limited by guarantee)

Report and Unaudited Financial Statements  
for the year to 31st March 2022

Company Number : 7907437  
Registered Charity Number : 1147925

# **The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd.**

(A company limited by guarantee)

The trustee board presents its directors' report and unaudited financial statements for year to 31 March 2022.

## **ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS OF THE CHARITY, ITS TRUSTEES AND ADVISERS**

Company Registered No : 7907437

Charity Registered No : 1147925

Principal Address: Jindabyne, Great Hinton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6BT

Registered address: Jindabyne, Great Hinton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6BT

Trustees that served during the period:

- Marcus Robert Cooper – Chair to October 2021
- Christopher Musgrave – Chair from January 2022
- Robin Butler
- Gillian Carter
- Peter Lawson
- Victoria Lowes
- Piers Maynard
- Matthew Moore

Project Management: Black Sheep Countryside Management – Lead Dr Jemma Batten

### **Independent Examiner**

Helen Frost, HF Bookkeeping Plus, 1 Forest Hill Cottages, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 3HN

### **Bank**

Barclays Bath Branch, 4-5 Southgate Street, Bath BA1 1AQ

# The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd.

(A company limited by guarantee)

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEE BOARD

### 1. Chairman's Introduction

We all live in a seemingly fast moving and ever changing world. No sooner do we start to look back on a shared Covid experience than our world is yet again rocked by world events with the issues and fallout from the war in the Ukraine and how this will affect our way of life.

We are all facing into an increasingly unstable economy and with a Government which at times seems distanced from the importance of maintaining a viable rural infrastructure. Ever more is the need to appreciate what the countryside can offer to society. Covid clearly demonstrated the importance of health and wellbeing and we as land managers are in a pivotal position to be able to deliver this to society.

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Partnership – the precursor to the national phenomena of Cluster Groups and Facilitated Groups, has started something that has the ability to deliver a whole plethora of sustainable and realistic benefits to society.

One is only as good as the people who work alongside us and yet again, we all owe a huge thanks to Dr Jemma Batten who has continued to drive us to ever higher heights. Her clear determination alongside her intrinsic knowledge of the countryside have helped to once again galvanise us into a collective body of farmers and land managers who desire to demonstrate the value of ecosystem services.

To aid Jemma, we have now employed a new event co-ordinator, Janinka Diviero, and between the pair of them it means that we are now far better placed to be able to deliver on a more diverse, attractive and accessible landscape.

There is a lot to look forward to, we have the ability to improve the quality of life of many people – and that is an enviable position to be, or as Shakespeare once said 'One touch of nature makes the whole world kin'. The challenge is before us and we are now well setup to deliver on our collective aims and objectives.

Chris Musgrave  
Chair

## **2. Structure, governance and management**

### **Governing Document**

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 January 2012 in preparation for the potential success of a bid application submitted to Natural England, which was then awarded on March 2012, and registered as a charity on 3 July 2012. The company was established as 'The Marlborough Downs NIA' under a standard Memorandum of Association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £10. On 16th December 2015 the Charitable Company was renamed as 'The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming'.

### **Organisational Structure**

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming charity has a board made up of farming and non-farming trustees and invited associates. Chris Musgrave is the chair of the charity board. The board delegates operational activities to two delivery groups: the Biodiversity and Landscape Group (previously Downland Species Group) and the Community Outreach Group (previously Habitats and Heritage Group).

Projects are a collaboration between the farmers of the Marlborough Downs (who are members of the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming charity), Black Sheep Countryside Management (responsible for project delivery), and various other stakeholders. Board meetings are run as project board meetings and for this purposes representatives from non-farming members and partner organisations have been co-opted to the board. They are:

- Christopher Musgrave and Victoria Lowes, Associate Member representatives
- Richard Broadhead, Wiltshire Council (retired June 2021)
- Jemma Batten, Senior Consultant, Black Sheep Countryside Management

Other key stakeholders may be invited to attend board meetings from time to time. All strategic decisions are taken at these properly constituted project board meetings. All agenda items are supported by board papers, which include a risk analysis and clear recommendations to be discussed and considered. The decisions are clearly minuted and these minutes with actions are circulated and made available to all members via the website.

