

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD

England & Wales · Charity number 1156214

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2014-03-17

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

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Activities

Objects: 1.TO PROMOTE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC THE CONSERVATION,PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL& NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF OAKFRITH WOOD AS A DESIGNATED LOCAL NATURE RESERVE,IN THE PARISH OF URCHFONT WILTSHIRE,BY PROMOTING BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY AND PUBLIC ACCESS.2.TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE CONSERVATION,PROTECTION & IMPROVEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL & NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.

Activities: Woodland management

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space
- **What:** Environment/conservation/heritage, Recreation
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Wiltshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£7,190	£4,378	-	-
2024-03-31	£4,621	£3,489	-	-
2023-03-31	£3,863	£4,734	-	-
2022-03-31	£3,434	£3,882	-	-
2021-03-31	£1,939	£2,617	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Graham Creasey		2017-03-22
IAN WALKER		2021-12-14
John Nigel Adlington		2024-08-28
Maria Kathleen Kemp		2022-03-22
Martin John Follett		2019-08-29
Nicholas Simon Mark Prichard		2019-08-29
PETER NEWELL		2014-02-10
Peter Winckley		2017-03-22
Richard Kemp		2023-08-22
STEVEN SHAUN RUSSELL BSC		2014-02-10
Simon Bell		2023-08-22

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD

England & Wales - Charity number 1156214

Accounts

Friends of Oakfrith Wood

Chair's report 15th July 2025

It has been another good year for the charity. Financially our income has exceeded our expenditure again and we have received another generous donation from the Scarecrow Festival of £1500 for which we are very grateful.

Both the Tuesday and the Saturday groups have worked hard to clear storm damage, continue the thinning programme and keep the paths open so that the wood can be used safely by the public. Both groups have attracted new recruits.

We have continued to make benches, one of which now sits in the garden of the Royal Oak in Easterton and that is largely due to the hard work and expertise of Nigel Field for which we are very grateful. We have cut more oak planks with the help of Adam Reed and they are currently seasoning and will be used to satisfy existing orders and enquiries.

In September we fired the charcoal burner and produced some 27 bags of charcoal which we have sold through the village shop, within the village and elsewhere. Thanks go to the crew who helped to pack the burner and bag the resulting charcoal and to Steph Szakalo who produced the excellent logo for the bags.

In November Urchfont School provided the workforce to plant the oak saplings, which had been temporarily in the school grounds, into space is made for them in the Millennium Wood and they still prosper.

Bob Organ continues to look after the bird boxes, producing an annual report as to their state and use and repairing and replacing those where necessary. We are very grateful to him for this important work for the life of the wood.

Nick Pritchard continues to produce monthly articles for the Redhorn News which is so important in educating the public, raising the profile the charity in the village and adding to our prosperity.

We have had two resignations from the trustees. Simon Bell who was also our treasurer resigned at the beginning of the year and Nigel Field has kindly and bravely stepped in as trustee and treasurer. Thanks go to Simon for at last sorting out our bank account and our gratitude to Nigel for taking this on. Peter Winkley, one of our longest standing trustees, has also recently resigned for personal family reasons and great thanks go to him for all that he has done as a trustee and his work in the wood over many years.

Finally I would like to thank all of the trustees for their continued work and support and in particular Steve Russell for his continuing advice and support. We are all delighted to see his recovery to health and hope that that continues into the future.

Friends of Oakfrith Wood
Accounts for Period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

		£	£	£	
Income	Savings account interest			155.45	
	Chain saw sales			0.00	
	Donations			15.00	
	Grants			1,045.00	
	Sundry, Bench and Charcoal sales			1,630.00	
	Bird Plot Rent			180.00	
	Firewood Sales - public			3,465.00	
	Firewood sales - volunteers			700.00	
				7,190.45	
Expenditure	Trustee & General Insurance			432.02	
	Fuel and oil			293.61	
	Safety Equipment			46.37	
	Chainsaw R and R (less £1529.50 for #E1)			36.26	
	Vehicles Tax and Insurance			1,343.80	
	Vehicles maintenance			500.10	
	Materials & tools			0.00	
	Training			0.00	
	Tree surgery at high level			1,200.00	
		less UPC grant			
	Printing and stationery			3.05	
	Catering			36.40	
	Sundry and Bench costs			486.75	
		Trading surplus			4,378.36
					2,812.09
	Depreciation	Quad			122.39
		Trailer			28.24
Truck				45.75	
Chain saws (incl. one off correction of £0.16)				1,008.42	
		Operating surplus			1,607.29
		Add surplus brought forward			21,900.00
	Accumulated surplus			23,507.29	
Represented by	Cash in bank			21,067.67	
	Quad	Cost	3,900.00		
		Less depreciation	2,798.52	1,101.48	
	Trailer	Cost	900.00		
		Less depreciation	645.81	254.19	
	Toyota	Initial value	2,000.00		
		less depreciation	1,588.22	411.78	
	Chainsaws	Cost	3,372.50		
		less depreciation	2,700.33	672.17	
				2,439.62	
			23,507.29		

