

Portland Bird Observatory and Field Centre

Trustees' Annual Report for 2023

The observatory was successful in all areas of its activities during the year and satisfaction with our ethos, operations and management was reflected by the third major bequest in ten years – this was once again by a regular visitor who had previously enjoyed the welcome and conviviality when staying at the observatory.

The very generous sum enabled the purchase of another four acres of land creating a series of continuous linked areas reflecting the differing microhabitats for farming and increased biodiversity under our DEFRA Mid-Tier Stewardship Agreement. The sum also enabled the trustees to plan for the maintenance and refurbishment of the Grade 2 listed Lighthouse and Cottage plus redevelopment of the non-listed ancillary buildings. The preliminary plans envisage bringing the youth hostel-type bunk bed accommodation to a modern standard with single beds and en-suite allowing visitors to enjoy some comfort after being outdoors in all weathers at Portland. The recently refurbished bookshop and meetings room selling books and observatory merchandise will remain in the new plans along with a new tractor shed and workshop.

Full occupancy of rooms was again a feature of the spring and autumn bird migration seasons with strong occupancy at other times, with the observatory open throughout the year for day visitors. The contribution of visitors to the sightings of all aspects of natural history again provided data to our sixty-year database and was reported daily to members and the public by the daily blog undertaken by the Warden, Martin Cade, and Assistant Warden, Jodie Mae Henderson - the latter who was made full-time at the end of the year. Alison Jones who had cleaned the observatory for visitors for twenty years retired and a new cleaner Verity Hill was appointed.

The two wardens and numerous helpers continued to undertake all the scientific observation combined with the trapping of birds and moths – the former often assisted by visiting British Trust for Ornithology qualified bird ringers. The data was computerised and detailed analysis of species recovery maps were produced for the first time. A new development was the installation of a MOTUS tracking system for bats and birds undertaken in conjunction with other bird observatories and universities in the British Isles and Europe.

The planting of the fields was again undertaken by James Foot and provided beneficial cover for resident and migratory insects and birds. There being little freshwater on Portland a new pond was developed in the fifteen-acre field and was an immediate draw for new recorded species of dragonfly and for birds.

Peter J Morgan

Chairman, Portland Bird Observatory.

PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY AND FIELD CENTRE

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT

AND

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

We hereby approve the attached statements:

Treasurer

Secretary

Date: 20 July 2024

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 2023, 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.

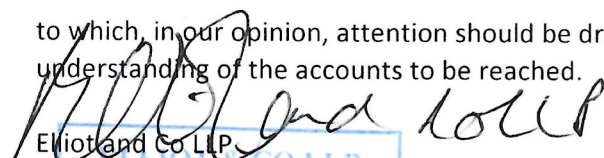
Basis of independent examiner's report

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.


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

Date: 26th June 2024

PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY AND FIELD CENTRE

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR
THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
<u>INCOME RECEIPTS</u>		
Accommodation	41,975.00	43,208.00
Bank Interest and Dividends Received	75,972.78	73,021.42
Bookshop Sales (Note 1)	3,343.51	5,791.13
Donations Received	2,302.81	1,347.41
Farming Income (Note 2)	0.00	634.93
Membership Fees	14,444.00	13,796.00
Exceptional Income - Bequests (Note 3)	<u>442,648.66</u>	<u>100,000.00</u>
<u>TOTAL RECEIPTS</u>	580,686.76	237,798.89
<u>DIRECT CHARITABLE EXPENDITURE</u>		
Bank Charges and Merchant Fees	1,069.81	919.53
Cleaning	4,467.00	4,259.32
Farming Costs (Note 2)	776.15	0.00
Insurance	3,120.24	3,322.65
Light and Heat	8,117.91	5,366.06
Postage	366.73	1,711.24
Printing, Stationery, Office and Meeting Costs	426.71	1,320.65
Professional Fees	1,130.70	1,063.96
Rates and Water	2,438.09	2,306.55
Rent	900.00	1,250.00
Repairs and Maintenance	33,213.59	14,349.45
Ringing and Data Processing	7,867.05	7,941.30
Subscriptions and Donations Made	1,229.30	448.00
Telephone and Internet	11,616.50	15,041.52
Wages, Pensions and Payroll Taxes	55,337.64	49,118.68
Exceptional Expenses - Land Purchase (Note 3)	<u>0.00</u>	<u>102,032.60</u>
<u>TOTAL PAYMENTS</u>	132,077.42	210,451.51
<u>NET (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR</u>	<u>448,609.34</u>	<u>27,347.38</u>
 BANK & CASH BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2022	 <u>117,594.22</u>	 <u>90,246.84</u>
BANK & CASH BALANCE AT 31 DECEMBER 2023	<u>566,203.56</u>	<u>117,594.22</u>
 <u>NET (DEFICIT)/SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR EXCLUDING EXCEPTIONAL ITEMS</u>	 5,960.68	 29,379.98

PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY AND FIELD CENTRE

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>
<u>MONETARY ASSETS</u>		
Balance at Santander Current Account attributable to the Charity	565,953.56	117,404.22
Cash at Hand	250.00	190.00
	<u>566,203.56</u>	<u>117,594.22</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 2023		88,857.053
Value at 31/12/2023	£1,275,089.82	
Value at 31/12/2022	£1,305,772.17	

PORTLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY AND FIELD CENTRE

NOTES TO THE RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

- 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 has resulted in a small deficit in 2023.
- 3 During 2023 the Charity was the beneficiary of the estate of Mrs Julie Spivey, resulting in the significant exceptional income in the period. The Trustees are continuing to consider the best use of the funds in line with the Charity's purposes. This has included certain land purchases which will be reported in 2024.

During 2022 the Charity received a generous bequest in memory of Rob Tuck, specifically to be used to fund the purchase of two parcels of land adjacent to the Observatory for conservation purposes, shown as respectively exceptional income and expense.

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

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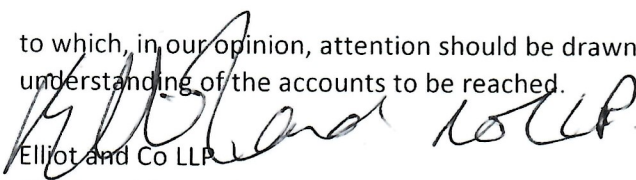
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