### **Recruitment & Training**

This is the tenth year of the charity and this report covers the year ended 31st March 2022. The charity continues with the same overall aim as in previous years. All bar one of the trustees are currently or have previously been farmers and represent the farming community in the Marlborough Downs area. Some have been on the board from the start of the charity and others have joined

since. At the 2018 AGM it was agreed that non-farmer associate members should also be allowed to stand as trustees as long as the majority of the board remains as farmer members. No new trustees were appointed in the year to 31st March 2022.

The skills of the project board and their advisers are considered to be appropriate for the requirements of the charity's objectives and have been able to meet the ever increasing challenging project targets over the year. Trustees are offered training to fill any further gaps identified and if required additional trustees with new skills would be recruited.

### **3. Financial Review**

The majority of this year's income was derived from a donation of £21,000 from the Bybrook Trust, another local charity which is in the process of closing down.

In addition, the charity was awarded a Farming in Protected Landscapes grant of £28,986.46 for community events and outreach activities from March 2022 to March 2024 (£1,710.00 for 2021-22; £14,180.46 for 2022-23; and £13,096 for 2023-24), and £6,000 was raised through member subscriptions to support Overheads.

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>Spend</b>	<b>Under/over-spend</b>
Community	£2,786	£1,721	£1,065
Landscape	£21,780	£4,691	£17,089
Overheads	£7,006	£7,961	-£955
<b>Total</b>	<b>£31,571</b>	<b>£14,373</b>	<b>£17,199</b>

Please note: All figures are rounded to the nearest £1

£32,281.71 of restricted funding was brought forward (Landscape).

### **Reserves Policy**

The policy on reserves is accepted as being minimal as offices are virtual and all work is undertaken by volunteers or contractors. Generally, a reserve of £5,000 for unforeseen events is considered adequate as this could cover half a year's management costs in an emergency plus one quarter's scheduled community activities. As of 31 March 2022 we had £3,745 unrestricted funds in reserve which, with the FiPL grant covering community activities, is considered adequate for this year.

## **Donations In Kind**

In addition to the actual management of the budget, the charity benefits from items and services donated as 'in kind'. In previous years a significant contribution has come from a Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund grant received via Black Sheep Countryside Management. This grant expired at the end of 2020 and consequently this contribution in kind was not received during the year 2021-22. However, this did not result in any real detriment as, due to Covid-19 restrictions, we were unable to carry out many of our usual activities so the type of expenditure previously associated with this grant also dropped significantly this year.

There was also a range of contributions from pro bono staff time to support the project to donated items including seed, habitat management activities and free venue use. Additionally, volunteer time accounted for a high proportion of activities undertaken including project management time. However, the majority of this was not recorded due to the lack of reporting and paid support time to record and collate.

## **4. Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others**

The trustees act as custodians and ultimately the controlling group of the funds held. This was limited during the year as explained above. Otherwise, no funds are held on behalf of others.

## **5. Public benefit statement**

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farmers Ltd and Charity aims to deliver a more biodiverse, more attractive and more accessible landscape. Alongside these obvious, tangible benefits come a suite of gains that may be more difficult to quantify but are known collectively as ecosystem services. Such gains include improved water quality due to reduced agricultural inputs; a contribution towards the physical and mental health of residents and visitors through access to green spaces and fresh air; mitigation against climate change through building robust ecological networks; better crop pollination; support for a strong rural economy via agriculture, tourism and recreation; and the social, cultural and educational benefits that are a result of interaction with nature.

The partnership is driven by the fact that despite decades of conservation effort, many of our habitats and species are at best stable and at worst in decline and while most of the farmers in the area have long been involved in environmental schemes, we have shown that the farmer-led, bottom-up approach of this initiative can lead to far greater and more wide-reaching benefits as a result of the 'ownership' conferred on us by this project. We are also convinced that the potential for the long term

delivery of this project is far higher than for others that rely upon financial incentives rather than personal commitment. We understand that a landscape-scale approach cannot succeed without widespread farmer involvement and we ensured that all farmers in the area had the opportunity to contribute to the development of the project.

