

CHARITY COMMISSION

Foundation For Common Land

(A company limited by guarantee)

**Annual Report and Financial
Statements**

30 June 2024

Company registration number: 08113120

Charity registration number: 1150439



Foundation For Common Land
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Foundation For Common Land
Reference and Administrative Details

Charity name	Foundation For Common Land
Charity registration number	1150439
Company registration number	08113120
Principal office	Low Nook University of Cumbria Rydal Road AMBLESIDE LA22 9BB
Registered office	Low Nook University of Cumbria Rydal Road AMBLESIDE LA22 9BB
Trustees	C Short J Bailey R J Milton J C Phelps L C Branfield H Fraser P Arkle (Appointed 18 June 2024)
Secretary	L M Stride
Accountant	Dodd & Co Limited FIFTEEN Rosehill Montgomery Way Rosehill Estate CARLISLE CA1 2RW

Foundation For Common Land
Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in the notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 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.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

The aim of our work is to safeguard and enhance the heritage of common land and keep commons alive by supporting active grazing. Our aims fully reflect the purposes the charity was set up for.

The Foundation for Common Land's (FCL) charitable objectives as set out in its Articles of Association are:

- To conserve the agricultural systems and the cultural landscapes associated with commoning and the management of common land for the benefit of the public.
- To promote the conservation of the physical and natural environment of common land by supporting the responsible and sustainable pastoral use of commons.
- To conduct and commission research into commoning and common land issues and publish the results of such research to the public at large.
- To educate the public, particularly policy makers and other interested parties in subjects pertaining to commoning.

The common land of England and Wales and the common grazings of Scotland are nationally important for access, tourism, wildlife, carbon storage, water supply, archaeological conservation, food production and livestock breeding. Commons deliver more public benefits than any other type of farmland but this heritage is at risk from a continued decline in its active management and the challenges in accessing financial support for delivering public goods.

Strategies and activities for achieving objectives

We deliver our core work in the following ways:

- Influence and advocacy through bilateral engagement and membership of technical advisory groups and alliances
- Convene and chair strategic partnerships
- Contract out work to the best consultants in our field
- Design and deliver training to deepen the knowledge of policy makers and practitioners who can influence future commoning
- Develop partnership projects to secure the cultural heritage of commoning
- Provide up-to-date and in-depth information on common land and commoning on our website
- Choose trustees with strong links to commoners and commoning
- On the ground delivery to develop, demonstrate and disseminate best practice

Due to devolution of agricultural and environmental policies to the devolved nations, and FCL being a small charity, our current activities are restricted to England though we seek to retain active links with networks in Scotland and Wales and our constitution allows us to work across Great Britain.

Foundation For Common Land
Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

The Focus of our work in 2024-2025

- 2024-2025 will be a year of making the most of the last year of the Lottery funded 'Our Upland Commons' ensuring we can capture and share the learning and embed the ability for communicating it within our core team and functions.
- Growth in the charity and its work over the past five years during Our Upland Commons.
- The charity will continue to strengthen staffing and governance structures to support the growing body of work which FCL is now delivering.
- Working with a fundraiser FCL will apply for a Heritage Lottery grant focused on resilience building within the organisation.
- To continue to offer a commercial service to moorland owners enabling the application of SFI Moorland standard and generating income to support the ongoing work of FCL.
- Develop the Farmer Led Habitat Assessment moorland app beyond the pilot phase to Beta testing at scale.
- To prepare training materials for a course on Collaborative Practices for Uplands Environmental Land Management as commissioned by the University of Cumbria.
- To continue to work with and hold the Rural Payments Agency, Natural England and Defra to account over their delivery of schemes on common land in England with particular emphasis on expiring Higher Level Stewardship schemes and the new ELM schemes.
- To continue our core work of advocacy, outreach and communications with the aim to reach wider audiences including refreshing and improving our website and holding free of charge webinars

How our activities deliver public benefit

In the 1600s over 50% of England was common land. It is now less than 3% so commons are a resource under threat. Common land delivers more public benefits than any other type of farmland and is more heavily designated than enclosed land; for instance Common Land is seven times more likely to be designated for nature as a SSSI than enclosed land. Commons are closely linked with a history of traditional and sympathetic pastoral systems developed over many centuries, adapted to local circumstances and informed by the experience of local farming communities. However, as a result of inappropriate government policies and schemes from the mid 1970s onwards biodiversity has declined and alongside this the cultural heritage of commoning is at risk. Farming communities and conservation organisations alike are concerned about the loss of skills and heritage. The impacts of climate change are also becoming apparent though the potential for commons to mitigate the impacts of climate change and be a refuge for some species is high.

