

FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1163581

Details

Other names FOCV

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2015-09-15

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

Contact

Address 501 Bexhill Road
St. Leonards-On-Sea
East Sussex
TN38 8AT

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Website <http://www.friendsofcombevalley.co.uk>

Activities

Objects: The objects of the CIO are: To work within the Combe Haven Valley and in particular within the boundaries of the Combe Valley Countryside Park - 1. To promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment, including biodiversity, in particular but not exclusively by, encouraging the public to use and enjoy the area and its fauna and flora. 2. To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

Activities: This charity has been converted to members only and it held its first AGM under the new constitution on December 13 2019. New trustees have been elected and are now registered. The charity is working within the Combe Valley helping the Combe Valley Countryside Park Community Interest Company.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research
- **What:** Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- East Sussex

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-09-30	£4,335	£7,998	-	-
2024-09-30	£8,824	£6,066	-	-
2023-09-30	£5,985	£8,751	-	-
2022-09-30	£11,999	£16,754	-	-
2021-09-30	£11,879	£6,036	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Peter Clarke BEM	Chair	2019-01-01
Adelaide Virginia Vilela		2021-12-08
Anna Jane Sabin		2021-05-11
Christopher John Dadswell		2019-12-13
Cliff Willard		2019-12-13
Emma Ramsden		2021-05-11
Joanna Helen Francis Brewerton		2021-12-08
Karl Beaney		2019-12-13
Peter William Ackroyd		2019-08-14
Rita Drobner		2025-02-06
Will Kemp		2019-01-01

FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1163581

Accounts



Annual Report

October 2024 – September 2025

Facts about the Countryside Park

Covers 2.3 square miles
(1480 acres)

Located between Bexhill
and Hastings, providing
vital green space between
two urban areas

Huge community asset:
nature on your doorstep

Network of footpaths for
recreation, including
Greenway: suitable for
cycles and horses

A very important area for
wildlife, including extremely
rare animals; providing a
wildlife corridor between
urban areas

The largest area of reedbeds
found in Sussex, located in
Filsham Reedbed and nearby
Glyne Gap Reedbed

2456 recorded species of
fauna and flora



In summary a variety of habitats, including the following
UK priority habitats: ancient woodland, hedgerow,
reedbed and lowland fen, flooded meadows, lowland
grassland, river, coastal vegetated shingle, intertidal.



Introduction

The Friends of Combe Valley have completed another successful year maintaining and improving the natural space of the Combe Valley. Working alongside the Combe Valley CIC and Groundwork South, we have enjoyed developing The Community Garden around the Discovery Centre, which is now establishing itself to be a place to enjoy the natural green space.

Diary of Events held in the Park and around The Discovery Centre, including Thursday work party activities.

October

Presentation to Councillors and Council Officers

Another set of presentations highlighting the good work undertaken and the opportunities arising in the Park was given by the Friends, Groundwork South, and Combe Valley CIC. These were given to several councillors of both Hastings and Rother Councils who wish to give their support to the park.

November

Completion of the new roof and rain harvesting system on the green container

Courtesy of an East Sussex County Council grant, a rainwater harvesting system was installed on the new tool container roof. This now feeds four large water vats for watering the community garden and trees.



January

Installation of new signs around the Park

The final 25 new updated metal signs were finally installed around the park to replace the outdated and damaged ones.



February

Improving the outdoor green woodworking area

The green wood working behind the tool container has been fitted out with poles to attach a cover for all-weather working. The installation of a shave horse and vice bench enables the working of felled and coppiced wood to create park benches and various woodland crafts.

In collaboration with The Custom Cafe, used coffee grounds were regularly collected and added to the compost bins to enhance the compost.



March

A litter pick and path clearance along the disused railway took place, checking the condition of the picnic seats and tables, sadly revealing that many need to be repaired or replaced. A quick survey also revealed that many dead ash trees needed to be felled. The appropriate council was contacted and the felling completed.

A quick survey along the path revealed the presence of Brimstone, Peacock & Red Admiral butterflies, a green woodpecker, hairy caterpillars, marsh frogs, swans, a Cetti's warbler and Hemlock Water Dropwort. amongst other flora.



May

Discovery Centre outdoor tables and new all-weather rubber matting

The large picnic tables were given an overhaul to reduce their size and painted in bright colours to make them more family-friendly. Also, initial preparation of the ground for rubber grass matting around the picnic tables.

Later, we were lucky to be given support by Cappagh Browne, civil engineers. Their volunteers gave time, expertise and a mechanical excavator to lay and peg down over 100 1x1.5m rubber grass mats. We were very grateful for this help to make the area a safer, drier area in winter. At the same time, they excavated the path on the east side of the car park, removing all the spoil from the site. Cappagh Browne put us forward for a grant by Enterprise Mobility to help with future needs.



June

The Great Big Green Week

In June, we held our fourth and most successful Great Big Green event to increase awareness of the Park's role as a green space and its importance in developing a bio-diverse and healthy natural environment, with an emphasis on adapting to future climate change conditions. We were joined by over ten green and nature-inspired groups from surrounding towns, including Groundwork South, Crowhurst Environment Group, Standup 4 Nature, Church-in-The -Wood Community Orchard, Energise Sussex Coast, Ore Community Land Trust, Sussex Ornithological Society and others.

This year was centred around swapping, so books, clothes and plants were on offer to swap or donate. Visitors were also offered soothing hand massages by 'A touch of Gentleness', who bring joy, connection and peace back to the heart of the community. Peter and Cliff made and presented a wooden bench made from coppiced wood to the Beach Garden Project along Western Parade, Bexhill.





July

BBC Make A Difference Awards

A BBC Sussex and Surrey reporter attended the Discovery Centre to interview and record Cliff, Peter and Julie for the Make a Difference awards, for which the Friends had been nominated and who successfully made the finals, achieving a Highly Commended in the green category.

Donation of a TV screen by Hastings Direct

Hastings Direct donated a large TV to the Discovery Centre, which will allow better presentations and video conferencing in the centre, including the AGM.

Big Butterfly count: Friends also took part in the 2025 survey. 6 separate surveys recorded 10 species. Results for the whole country available at the following website:

<https://butterfly-conservation.org/big-butterfly-count-results-2025>





August

Hastings Direct community volunteer day

Several employees from Hastings Direct joined us for the day to remove large thistles from the Friends meadow, dig holes for poles which were to be used for the 'walk the plank' team building game. They also tested the game with great hilarity.

September

Open Day Pirate Pete's Treasure Trail

Another successful open day welcomed residents and visitors of Bexhill, Hastings and St Leonards to the park, showcasing our activities. Visitors were encouraged to join the Friends and become volunteers in the park. A Pirates treasure trail took children and families around The Community Garden, finding activities to do en route, including a bug hunt in the Friends meadow organised by Emma of Groundwork South. Families enjoyed a team-building game of walking the plank.

The children had a mini version too.

Over 60 people attended and we gained 1 new member, with many offering to volunteer.



The Community Garden – in conjunction with Groundwork

The Friends have now constructed and erected nine new rustic benches from locally coppiced sweet chestnut. These are located throughout The Community Garden and provide several very welcome places for visitors to rest a while to appreciate the beauty of the space, including one that was placed in the new Beach Garden, Western Parade, Bexhill Seafront.

Five new signs have been erected, welcoming visitors to The Community Garden.

The mixed native hedging and trees around The Community Garden continue to grow with constant weeding, mulching and watering, especially during the dry summer months. The tree line between the middle and third tier also continues to be watered and mulched.

Maintenance of the paths, raised beds, tree nursery and throughout the garden has regularly been undertaken by the Friends and Groundwork South volunteers, resulting in a good biodiverse colonisation of flowers, fauna, insects and small mammals such as voles. The gardens are regularly visited by hunting raptors resting on the newly installed standing pole and fence posts.

Along the western edge of the Friends Meadow, several bays of sweet chestnut post and rail fencing in traditional Sussex style have been erected to create a feature.



Elsewhere in the park

Due to the increased amount of time being spent creating The Community Garden, less time has been spent around the Combe Valley; however, the Haven Copse and Combe Hedge, at the eastern edge of tier three, have been maintained with weeding, cutting and clearing of the surrounding grass, replacement of saplings, mulching and watering. Although watering at this more remote location presents logistical problems.

Managing Ash Die Back within the "Long Wood" continues along with the cutting up and removal of fallen trees on the dismantled railway, clearing and cutting back vegetation on footpaths, litter picks around the park and along the beach.

A group of volunteer gardeners continue to repair, paint and plant up the raised beds with a selection of seasonal flowers and herbs, which are much admired. The original beds have been supplemented with additional raised beds maintained by Groundwork volunteers. A supply of vegetables and fruit has been most welcome, resulting in jam and fruit pies enjoyed by all.





Nature Detectives

Emma Ramsden, employed by Groundwork South (Sussex and Surrey) (GW) on behalf of the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC (the CIC), continues to provide sessions in the park and along the Beach for families. FoCV volunteers also contribute their time and effort to these sessions.

Creative Mondays

New to 2024, and thanks to The Big Lottery and Groundwork South, various regular creative craft sessions have been held every month for families to attend for quiet and reflective crafts.

Social Evenings

These have continued once a month, including fun card nights and a well-attended fish and chip supper.

Presentations & Other Events

Cliff and Julie have given slide presentations about the Combe Valley to a Ladies' lunch club, Bexhill 100 and the Wonky WI groups, all of whom appreciated the hard work undertaken by all the volunteers in the park to sustain a beautiful free open green space, available to all. Donations were received by all three groups in thanks.

Stands displaying marketing materials were manned at St Helens Wood open day, Ocean Symposium and Church in the Wood events.

BBC Make A Difference Awards

Julie, Cliff and Virginia attended the BBC Sussex and BBC Surrey Make a Difference awards at Lingfield Racecourse to collect a highly commended award (Green category) on behalf of the Friends. This was a prestigious event attracting hundreds of nominations.

Future Plans

Training for the Water quality sampling project within the park, supported by Strandliners, will be undertaken.

Bee project – working with Groundwork South to create an area of bee-friendly plants to attract specific bees.

Developing plans for the lower tier and tier three.

Walks, surveys and education events.

Warden Service

The warden service continues more informally since there are fewer incidents, which contributes to a more peaceful park.

Community Police

An increase in liaising with local community police officers has resulted in more frequent site checks and the community police meetings being held at the centre.



Volunteers

The activities outlined in this report rely on volunteers, and their contribution is substantial.

The following are the totals, from our records and estimates of time spent on:

Conservation work about 2,200 hours, including the regular Thursday mornings and numerous other tasks around the park

Other events – about 500 hours over the events set out above, the social evenings and events in partnership with GWS for the CIC

Wardens – this has not been formally recorded: currently, 6 wardens walk regularly in the park and deal, as appropriate, with any information received about the park.

Administration, Peter, along with chairing the committee, continues to deal with car park and security issues. William, alongside Secretarial and Treasurer duties, has been dealing with planning and other legal issues. Julie has been organising events, managing Facebook and web pages, and Karl has designed our posters. This all amounts to an additional 1,200 hours during the year.

Overall, about 3,900 hours during the year, with a dedicated band of volunteers, now numbering around 50, and we continue to welcome new volunteers and all their help is much appreciated.

Julie Willard's individual fundraising has continued through her annual plant sale and also via her sewing group, which now regularly uses the Discovery Centre weekly.

Theresa and Lindsay continue their support by providing tasty refreshments for the volunteers after the regular Thursday Sessions and providing lovely homemade cakes for the events.

Members & Subscribers

We have 58 fully paid-up members (42 with recurring membership) and 171 newsletter subscribers. We are very grateful for all these contributions to our work.

Bulverhythe Recreation Ground

Discussions, consultations, and reports continue to be held to preserve the area as a space for both formal and informal sports, as well as recreation and biodiversity enhancement.

Upper Tier

Ongoing consultation for the extension of the community garden further into the east recreation ground also continues.

Funding

We are grateful for all the grants and time provided by organisations to support the excellent work of the Friends (East Sussex County Council, Hastings Direct, Cappagh Browne). We also continue to work closely with the CIC and Groundwork South (Sussex and Surrey), in implementing funding which they obtain to continue making the Countryside Park a place for all.

Conclusion

It is good to report that although challenges continue, we have been able to contribute to the development of the park with the CIC and their agents, Groundwork South. We thank all the volunteers in whatever capacity who give up time and energy throughout the year to keep the park in a healthy condition.



