

Portland Bird Observatory and Field Centre: trustees' annual report for 2020

The SARS Covid-19 pandemic affected a large proportion of the Observatory's public activities in 2020. In line with government regulations the Observatory was closed to all visitors between March and July, and closed again for residential guests from November into 2021; we were able to open the self-contained Cottage between July and November, and provided some facilities for day-visitors once this was permitted after July. Our staff – Warden Martin Cade and Assistant Warden Erin Taylor – remained on site throughout and were able to maintain a full programme of scientific monitoring as well as carrying out essential maintenance to the Grade II listed lighthouse.

The financial losses incurred as a result of the pandemic could have severely impacted our future but for the yearly dividend from Helen Brotherton's generous legacy and continued support from our members' subscriptions – both these helped to alleviate any potentially disastrous outcome for the Observatory.

The farming and planting associated with the Mid-tier Countryside Stewardship grant continued due to the sterling efforts of Richard Newton, one of our trustees - the results being approved and verified by a DEFRA inspection visit. The crops continued to be an invaluable resource for visiting migrant birds and invertebrates as well as for overwintering species. We added to our land holdings with the purchase of an one acre field (purchase initiated in 2019 and completed in early 2020) that will be incorporated into the renewal of the Stewardship agreement due in 2021.

The monumental task of digitising sixty years of our daily logs that incorporate the observations of not only our staff but thousands of observatory members, residential guests and day visitors was successfully completed during the year and added to the British Trust for Ornithology Birdtrack database to assist in the monitoring of long -term population changes, especially of birds.

The trustees welcomed two new members to replace two who had resigned in 2019: Mark Cutts, a Royal Navy employee recently moved to Portland, and Andrew Davidson, a naturalist with Hampshire County Council with specialist entomological expertise. Trustee Zoom meetings were initiated during the year and the Observatory successfully held its first Zoom Annual General Meeting for members during the autumn.

Membership continued to be buoyant, even if the majority could not visit during the year. Their interest and that of the wider public was

maintained daily by the excellent and informative social media output from our staff.

After such a difficult year our future looks positive.

PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY AND FIELD CENTRE

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

AND

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

We hereby approve the attached statements:

Treasurer

Secretary

Date: 15th June 2021

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of "Portland Bird Observatory and Field Centre"

We report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 31 December 2020, which are set out on pages 1 to 3.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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

It is our responsibility to:

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

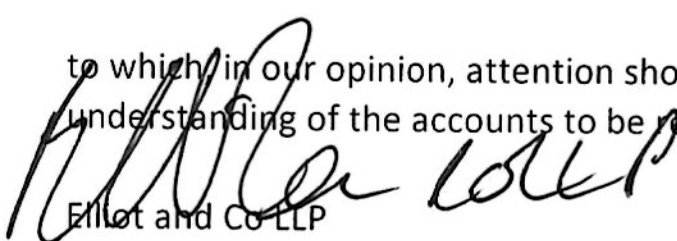
Basis of independent examiner's report

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

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with our examination, no matter has come to our attention.

- which gives us reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
- to which, in our opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.


Elliot and Co LLP
Chartered Accountants
7 King Street
Weymouth
Dorset
DT4 7BJ

Date: 15th June 2021

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Dorset DT4 7BJ

PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY AND FIELD CENTRE

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR
THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2019</u>
<u>INCOME RECEIPTS</u>		
Accommodation	8,247.97	40,967.00
Bank Interest and Dividends Received	59,431.16	73,623.69
Bookshop Sales (Note 1)	3,487.87	5,880.41
Farming Income (Note 2)	3,788.38	1,155.95
Donations and Bequests	900.21	1,008.13
Membership Fees	12,300.00	15,390.00
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>	88,155.59	138,025.18
<u>DIRECT CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE</u>		
Bank Charges and Merchant Fees	349.51	613.51
Cleaning	3,982.36	4,143.82
Insurance	2,855.31	2,893.61
Light and Heat	5,913.43	5,296.06
Pension Contributions	5,526.64	5,183.79
Postage	452.28	1,331.75
Printing, Stationery and Office	292.56	4,463.40
Professional Fees	1,153.20	1,020.90
Rates and Water	2,221.38	2,205.11
Rent	1,200.00	1,550.00
Repairs and Maintenance	21,740.63	29,689.37
Ringing	2,783.14	2,887.25
Subscriptions and Donations Made	212.00	607.00
Sundry Travel and Meeting Costs	360.56	303.96
Telephone	11,987.67	13,521.56
Wages and Payroll Taxes	41,778.09	39,689.49
Exceptional Expenses (Note 3)	21,565.40	1,090.00
<u>TOTAL PAYMENTS</u>	124,374.16	116,490.58
<u>NET (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</u>	<u>(36,218.57)</u>	<u>21,534.60</u>
 BANK & CASH BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2019	 <u>100,470.00</u>	 <u>78,935.40</u>
BANK & CASH BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2020	<u>64,251.43</u>	<u>100,470.00</u>
 <u>NET (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR EXCLUDING EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS</u>	 <u>(14,653.17)</u>	 <u>22,624.60</u>

PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY AND FIELD CENTRE

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

2020

2019

MONETARY ASSETS

Balance at Santander Current Account attributable to the Charity	63,501.43	99,870.84
Cash at Hand	750.00	599.16
	<u>64,251.43</u>	<u>100,470.00</u>

NON-MONETARY ASSETS

- Old Lower Lighthouse including the Lighthouse Keeper's Cottage and attached annexe
- Approximately 31 acres of land at Portland Bill including the Crown Estate Field
- Stock of books with an approximate value of £25,000
- Agricultural equipment

OTHER ASSETS (NON-ENDOWED)

1. Held for investment purposes

- M & G Investments – Income units held as at 31 December 2020		88,703.233
Value at 31/12/2020	£1,217,513.97	
Value at 31/12/2019	£1,473,085.72	

PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY AND FIELD CENTRE

NOTES TO THE RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

- 1 Bookshop sales have been shown as a net income figure rather than showing sales and purchases, as requested by the Trustees. This does not affect the overall accounts. This category includes the sale of Observatory-branded merchandise.
- 2 Farming costs are shown net of government grants received under the Mid Tier Countryside Stewardship scheme. This resulted in a small surplus in 2020 and 2019.
- 3 The Charity has incurred exceptional expenditure this year on the purchase of land in the immediate vicinity of the Observatory, which completed in January 2020 with a purchase price of £21,500 plus legal fees. Prior year exceptional expenditure related to the legal fees for this purchase.