As well as environmental and conservation benefits there is an emphasis on education of the public through volunteer activities to support the project as well as direct educational activities provided by the project. These activities are community based and work with existing groups so also promote community working and cohesion as groups and individuals are brought together with a common aim. We are working with local communities to encourage more involvement in the countryside and to promote greater awareness of landscape, wildlife and farming. We are keen to enthuse people about the countryside and get the non-farming community involved with activities on and about the Downs through events and activities, workshops and work parties. We are working to provide better public access and information to encourage people to enjoy and understand the landscape while improving their health and wellbeing.

Although a second year of restrictions due to Covid-19 has meant that face-to-face activities have been limited, we have seen that the relationships developed during the initial pilot project, both within the partnership and with external agencies and organisations, have continued, and the shared commitment to improving the nature of the Marlborough Downs is having a long-lasting impact upon the area.

## **6. Objectives and activities**

The objectives as laid out for the Company in the initial incorporation document were:

- To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment.
- To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the environment.
- To promote sustainable development for the benefit of the public by the preservation, conservation and the protection of the environment and the prudent use of resources.
- The promotion of sustainable means of achieving economic growth and regeneration.

## 7. Achievements and performance Year 10 (April 2021 to March 2022)

Much of the charity's work involves events, activities, face-to-face meetings, workshops and practical tasks so, like many organisations, our delivery was severely curtailed during 2021 and into early 2022 because of successive lockdowns or other restrictions on gatherings due to Covid-19. Even when restrictions were relaxed, people were cautious of meeting up, particularly those classed as vulnerable.

Going into the second year of Covid restrictions, people were also suffering from 'Zoom fatigue', having spent months conducting their business and social lives online, so even trying to keep things going remotely was difficult. Consequently, there isn't a great deal to report for 2021-22 except behind-the-scenes work, though the project management team aimed to deliver on one activity per month and achieved as follows:

Month	Meetings		Funding application	Date and event	Venue (and number attending)		
	Board	Delivery Group					
Apr	✓	B&L	Countryside Stewardship	Space for Nature Reserve - habitat creation and management	6th Farmland birds	Online (45)	
May							
Jun							
Jul						1st Farm walk & picnic	Reserve (24)
Aug	✓						
Sep						14th Intro to regen farming	Overtown Farm (28)
Oct	✓					6th Seasonal Supper	Marlborough (34)
Nov						4th ELMS workshop	Broad Hinton (8)
Dec				3rd Willow wreaths	Avebury (12)		
Jan	✓		FiPL				
Feb		COG		2nd & 9th Land App training	Online (19)		
Mar		B&L		New event co-ordinator			

More details can be found under the relevant objective headings that follow.

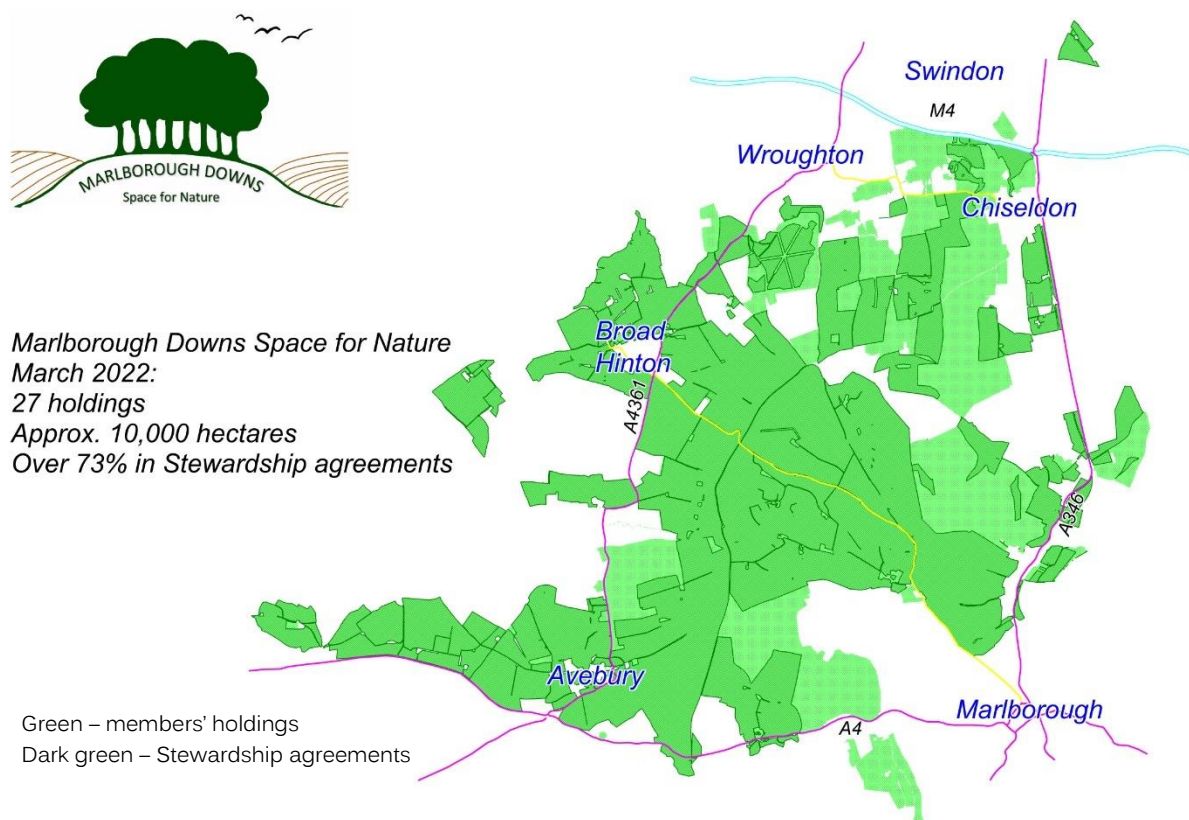
## OBJECTIVE 1 – To deliver evidence-based conservation activities on a landscape scale