For more information about **Friends of Combe Valley** visit www.friendsofcombevalley.co.uk

Friends of Combe Valley is a Registered Charity (in England) No: 1163581

Friends of Combe Valley (Charity Number (1163581))



Friends of Combe Valley

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

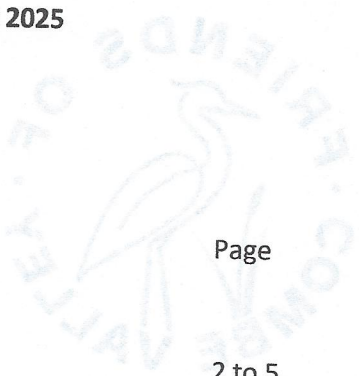
Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended

30th September 2025

CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025



CONTENTS

	Page
Report of the Trustees	2 to 5
Independent Examiner's Report	6
Receipts and Payments Account	7
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	8
Notes to the Accounts	9 to 10

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

Trustees Annual Report and
Financial Statements

For the year ended

30th September 2025

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025**

The committee of Friends of Combe Valley presents its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30th September 2025.

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Name of Charity: Friends of Combe Valley

Principal Address: 501 Bexhill Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN38 8AT

Legal Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

Governing Document: Constitution adopted 15/09/2015 Amended on 03/04/2019
Amended 23/02/2021

Trustees:
Peter Clarke - Chair (re-appointed 06/12/2022)
William Ackroyd - Treasurer (re-appointed 05/12/2023)
Christopher Dadswell - Vice Chair (re-appointed 05/12/2023)
Will Kemp (re-appointed 06/12/2022)
Karl Beaney (re-appointed 06/12/2022)
Cliff Willard (appointed 18/12/2020)
Anna Sabin (appointed 08/12/2021)
Emma Ramsden (appointed 08/12/2021)
Virginia Vilela (appointed 08/12/2021)
Joanna Brewerton (appointed 08/12/2021)
Rita Drobner (appointed 06/02/2025)
Elise Liversedge (resigned 05/12/2023)
Stephanne Collins - Secretary (resigned 08/06/2025)

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank

Independent Examiners: Lorraine Brown
Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd
The Old Court House
North Trade Road
Battle
East Sussex TN33 0EX

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025**

The Trustees submit their annual report and financial statements for Friends of Combe Valley for the period ended 30th September 2025.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Friends of Combe Valley (FCV) has a committee of Trustees governed by a constitution adopted 19/09/2015, Amended 03/04/2019 and 23/02/2021. Day to day management of the Charity is vested in the Trustees, who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution.

The Committee of Trustees shall have no less than three and no more than twelve members. Trustees are appointed on a 3-year rotational basis at the Annual General Meeting. The names of the Trustees are shown on page 2 of this document.

The method adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new Trustees is contained within the constitution.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The objects of FCV are to work within the Combe Haven Valley and in particular within the boundaries of the Combe Valley Countryside Park:

- a. To promote the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment, including biodiversity. In particular but not exclusively by, encouraging the public to use and enjoy the area and its fauna and flora.
- b. To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees have considered their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission, and in their opinion the enclosed report on the achievements and performance demonstrates that they have complied therewith.

BACKGROUND

FCV was registered as a charity with Trustees in 2015, it became inactive for a number of years, after which it was restructured in the Spring of 2019 and became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, a membership association with limited liability for its members.

In May 2019 FCV took over the running of the café at the Discovery Centre in the Combe Valley Countryside Park. The café closed in March 2020. It re-opened for nearly three months in the spring of 2022 but was forced to close because of the lack of volunteers. Currently it is open for special events.

The Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC is responsible for the management of the park and does that through Groundwork South CIC (GWS), who are their agents under a Service Level Agreement.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025 (Cont'd...)

ACHIEVEMENTS, PERFORMANCE AND FUTURE PLANS

FCV's work and activities have continued to expand. Membership numbers fluctuate but are currently 170, including 60 full members who are able to offer direct assistance with the work and 110 associate members who offer support and assistance as and when they can.

This year it has continued to consolidate the work being done with the benefit of existing funding. In particular in the development and expansion of the community garden with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and their agents Groundwork South CIC.

It completed the installation of the rainwater harvesting system on the roof of the storage container, which is owned and managed by FCV. We have published three booklets on birds, butterflies and moths and insects in the park, as a guide to identification.

Future Plans

1. Continue to develop the relationship with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC in expanding its work in the park.
2. To continue conservation work within the park, in conjunction with Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.
3. Continue discussions on the future development of the park, to protect its environment and as appropriate enable access, working with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.
4. More information is contained in our full Annual Report for the year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Position

FCV reported that the finances are in a stable and creditable condition.

Receipts in the year were £4,335 (2024 £8,824) and payments were £7,998 (2024 £6,066) resulting in a deficit of £3,663 (2024 £2,759) which largely reflected the use of grants received in previous years. The net fund reserve at 30th September 2025 totalled £6,096 (2024 £9,759), of which £3,143 are protected funds.

RISKS, POLICIES AND SAFEGUARDS

The Trustees have considered the major risks faced by the organisation to establish policies and systems to mitigate those risks.

RESERVES AND INVESTMENT POLICIES

In line with guidance by the Charity Commission, the trustees endeavour to build up its reserves to enable the charity to fulfil its objectives and financial plans.

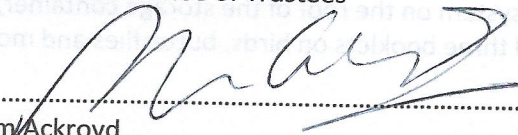
**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025 (Cont'd...)**

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on
on its behalf by:

Thursday 22/1/2026
and signed



Pete Clarke
Chair of the Committee of Trustees



William Ackroyd
Trustee and Treasurer

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY CIO
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Friends of Combe Valley Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for the year ended 30 September 2025.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 the 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.

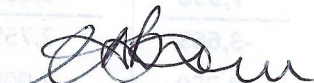
Independent examiner's statement

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 130 of the Charities Act 2011; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have 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.



Lorraine Brown
Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd
The Old Court House
North Trade Road
Battle
East Sussex TN33 0EX

Date: 10/03/2026

Receipts and Payments account
For the year ended 30 September 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2025 Total Funds £	2024 Total Funds £
RECEIPTS					
Grants	4	-	-	0	4,137
Beach Hut	4	-	1,500	1,500	2,566
Membership & donations		2,077	188	2,265	2,121
Other income - CIC		570	-	570	-
Total Receipts		2,647	1,688	4,335	8,824
PAYMENTS					
Grant disbursements	4	720	2,232	2,952	2,583
Beach Hut		-	1,967	1,967	2,443
Wild Isles		-	1,239	1,239	
Food			-	0	89
Administrative expenditure:					
Misc expenses		161	-	161	143
Stationery			-	0	9
Website		60	-	60	60
Insurance		282	-	282	157
Professional fees		350	-	350	350
Bank charges		23	-	23	25
Activities		56	-	56	125
Repairs & maintenance		304	-	304	82
CIC costs		603	-	603	-
Total Payments		2,559	5,439	7,998	6,066
Net receipts/(payments)		88	-3,751	-3,663	2,759
Funds at start of this period		3,313	6,446	9,759	7,000
Transfers between funds		-526	526	-	-
Funds at end of this period		2,875	3,221	6,096	9,759

**Statement of assets and liabilities
at 30th September 2025**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total Funds 2024
	£	£	£	£
Cash funds				
Co-op Bank	2,260	3,221	5,481	9,245
Cash in hand	590		590	489
Cash float at café	25	-	25	25
Total cash funds	2,875	3,221	6,096	9,759

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds 2025	Total Funds 2024
	£	£	£	£
Other monetary assets				
Debts owed to the charity:				
Groundwork CIC	£603	-	£603	-

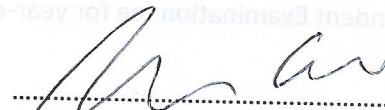
	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost	Depreciation	Current Value
Assets retained for the charity's own use				
Equipment /Tools	Various	£13,457	(£12,482)	£975

	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due	When due
Current Liabilities			
Debts owed by the charity :		-	-

These financial statements are approved by the Board of Trustees on 22 JAN. 2026
and signed on its behalf by:



Pete Clarke
Chair of the Committee of Trustees



William Ackroyd
Trustee and Treasurer

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2025**

1. Receipts and Payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts are statements that summarise the movement of cash into and out of the organisation during the financial year. In this context "cash" includes cash equivalents, for example, bank accounts where cash can be readily withdrawn to pay for debts as they become due.

2. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

Trustees received no remuneration or benefits in this period.

Trustees' expenses

During the year reimbursable expenses totalling £3,177 were paid to 3 Trustees for out-of-pocket expenses relating to purchases made on the Charity's behalf.

3. Staff Costs

The Charity had no staff costs in the year.

4. Previous period comparison

The financial year end of the charity is 30 September 2025. The previous period's figures have been included for comparison.

5. Restricted fund

These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.

Grants	2025				Bal c/fwd 30/09/2025
	B/fwd 01/10/2024	Incoming	Outgoing	Transfer	
Hastings Direct	1,500	0	0	-	1,500
Art Project	400	0	0	-	400
Beach Hut Project	510	1,500	-1,967	-	43
Bexhill Town Council	1,000	0	0	-	1,000
Wild Isles Crowdfunder	1,330	188	-1,239	-	278
ESCC	1,706	0	-2,232	526	0
Total	6,446	1,688	-5,439	526	3,221

6. Governance Costs

Independent Examination fee for year-end accounts 2025 quoted at £368; (2024 £350).

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2025**

7. Assets retained for the charity's own use

	Equipment/Tools £
COST	
Bfwd at 1st October 2024	11,995
Additions	<u>1,462</u>
At 30th September 2025	<u>13,457</u>
REDUCTION IN VALUE	
Bfwd at 1st October 2024	(8,728)
Charge for the year	<u>(3,754)</u>
At 30th September 2025	<u>(12,482)</u>
CURRENT VALUE	
At 30th September 2025	<u><u>975</u></u>
At 30th September 2024	<u><u>3,267</u></u>

FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1163581

Accounts



Annual Report

October 2023 to
September 2024



View East from the Discovery Centre

Friends of Combe Valley is a Registered (in England) Charity Number: 1163581

Introduction

Our work has continued and in particular the community garden around the Discovery Centre is increasingly well established and more people have learned about the park’s beauty.



The southern border of the car park in June

Events

Presentation to Councillors and Council Officers: January 27

A number of councillors in both Hastings and Rother are very active in their support of the park, but we wanted to offer others a chance to learn about the park at a special meeting. At the meeting Julie Willard provided information about Friends of Combe Valley, Emma Ramsden explained the role of Groundwork (GW) as agents of the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC (CIC) and her role as their manager in the park, Pete Hunnisett described the different habitats of the Combe Valley Park and Jamie Parsons outlined the project of Sussex Wildlife Trust to clear back the reed beds.

The Great Big Green Week – June 9

In June we had our third Great Big Green event, which increased awareness of the Park's role as a green space and its importance in developing a diverse and healthy environment, with an emphasis on preventing further climate change.



The weather was dry but windy and mainly sunny, so stalls were set up outside, with a variety of activities and games. Inside the Discovery Centre there was an excellent exhibition of wildlife photographs and documents about the Country Park plus a display of recipes for swapping and copying.

There was a good attendance with about 80 visitors and around 20 children as well as 30 people linked to stalls and 14 volunteers from the Friends: not forgetting 6 Morris dancers plus an accordionist



Open day on September 29



This successful open day was a chance to welcome people to the Discovery Centre and the park generally, to show-case what we do, encourage people to join the Friends and become volunteers in the park. About 50 people attended and we gained 7 new members, with many offering to volunteer.

Cliff with his hand made rake and on the right the exhibition inside the Discovery Centre



Nature Detectives

Emma Ramsden, who is employed by Groundwork South (GW) on behalf of the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC (the CIC) continued to provide sessions in the park for families, which she started through the Friends in the summer of 2021. In total 9 Nature Detectives days have been delivered this year, 5 with GW in collaboration with FCV and 4 by GW as stand-alone events or incorporated in the Big Green Day and the Open Day.



97 children and 67 adults have participated meaning that 164 people have engaged in these sessions in 2024.