I have examined the documents made available to me and find them to be correct Signed: *CHH* (Cillian Hill)

Date: 30th June 2025

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD

England & Wales - Charity number 1156214

Accounts

FOW - Minutes of AGM held 28/8/24

Those attending;

Trustees : Martin Follet (M.F.) / Steve Russell (S.R.) / Ian Walker (I.W.) / Simon Bell (S.B.) / Richard Kemp (R.K.) / Peter Winkley (P.W.) / John Adlington (J.A.) / Peter Newell (P.N.) / Graham Creasey (G.C.) / Nick Pritchard (N.P.) Kevin Crofts (K.C.) - see items 8 & 9 below

Non-trustees : Stephanie Szalalo, Orla Follett, Georgina Wheatley, Colin Whitehead

1. Welcome :

The Chair welcomed all those attending and thanked them for their interest.

2. Apologies :

Apologies had been received from Bob and Joyce Organ, also Maria Kemp

3. Approval of minutes :

There being no amendments or comments regarding the minutes from the last AGM (22/8/23) they were duly approved.

4. Chairs' Report :

MF presented a report for last year (2023/24) i.e.

“Friends of Oakfrith Wood Chair's report 28th August 2024

It has been another busy year in the wood despite the weather.

I will leave it to John Adlington and Simon Bell to give you the good news in their reports. However I can say that we have some new people joining our teams and that turn out at the sessions has been very good. We have also benefited from the generosity of the Scarecrow Festival which has provided the funds to enable us to buy a new battery operated chainsaw. We are very grateful for their continued support.

Nick Prichard has continued with his regular articles in Redhorn News which raises our profile in the village and hopefully our sales of firewood.

We have enjoyed two barbecues this year, the first our traditional one in December when it was traditionally cold and another in July when it wasn't. Both were well supported and enjoyed by all who attended. We also had an excellent end of season dinner in the Lamb for the Tuesday group.

Nigel Field has been largely responsible for building our benches. We have completed and sold two large ones and two smaller ones and we have orders for one large one and

two small ones and, we hope, sufficient seasoned wood to complete them. One is installed in the picnic area in memory of Lyn Everson who worked with us in the wood and many will remember. It catches the afternoon and evening sun in the summer. The sales will contribute to our solvency.

Kevin Crofts and Bob Organ have both said they wish to step back from day-to-day responsibility and I would like to formally record our great thanks to both, particularly to Bob Organ who has for the last few years devoted enormous amounts of time to keeping the whole show on the road. Thank you to both. John Adlington has kindly stepped forward to run the Tuesday group and all that that entails. We are very grateful to him. Steve Russell has been battling illness for the last few months but we were delighted to see him and his family at the July barbeque and as always we are grateful to him for carrying out his safety inspection. Without his advice and support we could not operate

Martin Follet 28/8/24

5. Treasurers' Report :

SB then presented a financial report outlining the position for the year ending Mar 2024. In so doing it was noted that costs and revenue are not always in step with year to which they apply.

Please see attached report.

SR queried the budget position for the coming year and although not guaranteed SB felt there was no reason to think the coming year would be markedly different, indeed there was potential for increased income.

At this point JA noted that Urchfont Motors had been particularly helpful and supportive in terms of providing the necessary servicing and MOT requirements for the pick-up and quad for which FOW are very grateful.

6. Woodland Co-Op report 2023 - 24 :

JA presented his report summarising activity as follows :

The season commenced on 10 Sep 23 with the first deliveries completed on 19 Sep 23. Whilst the weather was wet throughout the winter the volunteers still managed to get together on 17 occasions where the attendance was very good.

1. During the year we managed to deliver 43 loads, 29 to customers and 14 for the volunteers. The accounts may differ slightly from this figure but maybe only due to the cost paid by the volunteers where they had more than one load. Most of the tree felling was according to plan, taking down trees identified by Steve Russell following his inspections. There were a number of storm damage fells although this seemed to be less than last season.
2. We completed some CS32 training for four of the chainsaw operators who all successfully passed the assessment given by Dave Grafton. Dave continues to provide excellent support when requested and should be thanked.

3. The season ended in early Apr, later than planned due to the large amount of timber requiring recovery. This was partly due to the amount of felling completed during the training. The trees felled were mostly very large, as required by CS32, but proved hard work to recover. The woods have been particularly wet in the early months of 2024.
4. We had contractors in the woods to deal with a dangerous Poplar which had split at height. The tree is now safely on the ground and may be dealt with as appropriate. (It will be of no use as firewood). Thanks to Bob and Richard for their assistance during this work. It should be noted that the techniques used by the contractors (Albeit much younger than the volunteers) were identical to those used by the volunteers which confirmed our own safety procedures.
5. The truck was serviced by Urchfont Motors and passed its MOT on 20 Jun, it will need renewing by 13 Jul 25. There were a couple of advisories which do need to be addressed but not as a matter of urgency. (Wheel bearing slight play and corroded mounting near the wheel arch). The Quad was also inspected by Urchfont motors who provided assurance that it was in good working order. No change was made for the quad inspection. Thanks to Jason and Tracey for their continued support. The truck had travelled 528 miles since its last service! It should be noted that the truck has been used by the rights of way group and will be shortly by the parish council.
6. Equipment is in good order and is regularly cleaned and maintained by the volunteers. An electric chainsaw has been purchased following the provision of a grant from the scarecrow. The MSA300 is comparable to the MS261 petrol chainsaws and will be brought into use when the work commences. Safety training will be provided for all cutters on the use of this new saw as the procedures for use are similar but not identical to a petrol chain saw.
7. We currently already have orders for 12 loads of firewood. Work will commence on 10 Sep subject to the availability of volunteers.
8. Thanks must go to Pat Putland for allowing the truck and trailer to be stored on her drive, to Bob Ward for storing and maintaining the quad (including installing enhancements) and finally to Bob Organ for all his hard work and dedication not only in the last year but in many previous years.