### 1.1 Biodiversity tailoring

Detailed knowledge of what's happening beyond individual farm boundaries enables us to deliver on a landscape scale.

#### 1.1.1 Existing Stewardship agreements

The project management team continues to support members in their delivery of individual Environmental Stewardship (ES) and Countryside Stewardship (CS) agreements. At the beginning of 2022, these covered over 73% of the 9,824 hectares farmed by members which is significantly more than the national average (in 2020 just 20% of land in England was covered by an ES or CS agreement).



#### 1.1.2 New Stewardship agreements

One higher and two mid tier applications were supported in 2021. The higher tier was a ground-breaking 'wilding' scheme, with the aim of creating a semi-natural mosaic of grassland, scrub, woodland, scrapes and watercourses. One of the mid tiers covered only the species-rich grassland on the holding with the idea being that the arable would be included in a separate application to be submitted in 2022. The final application was a very comprehensive scheme which included management for farmland birds (bird seed plots, unharvested and low input cereals, winter feeding)

and pollinators (flower-rich margins and plots); hedge management; soil health (legume fallows); water quality (winter cover crops, arable reversion to unfertilised grassland, capital works).

All three applications were successful and agreements started on 1 January 2022.

In addition, two capital grants were achieved, one to plant 1,690 m of new hedgerow, and one to reduce the risk of diffuse pollution by covering a silage clamp.



### 1.1.3 Dissemination of best practice

In 2021 we received a donation from the Bybrook Trust which was made on condition that expenditure is restricted to activities:

- (a) To advance the education of the public in the principles and practices of conservation farming;
- (b) To carry out research into conservation, organic farming and horticulture and to publish for the benefit of the public the useful results of such research.

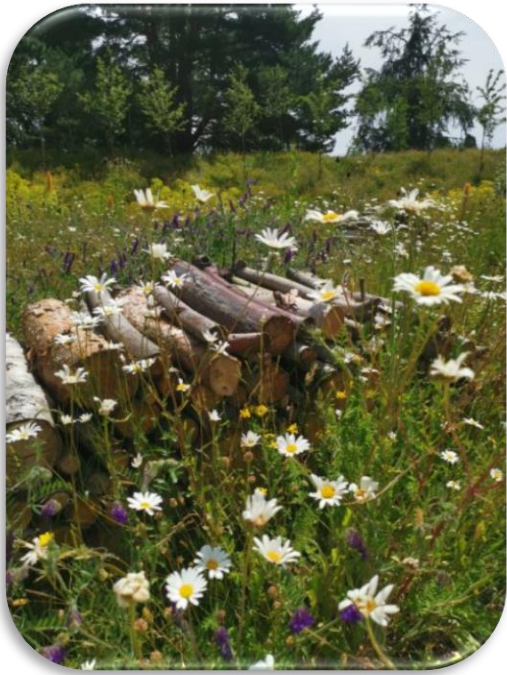
We held two events to find out more about conservation farming (also known as regenerative agriculture). The first, in September 2021, was a day with Groundswell agronomist Richard Harding (28 attended), and the second a trip to FarmED in the Cotswolds (October 2021, 18 attended).