Session have included nature discovery both in the Combe Valley Community Garden and on the beach at Glyne Gap. They have also included gardening for wildlife, simple herb growing and plenty of nature and seasonally focused arts and

crafts.

Ten FCV volunteers have contributed their time and effort to these sessions over the year giving 64 volunteer hours to these sessions.



Social Evenings

In January 2024 Julie Willard arranged a social evening to give people connected to the park an opportunity to get together, to relax - natter, do craft work and play board games. This has become a regular feature now the fourth Wednesday of the month and provides an informal venue for members and subscribers to get together.



Conservation work

This has been a very productive year for the FCV Volunteers, along with the support of the CIC, working alongside (GW) and ably assisted by corporate volunteers from Hastings Direct.

Highlights include:

The Community Garden

Planting of new mixed native hedging around the Community Garden, including stripping off turf and erecting stock fencing to offer protection. Subsequent mulching, weeding, watering and on-going care has enabled the whips to get established and survive the dry summer period. Hedge trees have been planted within the hedge line, with margins left uncut to help create corridors, promote bio-diversity and provide cover for small mammals and overwintering for invertebrates.



The tree line between the middle and third tier has been extended by planting additional native trees, further improving the provision of wildlife corridors. The installation of protective cages, mulching and an intensive watering programme enabled the trees to get well established through the dry summer period.

Natural meadow expansion on the newly extended Community Garden area has been encouraged and managed with the inclusion of mown winding pathways to enable visitors to appreciate the flora and fauna with minimal disturbance. An on-going meadow management plan will see rotational mowing, with “cut and clear” operations to ensure a mixed habitat is maintained whilst wildflower colonisation is promoted.

The Native Tree Nursery has been established within the Community Garden space. This area has been enclosed by stock fencing and a perimeter hedge, to provide protection and shelter for the trees, along with more diversity of habitat. The fence posts are already being adopted as perches for several species of birds.

The Friends Meadow is an on-going project which goes from strength to strength, the “cut and clear” mowing management scheme is aiding the establishment of a diversely populated meadow space, again with mown pathways to enable visitors to appreciate the space up close with minimal disturbance. Further yellow rattle seed has been dispersed to help weaken the grass and further encourage wild flower growth.



We have seen a marked increase in the numbers of insects, small mammals, feeding birds and hunting raptors within the Community Garden Space.

Elsewhere in the Park

The Haven Copse and Combe Hedge at the eastern edge of tier three is maintained with weeding, “cut and clear” of the surrounding grass, replacement of saplings, mulching and watering. Although watering at this more remote location present logistical problems.

Work continues to manage Ash Die Back within the “Long Wood”. Periodically wind felled trees are safely lowered to the ground and local use is made of the timber within the wood as wildlife habitat piles and towers.

On-going park maintenance projects include the cutting up and removal of fallen trees on the dismantled railway,

cutting up and removal of a fallen tree in the Gorringe, clearing and cutting back vegetation on footpaths, litter picks around the park and along the beach and a major clean up after an incursion by travellers, along with repairs to damaged raised beds. A group of gardeners have repaired, painted and planted up the original raised beds with a selection of flowers and herbs.



cutting up and removal of a fallen tree in the Gorringe, clearing and cutting back vegetation on footpaths, litter picks around the park and along the beach and a major clean up after an incursion by travellers, along with repairs to damaged raised beds. A group of gardeners have repaired, painted and planted up the original raised beds with a selection of flowers and herbs.

Hastings Direct volunteers joined the Friends to further extend the elevated pathway (Platform One), to enable walkers to navigate around a normally flooded section of the Dismantled Railway. Other volunteers from Hastings Direct have assisted in the digging out of the meadow/car park pathway.



Signs for the park

New park signage has been designed and purchased. The replacement of signs at various entrances to the park is being undertaken by the Friends, with just 5 left for installation. A survey is also on-going to record the condition of the existing marker posts within the park, with a view to renovating / replacing them in due course.



Furniture

The Friends have constructed and erected five new rustic benches from locally coppiced sweet chestnut. These are located throughout the Community Garden and provide a number of very



welcome places for visitors to rest a while to appreciate the beauty of the space.



Booklets



A successful application was made to the Aviva Wild Isles Fund for funding to create and publish three booklets about the flora and fauna of the park, to be given free to visitors to the park. The scheme involved crowdfunding for the project with Aviva match funding the amounts raised. East Sussex County Council also supported the project with similar match funding. 26 members of the public supported the project, raising just under £600, which with money from ESCC and Aviva took the total to just under £2000.

The first booklet on butterfly and moth species was published in August, with the other two on birds and insects were published in November. The booklets were written by Pete Hunnisett who used his photos to illustrate the text and designed by Karl Beaney.

Rainwater harvesting

In August East Sussex County Council gave us a grant to use the roof of the storage container to harvest rainwater. The design and installation of a pitched roof was started in September and has been completed since then.



Future plans

On-going and future projects by the Friends include

- Along the western edge of the Friends Meadow erection of several bays of sweet chestnut post and rail fencing in the traditional Sussex style, to create a feature.
- Between the meadow and car park continuing the pathway to enable safer movement for visitors.
- The grass area around the picnic benches in front of the Discovery Centre is to be reinforced with a rubber grid through which the grass can grow.
- In the work area to the side of the Friends storage container installing a removable shelter to provide protection from rain and sun.
- Installing water containers at Eastern end of Tier Three for localised water supply to maintain Haven Copse and Combe Hedge
- To create a vehicle entrance to tier two from the Freshfields car park to make the community garden vehicle free, whilst maintaining access for ambulance, contractor and Environment Agency vehicles.

Warden service

The warden service has continued more informally since there are fewer incidents. As has been noted in previous reports the presence of the wardens helps contribute to the peace of the park.



Making caterpillars on an open day

Volunteers

The activities outlined in this report rely on volunteers and their contribution is substantial. The following are the totals, from our records and estimates of time spent on:

- i. Conservation work about 2,200 hours, including the regular Thursday mornings and numerous other tasks around the park
- ii. Other events – about 500 hours over the events set out above, the social evenings and events in partnership with GWS for the CIC
- iii. Wardens – this has not been formally recorded: currently 6 wardens walk regularly in the park and deal, as appropriate, with any information received about the park.
- iv. Administration, including dealing with calls about security and planning issues, as well as design help from Karl amounts to about 1,200 hours during the year.

Overall about 4,100 hours during the year, with a comparatively small band of volunteers, now numbering around 50 and we continue to welcome new volunteers and all their help is much appreciated.



In addition, Hastings Direct has sent several teams of volunteers over the year to help in the park, and their help is much appreciated.

We were delighted that Julie Willard's substantial contribution to our work was recognised with her award as a volunteer of the year by Hastings Voluntary Action at their AGM in November 2023.

Like any army of any worth, the Friends march on their stomachs. The volunteers are very appreciative of the refreshments provided after the Thursday Volunteering sessions. All manner of culinary delights are served up by Teresa, to whom many thanks are due.

Members and Subscribers

During the year as we got used to using Mailchimp, we have divided our members into subscribers, who have not paid a subscription during the current year and members, who have paid. We have 101 subscribers, of whom 3 do not have email addresses, so contact is less regular and 74 members.

We do not want to exclude anyone because they do not have the means to contribute, so we accept £1 a year as the minimum amount for membership and we are grateful that most members pay £10 a year.

42 of our members subscribe on a direct debit through Donorbox, which is collected on line or by a standing order to our bank account (which saves on the charges of Donorbox). Altogether these contribute a regular annual payment of £376.

We are very grateful for all these contributions to our work.

Issues in Park

Unfortunately the park continues to attract problems: there is some antisocial behaviour and still too much litter is left behind, but more importantly continued pressure from development proposals threaten the park.

Bulverhythe Recreation Ground:

Last year there were plans to put a golf driving range and club house on the upper tier in front of the Discovery Centre, this was dropped, but it was followed by a proposal by Hastings And Rother Sports Trust which owns Horntye Park Sports Complex to move their grounds to the upper tier also with a clubhouse directly in front of the Discovery Centre. Both FCV and the CIC objected to this proposal and it appears that they are moving elsewhere.

In response, FCV got together with the CIC and GW to discuss a plan for the whole of the Bulverhythe Recreation Ground, to ensure that the whole area is maintained for both organised sport and informal recreation as well as enhancing the biodiversity of the whole area.



For the lower tier, which was threatened with a housing development by Hastings BC, we are working towards the possibility of creating a wet woodland which would ameliorate the regular flooding as well as providing a pleasant area for walking and indeed more active exercise. One

particular proposal is to join the raised walkways at both the

western and eastern end of the bund by the Gorringe Stream, to make a path for pedestrians and cyclists which would be above the current flood levels and so accessible all the year round.



Friends of Combe Valley Annual report October 2023 – September 2024

For the upper tier with the Discovery Centre, we are proposing to extend the community garden further to the east and provide an exercise track around the whole tier.

Antisocial behaviour

Reference has already been made to the problems of litter in the park.

There was again an attempt by travellers to take over the field around the Discovery Centre. They were quickly moved on, but once again they proved themselves to be very messy visitors.

Funding

Reference has already been made to the Booklet project and the grant from East Sussex County Council for the rainwater project. We also continue to work closely with the CIC and GW, in implementing funding which they obtain.

A special thanks is due to Julie Willard, who as in previous years ran a plant sale from her home raising money for Friends of Combe Valley

Conclusion

It is good to report that although there continue to be challenges, we have been able to contribute to the development of the park with the CIC and their agents GW.



Links and contacts

Friends of Combe Valley

Combe Valley Countryside Park
Café & Discovery Centre
Freshfields, Bexhill,
East Sussex, TN38 8FB
email: team@friendsofcombevalley.co.uk
website: <https://friendsofcombevalley.co.uk/>



Combe Valley Countryside Park
<https://combevalleycountrysidepark.com/>



Groundwork South
<https://www.groundwork.org.uk/hubs/south/>



correspondence to
William Ackroyd
501 Bexhill Road
St Leonards on Sea TN38 8AT
01424 539 739
07419 741266



*Bee orchids near the
Discovery Centre*

Friends of Combe Valley (Charity Number (1163581))



Friends of Combe Valley

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended

30th September 2024

CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024

CONTENTS	Page
Report of the Trustees	2 to 5
Independent Examiner's Report	6
Receipts and Payments Account	7
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	8
Notes to the Accounts	9 to 10

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

The committee of Friends of Combe Valley presents its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30th September 2024.

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Name of Charity: Friends of Combe Valley

Principal Address: 501 Bexhill Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN38 8AT

Legal Status: Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

Governing Document: Constitution adopted 15/09/2015 Amended on 03/04/2019
Amended 23/02/2021

Trustees: Peter Clarke - Chair (re-appointed 06/12/2022)
William Ackroyd - Treasurer (re-appointed 05/12/2023)
Christopher Dadswell - Vice Chair (re-appointed 05/12/2023)
Will Kemp (re-appointed 06/12/2022)
Karl Beaney (re-appointed 06/12/2022)
Cliff Willard (appointed 18/12/2020)
Elise Liversedge (resigned 05/12/2023)
Anna Sabin (appointed 08/12/2021)
Emma Ramsden (appointed 08/12/2021)
Virginia Vilela (appointed 08/12/2021)
Stephanne Collins - Secretary (appointed 08/12/2021)
Joanna Brewerton (appointed 08/12/2021)

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank

Independent Examiners: Lorraine Brown
Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd
The Old Court House
North Trade Road
Battle
East Sussex TN33 0EX

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

The trustees submit their annual report and financial statements for Friends of Combe Valley for the period ended 30th September 2024.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Friends of Combe Valley (FCV) has a committee of Trustees governed by a constitution adopted 19/09/2015, Amended 03/04/2019 and 23/02/2021. Day to day management of the Charity is vested in the Trustees, who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution.

The Committee of Trustees shall have no less than three and no more than twelve members. Trustees are appointed on a 3-year rotational basis at the Annual General Meeting. The names of the Trustees are shown on page 2 of this document.

The method adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees is contained within the constitution.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The objects of FCV are to work within the Combe Haven Valley and in particular within the boundaries of the Combe Valley Countryside Park:

- a. To promote the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment, including biodiversity. In particular but not exclusively by, encouraging the public to use and enjoy the area and its fauna and flora.
- b. To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees have considered their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission, and in their opinion the enclosed report on the achievements and performance demonstrates that they have complied therewith.