It is now over eight years since the decision to leave the EU and therefore the Common Agricultural Policy. Sadly, the pace of change from BPS to ELM has been glacial and unpredictable leading to significant risks that the environmental benefits from commons are at risk as are the commoning communities that manage this land. Therefore, while we fully support the policy of public money for public goods we are increasingly concerned that implementation by the Government falls far short of what is required. Responsible commoning is not financially viable in most areas of the UK without government support as there is no reward for public goods from the market. Private markets for public goods are poorly developed.

If these traditional systems and techniques, local infrastructure and expertise is lost, they will be difficult and expensive to re-establish. Loss of pastoral grazing would lead to the loss of many significant habitats and species and damage archaeological sites as well as affecting access and recreation and an erosion of cultural heritage. We also support the appropriate planting of trees and natural regeneration of scrub on common land especially through maintaining, enhancing and creating new wood pasture which has been an ancient land use on common land with the New Forest being a shining example. There are safeguards though the Commons Act 2006 to ensure this is planned with full consultation as works on common require the Defra Secretary of State's consent.

Through our work we take action to address these concerns to enable our cultural and natural heritage on commons to thrive as well as the unique collaborative system of management. We work with commoners, owners of common land, environmental NGOs, farming bodies and government agencies to be the national voice for common land and commoning. Our ambition is to empower individuals and organisations through their work to improve outcomes for the public benefits from common land.

Foundation For Common Land

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Trustees' achievements and performance: July 2023-June 2024

2023/2024 was a year of consolidation. Julia Aglionby stepped back as Executive Director in September 2024 for 15 months, but continued to provide project management support for the Our Upland Commons Lottery project work as well as oversight of the SFI Digital App. Her roles were shared between Trustees and Jo Swiers. Robin Milton has taken the lead on policy, meeting regularly with Defra and other officials, supported by Chris Short and Jim Bailey.

Jo Swiers led on project development, particularly focusing on resilience and the legacy of Our Upland Commons alongside Sam Caraway the OUC Project Manager.

Lyndsey Stride has provided the Company Secretarial role and Susie Hodgson continues to undertake our Administrator Role, supporting both the core charity work and the Tests and Trials. Trustees remain actively engaged and we now have an established staff and trustee buddy system.

During this year we recruited Rhiannon Jones to support training and knowledge exchange two days a week and Owen Morgan to support Tom Lawrence run the SFI Moorland App Service.

The FCL's main activities and achievements for the year July 2023-June 2024 have been:

Projects

• **'Our Upland Commons'**, continuing this major £3.1 million Natural Lottery Heritage Fund project maintaining a good working relationship with our 25 project partners. The accountable body is the National Trust. Highlights during 2023/2024 include:

- Collaboratively planned and contracted Natural Flood Management Interventions for Brant Common, Yorkshire Dales with leaky dams, footpath diversions and wetland creation and restoration.
- In Dartmoor a detailed management plan was agreed for Harford and Ugborough Common.
- Molinia Trials underway and extended in Dartmoor
- Animal health and dung beetle research looks to reduce vet and med interventions to enhance soil fauna.
- Labour of Love Exhibition held at Hawes - over 7,500 visitors to see the Words and Pictures by Harriet and Rob Fraser
- Clee Liberty Common signed up to a Countryside Stewardship Scheme after years of negotiations and extensive surveys for birds and butterflies. New equipment now allowing active management for nature outcomes.
- Ongoing constructive discussions over interpretation panels in the Longmynd, Shropshire
- Over 40 commoners and advisors awarded bursary places for Uplands Environmental Land Management Level 4 accredited courses run by the University of Cumbria
- Grassington Lead Mine Trail completed in the Yorkshire dales
- Farmer Led Habitat Assessment undertaken by commoners on over 3,000 ha of moorland
- Undertook further surveys and research to better understand the species & habitats on upland commons and their management requirements including butterflies, birds and habitats on over 12,000 ha.
- We supported sustainable commoning by providing equipment including remote controlled bracken cutter, restoring historic sheep pens, and researching flock/herd health providing actionable insights for commoners to improving flock and herd health.