Soil health is an important element of regenerative agriculture and in August, we inspected the soil under a herbal ley that had been planted on really poor ground and were pleased to see that positive results had been achieved in a relatively short space of time.



In addition, we offered best practice workshops on

- The new Environmental Land Management Scheme (November 2021, 8 attended)
- The Land App online mapping tool (two sessions, February 2023, 19 attended)



The annual seasonal supper in October 2021 was the first time the membership had been able to meet up as a group since 2019, and included talks on permaculture principles and their relevance to conservation farming (Marlborough Permaculture Association), and on growing wildflowers as a business (Wildflower Turf)

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the usual number of farm visits carried out by the project director didn't happen this year. Instead, members were kept informed of relevant online events such as webinars and talks, and we continue to add factsheets, management guidance and other information to the 'information and guidance' page on our website – [www.spacefornature.net](http://www.spacefornature.net).

Additional 'best practice' activities associated with particular habitats and/or species are detailed under the relevant Objective headings below.

## 1.2 Supporting local conservation businesses

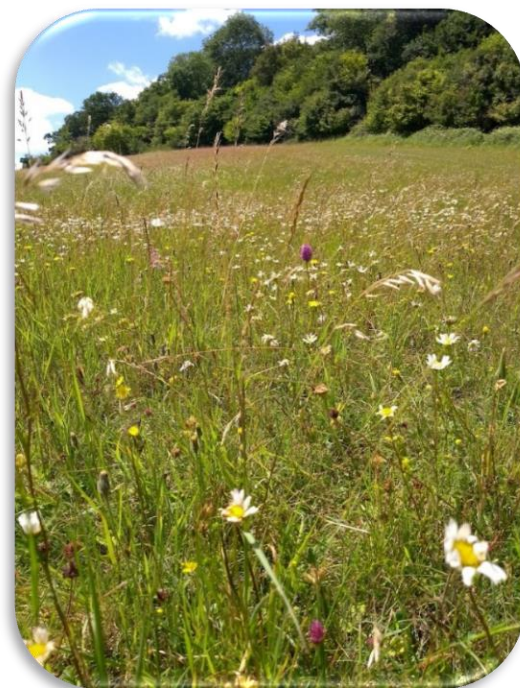
We continue to have excellent relationships with many local businesses and other organisations involved in farming, conservation, land management, and other countryside activities, and communicate and collaborate on an *ad hoc* basis. For example, we collaborated with another local charity, Action for the River Kennet, to submit an application for a grant to the Farming in Protective Landscape fund, administered by the North Wessex Downs AONB.

## OBJECTIVE 2 – To enable appropriate management of semi-natural wildlife habitat

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### 2.1 Restoring Resilient Ecosystems

MDNEP members are contributing to the Restoring Resilient Ecosystems (RestREco) project, which is a collaboration between Cranfield University, UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology, University of Stirling, National Trust and Forest Research. The aim is to determine the most efficient approaches to restore complex, multifunctional and resilient ecosystems, thus securing net environmental gain, and CEH are undertaking floral and invertebrate diversity surveys on seven chalk grassland restoration sites across the Marlborough Downs. Already some exciting results are emerging and we look forward to receiving feedback and updates as the project progresses.



### 2.2 Wildlife corridors and stepping stones

#### 2.2.1 On-farm delivery

Another thing that Covid-19 hasn't impacted upon is our ability to deliver high quality semi-natural habitat management across the Downs, and members continue to make hay, move animals around, and control weeds like ragwort in chalk grassland on their farms.