BACKGROUND

FCV was registered as a charity with Trustees in 2015, it became inactive for a number of years, after which it was restructured in the Spring of 2019 and became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, a membership association with limited liability for its members.

In May 2019 FCV took over the running of the café at the Discovery Centre in the Combe Valley Countryside Park. The café closed in March 2020. It re-opened for nearly three months in the spring of 2022 but was forced to close because of the lack of volunteers. Currently it is open for special events.

The Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC is responsible for the management of the park and does that through Groundwork South CIC (GWS), who are their agents under a Service Level Agreement.

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024(Cont'd...)**

ACHIEVEMENTS, PERFORMANCE AND FUTURE PLANS

FCV's work and activities have continued to expand. Membership have increased to 175, including both active members who are able to offer direct assistance with the work and informal members who offer support and assistance as and when they can.

This year it has continued to consolidate the work being done with the benefit of existing funding. In particular in the development and expansion of the community garden with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and their agents Groundwork South CIC.

It did receive a grant from the East Sussex County Council for £2,230 to buy materials for a rainwater harvesting system on the roof of the storage container, which is owned and managed by FCV.

Future Plans

1. Continue to develop the relationship with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC in expanding its work in the park.
2. To continue conservation work within the park, in conjunction with Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.
3. Continue discussions on the future development of the park, to protect its environment and as appropriate enable access, working with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.
4. More information is contained in our full Annual Report for the year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Position

FCV reported that the finances are in a stable and creditable condition.

Receipts in the year were £8,824 (2023 £5,985) and payments were £6,066 (2023 £8,751) resulting in a surplus of £2,759 (2023 £2,766 deficit) for the year. The net fund reserve at 30th September 2024 totalled £9,759 (2023 £7,000), of which £6,446 are protected funds.

RISKS, POLICIES AND SAFEGUARDS

The Trustees have considered the major risks faced by the organisation to establish policies and systems to mitigate those risks.

RESERVES AND INVESTMENT POLICIES

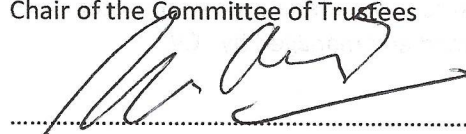
In line with guidance by the Charity Commission, the trustees endeavour to build up its reserves to enable the charity to fulfil its objectives and financial plans.

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024 (Cont'd...)**

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on and signed
on its behalf by:



.....
Pete Clarke
Chair of the Committee of Trustees



.....
William Ackroyd
Trustee and Treasurer

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY CIO
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Friends of Combe Valley Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for the year ended 30 September 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 the 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 130 of the Charities Act 2011; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have 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.

Signed:

Lorraine Brown
Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd
The Old Court House
North Trade Road
Battle
East Sussex TN33 0EX

Date: 12/02/2025.....

Receipts and Payments account
For the year ended 30th September 2024

		Unrestricted	Restricted	2024	2023
	Note	Funds	Funds	Total	Total
		£	£	Funds	Funds
				£	£
RECEIPTS					
Grants	4	-	4,137	4,137	500
Beach Hut	4	-	2,566	2,566	2,165
Membership & donations		2,121	-	2,121	1,026
Events		-	-	-	157
Rec'd from CIC		-	-	-	1,991
Sundry/Misc		-	-	-	145
Total Receipts		2,121	6,703	8,824	5,984
PAYMENTS					
Grant disbursements	4	1,255	1,328	2,583	5,611
Beach Hut		-	2,443	2,443	2,287
Food		89	-	89	12
Administrative expenditure:					
Misc expenses		143	-	143	100
Stationery		9	-	9	-
Website		60	-	60	-
Insurance		157	-	157	157
Professional fees		350	-	350	350
Bank charges		25	-	25	29
Activities		125	-	125	79
Equipment costs		82	-	82	125
Total Payments		2,294	3,771	6,066	8,751
Net receipts/(payments)		(173)	2,932	2,759	(2,766)
Funds at start of this period		3,441	3,559	7,000	9,766
Transfers between funds		45	(45)	-	-
Funds at end of this period		3,313	6,446	9,759	7,000

**Statement of assets and liabilities
at 30th September 2024**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
Cash funds				
Bank account	2,799	6,446	9,245	6,555
Cash in hand	489	-	489	420
Cash float at café	25	-	25	25
Total cash funds	3,313	6,446	9,759	7,000

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2024 Total Funds £	2023 Total Funds £
Other monetary assets				
Debts owed to the charity				
Groundworks CIC	-	-	-	-

	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost	Current value
Assets retained for the charity's own use			
Equipment / Tools	Various	11,995	3,267

	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due	When due
Current Liabilities			
Debts owed by the charity	-	-	-

These financial statements are approved by the Board of Trustees on
and signed on its behalf by:

P. Clarke

.....
Pete Clarke
Chair of the Committee of Trustees

William Ackroyd
.....
William Ackroyd
Trustee and Treasurer

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

1. Receipts and Payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts are statements that summarise the movement of cash into and out of the organisation during the financial year. In this context "cash" includes cash equivalents, for example, bank accounts where cash can be readily withdrawn to pay for debts as they become due.

2. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

Trustees received no remuneration or benefits in this period.

Trustees' expenses

During the year reimbursable expenses totalling £1,758 were paid to 3 Trustees for out-of-pocket expenses relating to purchases made on the Charity's behalf.

3. Staff Costs

The Charity had no staff costs in the year.

4. Previous period comparison

The financial year end of the charity is 30th September 2024. The previous period's figures have been included for comparison.

5. Restricted fund

These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.

Grants	2024			
	Bfwd	Incoming	Outgoing	Bal cfwd
Hastings Direct	1,585	0	-85	1,500
Art Project	400	0	0	400
Beach Hut Project	387	2,566	-2,443	510
Bexhill Town Council	1,000	0	0	1,000
Wild Isles Crowdfunder	0	1,907	-577	1,330
ESCC	0	2,230	-524	1,706
Chalk Cliff CIC	187	0	-187	0
Total	3,559	6,703	-3,816	6,446

6. Governance Costs

Independent Examination fee for year-end accounts 2024 £350; (2023 £350).

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

7. Assets retained for the charity's own use

	Equipment/Tools £
COST	
Bfwd at 1st October 2023	11,995
Additions	-
At 30th September 2024	<u>11,995</u>
REDUCTION IN VALUE	
Bfwd at 1st October 2023	(5,061)
Charge for the year	<u>(3,667)</u>
At 30th September 2024	<u>(8,728)</u>
CURRENT VALUE	
At 30th September 2024	<u>3,267</u>
At 30th September 2023	<u>6,934</u>

FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1163581

Accounts

Annual Report

Friends of Combe Valley

October 2022 to September 2023



Friends of Combe Valley

Combe Valley Countryside Park
Café & Discovery Centre
Freshfields, Bexhill,
East Sussex, TN38 8FB
email: team@friendsofcombevalley.co.uk
website: <https://friendsofcombevalley.co.uk/>

correspondence to
William Ackroyd
501 Bexhill Road
St Leonards on Sea TN38 8AT
01424 539 73

Combe Valley website <http://combevalleycountrysidepark.com/>
Groundwork South website <https://www.groundwork.org.uk/hubs/south/>

Friends of Combe Valley is a Registered (in England) Charity Number: 1163581

Introduction

Another successful year for The Friends of Combe Valley, we have continued to connect people with nature by developing our ties with the local community including schools. We have progressed with improving the parks beautiful landscape to offer opportunities for good health and well being. Promoting park, people and nature.

Events

Coronation weekend

Following on the success of the Platinum Jubilee last year, we held a successful community lunch on May 7, with 30 people coming to enjoy cake and games in the sunshine. On Monday May 8 we joined the King's call for a volunteer day with a litter pick along the beach at Glyne Gap.



The Great Big Green Week

In June we held our second Great Big Green event, to increase awareness of the Park's role as a green space and its importance in developing a diverse and healthy environment, with emphasis on preventing further climate change. Around 90 participants attended taking part in a herbal health benefits, awareness walk, recycled paper pot making, various nature related crafts plus a large photographic exhibition of local nature. A small history of the park was also exhibited.



A number of local organisations assisted with Happy Harold Bus providing transport from Central Hastings. We enjoyed cakes, biscuits and pastries made by members of Friends of Combe Valley, Uzbek samosas and pancakes and plates of Syrian dolmas and sweets, made by refugees who wanted to make a contribution to the community involvement event.

Open day and showcase on September 16

The open day was a chance to welcome people to the Discovery Centre and the park generally, to show case all the work that we do and to encourage people to join the Friends and become volunteers in the park. Around 50 people attended and we gained 10 new members, with many offering to volunteer.



Nature Detectives

Emma Ramsden, who is employed by Groundwork South (GWS) on behalf of the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC (the CIC) continued to provide discovery and



play sessions in the park for families. The Friends continue to provide support for these sessions with volunteers and they are an important way of connecting children with nature.

Cliff Willard /Pete Clarke have been working with local scouts and cubs building bird boxes, bug poles and other nature related projects.

Social Evenings

In January Wednesday social evenings began to give people connected to the park an opportunity to get together, to relax - natter, do craft work, play board games and whist drives. This has become a regular feature on the third Wednesday of the month and provides an informal venue for members and subscribers. Please check out Facebook for up to date social events.



Conservation work

Paths in the park

The backbone of our work in the park is helping to keep the paths clear and passable



supplementing the work of East Sussex County Council who have responsibility for the rights of way in the park and Rother DC and Hastings BC who own land in the park. The hard working volunteers eagerly respond to reports of paths being blocked by fallen trees as well as regular work parties clearing path rides as well as litter picks which unfortunately still includes picnic waste, drink cups and dog waste.



Community Garden

In 2021 we started re-wilding round the Discovery Centre, using funds from the Cooperative Community Fund to plant wild flower seeds and lay wild flower turfs on the mound to the north of the Discovery Centre, this has expanded into a project for a Community garden around the Discovery Centre. In the summer Hastings BC agreed to extend the area of land leased to the CIC up to the drainage ditches to the East and South of the Discovery Centre.



With money from the Green Recovery Grant received by the CIC and working with GWS and Annie Brown, a landscape designer who was employed under the grant, plans were drawn up for the area and some of this was achieved: in particular a compacted gravel (Hoggin) path beside the car park, giving safe access to the Discovery Centre for wheel chair users and pushchairs.



The mound beside the path has been turfed with wild flower turfs and six semi-mature birches have been planted.

The raised beds around the Discovery Centre have been cared for by volunteers and work is continuing to allow much of the area to become naturalised, with a mown area outside the Discovery Centre for events, and mown paths for access across the site.

With support of a Chalk Cliff Trust a grant we were able to paint two sides of the Discovery Centre, the third side was painted with funding from the CIC and a donor. The paintwork was completed by Wave Art, a community group now installed at the compound on the site of the old tram depot in the Bexhill Road.



Work on the area round the container store which was installed last year has been completed, establishing an exterior working area with fencing to define the area and the ground surfaced with wood chips. Two large composting bays have been constructed with pallets. A fixed circular picnic table with benches has been donated and installed and is used regularly by the friends working parties.

Signs for the park

The production of new signs for entrances to the park has been an ongoing project, finally this year the signs were sent for printing, with financial support from funding to the Friends from the Police and the CIC from the Green Recovery Fund. The installation of the signs will begin early next year by the Friends & volunteers.

Furniture



The long standing hope of building furniture for the park started this year, with two rustic benches beside the wild flower mound at the Discovery Centre, using wood from local woodlands. With the Tesco grant for outdoor furniture and under the guidance of Cliff Willard and Pete Clarke, two permanent picnic tables have been constructed and installed outside the centre. In a variation on the normal design for such tables, the tops have been extended at either end so they can be utilised by wheelchair users.

Warden service

The warden service has continued with the wardens walking the park and picking up on issues needing attention, most of which can then be dealt with by our volunteers. The presence of the wardens helps contribute to the peace of the park, with probably rather less incidents than in the past. Many park maps get distributed by the wardens increasing the awareness of its beauty, size and opportunities.

