



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

Period start date

Period end date

From

1 January 2023

To

31 December 2023

Section A

Reference and administration details

Charity name THE FRIENDS OF CRESSING TEMPLE

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) 1166431

Charity's principal address CRESSING TEMPLE BARN

WITHAM ROAD

BRAINTREE

ESSEX

Postcode

CM77 8PD

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Suzanne Lowe	Chair		
2	Andrew Bright	Treasurer	1 st January 2023 – 20 th November 2023	
3	Jane Palmer	Membership Secretary		
4	David Andrews			
5	Lesley Killin			
6	Monika Curry			

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document	Constitution dated 4 th August 2015 as amended on 12 th December 2020	
How the charity is constituted	Unincorporated small company charity	
Trustee selection methods	Elected at the AGM	

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Relationship with Essex County Council, owners of the Cressing site. Reference letter dated 15th March 2016 from the Head of County Parks, Environment, Sustainability and Highways, Essex County Council.

The charity continued to build on a positive working relationship with Essex County Council during the year.

The trustees do not consider there are any major risks as there are no liabilities, other than those covered through our insurance. There is a dependency on the voluntary efforts of the members and officers. This year has seen the resignation of the Treasurer, a role we hope to fill in the next reporting period. We are also reliant on the support of the two horticulturalists employed by Essex County Council.

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

To conserve, enhance and develop the historic site at Cressing Temple, including the Walled Garden, the Cullen Garden and the Jubilee Orchard, as a unique historical, social and horticultural record and educational resource.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

In deciding our programme of activity and development the Trustees have paid due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.

The Trustees aim to further develop an inclusive culture in the charity's ways of working. Valuing diversity and equality and ensuring equal opportunities.

One of the Friend's objectives is to raise money in support of the site and gardens. We have carried on from last year in growing our activities and income streams following the lifting of covid restrictions two years ago and hope this upward trend continues.

We held a very successful Apple Day again in October, which is the main focus of our community facing events, we achieved increased attendance and income from last year and expect this will be established as an annual event over the coming years.

We have experienced a very successful year in regard of income, reflecting a steady growth of income from 2019. Sales of Plants continue to be the main source of income and we have established a regular rhythm of workshops, such as willow weaving, income from which has increased significantly in this year.

The number of garden volunteers remains stable at 39 and the number of Friends including volunteers, members, committee and Trustees is 90. Volunteers play a key role in sustaining the high standard of the gardens and increasingly in activities relating to the heritage of the site such as digitising the vast archive documents and restoration of farm machinery.

This public benefit is embedded in our constitution and at the forefront of the Trustees and officers' activity. All give their services voluntarily and in the interests of the charity and its objectives and draw no personal fiduciary benefit from their roles.

The gardens provide both historical and environmental interest to the local community and wider society with hands on experience and involvement. We have firmly established partnerships with two local mental health charities who provide weekly sessions for their clients reflecting the benefit and impact gardening and environmental activities can provide for growing skills, providing time with nature and tackling isolation.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

As said previously the Friends of Cressing Temple could not operate without the generous and willing help of all our volunteers.

A total of 4,822 volunteer hours were recorded this year, the equivalent of 652 days or approx. 3 fulltime posts and calculated at minimum wage an equivalent of a valuable £50,245.

The number of volunteer hours represents a 24% increase on 2022.

Volunteer activities and opportunities range across an increasing variety of activities at the core is garden planting and maintenance work in the Tudor, Cullen and Community gardens and Jubilee orchard, increasingly in this year heritage focused work grew such as digitising the archive and restoration of old farm machinery. Alongside, the essential supervision, management and administrative activities and duties incumbent on a successful charity.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

This year has seen our highest income of recent years, £47,581 due to a number of factors such as fundraising for the purchase and installation of the compost loo and a very successful Apple Day.

Plant and herb sales continue to be our main source of trading income. This year's total of £13,615 was a 9% decrease in sales from last year, with an increase in the costs of buying plants the profit margin was 30% as opposed to 40% last year.

Sales of craft, books and honey was £5,997 a slight increase on last year.

We held our Apple Day in October, another great success helped by glorious weather and support from our partners. The day was attended by over 1200 people raising a total net income after costs of £7,058 which is £1,442 higher than last year.

The use of contactless payments via sum-up and PayPal continues to increase and we have seen higher donations this year facilitated by the Payaz terminal purchased last year.

Our WRAGS trainee successfully completed her training in October, a role primarily funded via a grant from Finnis Scott Foundation.

The major item of expenditure this year centred around the purchase and fitting of a Natsol compost toilet in the Community Garden at a cost of £15,324. Funding for this project reflecting the growth in both the partners present and cooperation in what is becoming a growing community hub. Essex County Council, Braintree District Council, Trustlinks, Cressing Community Shed, Braintree Beekeepers and the Essex Beekeeping Association, all collaborating and contributing to the funding, resulting in 74% of the total funding coming from these partners. This facility is proving to be a major benefit to the community organisations based in and around the Community Garden.

Section D

Achievements and performance

We have seen less grant activity during this year but are in the process of receiving funding toward initiating restoration of the farm machinery from a local grant maker expected in 2024.