At this point GC referred to more recent storm damage in terms of Health & Safety. JA noted that temporary safety measures had been taken but that further work would be required in the near future.

7. Working Party :

MF recorded that the summer Bar-B-Q was well attended despite changeable weather with 17 people attending.

8.& 9 Trustee changes :

JA has been elected to join the trustees, while KC has stepped down. RO has 'stepped back' from regular activity but currently maintains a keen interest in FOW.

10. Independent Auditor :

SB confirmed that the last set of accounts had been scrutinised and agreed by Gill Hill as the external auditor and FOW are grateful for her continued support in this regard.

11. Timing of future AGM :

A general discussion reviewed the timing of the AGM in future with regard to the relationship between this, practical woodland activity and the FOW financial year. It was generally felt that the AGM would be more appropriately held nearer the end of the financial year, accordingly it was agreed that the Aim for this year 2024 - 25 would be scheduled for mid-May.

12. External questions :

MF referred to a question from RO relating to details of any plan/program that might be considered by trustees for development of areas of the wood from which timber has been extracted. Discussion followed acknowledging the benefits of renewal, re-planting etc. and that a report some years ago by the Woodland Trust may still be relevant, SR concurred and supported the idea of taking positive action. GC asked whether the oak saplings at the school might be incorporated by way of re-planting. The trustees agreed to explore options at future meetings with the object of formulating a proposal.

13. A.O.B. :

PN drew attention to the 30th anniversary this year of the initial gathering of the volunteer group taking a specific interest in Oakfrith which has developed into the FOW and perhaps this should be marked in some way. Referring to item 12. It was suggested that re-planting the saplings and marking the 30th anniversary might be combined. IW will investigate the number and condition of the saplings currently with a view towards having an 'event' late Nov/early Dec.

The AGM was then concluded allowing the trustee meeting to take place.

Friends of Oakfrith Wood
Accounts for Period 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Income

Chain saw sales		
Donations	49.00	
Grants	800.00	
Sundry and Bench sales	500.00	
Bird Plot Rent	180.00	
Firewood Sales - public	2,815.00	
Firewood sales - volunteers	<u>277.50</u>	4,621.50

Expenditure

Trustee & General Insurance	430.74	
Fuel and oil	277.86	
Safety Equipment	129.66	
Chainsaw R and R	129.49	
Vehicles Tax and Insurance	1,263.92	
Vehicles maintenance	232.57	
Materials & tools	75.95	
Training	440.00	
Tree surgery at high level less UPC grant		
Printing and stationery		
Sign boards refurbishment		
Sundry and Bench costs	<u>508.54</u>	<u>3,488.73</u>

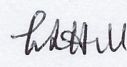
Depreciation

	Trading surplus		1,132.77
Quad	135.98		
Trailer	31.38		
Truck	50.84		
Chain saws	<u>226.63</u>	<u>444.83</u>	
	Operating surplus		687.94
Add surplus brought forward			<u>21,212.06</u>
	Accumulated surplus		<u>21,900.00</u>

Represented by

Cash in bank			19,785.08
Quad	Cost	3,900.00	
	Less depreciation	<u>2,676.14</u>	1,223.86
Trailer	Cost	900.00	
	Less depreciation	<u>617.57</u>	282.43
Toyota	Initial value	2,000.00	
	less depreciation	<u>1,542.46</u>	457.54
Chainsaws	Cost	4,354.00	
	less depreciation	<u>4,202.91</u>	151.09
			<u>2,114.92</u>
			<u>21,900.00</u>

I have examined the documents made available to me and find them to be correct

Signed 
 CILLIAN HILL
 12th June 2024

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD

England & Wales - Charity number 1156214

Accounts

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD (FOW)

MINUTES of the AGM - 22nd AUG 2023 - 18.00 hrs

URCHFONT VILLAGE HALL

Attendees :

Gen. Public : Bob Ward, Paul Melhuish, Linda Jennings, Colin Whitehead, Simon Bell, Emma Bell, Joyce Organ, Richard Kemp

Trustees : Nick Pritchard (NP), Peter Newell (PN), Peter Winkley (PW), Martin Follett (MF), Robert Organ (RO), Graham Creasey (GC), Maria Kemp (MK)

1. MF extended a warm welcome to all and expressed thanks for the continued interest and support shown to the FOW for the work that is done.