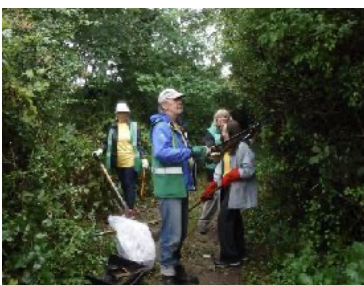
Volunteers

As has been reported many times the activities outlined in this report rely on volunteers and their contribution is substantial. The following are the totals, from our records and estimates of time spent on:



- i. Conservation work around 2100 hours, including the regular Thursday mornings and numerous other tasks around the park and helping the local scouts to build bird boxes and bug hotels.
- ii. Other events – around 500 hours over the three events set out above, the social evenings and events in partnership with GWS for the CIC
- iii. Wardens – around 950 hours over the year with 7 wardens until September.
- iv. Administration, including dealing with calls about security and planning issues around 1000 hours.

Overall around 4,500 hours during the year, with a comparatively small band of volunteers. We continue to welcome new volunteers and all their help is very much appreciated.



Path clearing, New Orchard tree planting and installation of a new kissing gate.

Recognition Awards

We were delighted that Cliff Willard's substantial contribution to our work was recognised with his award as a volunteer of the year by Rother Voluntary Action at their AGM in December 2022.



Members and Subscribers

Currently we have 91 online mail subscribers and 38 fully paid members. This includes 26 who have set up a regular annual payment which comes to £266 a year. We are very grateful for all these contributions to our work and would like to encourage more members to set up a regular payment through our webpage or by standing order.

Thank you, Thank You, Thank you to all our supporters.

Issues affecting the Park

Unfortunately the park continues to attract problems: there is some antisocial behaviour, unauthorised overnight campers and still too much litter is left behind, but more importantly a continued pressure as development proposals threaten the park.

Bulverhythe Recreation Ground:

HBC withdrew planning for 192 houses on lower flood plain.

Future plans - possible new reed beds linking Filsham reed bed and Glyne Gap marshes, Souther Water involved but this will be a slow process.

Pebsham Farm: Sold to a development company over a year ago. This information comes from the land registry, but no planning applications has been made to date.

Biffa Site: Sold by Biffa in early 2022 and leased to 1066 M/C training, a company who are providing a service to local people, particularly the young adults and most of the training work takes place away from the site so it has little impact on the rest of the park. We supported their planning application and expect to work with them in the future to increase sympathetic wilding of the surrounding area using local species.

The golf academy: the proposal for a driving range on the upper tier of the Bulverhythe Recreation Ground was reported last year. The developers apparently dropped that idea, but have now suggested that it should replace the Discovery Centre and take up the top half of the middle tier. They have also proposed as an inducement to Hastings BC that they would install an all weather football pitch, which in essence would be a plastic covering and flood lighting to enable it to be used all year round.

Apart from the loss of the facilities of the Centre and destruction of the work we the Friends with the CIC and GWS and others have done over the last few years, the proposal would be very damaging to the park and the environment generally. It does not appear to be in the interest of local residents. We hope that the whole scheme will not be proceeded with within the park.

Glyne Gap

RDC have refused permission for a drive through Starbucks cafe. We, along with local business and residents made strong objections.

Antisocial behaviour

Reference has already been made to the problems of litter in the park.



There was also an attempt by travellers to take over the field round the Discovery Centre as they did in the summer of 2022. Fortunately the presence of our chair, Pete Clarke at the time plus the increased security in the form of raised beds and posts deterred them and they went elsewhere.

Use of the park by trail bikers continues, however one such user was caught by the police and the bike was confiscated.

We hope that 1066 M/C training will help provide a place for the bikers to ride safely and without disturbing other users of the park.

Funding

Having had several successful grant applications, we are consolidating our work with the funds we have. A grant we did obtain this year was the Police Property Act Grant which assisted the operation of the successful Great Green Day. We also received contributions of food and drink for events from Tesco and Iceland.

A special thanks is due to Julie Willard, who for the last three years has run a plant sale from her home raising money for Friends of Combe Valley

Conclusion

Although there are many challenges ahead for the park, we believe that Friends of Combe Valley have provided a vital service in helping to make the park be better known, better used and in better condition. We thank our members, supporters, grant givers and all who attend our events allowing our open, caring community to grow.



Friends of Combe Valley

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended

30th September 2023

CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023

CONTENTS	Page
Report of the Trustees	2 to 5
Independent Examiner's Report	6
Receipts and Payments Account	7
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	8
Notes to the Accounts	9 to 10

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023**

The committee of Friends of Combe Valley presents its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30th September 2023

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Name of Charity:	Friends of Combe Valley
Principal Address:	501 Bexhill Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN38 8AT
Legal Status:	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
Registered Charity Number:	1163581
Governing Document:	Constitution adopted 15/09/2015 Amended on 03/04/2019 Amended 23/02/2021
Trustees:	Peter Clarke (Chair) (re-appointed 06/12/2022) William Ackroyd (Treasurer) (appointed 18/12/2020) Christopher Dadswell (Vice Chair) (appointed 08/12/2021) Will Kemp (re-appointed 06/12/2022) Karl Beaney (re-appointed 06/12/2022) Cliff Willard (appointed 18/12/2020) Elise Liversedge (appointed 18/12/2020) Anna Sabin (appointed 08/12/2021) Emma Ramsden (appointed 08/12/2021) Virginia Vilela (appointed 08/12/2021) Stephanne Collins (appointed 08/12/2021) Joanna Brewerton (appointed 08/12/2021)
Bankers:	The Co-operative Bank
Independent Examiners:	Lorraine Brown Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd The Old Court House North Trade Road Battle East Sussex TN33 0EX

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023

The trustees submit their annual report and financial statements for Friends of Combe Valley for the period ended 30th September 2023.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Friends of Combe Valley (FCV) has a committee of Trustees governed by a constitution adopted 19/09/2015, Amended 03/04/2019 and 23/02/2021. Day to day management of the Charity is vested in the Trustees, who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution.

The Committee of Trustees shall have no less than three and no more than twelve members. Trustees are appointed on a 3-year rotational basis at the Annual General Meeting. The names of the Trustees are shown on page 2 of this document.

The method adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees is contained within the constitution.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The objects of FCV are to work within the Combe Haven Valley and in particular within the boundaries of the Combe Valley Countryside Park:

- a. To promote the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment, including biodiversity. In particular but not exclusively by, encouraging the public to use and enjoy the area and its fauna and flora.
- b. To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees have considered their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission, and in their opinion the enclosed report on the achievements and performance demonstrates that they have complied therewith.

BACKGROUND

FCV was registered as a charity with Trustees in 2015, it became inactive for a number of years, after which it was restructured in the Spring of 2019 and became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, a membership association with limited liability for its members.

In May 2019 FCV took over the running of the café at the Discovery Centre in the Combe Valley Countryside Park. The café closed in March 2020. It re-opened for nearly three months in the spring of 2022 but was forced to close because of the lack of volunteers. Currently it is open for special events.

The Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC is responsible for the management of the park and does that through Groundwork South CIC (GWS), who are their agents under a Service Level Agreement.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023 (Cont'd...)

ACHIEVEMENTS, PERFORMANCE AND FUTURE PLANS

FCV's work and activities have continued to expand. Membership have increased to 125, including both active members who are able to offer direct assistance with the work and informal members who offer support and assistance as and when they can.

This year it has done fewer fund-raising activities, instead consolidating the work being done with the benefit of existing funding.

It did receive a grant from the Police Property Act Fund for £500 used for the Great Big Green Walk event held on June 18.

Future Plans

1. Continue to develop the relationship with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC in expanding its work in the park.
2. To continue conservation work within the park, in conjunction with Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.
3. Continue discussions on the future development of the park, to protect its environment and as appropriate enable access, working with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.
4. More information is contained in our full Annual Report for the year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Position

FCV reported that the finances are in a stable and creditable condition.

Receipts in the year were £5,984 (2022 £11,999) and payments were £8,751 (2022 £16,754) resulting in a deficit of (£2,767) (2022 £4,755 deficit) for the year, the increase in payments being due to expenditure of grant income received in earlier years. The net fund reserve at 30th September 2023 totalled £6,999 (2022 £9,766), of which £3,559 are protected funds.

RISKS, POLICIES AND SAFEGUARDS

The Trustees have considered the major risks faced by the organisation to establish policies and systems to mitigate those risks.

RESERVES AND INVESTMENT POLICIES


In line with guidance by the Charity Commission, the trustees endeavour to build up its reserves to enable the charity to fulfil its objectives and financial plans.

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023 (Cont'd...)**

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 5th Decem 2023 and signed on its behalf by:


.....

Pete Clarke
Chair of the Committee of Trustees


.....

William Ackroyd
Trustee and Treasurer

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY CIO
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of Friends of Combe Valley Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for the year ended 30 September 2023.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 the 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 130 of the Charities Act 2011; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have 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.

Signed: 

Lorraine Brown
Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd
The Old Court House
North Trade Road
Battle
East Sussex TN33 0EX

Date: 10/01/2024

Receipts and Payments account
For the year ended 30th September 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 Total Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
RECEIPTS					
Grants	5		2,665	2,665	9,792
Café takings				-	184
Membership & donations		1,026		1,026	1,029
Centre hiring				-	-
Events		158		158	354
Income from CIC		1,991		1,991	640
Sundry/Misc income		145		145	-
Total Receipts		3,320	2,665	5,985	11,999
PAYMENTS					
Grant disbursements	5	519	7,380	7,899	5,451
Café expenditure				-	
Materials				-	423
volunteer expenses				-	-
Food		12	-	12	105
Hiring				-	-
Administrative expenditure:					
Misc expenses		100	-	100	-
Stationery				-	-
Postage				-	2
Telephone				-	-
Professional fees	6	350	-	350	225
Insurance		157	-	157	157
Training				-	-
Bank charges		29	-	29	-
Travel				-	-
Activities		79	-	79	533
CIC costs				-	-
Equipment purchased		125	-	125	9,810
Total Payments		1,371	7,380	8,751	16,754
Net receipts/(payments)		1,949	(4,715)	(2,766)	(4,755)
Funds at start of this period		1,492	8,274	9,766	14,521
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Funds at end of this period		3,441	3,559	7,000	9,766

**Statement of assets and liabilities
at 30th September 2023**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 Total Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
Cash funds				
Bank account	2,996	3,559	6,555	9,428
Cash in hand	420	-	420	313
Cash float at café	25	-	25	25
Total cash funds	3,441	3,559	7,000	9,766

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2023 Total Funds £	2022 Total Funds £
Other monetary assets				
Debts owed to the charity				
Groundworks CIC	-	-	-	2,031

	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost	Current value
Assets retained for the charity's own use			
Equipment / Tools	Various	11,995	10,932

	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due	When due
Current Liabilities			
Debts owed by the charity	-	-	-

These financial statements are approved by the Board of Trustees on *5th Decemr 2023*
and signed on its behalf by:

P.K Clarke
.....
Pete Clarke
Chair of the Committee of Trustees

William Ackroyd
.....
William Ackroyd
Trustee and Treasurer

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023**

1. Receipts and Payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts are statements that summarise the movement of cash into and out of the organisation during the financial year. In this context "cash" includes cash equivalents, for example, bank accounts where cash can be readily withdrawn to pay for debts as they become due.

2. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

Trustees received no remuneration or benefits in this period.

Trustees' expenses

During the year reimbursable expenses totalling £3,483 were paid to 4 Trustees for out of pocket expenses relating to purchases made on the Charity's behalf.

3. Staff Costs

The Charity had no staff costs in the year.

4. Previous period comparison

The financial year end of the charity is 30th September 2023. The previous period's figures have been included for comparison.

5. Restricted fund

These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.

	2023			
	Bfwd	Incoming	Outgoing	Bal cfwd
Grants				
Police grant1 - wardens	1,000	0	-1,000	0
Police grant 2 - school	294	0	-294	0
Police grant 3 - wardens	0	0	0	0
Police grant 4- wardens	0	0	0	0
Police grant 5 - wardens	0	0	0	0
Hastings Direct	2,220	0	-635	1,585
Coop Community Fund	0	0	0	0
Rother District Council	0	0	0	0
Art Project	400	0	0	400
Beach Hut Project	509	2,165	-2,287	387
Bexhill Town Council	1,000	0	0	1,000
Tesco Community Grant	400	0	-400	0
Great Big Green Week	0	500	-500	0
Chalk Cliff CIC	2,451	0	-2,264	187
Total	8,274	2,665	-7,380	3,559

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023**

6. Governance Costs

Independent Examination fee for year-end accounts 2023 £350; (2022 £350).