#### 2.2.2 Space for Nature Reserve

Happily, work on the Reserve was not curtailed by Covid-19 and by spring 2022, 'construction' of the site was more or less complete. Two Herdwick sheep are doing a good job of keeping the establishing sward grazed down in a fenced area with a field shelter purchased by the charity. Over



the winter of 2021-22, all the trees and shrubs (including the hedge) that had been planted over the previous two years were inspected and replaced where necessary. We've built log and stone piles and a bug hotel and in July 2021, once Covid restrictions began to relax, we even managed to hold our annual Summer Farm Walk and Picnic on the Reserve (24 attended) to showcase the work undertaken so far to members and to award the 2021 Wildlife Champion Award.

This went to Richard Broadhead, recently retired from Wiltshire Council, who had been a partner representative on the MDNEP board since the very early days.



## OBJECTIVE 3 – To consolidate populations of species of national and local importance

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### 3.1 Space for Birds: Marlborough Downs farmland bird project

Matt Prior continues to co-ordinate our three-pronged approach to farmland bird conservation:

1. Year-round feeding opportunities for adults and spring/summer insect food for chicks
2. Nesting habitat
3. Protection from predators where predation significantly threatens breeding success

Again, due to Covid-19 restrictions, not to mention a burst appendix at the beginning of the year, even Matt's activities were constrained.

#### 3.1.1 Feeding and foraging habitat

As in previous years, most of our members continue to provide overwinter stubbles, sown wild bird mixes and/or nectar mix plots via Stewardship agreements, and/or on a voluntary basis.

#### 3.1.2 Supplementary feeding

Members continue to feed over 20 tonnes of seed annually to our farmland birds over winter, either scattered on the ground or through giant bird feeders purchased by the charity at a reduced rate.

#### 3.1.3 Farmland bird events

As we were unable to hold our usual Spring Celebration in 2021 due to Covid-19 restrictions, Matt Prior gave an online talk about the farmland bird programme (April 2021, 45 attended).

In early 2021 we had been approached by GWCT to join a project to provide barn owl nest boxes to our members. The boxes will be monitored during the breeding season, with feedback provided to farmers. Adult barn owls will be GPS-tracked to better understand their use of arable habitats for foraging and enable our members to see the effects of their conservation efforts. Having postponed a February 2021 workshop due to lockdown, we finally got to build ten boxes in November (7 attended), which have now been installed in barns and other suitable locations. We look forward to sharing the results of the GWCT monitoring programme at a later date.





**OBJECTIVE 4 – To offer a range of opportunities for people to engage with the landscape of the Marlborough Downs**

**OBJECTIVE 5 – To provide high quality access for all**

**OBJECTIVE 6 – To increase local and national awareness of the work, achievements and impact of the Space for Nature Project**

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#### **4.1 Marlborough Downs SfN events and Volunteer Group**

This was the aspect of our work most impacted by Covid-19 and we only held one public event during the year 2021-22, which was the ever-popular willow wreath weaving workshop (December 2021, 12 attended). Open Farm Sunday was once again cancelled, as were other events that were planned but never delivered because of ever-changing disease control restrictions.



#### **4.2 Outreach**

The one thing that Covid-19 couldn't stop was our determination to take every opportunity to promote the project, our work, and the link between food, farming, landscape and wildlife. This year, due to lack of funding, this was largely social media based, via very active Facebook and Instagram accounts. Our daily posts of the landscape, nature and farm life of the Marlborough Downs reached almost 91,000 people on Facebook and over 7,600 on Instagram during the year to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. We try to make our posts informative and educational as well as attractive, and received many

comments during lockdown about how much people looked forward to their daily fix of the Downs and how it lifted their spirits during successive lockdowns, quarantines and isolation periods.



### 4.3 Event co-ordinator

In January 2022 we were awarded a significant grant to promote public engagement with the landscape, wildlife and farming activities of the Marlborough Downs, and at the end of March our new event co-ordinator, Janinka Diverio, started working for the group.

## **8. Progress Planned for future Years**

Now that widespread vaccination means that Covid-19 restrictions are likely to be a thing of the past, we are looking forward to re-engaging fully with our two main audiences:

- 1) Our members, the farmers, who have been steadfastly working throughout the pandemic to ensure that the Marlborough Downs continue to be a Space for Nature; and
- 2) Our communities, both local and virtual, who have continued to support us, albeit from a distance, over the past two years.