2. Apologies for absence had been received from Kevin Crofts, and Steve Russell. *It was noted that PW was unavoidably delayed and the treasurers' report would be deferred until later in the meeting.*

3. Minutes of the 2022 AGM were accepted and approved as a correct record. It was noted that minutes were not generally circulated to those attending meetings, it was agreed that this could be done in future, by email, to those who wished for a copy.

4. Chairmans' Report (MF) :

This has been a year during which Oakfrith Wood has continued to be much used by many from the parish and beyond, including the usual dog walkers and 10,000 steppers but also Urchfont School's Forest School, Lavington Scouts and many others.

Nick Pritchard has continued his contributions to Redhorn News with articles including the biology of bluebells and the skills of hedge laying, for which many thanks. Maria Kemp organised successful walks in the spring led by Steve Russell and Malcolm Turner, also for which many thanks. I think it is important for people to appreciate the wonderful asset on their doorstep and these are ways of encouraging this.

We organised the planking of a large storm damaged oak tree we had felled, and we now have 30 two inch planks being seasoned under cover for use as benches in the wood. If successful, this may be a further source of funds in the future.

The Scarecrow Festival Charity generously awarded us £800 for various projects and I thank all of you who lobbied the trustees of that charity. Hopefully the importance of Oakfrith Wood to the community, and of the Friends in maintaining it, are appreciated.

Peter Winkley is standing down as treasurer and Graham Creasey is standing down as secretary. Both have faithfully undertaken largely unseen but essential work for the Friends and I hope you will all join me in thanking them for the important work they have done for us over many years. I'm pleased to say that Simon Bell and Richard Kemp have come forward to offer themselves as replacements, subject of course to your approval.

I would like to finally thank the two people whose time, energy and support continue to be vital for the work of the Friends, namely Bob Organ and Steve Russell. Bob works tirelessly for the Friends, not only in organising the Woodland Cooperative for its Tuesday sessions but also in maintaining our vehicles and equipment and looking after the interests of the flora and fauna. Steve is our vital professional, giving us guidance and encouragement, without which we could not operate. Thank you to both.

6. Woodland Co-Operative Report 2022 -23 (RO) :

The season commenced on 6th September with the production and delivery of logs which continued throughout the month.

The number of days lost to the weather was low this season, only 3 and none to the lack of personnel. Attendance was very good throughout the year.

The number of loads sold to customers, I believe, was about 17. But the accounts may tell us better.

Steve Russell carried out an unannounced H&S question and answer session after the Christmas break which highlighted several areas of concern and the need to adhere to the training and procedures that have seen the group safely through the previous 25 years plus. All concerns have been taken on board.

There was a First Aid Training day held in the village hall on Friday 10th March for all those who could attend. Future training sessions need to consider the inclusion of other members of the Friends of Oakfrith Wood, perhaps.

The season ended on 28th March.

16th May, had a number of the group back in Oakfrith to deal with a fallen Oak near the centre crossroads and over the track heading east.

The truck has had its MOT and service and is now good to go. The mileage last year was 500 miles. To pass its MOT a front headlight needed replacing, wiper blades and wheel bearings attended to. A big thank you to Jason and Tracy Wildman for all their help and support.

The quad now resides with a member of the group within the village which may need a review of its insurance and security costs .

Note : Discussion followed in this regard, PW noted that the current insurance cover would not be affected by the change of location. The new keeper noted that the quad was kept out of sight and practically very difficult to move.

All other equipment is serviceable and ready to go.

The truck has been used to help other groups in the village i.e.:

1). the Rights of Way group, to transport equipment to the end of Marsh Lane. *(Paul Melhuish added a note of thanks in this regard and offered to assist with fuel costs if reqd.)*

2). Friends and Neighbours to move chairs for a garden party .

The intention is to start the new season on Tuesday 5th September, where there are several trees that need attending to due to the weather and trees being trees.

RO recorded continued thanks to Pat Putland for allowing FOW to utilise her driveway and garage,

N.B. PW joined the meeting

5. Treasurers' Report - Financial Year ending 31st March 2023 (PW) :

Compared to the previous year (2022) our income is up. Firewood sales have totalled £3000, a level not seen since the end of the 2018 financial year. The Covid lockdowns obviously had a lot to do with this decline. Firewood prices for this season were at £95 per load, up from the previous year, but the first increase for many years and necessary because of the rise in fuel costs. We received a Scarecrow Festival grant of £375.

Expenditure was up on the previous year but largely due to £1000 spent on training for new chain saw operatives and a first aid refresher course. However, having more trained volunteers should help us to catch up with felling requirements and with processing firewood sales, as in the past, lack of numbers has limited the level of firewood orders we can process and hence the potential income.

Vehicle tax and insurance continues to gradually rise, but this is a common theme with many charities and businesses. Truck maintenance continues (hopefully) without too many issues apart from the increased difficulty at sourcing parts.