7. Assets retained for the charity's own use

	Equipment/Tools £
COST	
Bfwd at 1st October 2022	11,995
Additions	-
At 30th September 2023	11,995
REDUCTION IN VALUE	
Bfwd at 1st October 2022	(1,063)
Charge for the year	(3,998)
At 30th September 2023	(5,061)
CURRENT VALUE	
At 30th September 2023	6,934
At 30th September 2022	10,932

FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1163581

Accounts



Nature walk on the sea front

Friends of Combe Valley Annual Report for the Year October 2021 to September 2022



Volunteers after some path clearing

Friends of Combe Valley

Combe Valley Countryside Park

Café & Discovery Centre

Freshfields, Bexhill,

East Sussex, TN38 8FB

email: team@friendsofcombevalley.co.uk

website: <https://friendsofcombevalley.co.uk/>

correspondence to
William Ackroyd
501 Bexhill Road
St Leonards on Sea TN38 8AT
01424 539 73

Friends of Combe Valley is a Registered (in England) Charity Number: 1163581

1. Introduction

- (a) At the beginning of the year we were still under COVID so our AGM in December was held partly in person but also on line. Since then we have held all our meetings in person and been developing our work.
- (b) We continue to have good relations with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC (CIC), for whom our chair Pete Clarke is the vice-chair and their agents for the park of Groundwork South (GWS), in particular Emma Ramsden who is also one of our trustees
- (c) Our membership has continued to increase and is now around 90, with both active members and subscribers on the website.

2. Activities

(a) Conservation work



1066 path before

In November 2021 with help from Crowhurst Environment Group and Dean Morrison who operated a chain saw we cleared back the willows overhanging and blocking the 1066 path between MP 13 and Three Bridges.



During



After

- (b) In January we worked again with Crowhurst Environment Group on the footpath from MP 14, by the Greenway to Combe Haven: in the process we discovered a few old Harvest Mouse nests and it is great news to know they are living here. Unfortunately, we had to stop due to the discovery of a dormouse nest which makes it a protected area.

At other times we worked clearing overgrown vegetation on the disused railway line and paths in the Filsham Reed Bed, and indeed where ever *Crowhurst path* in the park the paths needed clearing for access, sharing this work with ESCC who regularly clear the paths for which they are responsible and also with the GWS' trainees under the Greener Recovery Project.



(c) Litter picks



Litter is a perennial problem and any outing will result in some litter being collected, there were specific litter picking outings on 19 March in the

woods and recreation grounds round the Discovery Centre and on 17 September along the coastal walk.

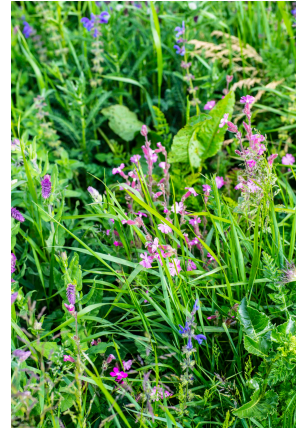
In July and August following the occupation of the land round the Discovery Centre by travellers there was a lot of rubbish to collect, helped by Hastings Council.

The major work of the last two years has been the removal of tree guards, used when the trees were planted, but unfortunately not removed whilst the trees were small. A substantial number were accumulated in the car park at the Discovery Centre and GWS arranged for two skips which we helped fill.

(d) Wild flower mound:



Work on the flower mound has continued successfully with much admiration for the beautiful flowers. The grass was scythed at various times through the year and plugs grown by Julie were planted out in the spring. In September more areas were cleared and covered to inhibit the growth of grass and prepare the land for wild flower seeds in the spring.



(e) Nature Detectives: *Helping local communities connect with nature*

This project started in the summer of 2021, supported by funding from the Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner and there was an autumn session on 23 October 2021. Since then the project has been continued in partnership with GWS led by Emma Ramsden, who had helped with the initiation of the programme in 2021 and Jill Tyson, funded by the Greener Recovery Project. There were sessions on 19 March 2022 with a local cub group and on 3 August 2022, on the beach at Glyne Gap. A further session had to be cancelled because of warnings of lightening.



(f) Container and equipment



A major event of the year was the purchase and installation of a container in the car park at the Discovery Centre: this project had been proposed in 2020 and finally came to fruition with the support of the CIC and GWS.



Planning permission was obtained from Rother DC in December 2021 and the container arrived in January. The project involved a considerable input of time from



volunteers, in particular Pete and Cliff, with foundations being prepared in November and December and then fitting out being carried out

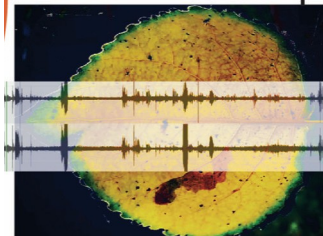


in the first half of 2022. The inside was insulated and lined with boarding, and electric lighting, working with photovoltaic panels, was installed. Then racks and shelving were built for tools and materials, with the space being shared with GWS for the Greener Recovery Project. Two work benches at the front complete the inside and outside an area has been cleared and fenced for use as a workspace.

The project was funded by the Police with a contribution from The Green Recovery Fund.

(g) Art Project

sound workshop



This project also started in 2021. In the summer a sound workshop was held on 7 May. This was followed by a series of audio walks round Combe Valley Countryside Park being prepared and they can currently be found on https://soundcloud.com/eliseandmary_2015 They should be available on our website in the near future. The titles are:

- Bulverhythe History walk David Dennis - Bulverhythe Medieval Harbour with David Dennis
- Early history of Combe Valley Julian Porter Bexhill Museum - Old Railway Line Birdsong

David Rogers

Nature walks in Combe Valley David Rogers - A naturalist's shoreline in Bexhill-on-Sea Peter Hunnisett.



Boundary Stone

fauna.

3. Events

(a) Walks with Peter Hunnisett

Pete led two interesting and informative walks in April and May, down to Pebsham Lake and along the sea front; he also did a walk as part of the Great Big Green Day on September 25, identifying local flowers and



(b) Queen's Platinum Jubilee June 5



Members and local people celebrated the Queen's Jubilee with a picnic party at the Discovery Centre on June 5, with many cakes and games.

(c) Eco fair with Community Supporters June 25

We welcomed Community Supporters from Bexhill for their AGM on June 25, which was an opportunity for FCV to showcase our work and achievements in the park.

(d) Great Big Green Day September 25

We responded to the national environmental campaign "The Great Big GreenWeek" by planning a day of introduction to the Combe Valley Countryside Park. The day was a collaboration between FCV, the



CIC through GWS, and Community Supporters. We received grants from the Big Green Week and the Chalk Cliff Trust to cover expenses. There was an exhibition of photographs taken in the Park and of animals and plants which can be found there at different seasons in the year. As mentioned above Pete Hunnisett did a guided walk to Pebsham Lake, there was a workshop on recycling paper as plant pots, seed and seedling planting and another on woodworking, with bird boxes being constructed. In the afternoon there was a foraging walk along Pebsham Lane. Emma from GWS offered a Nature Detectives craft event for children. There were also outdoor games for children, including croquet played with mallets made from recovered tree branches.



We offered free transport to and from the park, and were very pleased to be able to hire Happy Harold, a renovated trolley bus from the 1920s with an open top. The buffet lunch, based on plant food, included Uzbek snacks and bread, also home made cakes as well as juices and fruit which were donated by Tesco's.



4. Wardens and Security in the park

(a) Currently the wardens are Pete Clarke, Chris Dadswell, Will and Heather Kemp, William Ackroyd, Cliff Willard, Heide Roberts, Lindsay Lycett and they have been making regular patrols in the park and reporting on problems. The Sussex Police Commission Safety Fund have financed the purchase of hi-vis jackets for the wardens, so that they are more visible in the park.



(b) Problems

i. The use of trail bikes continues to be an issue, although much reduced as a result of kissing gates being installed which inhibit access



ii. Sewage leak at Pebsham Lake: this appeared in April and involved a lot of discussion with the Environment Agency and Southern Water, because it was not clear whether the leak was a run-off of leachate from the landfill site or a broken sewer pipe. In the end it was determined that there was a leaking sewer pipe and Southern Water promised to investigate. During the dry summer the earth

dried up, and in the Autumn Southern Water started their investigation: the outcome is currently unknown.

iii. The biggest disturbance in the park was at the end of June when a group of Travellers broke the barriers into the car park at the Discovery Centre and installed caravans on the field in front of the centre. They remained for several weeks, but were finally evicted towards the end of July 2022, leaving a lot of rubbish which was cleared by Hastings BC and FCV volunteers.

- iv. There have also been smaller problems, for example the damaging of the kissing gate on Pebsham Lane by the riding centre, and the some partying, which is generally fine, if all rubbish is removed at the end.

(c) Solutions

i. Kissing gates



After much discussion kissing gates, with access for wheel chairs, using a radar key, were installed at the Crowhurst Road entrance, MP19, also MP 22 on the path along side the railway and at the entrance to Filsham Reed Bed off Reedwood Road, MP81. The materials were funded by FCV, with a grant from the Police and installation carried out by ESCC, with some funding from the Green Recovery Fund.

ii. Information and Interpretation Boards

This is an on-going project and during the year, Annie Brown a landscape designer has been employed by GWS under the Green Recovery Project. She is working on designs for the information boards for the entrances to the park as well as information boards. Funding has been obtained for at least the replacement of some of the existing boards and one or two information boards and we hope these will be finally installed in the current year.

iii. Round the Discovery Centre

The visit by the travellers showed how easy vehicle access is onto the recreation ground from car park at the Discovery Centre: there are three routes and now after a very successful salvage of wood from skips by Pete and Chris, two substantial raised beds have been constructed with posts which have concreted into the ground. For the access by the Discovery Centre, two removable posts have been installed. This was all done by the FCV volunteers with financial support for materials from the Chalk Cliff Trust.



5. Café

An attempt was made to restart the café with a trial run from Easter to the end of June on Friday and Saturday afternoon. Although there were customers, business was very limited except when it was linked to an event, such as the Community Supporters day and also the Primary Schools football competition run by Hastings Sierra Leone Friendship Link. There were also insufficient volunteers and so the decision was made to close it except for specific events.

One aspect of the use of the café is the car park at the Discovery Centre, which is kept locked except when the café is open or there is some activity at the centre or in the park. This is unlike the car park on the other side of the recreation ground, with its entrance from Bexhill Road. Many visitors to the park will come by car and they need to have somewhere to park which is reliably accessible at least during the day: if the car park was open more then the café might be more viable.

6. Fundraising:

We are very grateful for the support we have received for our work:



- (a) Tesco Community Fund: who have provided funds to buy outside furniture to use at the Discovery Centre, specifically for the café.
- (b) Great Big Green Week: who contributed towards the funding of the Great Big Green Day.
- (c) The Chalk Cliff Trust: who have provided funds for the Great Big Green Day, security measures at the Discovery Centre and the painting of the Discovery Centre, which should be happening this year
- (d) The Sussex Police Commission Safety Fund: many of the projects outlined above have been supported by the police with funding provided in earlier years. This year they have also funded the hi-vis jackets for the wardens. We were pleased to welcome the PCC Katie Bourne at the Discovery Centre and to show her the work we had been doing.

7. Planning

We have had to be involved on a number of planning proposals affecting the park:

(a) Bulverhythe Recreation Ground

The proposal by Hastings to build housing on the lower tier, which is both owned by Hastings and within Hastings Borough, has been around for several years. The council persisted in pursuing the plans, although opposed by the Environment Agency, because the field is a flood zone and Sports England, because it is a recreation ground. Many other bodies objected and we have been involved in helping with that opposition. All these efforts finally paid off in March when Hastings withdrew the planning application.



The recreation ground in March 2020

Since then we have worked with the CIC and GWS and others to develop ideas for the improvement of the lower tier, by improving its capacity to take in flood water as well providing a natural environment for exercise.

(b) Pebsham Farm

Pebsham Farm was sold by Hastings to a family many years ago and it has now become the Pebsham Rural Business Centre, with the old farm house being converted into smaller housing units which have been sold off. All of this land is within the countryside park. The original owners were left with just the field running down from the business centre to Pebsham Lake, which was put on the market in April 2021. It was sold to Trafalgar Properties, a property development company based in Dubai. We have had contact with their agent in the UK and at the moment they do not appear to have any plans for the land, but clearly their hope is that they will be able to obtain planning permission for development of the land, which would be contrary to the policies of both Rother and Hastings for the park.