We are very excited to welcome our new event co-ordinator and already have ambitious plans for activities for families, special interest groups and the wider community, as well as ideas for new initiatives such as a regular Forest School programme.

We hope to finally start making full use of the Space for Nature Reserve as a valuable resource for education, demonstration and research, as well as somewhere to hold meetings and public events.

We have great hopes that we might be able to once again participate in the national event that is Open Farm Sunday, and welcome locals and visitors alike to come onto a farm and learn about how food is produced and how this impacts on the landscape and wildlife on the farm and beyond.

We are also looking forward to investigating the emerging world of regenerative agriculture via workshops, research, trials, and visits, and to sharing individual experiences both internally, with other members, but also to an external audience of anyone who might be interested to find out more about this new/old way of farming.

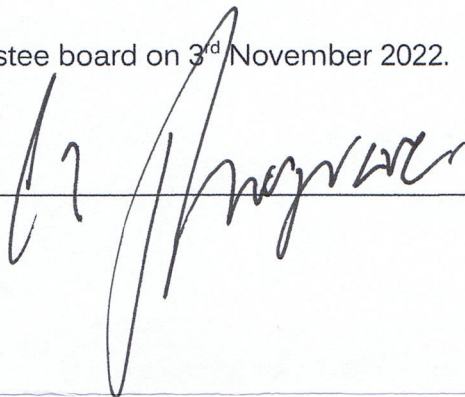
After two years of significant restrictions, hardship, isolation, and fear, we all hope that 2022 will be the year we get back to 'normal' and are able to once again enjoy simple pleasures like meeting up with neighbours to discuss how many lapwing nested on the farm this year; taking a farm walk with local school children to see the wildflowers; and getting together with members and friends of the charity for an evening of talks and updates, and a good old-fashioned, in-person Seasonal Supper event.

## Board Statement

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (issued March 2005). In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 419 (2) of the Companies Act 2006.

It was approved by the trustee board on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2022.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Musgrave', written over a horizontal line.

Christopher Musgrave

Chair

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> November 2022

# Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd

(A Company limited by guarantee)

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2022, which are set out on the following pages.

## Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees (who are also the directors of the company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under part 16 of the 2006 Act and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

## Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and the seeking of explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

## Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records are not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- the accounts do not accord with such records; or
- the accounts do not comply with relevant accounting requirements under section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 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
- the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (Statement of Recommended Practice), FRS102.

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 proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: Helen Frost

Helen Frost  
HF Bookkeeping Plus  
1 Forest Hill Cottages  
Marlborough  
Wiltshire SN8 3HN

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022

# THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING LIMITED

## STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT *FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022*

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<b><u>Income from:</u></b>					
Donations and legacies	3	8,324	21,475	29,799	938
Charitable activities	4	722	1,050	1,772	9,136
<b>Total income</b>		<b>9,046</b>	<b>22,525</b>	<b>31,571</b>	<b>10,074</b>
<b><u>Expenditure on:</u></b>					
Raising funds	5	1,935	-	1,935	639
Charitable activities	6	8,385	4,053	12,438	25,634
<b>Total resources expended</b>		<b>10,320</b>	<b>4,053</b>	<b>14,373</b>	<b>26,273</b>
<b>Net income/expenditure for the year/ Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(1,274)</b>	<b>18,472</b>	<b>17,198</b>	<b>(16,199)</b>
Fund balances at 1 April		4,544	27,634	32,178	48,377
<b>Fund balances at 31 March</b>		<b>3,270</b>	<b>46,106</b>	<b>49,376</b>	<b>32,178</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

# THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING LIMITED

## BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2022		2021	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors		1,050		-	
Cash at bank and in hand		52,507		35,459	
			53,557		
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	10	4,180		3,282	
Net current assets			49,376		32,178
<b>Income funds</b>					
Restricted funds			46,106		27,634
Unrestricted funds			3,270		4,544
			49,376		32,178

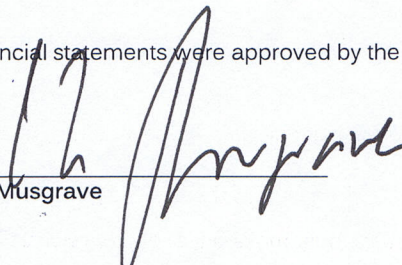
The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 March 2022.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476. However, the accounts have been reviewed by the independent examiner and, separately and independently, compliance checked before submission to Companies House and the Charities Commission.