For the past few years, so since the Year End 2017/18, we have been without the previous grants from various organisations and this gap in income poses the greatest challenge to maintaining a healthy bank balance and reserve. An increase in the levels of firewood sales could help along with future grants, but other sources of income may have to be explored.

Again I would like to express our thanks to Gillian Hill who audits our accounts. Gillian has kindly agreed to continue this for the current year.

7. Working Party report (MF) :

There have been five meetings of the group this year, including our winter BBQ. We have undertaken the usual coppicing and clearing up and in addition we laid the hedge between the pond and Witchell Lane. Particular thanks are due to Simon Bell for sterling work in the pouring rain to finish the hedge laying.

Sadly Linda Jennings was seriously injured during the February session when her foot was caught in a tough bramble and her ankle and her knee were broken, requiring the calling of an ambulance, emergency surgery and a stay in hospital. She is slowly recovering and we hope she's back to full mobility as soon as possible. It must have been a very frightening experience for her.

8. Election of Officers :

MF proposed Simon Bell (SB) and Richard Kemp (RK) be elected as treasurer and secretary respectively replacing Peter Winkley and Graham Creasey, the appointments were approved.

9. Trustees 2033 - 2024 :

PW, GC and KC would continue as trustees, in addition SB and RK were also elected as trustees.

10. Independent Accounts Auditor :

Per PRs' report Gillian Hill has agreed to continue in this role.

There being no comments from members of the public or AOB the meeting was closed.

Friends of Oakfrith Wood
Accounts for Period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023

Income

Chain saw sales	150.00	
Donations	125.00	
Grants	375.00	
Bird Plot Rent	238.00	See refund
Firewood Sales - public	2,320.00	
Firewood sales - volunteers	680.00	3,888.00

Expenditure

Trustee & General Insurance	506.82	
Fuel and oil	304.45	
Safety Equipment	70.00	
Chainsaw R and R (less £693 for new saw)	110.37	
Vehicles Tax and Insurance	1,158.88	
Vehicles maintenance	496.90	
Materials & tools	646.98	
Training	1,000.00	
Tree surgery at high level	180.00	
less UPC grant		
Printing and stationery	0.00	
Sign boards refurbishment		
Sundry	259.71	4,734.11
		<hr/>
Trading surplus		-846.11

Depreciation

Quad	151.09	
Trailer	34.87	
Truck	56.49	
Chain saws	566.59	809.04
		<hr/>
Operating surplus		-1,655.15
Add surplus brought forward		22,867.21
Accumulated surplus		<hr/> <hr/>
		21,212.06

Represented by

Cash in bank			18,652.31
Quad	Cost	3,900.00	
	Less depreciation	2,540.15	1,359.85
Trailer	Cost	900.00	
	Less depreciation	586.19	313.81
Toyota	Initial value	2,000.00	
	less depreciation	1,491.63	508.37
Chainsaws	Cost	4,354.00	
	less depreciation	3,976.28	377.72
			2,559.75
			<hr/> <hr/>
			21,212.06

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD

England & Wales - Charity number 1156214

Accounts

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD
MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
23rd AUGUST 2022 commencing at 6.00pm
CONFERENCE ROOM, URCHFONT VILLAGE HALL

1. **Welcome:** MF, expressed his appreciation and thanks to both the audience members and Trustees for continuing to support the work of the Friends and for attending the AGM.
2. **Attendance:** Audience – Emma Bell, Simon Bell, Bob Ward, Joyce Organ, Linda Jennings, Paul Melhuish, Colin Whitehead. Trustees – Martin Follett – (Chairman) MF, Peter Newell – PN, Kevin Crofts – KC, Steve Russell – SR, Peter Winckley – PW, Robert Organ – RO, Maria Kemp – MK, Graham Creasey – GC. Apologies were received from Nick Prichard – NP and Ian Walker – IW.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting held on the 24th August 2021:**
The minutes were accepted and approved as a correct record of the meeting.
4. **Chairman's Report:** MF presented his report as follows - With COVID hopefully in retreat, it has been very good to get back to normal working. The two volunteer groups have returned to full working, subject to the limitations of the weather, and have dealt with storm damage and the logging and deliveries of firewood. The usual inspections have been carried out by Steve Russell, Bob Organ and Kevin Crofts and the necessary remedial work undertaken to keep the wood safe for its many visitors.

We have welcomed some new volunteers and three members of the Woodland Cooperative have completed their CS31 chainsaw qualification, so we now have a total of eight cutters. Two young people undertaking their Duke of Edinburgh awards successfully worked in the wood during the year. Geoff Potter kindly scraped the metalled rides, clearing them of mud and debris.

Chivers Stoves of Devizes kindly donated a number of oak saplings for planting in the wood and, in the hope of involving some of the children from the school, these have been planted in the school grounds with the intention that the children will replant them in the wood and elsewhere in a couple of years' time. The school has not been in a position to operate their Forest School for much of the year, but the intention is to revive it in future. The pre-school organised a sponsored walk in the wood. Urchfont Scouts have used the wood for their Foresters' badge and led by Steve Russell and

other volunteers, about a dozen scouts with helpers completed that in May.