Pebsham Farm Field

(c) Biffa Site



The Biffa site soon after it had been sold

This unoccupied site which was owned by Biffa is behind the recycling and refuse transfer centre and runs along side Pebsham Lane, where it becomes a footpath, going down to Freshfields. Biffa have sold it to a local developer who is thinking about trying to obtain planning permission for a light industrial unit or storage facility. The site along with the recycling area are excluded from the park although these sites are all within the park. Rother Planning Department have indicated that they would oppose the development

and so far no planning application has been made.

(d) Beach below Galley Hill - beach huts

This is a proposal by Rother DC to install 20 beach huts on the beach below Galley Hill, where the Coast Guard station is situated. It is an environmentally important site for insects and plants, in particular kale and horned poppy; the cliffs are unstable and it is an inappropriate development within the park. We have lodged an objection in the preplanning consultation procedure and since then no further action has been taken. Hopefully the council will accept that the project should not go ahead.



Galley Hill Cliffs

(e) Upper tier of Recreation Ground - golf academy

In September we heard about a proposal to use the top tier of the recreation ground, where the 1066 Model Aircraft Club operate and in a field used by walkers for a golf driving centre, with other related activities. The plans would involve forcing the club to relocate, and access would be obtained across the car park of the Discovery Centre and also require the relocation of the Southern Oval Model Car Club. Hastings BC own the land, but it is within Rother DC and Rother have made it clear that they do not consider the proposed development is appropriate. Again it remains to be seen whether a planning application will be made.

8. Volunteers

- (a) Volunteers are the life blood of our organisation and it is through their contributions over the year that we have been able to achieve so much. We have a register of 36 volunteers.
- (b) Regular Thursday work mornings have continued together with activities on the third Saturday of each month, largely regardless of the weather. The mornings end with savoury treats and cakes, prepared by Teresa Clarke, which are very much appreciated. This has brought in a number of new members and volunteers with, on average, groups of 10 to 15 at the sessions.
- (c) All the other activities outlined in this report rely on volunteers and this year we have continued to keep a record of the time spent by volunteers on work for the park. The following are the totals, from those records and also estimates of time spent on other activities:

- i. Thursday mornings and Third Saturdays about 1600 hours over 56 sessions
- ii. Additional work on the container and security, about 300 hours shared by Pete, Chris and Cliff
- iii. Other events - about 430 hours over 8 events, including events in partnership with GWS for the CIC
- iv. Wardens - about 940 hours over the year with 6 wardens until September when we were joined by Lindsay Lycett
- v. The café: 210 hours over 21 sessions, with 5 volunteers
- vi. Administration, including dealing with calls about security etc about 1100 hours

(d) Overall about 4,500 hours during the year, with a comparatively small band of volunteers

9. Administration

(a) Trustees

The twelve trustees are headed by Pete Clarke, our chair, with Cliff Willard, Will Kemp, Karl Beaney, Chris Dadswell, William Ackroyd, Elise Liversedge, Anna Sabin, Emma Ramsden, Virginia Vilela, Stevie Collins and Jay Brewerton. Julie Willard assists and attends our meetings and other members are welcome to join us. We were pleased that Rother Voluntary Action recognised Pete's work with an award as a volunteer of the year.



(b) Website and communication:

We have reworked our website during the year and our website address is www.friendsofcombevalley.co.uk. It includes our email address team@friendsofcombevalley.co.uk

and we are on facebook as Friends of Combe Valley News at <https://www.facebook.com/CombeValley/>

and instagram at <https://www.instagram.com/friendsofcombevalleyarttrail/>

10. The future

(a) We intend to continue to develop our relationship with the CIC and GWS in expanding our work in the park.

(b) In particular we will continue with the work of landscaping round the Discovery Centre and hope that we will be able to start the wilding of the lower tier recreation ground. We also expect to start making benches for the park, first by the wild flower mound and then on the board walk in Filsham Reedbed.

11. Conclusion

Thanks for all the hard work of our members, our volunteers, the wardens as well as the committee and Pete Clarke our chair, which have made it a successful year.

William Ackroyd and other trustees



Path Clearance

Friends of Combe Valley (Charity Number (1163581))



Friends of Combe Valley

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended

30th September 2022

Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd
The Old Court House
North Trade Road
Battle
East Sussex
TN33 0EX

Friends of Combe Valley (Charity Number (1163581))

CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022

CONTENTS	Page
Organisational Information	2
Report of the Trustees	3 to 5
Independent Examiner's Report	6
Receipts and Payments Account	7
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	8
Notes to the Accounts	9 to 10

Friends of Combe Valley (Charity Number (1163581))

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022

Name of Charity: Friends of Combe Valley

Principal Address: 501 Bexhill Road, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex TN38 8AT

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

Governing Document: Constitution adopted 15/09/2015 Amended on 03/04/2019
Amended 23/02/2021

Trustees: Peter Clarke (Chair) (appointed 13/12/2019)
William Ackroyd (Treasurer) (appointed 18/12/2020)
Christopher Dadswell (Vice Chair) (appointed 08/12/2021)
Will Kemp (appointed 13/12/2019)
Karl Beaney (appointed 13/12/2019)
Cliff Willard (appointed 18/12/2020)
Elise Liversedge (appointed 18/12/2020)
Anna Sabin (appointed 08/12/2021)
Emma Ramsden (appointed 08/12/2021)
Virginia Vilela (appointed 08/12/2021)
Stephanne Collins (appointed 08/12/2021)
Joanna Brewerton (appointed 08/12/2021)

Bankers: The Co-operative Bank

Independent Examiners: Lorraine Brown
Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd
The Old Court House
North Trade Road
Battle
East Sussex TN33 0EX

Friends of Combe Valley (Charity Number (1163581))

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022**

The trustees submit their annual report and financial statements for Friends of Combe Valley for the period ended 30th September 2022.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Friends of Combe Valley (FCV) has a committee of Trustees governed by a constitution adopted 19/09/2015, Amended 03/04/2019 and 23/02/2021. Day to day management of the Charity is vested in the Trustees, who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution.

The Committee of Trustees shall have no less than three and no more than twelve members. Trustees are appointed on a 3-year rotational basis at the Annual General Meeting. The names of the Trustees are shown on page 2 of this document.

The method adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees is contained within the constitution.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The objects of FCV are to work within the Combe Haven Valley and in particular within the boundaries of the Combe Valley Countryside Park:

- a. To promote the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment, including biodiversity. In particular but not exclusively by, encouraging the public to use and enjoy the area and its fauna and flora.
- b. To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees have considered their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission, and in their opinion the enclosed report on the achievements and performance demonstrates that they have complied therewith.

BACKGROUND

FCV was registered as a charity with Trustees in 2015, it became inactive for a number of years, after which it was restructured in the Spring of 2019 and became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, a membership association with limited liability for its members.

In May 2019 FCV took over the running of the café at the Discovery Centre in the Combe Valley Countryside Park and started to recruit members. The café closed in March 2020. It re-opened for nearly three months in the spring of 2022 but was forced to close because of the lack of volunteers.

The Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC is responsible for the management of the park and does that through Groundwork South CIC (GWS).

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022 (Cont'd...)**

ACHIEVEMENTS, PERFORMANCE AND FUTURE PLANS

FCV's work and activities have expanded during the year as the difficulties created by the Covid pandemic decreased. Membership numbers have increased to 90, including both active members who are able to offer direct assistance with the work and informal members who offer support and assistance as and when they can.

It has participated in fund-raising activities, and it has received a number of grants, which are being used. Grants successfully applied for/received include:

- i. Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner: funds to buy hi-viz jackets for the Warden service in the park.
- ii. Tesco Community Grants: Funds to buy outside furniture for the cafe at the Discovery Centre.
- iii. The Great Big Green Week, part of the Climate Coalition: funding for an event on September 25 2022 as part of the Great Big Green Week
- iv. The Chalk Cliff Trust: funding for the Great Big Green Week event, security at the Discovery Centre and painting of the Discovery Centre and such other uses as the Trustees may decide

Future Plans

1. Continue to develop the relationship with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC in expanding its work in the park.
2. To continue conservation work within the park, in conjunction with Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.
3. Continue discussions on the future development of the park, to protect its environment and as appropriate enable access, working with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.
4. More information is contained in our full Annual Report for the year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Position

FCV reported that the finances are in a stable and creditable condition.

Receipts in the year was £11,999 (2021 £11,879) and payments £16,754 (2021 £6,036) resulting in a deficit of (£4,755) (2021 £5,843 surplus) for the year, the increase in payments being due to expenditure of grant income received in earlier years. The net fund reserve at 30th September 2022 totalled £9,766 (2021 £14,521).

The above figures do not include an unrestricted net balance of £1,983 owed by Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC: £1,991 towards the cost of the container; £40 for plumbing cost; offset by £48 share of surplus on café takings due from FOCV.

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022 (Cont'd...)**

RISKS, POLICIES AND SAFEGUARDS

The Trustees have considered the major risks faced by the organisation to establish policies and systems to mitigate those risks.

RESERVES AND INVESTMENT POLICIES

In line with guidance by the Charity Commission, the trustees endeavour to build up its reserves to enable the charity to fulfil its objectives and financial plans.


Trustees Responsibilities

Laws applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare an annual report and a financial statement for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the Trust's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the trustees should follow best practice and:

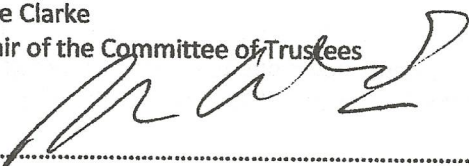
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable Accounting Standards and Statements of Recommended Practice have been followed, subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the Trust will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose, with reasonable accuracy, the financial position of the Charity, and which enable them to both ascertain the financial position of the Charity and ensure that the financial statements comply with relevant legislation. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Trust and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are satisfied that working with advice from the group Accountants they have achieved these requirements in principle.

This report was approved by the Board of Trustees on TUESDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2022 and signed on its behalf by:



.....
Pete Clarke
Chair of the Committee of Trustees



.....
William Ackroyd
Trustee and Treasurer

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022**

I report on the accounts of Friends of Combe Valley for the period ended 30 September 2022 which are set out on pages 2 to 10.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 the 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 130 of the Charities Act 2011; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have 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.

Signed: 

Lorraine Brown
Blue Ridge Accounting Services Ltd
The Old Court House
North Trade Road
Battle
East Sussex TN33 0EX

Dated: 10/01/2023

Receipts and Payments account
For the year ended 30th September 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total Funds £	2021 Total Funds £
RECEIPTS					
Grants	4		9,792	9,792	10,625
Café takings		223		223	-
Membership & donations		1,029		1,029	845
Centre hiring				-	-
Events		354		354	-
Cost reimbursed by CIC		600		640	409
Total Receipts		2,207	9,792	11,999	11,879
PAYMENTS					
Grant disbursements	4		5,451	5,451	4,547
Café expenditure					-
Materials		22		423	-
volunteer expenses					-
Food		105		105	-
Hiring					-
CIC share of café surplus				48	
Administrative expenditure:					
Misc expenses				-	100
Stationery					-
Postage		2		2	2
Telephone					-
Accountancy		225		225	-
Insurance		157		157	157
Training					-
Bank charges					-
Travel					-
Activities		533		533	30
CIC costs		40			-
Equipment purchased	4	419	9,800	10,219	1,200
Total Payments		1,503	15,251	16,754	6,036
Net receipts/(payments)		704	(5,459)	(4,755)	5,843
Funds at start of this period		2,780	11,741	14,521	8,678
Transfers between funds		(1,991)	1,991	0	0
Funds at end of this period		1,493	8,273	9,766	14,521

**Statement of assets and liabilities
at 30th September 2022**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total Funds £	2021 Total Funds £
Cash funds				
Bank account	1,155	8,273	9,428	
Cash in hand	313		313	118
Cash float at café	25		25	25
Total cash funds	1,493	8,273	9,766	14,521

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2022 Total Funds £	2021 Total Funds £
Other monetary assets				
Debts owed to the charity				
CIC	2,031	-	2,031	-

	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost	Current value
Assets retained for the charity's own use			
Equipment	Various	11,995	10,932

	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due £	When due
Current Liabilities			
Debts owed by the charity - CIC	Café	48	

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

.....
P. K. Clarke
 Pete Clarke
 Chair of the Committee of Trustees

Date: Dec. 6, 2022

.....
William Ackroyd
 William Ackroyd
 Trustee and Treasurer

Date: Dec. 6 2022

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022**

1. Receipts and Payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts are statements that summarise the movement of cash into and out of the organisation during the financial year. In this context "cash" includes cash equivalents, for example, bank accounts where cash can be readily withdrawn to pay for debts as they become due.

2. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

Trustees received no remuneration or benefits in this period

Trustees' expenses

During the year reimbursable expenses were paid to the following Trustees:

Peter Clarke	Chris Dadswell
Cliff Willard	Emma Ramsden
William Ackroyd	

3. Previous period comparison

The financial year end of the charity is 30th September 2022. The previous period's figures have been included for comparison.

4. Restricted fund

These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.

	2020			
	Bfwd	Incoming	Outgoing	Bal cfwd
Grants				
Police grant1 - wardens	1,635	2798	-3,434	1000
Police grant 2 – school	1,732	-	-1,438	294
Police grant 3 - wardens	2,000	-	-2,000	0
Police grant 4- wardens	4,000	-	-4,000	0
Police grant 5 – wardens	-	400	-400	0
Hastings Direct	2,700	-	-480	2,220
Coop Community Fund	-926	1,837	-911	0
Rother District Council	-500	500	-	0
Art Project	400	-	-	400
Beach Hut Project	-	1,448	-939	509
Bexhill Town Council	-	1,000	-	1,000
Tesco Community Grant	-	500	-100	400
Great Big Green Week	-	300	-300	0
Chalk Cliff CIC	700	3,000	-1,249	2,451
Total	11,741	11,783	-15,251	8,274

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2022**

5. Governance Costs

	2022	2021
	£	£
Independent Examination fee for year-end accounts	350	225

6. Assets retained for the charity's own use

	Equipment/ Tools £
COST	
Bfwd at 1st October 2022	2,195
Additions	<u>9,800</u>
At 30th September 2021	<u>11,995</u>
REDUCTION IN VALUE	
Bfwd at 1st October 2022	(331)
Charge for the year	<u>(732)</u>
At 30th September 2022	<u>(1,063)</u>
CURRENT VALUE	
At 30th September 2022	<u><u>10,932</u></u>
At 30th September 2021	<u><u>1,864</u></u>

FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY

England & Wales - Charity number 1163581

Accounts

Friends of Combe Valley (Charity Number (1163581))

Friends of Combe Valley

Registered Charity Number: 1163581

Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements

For the year ended

30th September 2021



**CONTENTS OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021**

CONTENTS	Page
Report of the Trustees	2
Independent Examiner's Report	5
Receipts and Payments Account	6
Statement of Assets and Liabilities	7
Notes to the Accounts	8

**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021**

The committee of Friends of Combe Valley presents its annual report and financial statements for the year ended 30th September 2021

ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Name of Charity:	Friends of Combe Valley
Principal Address:	Combe Valley Countryside Park, Café and Discovery Centre Freshfields, Bexhill, East Sussex TN38 8FB
Registered Charity Number:	1163581
Governing Document:	Constitution adopted 15/09/2015 Amended on 03/04/2019 Amended 23/02/2021
Trustees:	Peter Clarke (Chair) (appointed 01/01/2019) William Ackroyd (Treasurer) (appointed 14/08/2019) Christopher Dadswell (Vice Chair) (appointed 13/12/2019) Will Kemp (appointed 01/01/2019) Karl Beaney (appointed 13/12/2019) Cliff Willard (appointed 13/12/2019) Elise Liversedge (appointed 18/12/2020) Anna Sabin (appointed 11/05/2021) Emma Ramsden (appointed 11/05/2021)
Bankers:	The Co-operative Bank
Independent Examiners:	Lorraine Brown Employee of Rother Voluntary Action 47 London Road Bexhill on Sea East Sussex TN39 3JY

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021

The trustees submit their annual report and financial statements for Friends of Combe Valley for the period ended 30th September 2021.

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Friends of Combe Valley has a committee of Trustees governed by a constitution adopted 19/09/2015, Amended 03/04/2019 and 23/02/2021. Day to day management of the Charity is vested in the Trustees, who are elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution.

The Board of Trustees shall be administered by no less than three and no more than twelve members. Trustees are appointed on a 3-year rotational basis at the Annual General Meeting. The names of the Trustees are shown on page 2 of this document.

The method adopted for the recruitment and appointment of new trustees is contained within the constitution.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES:

The objects of the CIO are to work within the Combe Haven Valley and in particular within the boundaries of the Combe Valley Countryside Park:

- a) To promote the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment, including biodiversity. In particular but not exclusively by, encouraging the public to use and enjoy the area and its fauna and flora.
- b) To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

The Trustees have considered their duty to have due regard to public benefit guidance published by the Charity Commission, and in their opinion the foregoing report on the achievements and performance demonstrates that they have complied therewith.

BACKGROUND

Friends of Combe Valley was registered as a charity with Trustees in 2015, it became inactive for a number of years, after which it was restructured in the Spring of 2019 and became a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, a membership association with limited liability for its members.

In May 2019 the Friends of Combe Valley (FCV) took over the running of the café at the Discovery Centre in the Combe Valley Countryside Park and started to recruit members. The café closed in March 2020, initially because of the weather and flooding which meant we had no customers and then because of Covid. It has been closed ever since although it has been possible to use it for one or two small events. Currently works are being done to get it ready to reopen.

The Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC is responsible for the management of the park and does that through Groundwork South CIC (GWS). FCV operate under a service level agreement with the CIC, which has currently expired, but which is anticipated to be renewed in due course, as things return to some form of normality after the Covid Lockdown.

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021

ACHIEVEMENTS, PERFORMANCE AND FUTURE PLANS

The Charity's work and activities have been faced with difficulties due to the Coronavirus pandemic (Covid). Despite this, membership numbers have increased to just over 70, both active members who are able to offer direct assistance with the work and informal members who offer support and assistance as and when they can.

It has participated in some fund-raising activities, and it has received a number of grants, which are being used, though this has been made complicated by Covid. Grants successfully applied for/received include:

- i) The Chalk Cliff Trust: funding towards equipment for use in the park.
- ii) Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner: to provide equipment to establish a Warden service in the park.
- iii) Coop Community Fund: fundraising through instore shopping token scheme.
- iv) Hastings Direct: for signs in the park.
- v) Rother Community Fund: match funding for equipment for use in the park.

Future Plans

- 1) Continue to develop the relationship with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC in expanding its work in the park.
- 2) It is hoped that the café will be open again before too long and activities for members, including walks in the park will be set up.
- 3) Discussions have begun on creating a cultural strategy for the park, working with the Combe Valley Countryside Park CIC and Groundwork South CIC.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Financial Position

The charity reported that the finances are in a stable and creditable condition. Receipts in the year was £11,879 and payments £6,036 resulting in a surplus of £5,843 for the year. The net fund reserve at 30th September 2021 totalled £14,521.

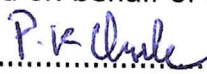
RISKS, POLICIES AND SAFEGUARDS

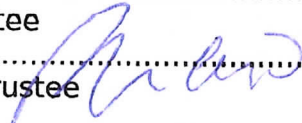
The Trustees have considered the major risks faced by the organisation to establish policies and systems to mitigate those risks.

RESERVES AND INVESTMENT POLICIES

In line with guidance by the Charity Commission, the trustees endeavour to build up its reserves to enable the charity to fulfil its objectives and financial plans.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees:

.....  Date: 11-12-2021.....
Pete Clarke, Chairperson and Trustee

.....  Date: 9 Dec 2021.....
William Ackroyd, Treasurer and Trustee

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF FRIENDS OF COMBE VALLEY FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021

I report on the accounts of Friends of Combe Valley for the period ended 30 September 2021 which are set out on pages 2 to 8.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act 2011, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with 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 the 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

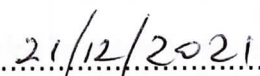
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act 2011; and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act

have 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.

Signed:.....

Dated:..........

L. Brown
Employee of Rother Voluntary Action

**Receipts and Payments account
For the year ended 30th September 2021**

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 Total Funds £	2020 Total Funds £
RECEIPTS					
Grants	4	-	10,625	10,625	8,000
Café takings		-	-	-	941
Membership & donations		845	-	985	813
Centre hiring		-	-	-	0
Events		-	-	-	310
Income from CIC		409	-	409	-
Total Receipts		1,254	10,625	11,879	10,065
PAYMENTS					
Grant disbursements	4	-	4,547	4,547	273
Café expenditure		-	-	-	-
Materials		-	-	-	487
volunteer expenses		-	-	-	39
Food		-	-	-	268
Hiring		-	-	-	0
Administrative expenditure:		-	-	-	-
Misc expenses		100	-	100	156
Stationery		-	-	-	0
Postage		2	-	2	22
Telephone		-	-	-	0
Financial Charges:		-	-	-	-
Insurance		157	-	157	89
Bank charges		-	-	-	23
Travel		-	-	-	0
Activities		30	-	30	9
CIC costs		-	-	-	115
Equipment purchased	4	-	1,200	1,200	-
Total Payments		289	5,747	6,036	1,483
Net receipts/(payments)		965	4,878	5,843	8,582
Funds at start of this period		1,815	6,863	8,678	96
Transfers between funds		-	-	-	-
Funds at end of this period		2,780	11,741	14,521	8,678

**Statement of assets and liabilities
at 30th September 2021**

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 Total Funds £	2020 Total Funds £
Cash funds				
Co-op Bank	2,637	11,741	14,378	8,530
Cash in hand	118	-	118	124
Cash float at café	25	-	25	25
Total cash funds	2,780	11,741	14,521	8,678

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	2021 Total Funds £	2020 Total Funds £
Other monetary assets				
Debts owed to the charity	-	-	-	409

	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost	Current value
Assets retained for the charity's own use			
Equipment		2,195	1,864

	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due	When due
Current Liabilities			
Debts owed by the charity	-	-	-

These financial statements are accepted on behalf of the charity by:

..... *P. K. Clarke* *P. K. Clarke* 11-12-2021

Trustee (Print Name)

Signature

Date

..... *William Arkrow*

William Arkrow

..... 9 Dec 2021

Trustee (Print Name)

Signature

Date

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2021**

1. Receipts and Payments accounts

Receipts and payments accounts are statements that summarise the movement of cash into and out of the organisation during the financial year. In this context "cash" includes cash equivalents, for example, bank accounts where cash can be readily withdrawn to pay for debts as they become due.

2. Trustees' remuneration and benefits

Trustees received no remuneration or benefits in this period

Trustees' expenses

During the year reimbursable expenses were paid to the following Trustees:
Peter Clarke £125.14; Cliff Willard £1,926.06; William Ackroyd £55; Anna Sabin £202; Chris Dadswell £88; Emma Ramsden £470.39

3. Previous period comparison

The financial year end of the charity is 30th September 2021. The previous period's figures have been included for comparison.

4. Restricted fund

These are funds given to the charity, subject to specific restrictions set by the donor, but still within the general objects of the charity.

Grants	2019			2020			
	Incom-ing	Outgo-ing	Bal cfwd	Bfwd	Incom-ing	Outgoi-ng	Bal cfwd
Police grant 1 - wardens	2,500	-695	1,806	1,806	0	-203	1,603
Police grant 2 - school	4,000	-443	3,557	3,557	0	-1,792	1,765
Police grant 3 - wardens					2,000		2,000
Police grant 4 - wardens					4,000		4,000
Hastings Direct	1,500	0	1,500	1,500	1,500	-300	1,200
Coop Community Fund					1,025	-1,951	-926
Art Project					400		400
Chalk Cliff CIC					1,700	-1,000	700
Rother DC						-500	-500
Total	8,000	-1,137	6,863	6,863	10,625	-5746	11,742

5. Governance Costs

Independent Examination fee for year-end accounts 2020/21 £200; (2019/20 Nil).

6. Assets retained for the charity's own use

	Equipment £
COST	
Bfwd at 1st October 2020	995
Additions	<u>1,200</u>
At 30th September 2021	<u>2,195</u>
REDUCTION IN VALUE	
Bfwd at 1st October 2020	-
Charge for the year	<u>-331</u>
At 30th September 2021	<u>-331</u>
CURRENT VALUE	
At 30th September 2021	<u>1,864</u>
At 30th September 2020	<u>995</u>