Foundation For Common Land
Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

• **Defra Test and Trial SFI Commercial Service:**

- After completing the SFI Moorland Test & Trial we rolled out the SFI Digital App to a universal national service employing two part time employees. The service enables managers of moorland both common and non-common moorland to survey their land on a phone app and assess the environmental benefits on the common and opportunities to enhance these public benefits. The information is then provided to the managers in a series of spatial maps and in a spreadsheet.
- Over 62,000 ha of moorland used the SFI Moorland service in our financial year 2023/2024
- We undertook three field training sessions in how to use the App and how to fulfil SFI common land eligibility requirements.
- We are developing the Farmer Led Habitat Assessment Tool as a top up to the SFI following trialling during Our Upland Commons.

Outreach and Engagement

- The level of outreach is made possible by the funding of comms support by the Our Upland Commons. We are now seeking to ensure these communication skills are being integrated into OUC's core staff activities.
- Through OUC we have engaged over 10,000 people in events educating, celebrating, and experiencing the natural and cultural heritage of common land, many targeted at hard-to-reach audiences.
- Our database of interested individuals stands at 1331 and MailChimp provides us with information about level of engagement whilst maintaining compliance with GDPR.
- A Quarterly newsletter has been written and distributed to all our contacts
- Provided ongoing guidance to commoners' groups, commoners, owners of common land and stakeholders via our website, attendance at their meetings and networks
- Raising the profile of commons through appearances on BBC Farming Today, the Financial Times, the Farmer's Guardian and in the Farmer supplement of the Cumberland News
- Hosted five well attended webinars during the 2023/24 year. Over 1100 people registered for the webinars and there have over 1000 views of these webinars on YouTube after the live events.
- 'Our Common Stories' videos are very popular with over 11,500 views in 2023/24
- We hosted five Hill Farm Training courses for Conservation Professionals training over 70 individuals. These are delivered in partnership with the Farmer Network and were commissioned by the National Trust, Natural England and the RPA.

Advocacy

Regular attendance at Defra stakeholder and policy meetings with senior stakeholder staff to attempt to find ways forward for common land governance issues with agri-environment schemes.

- Increasing our social media presence through regular tweets.
- New Instagram and Facebook accounts set up to reach a wider more public audience
- Submitted Written and Oral Evidence to the Dartmoor Review of Protected Sites

A list of all our funders and their contributions appears in the income section of these accounts. As ever, we would like to express our huge gratitude to all who have supported our work this year and we would like to take the opportunity to thank the following for their kind support: Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Garfield Weston Trust and National Lottery Heritage Fund as well as the many trusts and partners who are contributing in cash and kind to Our Upland Commons.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Review of the financial position

Our financial position has remained strong over 2023/2024. Our charitable activities have increased, and we have been successful in drawing down grant funding and contracts to undertake our work.

Our total Income was £336,039 (2023: £340,928) and our Expenditure was £330,285 (2023: £293,002). This included funds received and spent as agent as part of the SFI Moorland Digital Test and Trial project. We ended the year with free reserves of £128,053.

Foundation For Common Land
Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements.

Principal financial management policies adopted

The directors scrutinise management accounts and budgets vs actual expenditure at monthly directors' meetings. This is for both the organisation as a whole and on a project/funding stream basis. The adoption of Xero bookkeeping system allows accounts to be kept up to date and easy to analyse. Dodds in Carlisle remain as our accountants who have offered excellent support to Susie and Julia over the past year.

Reserves policy

FCL has completed its twelfth year of operation. During the year to which these accounts relate FCL had low liabilities with four permanent part time employees. We have low expenditure on overheads. The primary reason FCL needs reserves is to fund short-term deficits in cash flow and for investment in new projects where grant funding may not be forthcoming or for match funding for larger projects. The Trustees consider that the present level of reserves available to the charity are enough and this is reviewed on a regular basis.