Nick Pritchard has continued to write monthly articles for the Redhorn News on such diverse topics as tree management, the history of the wood and an explanation of our working parties. Two woodland walks were held in the summer, ably administered by Maria Kemp. One was led by Steve Russell entitled "A forester's tale" and the other by Malcolm Turner on "Little known plant life" and both were much appreciated by those who attended. A number of volunteers represented the wood in the Newcomers' Event in the parish hall in November, advertising to newcomers and longstanding residents our work and its importance to the community. We contributed to the Parish Council's environmental survey of the parish and the plan for improvement.

I would like to particularly thank Bob Organ for all of the work that he does for the charity, not only in organising the weekly Working Cooperative but also the immense amount of additional unseen work, such as dealing with the firewood sales, maintaining the truck and the equipment, monitoring the bird boxes and generally keeping an eye on the wood and its inhabitants, which keeps the charity working safely and effectively. Grateful thanks also go to Peter Winckley for managing the accounts and to Graham Creasey for keeping the minutes and to all of the other trustees who generously give up their time. Finally, thanks to Steve Russell for his care and expertise, without whom we would not function as a woodland charity.

5. **Treasurer's Report for the year ending 31st March 2022:** PW presented a copy of the accounts for the period which had been examined and approved as correct by our external inspector. PW explained that by comparing on a year by year basis it is clear our resources continue to steadily decline even though in the current year we have seen our income increase over the previous year. However, this increase has failed to keep pace with the significant rise in our expenditure and in particular rapidly increasing fuel costs for our vehicles and chainsaws. The Trustees have already agreed to increase the price of firewood from the start of this season for both customers and volunteers and keep the price under review. It was agreed that the rent for the Bird Plot which has remained static for many years would be investigated to get a better understanding if it is possible to seek an increase. PW expressed thanks on behalf of the Trustees to Gillian Hill for the audit of the accounts.
6. **Woodland Cooperative Report:** RO presented his report as follows - The group returned to its program of felling, logging and clearance at the beginning of August, to try and catch-up from the loss of working due to the Covid 29 pandemic. The felling of the

diseased ash trees continued along with other trees included in the tree safety survey. The four future chainsaw operators were involved with all the aspects of our tree work. Friday 21st and Saturday 22nd January saw our four new operators in the classroom undergoing their formal CS 30, Chainsaw Maintenance and Crosscutting training and all passing. CS 31, small tree felling with Mr Dave Grafton was completed for MF, IW and John Adlington at the end of April. Assessment of chainsaw operators is going to be a problem as the industry seems to have a lack of assessors! Richard Kemp will be CS31 tested this autumn.

During this training weekend, the opportunity was taken to try and sort the main ride. With the help of Mr Jeff Potter and his machinery the main ride was scraped back to the surface and the sides levelled off. A thank you to JP.

Felling, logging and training continued up to 15th February, from then on the wood was subjected to the damaging storms of Dudley and Eugene in the space of two days. These storms following on from Storm Malik at the start of February. The number of oak trees affected is sad. Yet again the work had to concentrate on clearing storm damage and to play catch-up with the felling program. To this end the group worked up until the end of April to extract and fit in with the CS31 tests. The group now has a further 3 chainsaw operators. A well done to MF, JA and IW. The number of loads of logs delivered was around 25 with another 6 to volunteers, There are 8 loads so far awaiting to be confirmed and delivered this coming season. As yet, there seems to be no reaction to use more wood due to other fuel prices.

There is also a requirement to carry out a risk assessment on the area before the school returns to its forest school. The MoU with the school is also up for review. IW to review with input from MF.

The Hi Lux has successfully gone through its MoT, has had a service and a cam-belt replacement, after 12 years since the last! Thanks to Jason and Tracy at Wildman Motors, Urchfont.

Due to concerns from within the group and being correct within the PUWER regulations the winching equipment has been inspected and certified fit to use, by Hutcheon Examination Services. Two slings were found to be not fit to use, so these will be replaced. Oakfrith is now on their data base for future use.

In July the whole of the green woodland work area was cleared away. Only the charcoal burner remains. The canvas awning is in a good condition so has been kept for future use; if needed.

The annual tree assessment of Oakfrith Wood was carried out this morning, the 23rd August with SR.

Paul Melhuish continues to be out of action and we send him our best wishes and get well soon.

Covid 19 again disrupted and affected our program of work. There has been no equipment failures to report. Saw #6 was sold and a replacement (#9) purchased. Saw #7 is about to be sold with a replacement waiting to be collected from Roses. There has been no accidents or incidents to report.

And lastly a big thank you to Mrs Pat Putland for all her help and generosity with the groups equipment.