Work continues to digitise the archive material, with close liaison with the Essex Record Office, to ensure preservation and accessibility of the rich historical records we have of Cressing Temple. To assist with this work we purchased scanning equipment at a cost of £566 which was funded by a grant received from Essex Community Foundation in 2022.

We have strong partnership working established with Abberton Rural Training and Trustlinks who provide weekly therapeutic gardening sessions for their beneficiaries on site.

We continue to provide governance via regular committee meetings, all now in person and we held our AGM in April.

Our key priorities for 2024 are;

- to recruit the vacant Treasurer post.
- to plan and raise funding for a new community building in the Community Garden.
- to plan and deliver a successful 2024 Apple Day.
- to explore and begin the journey to becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
- to commence the initial pilot phase of the farm machinery project focusing on several machines, we will explore further funding to expand on this.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

Reserves are held in the named Co-operative Bank account for the sole use and purpose of the Organisation as defined in the Aims & Objectives of its constitution. The Friends Reserves Policy requires that sufficient unrestricted financial reserves are held in order that the charity can continue to operate and meet the needs of the visitors in the event of unforeseen and potentially financially damaging circumstances arising.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

None, and not possible under the constitution.

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

All fundraising is to support the gardens and wider site and is mainly achieved through trading, member activities, members fees, donations and grants.

We are grateful for the £1,500 grant that we received from Finnis Scott Foundation for our WRAGS trainee, this was the final 25% tranche of a two-year grant totalling £6,000.

We are grateful to our partners – Trustlinks, Essex County Council, Braintree District Council, Cressing Community Shed, Braintree Beekeepers, Essex Beekeeping Association who all supported and contributed to the purchase and installation of the Natsol Compost Toilet.

The charity's activities provide benefit and interest to the local and wider society with hands on experiences and involvement. The gardens demonstrate the power of horticulture and other skills to improve people's lives.


Section F**Other optional information**

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Section G**Declaration**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees


Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	SUZANNE LOWE	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	CHAIR	
Date	22 nd June 2024	

The Friends of Cressing Temple
Registered charity number 1166431
Receipts and payments accounts
For the year to 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Year Ended 31 Dec 2023 Total funds to the nearest £	Year Ended 31 Dec 2022 Total funds to the nearest £
Receipts				
Finnis Scott Foundation	-	1,500	1,500	3,000
Contributions towards NatSol Tiolet	-	11,386	11,386	-
Essex Community Foundation	-	-	-	995
Donations	1,456	-	1,456	745
Membership subscriptions	350	-	350	360
Bank Interest Received	59	-	59	-
Total Grants, Contributions and Donations	1,865	12,886	14,751	5,100
Fundraising Activities				
Apple Day & Sales	7,031	-	7,031	5,070
Quiz Evening	540	-	540	155
Events / Workshops / Tours	3,929	-	3,929	381
Trading Activities				
Plants / Herbs Sales	13,615	-	13,615	14,956
Community Garden Sales	1,491	-	1,491	1,187
Books / Crafts / Honey Sales	5,997	-	5,997	5,239
Volunteer Uniform Sales	187	-	187	176
Other	40	-	40	4
Total Receipts from Activities	32,830	-	32,830	27,168
Total Receipts	34,695	12,886	47,581	32,268
Payments				
NatSol Compost Toilet	3,938	11,386	15,324	-
ECF grant funded Equipment	-	566	566	429
Community Garden	478	-	478	-
IT Equipment	270	-	270	64
Tools & Equipment	1,080	-	1,080	210
Total Assets Purchased	5,766	11,952	17,718	703
Plants / Herbs cost	9,537	-	9,537	8,997
Volunteer costs	348	-	348	649
Events / Workshops / Tours	1,258	-	1,258	178
Apple Day cost	1,225	-	1,225	520
Plants & Equipment Garden	4,398	-	4,398	3,918
Books / Crafts / Honey cost	1,679	-	1,679	2,076
Contract workers	4,657	2,390	7,047	7,543
Office consumables	586	-	586	391
Insurance & Professional Fees	519	-	519	255
Other	472	-	472	211
Total Payments	30,445	14,342	44,787	25,441
Net receipts/(payments)	4,250	(1,456)	2,794	6,827
Total Funds Brought Forward	14,463	1,456	15,919	9,092
Total Funds Carried Forward	18,713	-	18,713	15,919
Funds held at end of the year				
Bank	18,520	-	18,520	15,657
Cash	193	-	193	262
Total Funds	18,713	-	18,713	15,919

Signed on behalf of all the trustees by:

Signature
Print Name
Position
Date of Approval


SUZANNE LOWE
CHAIR OF TRUSTEES
22nd June 2024



Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

**Report to the trustees/
members of**

THE FRIENDS OF CRESSING TEMPLE

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31 December 2023

**Charity no
(if any)**

1166431

Set out on pages

1-7

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023.

**Responsibilities and
basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

**Independent
examiner's statement**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below *~~) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

** Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

22nd June 2024

Name:

DEREK WOTTON

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

CHARTERED MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTANT ACMA CGMA

Address:

54 QUEENSBERRY AVENUE

COPFORD COLCHESTER

ESSEX CO6 1YN