The reserves held are considered sufficient due to the following financial situation:

- We have sufficient reserves to meet our commitment for continuing operations.
- The charity owns no tangible assets that require repairs or investment. We have a license for a fully serviced shared office space at the University of Cumbria in Ambleside.

The charity employed four part time members of staff during the financial year. Two are employed on the SFI Digital App that has covered all costs and generated a small surplus to enable us to develop future digital tools. Half of our Administrator's salary in 2023-24 is funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Core Funding and that funding also covers all the Training and Knowledge Exchange post salary for four years.
- The Executive Director was self-employed though stepped back in September 2023.
- Additional Senior Operations Support was contracted in on a temporary basis - Jo Swiers.

The charity's Directors are chosen as individuals who are actively involved through their day jobs in activities that are closely linked to FCL's charitable objective so that in the worst case that project income ceased our Directors would continue to deliver the charitable objects if at a lower level of activity.

The Charity has enough funds in unrestricted funds to cover essential Trustee expenses of insurance, our part-time administrator, travel to the Annual Meeting and Accountants costs for at least 6 months as recommended by the Charity Commission. In 2023/24 we have maintained our unrestricted funds through the delivery of contracts to have reserves for all essential costs for at least 12 months and to be able to make offer match funding for future grant applications.

Principal funding sources

We were delighted to be awarded a core funding grant of £49,000 per annum for four years from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation; this will last until September 2027. This is the 13th year Esmée Fairbairn has supported FCL.

Funding in 2023/24 has come from Esmée Fairbairn for core funding, Defra for undertaking Environmental Land Management Test and Trial Projects and from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, Esmée Fairbairn and Garfield Weston for Our Common Cause: Our Upland Commons.

Foundation For Common Land

Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

In addition, as part of one of our Defra Test and Trials, we have invested in building a Phone App to support commons and moorland to undertake the Moorland SFI survey option. We have now made this service available to all charging a nominal fee per Ha, providing an important tool and with the aim of covering all costs and generating some surplus to contribute towards our charitable objectives.

For this year the main source of funding of our charitable activity is the £3.1 million 'Our Common Cause: Our Upland Commons' National Lottery Heritage Fund project. The Foundation for Common Land holds the grant with the National Trust who are the accountable body for the finances for that project. This means staff are employed by the NT and seconded to FCL and that contracts are with the NT. Our Executive Director chairs the project board and leads the partnership.

The Charity in this financial year has received funds for Our Common Cause: Our Upland Commons, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and Defra.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Securing the legacy from Our Upland Commons will be a priority for the year 2024/25 and in particular our focus will be on knowledge exchange and embedding the learning from all the work undertaken over the last four years.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing document

Foundation for Common Land is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity governed by its memorandum and articles of association. These were amended by special resolution registered at Companies House on 28 November 2012.

Recruitment and Appointment of the Director-Trustees

The management of FCL is the responsibility of the charity trustees who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the Articles of Association. Under FCL's Articles of Association the trustees are known as the directors. The directors of the company are also charity trustees for the purposes of charity law. Under the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the directors are elected to serve for a period up to the following year's AGM where all directors stand down and stand for re-election.

Paul Arkle was recruited to the Board of Trustees in June 2024.

Methods adopted for the training and induction of director/ trustees

The Charity Commission's guide "the Essential Trustee" is available to all Directors via a shared filing system. This system also contains all the essential governance documents including: Memorandum and Articles of Association; minutes of Director Meetings, away days, business plan, financial strategies, register of Directors' interests, project files and policies.

FCL recognises the need for directors to be familiar with the work of the organisation. Staff are invited to attend the Trustees' Meetings to encourage sharing of information and experience. Staff have also been buddied with Trustees for mentoring and support. Directors are encouraged to be members of relevant working parties and advisory panels and attend conferences (often giving presentations on our work) to keep their knowledge current.

During this financial year we have continued to have had the benefit of a Mentor paid via the National Lottery Heritage Fund and they have worked with the trustees and consultants to enhance our systems, governance and risk management.