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

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 12th July 2022.

  
Mr C B Musgrave  
Trustee

Company Registration No. 07907437

# THE MARLBOROUGH DOWNS NATURE ENHANCEMENT FARMING LIMITED

## NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

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### 1 Accounting policies

#### Charity information

The Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Limited is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Jindabyne, Great Hinton, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 6BT.

#### 1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Marlborough Downs Nature Enhancement Farming Ltd ("the company")'s Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 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)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The company has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to include the revaluation of freehold properties and to include investment properties and certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

#### 1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

#### 1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are as follows:

Restricted fund	Purposes	Uses in 2021/22
Kilcreggan Trust	Creation of nature reserve	Mobile bird hide; nest boxes; grassland management
	Farmland bird project	Nest boxes
Bybrook Trust	Conservation agriculture	Farmer workshop; visit to FarmED
Farming in Protected Landscapes	Public event programme	Planning events for 2022
	Habitat management	River restoration volunteer day
Other restricted	Winter bird seed	None
	Ticket sales	Visit to FarmED

#### 1.4 Incoming resources

Income is recognised when the company is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the company has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Turnover is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business.

#### 1.5 Resources expended

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the company to pay out resources.

This includes £945 for accounts preparation and examination. There are no costs for governance or trustee meetings or constitutional matters.

#### 1.6 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

#### 1.7 Financial instruments

The company has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the company's balance sheet when the company becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

##### *Basic financial assets*

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

##### *Basic financial liabilities*

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

### *Derecognition of financial liabilities*

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the company's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

## 2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

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

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

3	Donations and legacies	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		funds	funds		
		2022	2022	2022	2021
		£	£	£	£
	Donations and gifts	8,324	21,475	29,799	938
		8,324	21,475	29,799	938
4	Charitable activities	Charitable income		Charitable income	
		2022		2021	
		£		£	
	Sales within charitable activities	-		9,136	
	Grants	1,050		-	
	Other income	722		-	
		1,772		9,136	
5	Raising funds	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
		funds	funds		
		2022	2022	2022	2021
		£	£	£	£
	<u>Fundraising and publicity</u>				
	Fundraising costs	1,935	-	1,935	639
		1,935	-	1,935	639

6	Charitable activities	Charitable expenditure	Charitable expenditure
		2022	2021
		£	£
	Habitat creation/management	1,926	12,375
	Farmland bird programme	492	-
	Community events	710	12
	Workshops	540	-
	Outreach/promotion/printing	102	388
	Donated items and services	-	9,136
	Bank charges	1	-
	Insurance	86	86
	Office expenses	48	15
	Meeting expenses	31	-
	Employee travel	163	48
		<u>4,099</u>	<u>22,060</u>
	Share of governance costs (see note 7)	<u>8,339</u>	<u>3,574</u>
		<u>12,438</u>	<u>25,634</u>
	<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
	Unrestricted funds	8,385	3,339
	Restricted funds	<u>4,053</u>	<u>22,295</u>
		<u>12,438</u>	<u>25,634</u>
		<u><u>12,438</u></u>	<u><u>25,634</u></u>
7	Support costs	Governance costs	Governance costs
		2022	2021
		£	£
	Legal and professional	7,394	2,974
	Accountancy	945	600
		<u>8,339</u>	<u>3,574</u>
	<b>Analysis by fund</b>		
	Unrestricted funds	6,769	2,790
	Restricted funds	<u>1,570</u>	<u>784</u>
		<u>8,339</u>	<u>3,574</u>
		<u><u>8,339</u></u>	<u><u>3,574</u></u>
8	<b>Trustees</b>		
	None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits from the company during the year.		
9	<b>Employees</b>		
	There were no employees during the year.		
10	<b>Creditors</b>	2022	2021
	<b>Amounts falling due within one year:</b>	£	£
	Trade creditors	4,180	3,282
		<u>4,180</u>	<u>3,282</u>
		<u><u>4,180</u></u>	<u><u>3,282</u></u>