7. **Working Party Report:** MF presented his report as follows - There have been six meetings of the working party over the year and two cancelled due to bad weather with up to 15 people attending on one session. Two young people have successfully attended sessions as part of their Duke of Edinburgh awards. We have undertaken coppicing, grass cutting and general tidying and completed the clearing of the metalled rides which had been scraped by Geoff Potter. The hardier members of the group enjoyed a chilly but wholesome barbecue in December.
8. **Election of Officers:** MF advised that PW and GC had agreed to continue in their present positions as Treasurer and Secretary respectively for another year, however GC advised that it is his intention to step down as Secretary at the next AGM.
9. **Trustees 2021 - 2022:** MF advised that RO, PN, NP and himself would continue for a further term as Trustees.
10. **Appointment of Independent Accounts Inspector:** PW advised that Gillian Hill will continue in this role.
11. **Points from anyone in the audience:** None
12. **Any other business:** None

The meeting closed 6.27pm.

Friends of Oakfrith Wood

Accounts for Period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022

Income

Chain saw sales	200.00	
Donations	355.00	
Grants		
Bird Plot Rent	119.00	
Firewood Sales - public	2,505.00	
Firewood sales - volunteers	<u>255.00</u>	3,434.00

Expenditure

Trustee & General Insurance	506.82	
Fuel and oil	229.97	
Safety Equipment	446.19	
Chainsaw R and R (less £590 for new saw)	182.57	
Vehicles Tax and Insurance	1,084.00	
Vehicles maintenance	702.00	
Materials & tools	274.98	
Training	0.00	
Tree surgery at high level less UPC grant	300.00	
Printing and stationery	0.00	
Sign boards refurbishment		
Sundry	155.67	3,882.20
Trading surplus		-448.20

Depreciation

Quad	167.88	
Trailer	38.74	
Truck	62.76	
Chain saws	<u>376.97</u>	646.35
Operating surplus		-1,094.55
Add surplus brought forward		<u>23,961.76</u>
Accumulated surplus		<u><u>22,867.21</u></u>

Represented by

Cash in bank			20,191.42
Quad	Cost	3,900.00	
	Less depreciated	<u>2,389.06</u>	1,510.94
Trailer	Cost	900.00	
	Less depreciated	<u>551.32</u>	348.68
Toyota	Initial value	2,000.00	
	less depreciated	<u>1,435.14</u>	564.86
Chainsaws	Cost	3,661.00	
	less depreciated	<u>3,409.69</u>	251.31
			<u><u>2,675.79</u></u>
			<u><u>22,867.21</u></u>

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD

England & Wales - Charity number 1156214

Accounts

FRIENDS OF OAKFRITH WOOD
MINUTES of the ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
24TH AUGUST 2021 commencing at 6.00pm
CONFERENCE ROOM, URCHFONT VILLAGE HALL

1. **Welcome:** MF, expressed his appreciation and thanks to both the members of the audience and the Trustees for continuing to support the work of the Friends and attending the AGM.
2. **Attendance:** Audience – Paul Melhuish, Linda Jennings & Joyce Organ. Trustees – Martin Follett – (Chairman) MF, Peter Newell – PN, Kevin Crofts – KC, Steve Russell – SR, Peter Winckley – PW, Robert Organ – RO, Colin Whitehead – CW, Nick Prichard – NP, Graham Creasey – GC. There were no apologies from the Trustees, Paul Bancroft and Ian Maidment sent their apologies.
3. **Minutes of the last meeting held on the 17th November 2020:** The minutes were accepted and approved as a correct record of the meeting.
4. **Chairman's Report:** MF presented his report as follows – There is said to be an ancient Chinese curse 'May you live in interesting times' and recently the times have certainly been interesting. For most of the period since the last AGM the country has been in lockdown which has meant that no work could take place in the wood. As a result our faithful bands of volunteers have been frustrated and we have been unable to fulfil orders to regular customers. As the rules have been relaxed we have been able to complete extraction and recently to start delivering logs but obviously our income has been affected. It is not all bad news however. The wood has been much used by local people enjoying its beauty, walking the dog, entertaining small children and generally relieving their isolation and stress. I'm in the wood regularly and I cannot remember an occasion when I have not bumped into someone wandering around. To see the wood being enjoyed has been very satisfying, although there are, of course, the downsides of muddy paths and on New Year's Eve, partygoers who braved freezing temperatures and left empty bottles and mess, resulting in minor outrage on the village Facebook page. We have also taken the opportunity of the lockdown to review where we are as a charity, to remind ourselves of its history and to collect together the various documents that have made the charity work. We have made plans to raise the profile of Oakfrith in the community through use of local media and Nick Prichard has already made a cracking start to this, and we also have plans to revive a bit of an educational programme.

The hope is that we will attract more volunteers and to enlist the support of the next generation in running the charity. Thanks are due particularly to Colin Whitehead who has indicated that he will be stepping down as a trustee and as the organiser of the Saturday working parties. I am grateful for his wisdom and experience and his ability to make the Saturday sessions such fun. Thanks are also due to Bob Organ who it seems has borne the brunt of the issues that have arisen from day to day and also to him, Steve Russell and Kevin Crofts who have undertaken the safety inspection in March and the ash dieback inspection in June so that we can be sure the wood is safe for the public. Thanks also to Peter Winckley who has kept our finances in order and to Graham Creasey who has kept the minutes in order. Finally, thanks to Steve Russell for his care and expertise without whom we would not cope as a woodland charity.