Foundation For Common Land
Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

Organisational structure

The affairs of FCL are managed by the directors of the limited company who are also trustees of the Charity. According to the Articles of Association there must be a minimum of three Directors and there is no maximum number of directors. The directors aim to meet face-to face at least once a year. This is supplemented by 2-hour Director meetings by Zoom (aiming for four per year) following a prepared agenda and written reports covering agenda items. The minutes are recorded and reviewed at each subsequent meeting. The directors are responsible for the strategic direction and policy of FCL. At the year end we had seven directors from a variety of backgrounds relevant to the work of the charity. The Executive Director, Company Secretary, and other staff and consultants also attend director meetings as appropriate but have no voting rights.

A scheme of delegation is in place and day-to-day responsibility for the work of FCL rests with the Executive Director, the Operations Lead and the Administrator. They are responsible for ensuring that FCL delivers agreed projects and contracts and all work is delivered in line with good practice models and relevant quality standards and key performance indicators are met.

Risk management

The Trustees have assessed the risks related to the operations and finances of the charity and are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate our exposure to the major risks.

The directors have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. A risk register has been developed and is regularly reviewed.

Post Year End Events and Risks

None to report.

Small company provisions

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

Approved by the Board on 25 February 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



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C Short
Trustee

Foundation For Common Land

Trustees' Responsibilities in relation to the Financial Statements

The trustees (who are also directors of Foundation For Common Land for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and the Financial Reporting Standard 102 - 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland'.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

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

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

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Foundation For Common Land

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 30 June 2024, which are set out on pages 11 to 22.

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. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales.

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 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145 (5) (b) of the 2011 Act; and
- 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 seeking 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 matter has come to my attention:

- (1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the Companies Act 2006 and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charitieshave not been met; or
- (2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


Joanne Thomlinson FCA
Dodd & Co Limited
Chartered Accountants

25 February 2025

FIFTEEN Rosehill
Montgomery Way
Rosehill Estate
CARLISLE
CA1 2RW

Foundation For Common Land

**Statement of Financial Activities (including Income and Expenditure Account) for the Year
Ended 30 June 2024**

		Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	Note	£	£	£	£
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	2	-	165,250	165,250	71,340
Charitable Activities	3	145,933	24,856	170,789	269,588
Total income and endowments		<u>145,933</u>	<u>190,106</u>	<u>336,039</u>	<u>340,928</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities		114,103	216,182	330,285	293,002
Total expenditure		<u>114,103</u>	<u>216,182</u>	<u>330,285</u>	<u>293,002</u>
Net income before transfers		31,830	(26,076)	5,754	47,926
Transfers					
Transfers between funds		<u>727</u>	<u>(727)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net movements in funds		32,557	(26,803)	5,754	47,926
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		95,496	26,803	122,299	74,373
Total funds carried forward		<u>128,053</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>128,053</u>	<u>122,299</u>

All of the Charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above periods.

The notes on pages 13 to 22 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Foundation For Common Land
Company registration number: 08113120
Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2024

		2024		2023	
	Note	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	9		720		-
Current assets					
Debtors	10	9,384		20,844	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>131,863</u>		<u>117,632</u>	
		141,247		138,476	
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	11	<u>(13,914)</u>		<u>(16,177)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>127,333</u>		<u>122,299</u>
Net assets			<u>128,053</u>		<u>122,299</u>
The funds of the charity:					
Restricted funds			-		26,803
Unrestricted funds					
Unrestricted income funds			<u>128,053</u>		<u>95,496</u>
Total charity funds			<u>128,053</u>		<u>122,299</u>

For the financial year ended 30 June 2024, the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Act.

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

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

Approved by the Board on 25 February 2025 and signed on its behalf by:



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C Short
Trustee

The notes on pages 13 to 22 form an integral part of these financial statements.

Foundation For Common Land

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

1 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

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

Basis of preparation

The charitable company meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

These financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the Charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

Fund accounting policy

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Further details of each fund are disclosed in note 15.

Income and endowments

Donations are recognised when the Charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the Charity before the Charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the Charity and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

Legacy gifts are recognised on a case by case basis following the grant of probate when the administrator/executor for the estate has communicated in writing both the amount and settlement date. In the event that the gift is in the form of an asset other than cash or a financial asset traded on a recognised stock exchange, recognition is subject to the value of the gift being reliably measured with a degree of reasonable accuracy and the title to the asset having been transferred to the Charity.