5. **Treasurer's Report for the financial year ending 31st March 2021:** PW presented his report as follows - Compared to the previous year (2020) our funds are down. Unsurprisingly this is largely due to the period bearing the brunt of the Covid-19 Pandemic which had only just arisen at the end of the previous financial year. The lockdowns badly interrupted our felling and processing work which resulted in a drop in firewood sales income from the general public. Despite this we were still able to adapt our working periods and the income shortfall compared with this previous period was £305, so not too bad considering the circumstances. Donations and grants for this period were minimal again. The combined Trustee and General Insurance with Zurich came down a bit but the vehicle insurance rose by £143. The good news is that for the current financial period (i.e. year end 31 March 2022) the combined Trustee and General Insurance has remained frozen and we managed via Calder Valley Insurance Services to get a reduction in the vehicle insurance, albeit by £63. For the year end 2021 we delivered 27.5 loads to the general public and volunteers, compared to 25 in the previous year which were just to the general public, thus generating slightly more income. At our last trustees meeting we decided that the firewood prices would continue at the previous rate, so at £85 per load. We have already started delivering this month at this rate so one would assume that this will continue over this coming winter - TBC. Finally I would like to express our thanks to Gillian Hill who kindly audits our accounts now and who completed the audit for the year end 2021 on the 20th April 2021. Gillian has kindly agreed to continue this for the current year. Accounts attached.
6. **Woodland Cooperative Report:** RO presented his report as follows - As we all know this season has again been a very disrupted and awkward year and some very bad weather to hinder our operations. On 8th December, the team reassembled working to the

Covid protocols of Rule of Six, Hands Face and Space and dividing into small working groups of 3 or 4. We were able to extract and deliver a couple of loads of logs. The same was done on the 15th with up to 8 people attending. The tree inspection was carried out with SR, RO and KC on March 2nd 2021. From the inspection there was no immediate work to carry out. However, there was climbing work to be carried out in 4 locations. The end of March brought relief from the lockdown and it was decided that the most pressing work was the extraction of the felled timber off of the wood floor and onto stacks. So on 31st March and 6th April the teams worked extended days well into the late afternoons extracting 15 loads on each day. Very hard work which I would not like to do on a regular timetable. RO met with William Warden to discuss the climbing work required as per the tree inspection. Agreed that the work would be on an ad hoc basis as previous. The 4 items of climbing work required (tree assessment items 9, 10, 11 and 12) were carried out on the 20th July successfully. It was decided that before it's MoT, the hi-lux should have some bodywork repair carried out on both rear sides. The work was carried out at a previously used body workshop in Stockley near Calne, by Image Cars. Incurring a cost of £650. However the planned maintenance on the truck has not been carried out due to unforeseen circumstances and future maintenance on the hi-lux will need to be arranged at another location. The MoT was successfully re-arranged without any failures. An Ash tree assessment was carried out with SR on Thursday 15th July. Approximately 15/18 trees have been identified and marked as needing felling due to ash dieback. A large Oak was also found in need of felling sooner than later. These trees will be felled as part of our programmed work for the 2021/22 season. August 3rd saw the Co-operative back in the wood to fulfil outstanding firewood orders. This will continue through the month to try and catch-up. However, this work is being hampered due to low attendance and other tasks eg. dangerous trees, item 7 a silver birch identified in the March tree assessment and a large ash leaning in a dangerous position. Large ash trees are becoming unstable throughout the year and need attention. Firewood. There are 9 outstanding orders on the book, plus 2 for the Ellis's and another 8 for ourselves. Orders have been lost due to the pandemic. The low numbers of helpers is causing concern in being able to carry out the tasks needed to maintain Oakfrith in the condition that we would like. It is with much sadness that I have to report the passing of Mathew G, who for many years maintained and advised the group on our hi-lux truck. His vast knowledge and skill, helpfulness and approachable nature will be very much missed. A sympathy card has been sent to Serena on behalf of the Trustees and Friends of Oakfrith. A donation will also be contributed to the collection towards the Wiltshire Air Ambulance and the Dyson Cancer Research Centre at the RUH. Other news to report. Unfortunately, two of our elder helpers are not very well.

Fabian and Derek are both having to have hospital treatment. We wish them well and a speedy return to good health.

7. **Working Party Report:** CW advised that he had nothing to report as there had been no Saturday sessions due to lockdown.
8. **Election of Officers:** MF advised that PW and GC had agreed to continue in their positions as Treasurer and Secretary respectively for another year.
9. **Trustees 2021 - 2022:** MF advised that SR and RO will continue for a further term as Trustees. MF also wished to formally record that CW had stepped down as a Trustee with immediate effect.
10. **Appointment of Independent Accounts Inspector:** PW advised that Gillian Hill will continue in this role.
11. **Points from anyone in the audience:** None.
12. **Any other business:** Item 5 above, it was agreed that in future when the accounts are presented the previous year's figures would be shown in the report for comparison purposes. Item 6 above, it was agreed that the donations referred to in the report would be made. The meeting closed at 6.40pm.

GC Sept 2021.