Income from Government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

Foundation For Common Land

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

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Expenditure

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to the expenditure. All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

Support costs

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, for example, allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is charged against the category of resources expended for which it was incurred.

Taxation

The Charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the Charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing - or more are initially recorded at cost.

Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Fixtures, fittings and office equipment 3 years straight line basis

Trade Debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business. Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the Charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Foundation For Common Land

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

..... continued

Liabilities

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of business from suppliers. Accounts payable are classified as current liabilities if the Charity does not have an unconditional right, at the end of the reporting period, to defer settlement of the creditor for at least twelve months after the reporting date. If there is an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least twelve months after the reporting date, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

Trade creditors are recognised initially at the transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Operating leases

Leases in which substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership are retained by the lessor are classified as operating leases. Rentals payable under operating leases are charged in the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight line basis over the lease term.

Pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. Contributions are charged in the statement of financial activities as they become payable in accordance with the rules of the scheme.

Financial instruments

Financial assets and financial liabilities are recognised when the charity becomes a party to the contractual provisions of the instrument. Financial liabilities and equity instruments are classified according to the substance of the contractual arrangements entered into. An equity instrument is any contract that evidences a residual interest in the assets of the Charity after deducting all of its liabilities.

All financial assets and liabilities are initially measured at transaction price (including transaction costs), except for those financial assets classified as at fair value through profit or loss, which are initially measured at fair value (which is normally the transaction price excluding transaction costs), unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction. If an arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, the financial asset or financial liability is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest for a similar debt instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are only offset in the statement of financial position when, and only when there exists a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and the Charity intends either to settle on a net basis, or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Financial assets are derecognised when and only when a) the contractual rights to the cash flows from the financial asset expire or are settled, b) the Charity transfers to another party substantially all of the risks and rewards of ownership of the financial asset, or c) the Charity, despite having retained some, but not all, significant risks and rewards of ownership, has transferred control of the asset to another party.

Financial liabilities are derecognised only when the obligation specified in the contract is discharged, cancelled or expires.

Foundation For Common Land
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

..... continued

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Donations and legacies				
Appeals and donations	-	-	-	40
Grants				
Esmee Fairbairn	-	115,250	115,250	13,300
Garfield Weston	-	50,000	50,000	50,000
Historic England	-	-	-	8,000
	-	165,250	165,250	71,300
	-	165,250	165,250	71,340

Of the donations and legacies income in 2023, all income related to unrestricted funds.

3 Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds 2024 £	Total Funds 2023 £
Provision of project management for Our Uplands Common	49,654	-	49,654	23,011
Defra T&T	-	-	-	23,860
Defra Lowlands T&T	42,360	-	42,360	97,384
SFI Road Test	3,573	24,856	28,429	124,973
SFI Commercial	37,413	-	37,413	-
Hill Farm Training	11,133	-	11,133	-
Exeter Funding	1,800	-	1,800	-
Other	-	-	-	360
	145,933	24,856	170,789	269,588

Of the other trading activities income in 2023, £195,020 related to unrestricted funds and £74,568 related to restricted funds.

Foundation For Common Land

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

..... continued

4 Expenditure

	Charitable activity	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£
Direct costs			
Provision of Charitable Activities	12,046	12,046	4,046
Our Uplands Commons	154,078	154,078	97,600
Defra T&T	-	-	271
Hill Farm Training	10,842	10,842	-
Lowlands T&T	17,989	17,989	27,473
SFI Road Test	64,271	64,271	102,112
SFI Commercial	10,921	10,921	-
Wages and salaries	40,995	40,995	53,234
Staff pensions	825	825	1,094
	<u>311,967</u>	<u>311,967</u>	<u>285,830</u>
Support costs			
Rent	1,011	1,011	1,011
Insurance	522	522	494
Sundry expenses	11,322	11,322	4,291
Accountancy fees	1,053	1,053	838
Independent examiner's fee	500	500	500
Consultancy fees	3,850	3,850	-
Bank charges	47	47	38
Depreciation of office equipment	13	13	-
	<u>18,318</u>	<u>18,318</u>	<u>7,172</u>
	<u>330,285</u>	<u>330,285</u>	<u>293,002</u>

Of the expenditure in 2023, £236,357 related to unrestricted funds and £56,645 related to restricted funds.

5 Governance costs

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accountancy fees	1,053	838
Independent examiner's fee	500	500
	<u>1,553</u>	<u>1,338</u>

6 Trustees' remuneration and expenses

Expenses totalling £497 (2023 - £nil) in relation to travel were claimed by 3 trustees.
Trustee R Milton received £1,750 (2023 - £nil) in relation to consultancy & advocacy work.

Foundation For Common Land
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

..... continued

7 Net income

Net income is stated after charging:

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation of tangible fixed assets	13	-

8 Employees' remuneration

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management) employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Charitable activities	3	3

The aggregate payroll costs of these persons were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	40,995	53,234
Other pension costs	825	1,094
	41,820	54,328

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year (2023 - No. 0).

Foundation For Common Land
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

..... continued

9 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures, fittings and office equipment £
Cost	
As at 1 July 2023	634
Additions	733
As at 30 June 2024	<u>1,367</u>
Depreciation	
As at 1 July 2023	634
Charge for the year	13
As at 30 June 2024	<u>647</u>
Net book value	
As at 30 June 2024	<u>720</u>
As at 30 June 2023	<u>-</u>

10 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	<u>9,384</u>	<u>20,844</u>

11 Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	100	1,915
Taxation and social security	4,403	6,990
Other creditors	121	169
Accruals and deferred income	<u>9,290</u>	<u>7,103</u>
	<u>13,914</u>	<u>16,177</u>

12 Members' liability

The charity is a private company limited by guarantee and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the members is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

Foundation For Common Land
Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

..... continued

13 Pension scheme

Defined contribution pension scheme

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge for the period represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £825 (2023 - £1,094).

Contributions totalling £121 (2023 - £169) were payable to the scheme at the end of the period and are included in creditors.

14 Related parties

Controlling entity

The charity is controlled by the trustees who are all directors of the company.

15 Analysis of funds

	At 1 July 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 30 June 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General Funds					
Unrestricted income fund	95,496	145,933	(114,103)	727	128,053
Restricted Funds					
Restricted income fund	1,947	165,250	(166,470)	(727)	-
DEFRA	24,856	24,856	(49,712)	-	-
	26,803	190,106	(216,182)	(727)	-
	122,299	336,039	(330,285)	-	128,053

Restricted funds - these are funds held relating to previous projects.

DEFRA - Funds held for direct payment to commons associations from DEFRA as part of the agreement in our T&T.

Foundation For Common Land

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

..... continued

Prior period

	At 1 July 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	At 30 June 2023
	£	£	£	£	£
General Funds					
Unrestricted income fund	55,797	266,360	(236,357)	9,696	95,496
Restricted Funds					
Restricted income fund	1,947	-	-	-	1,947
Esmee Fairbairn	3,333	-	(3,333)	-	-
Our Uplands Common	9,696	-	-	(9,696)	-
Exeter University	3,600	-	(3,600)	-	-
DEFRA	-	74,568	(49,712)	-	24,856
	<u>18,576</u>	<u>74,568</u>	<u>(56,645)</u>	<u>(9,696)</u>	<u>26,803</u>
	<u>74,373</u>	<u>340,928</u>	<u>(293,002)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>122,299</u>

16 Transfers

The transfers totalling £727 from restricted to unrestricted funds represents funds on which the restriction is no longer in place.

Foundation For Common Land

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2024

..... continued

17 Net assets by fund

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2024	Total Funds 2023
	£	£	£	£
Tangible assets	720	-	720	-
Current assets	141,247	-	141,247	138,476
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(13,914)	-	(13,914)	(16,177)
Net assets	<u>128,053</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>128,053</u>	<u>122,299</u>

Prior period

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2023	Total Funds 2022
	£	£	£	£
Tangible assets	-	-	-	-
Current assets	111,673	26,803	138,476	78,831
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	(16,177)	-	(16,177)	(4,458)
Net assets	<u>95,496</u>	<u>26,803</u>	<u>122,299</u>	<u>74,373</u>