

art

RURAL TRAINING

ANNUAL OVERVIEW



2022-2023



ART – Improving and saving lives.

By CEO, Jacqui Stone

This academic year has been our biggest ever! This is our 9th year, and once again has seen significant growth in demand, with therapeutic gardening being increasingly recognised for its benefits to mental health and improving confidence and wellbeing, together with the need for “levelling up” with increased skills particularly in our key curriculum areas including construction, horticulture and textiles, all being top 20 in demand industries currently. Countryside & Environment and Green Skills knowledge is also key in the East of England, with farms and land-owners increasingly having to look at improving their Environmental impacts, and ensuring that wildlife areas are maintained with surveys being key to know what wildlife is there!

This demand, together with a huge increase in mental health issues, domestic violence issues, increased suicide risk and lack of access to central services, mean that demand for our services has never been higher.

We have lots of exciting projects that we have been asked to be involved in, and lead, for the following year, which will mean balancing resources and funding over the next year, particularly with central funding that we have previously had for the last 9 years ceasing with ACL Essex stopping sub-contracting due to Department for Education changes and their own pressures. This means that we will increasingly need to be careful to balance our books, yet still aim to provide all the services that our beneficiaries need as they are literally life-saving.

With an increasing number of alerts this year, with 74 reportable safeguarding risks alerted this year, 14 of which have been red issues (life threatening risks), we have been able to help people in the process of suicide, and at high risk of suicide. This has been very challenging for all the team this year – our constant vigilance of picking up little clues including someone giving personal gifts to other students resulting in an alert being raised and stopping an overdose in progress, have been hard for all the staff, which is why we have also introduced our Wellbeing programme this year for all staff, including access to internal and external counselling services and other initiatives to help reduce the stress of our work.

I am, as always, grateful to our wonderful staff team, who work so hard to put our beneficiaries first, no matter what their history or issues, and welcome them without judgement to our sites and courses. It is this respect for all, allowing people to be who they are without having to put on a front or pretend, whilst increasing confidence and self-esteem, be more active, build coping strategies and find new friends and support are key to our success.

We are not completely sure what the next year will bring, but for sure we will be up for the challenge and are so proud of all our students and participants who have achieved so much this year despite multiple barriers and challenges.

We could not do our work without the support of our funders, partners, referral partners, corporate volunteers, trustees, and our course volunteers. Thank you for your support in what we do.

Best wishes, Jacqui

ART IN STATS 2022/23



467 INDIVIDUALS ATTENDING COURSES

- Learning new skills
- Improving Mental Health
- Improving the environment
- Making new friends
- Gaining qualifications



**27.2% PARTICIPANTS INTO
EMPLOYMENT**

24806 TOTAL GUIDED LEARNING HOURS

4084 DAYS OF LEARNING ATTENDED BY OUR STUDENTS

OUR PARTICIPANTS



94% Wellbeing increased
94% Confidence increased
81% Mental health improved
20% reduced GP attendance
16% Reduced medication
27% Used counselling service

58% Male
41% Female
1% Transgender

With our support 1 participant was assisted to join a GP and seek medical attention for the first time in 17 years!

199 participants have gained qualifications

ARMED FORCES SUPPORT

- Helping our veterans and service personnel
- Signatories of the armed forces covenant
- Silver Award Employer Recognition Scheme
- Improving mental health and reducing suicide risk

**302 DAYS
OF TRAINING
FOR VETERANS AND WOUNDED
AND INJURED SERVICE
PERSONNEL ON RECOVERY DUTY**

**SUPPORTING 100% WOUNDED AND
INJURED SERVICES PERSONNEL IN
THE PROCESS OF MEDICAL DISCHARGE**



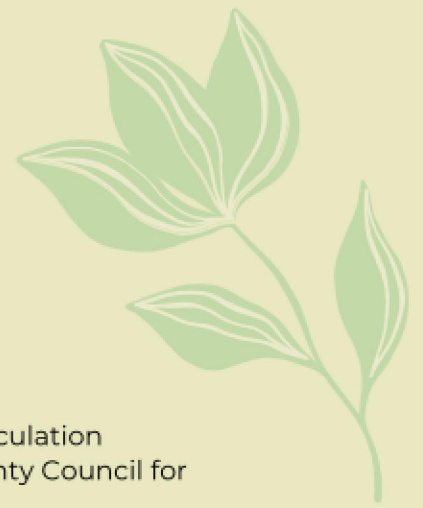
**ARMED FORCES
COVENANT**

**EMPLOYER
RECOGNITION
SCHEME**

SILVER AWARD 2023

ASSISTED IN FUNDING BY THE ARMY BENEVOLENT FUND AND THE VETERANS FOUNDATION

OUR SOCIAL VALUE



£4,989,130

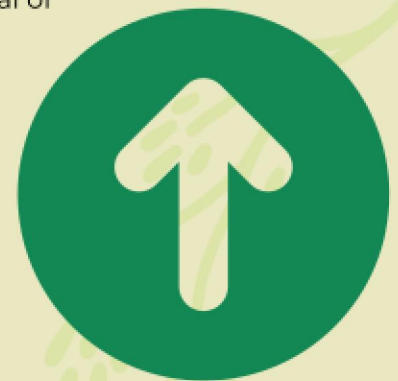
Total Social Value calculation (TOMs) by Essex County Council for 2022/23

14 SUICIDES PREVENTED

Based on HM Government own research each suicide costs **£1.6million**. ART has had a direct hand in suicide prevention and intervention, specifically intervening in 14 attempted suicides (red incidents) this year. As well as 32 "amber" incidents and 28 "yellow" incidents for a total of 74 reportable incidents

23
VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE OR
VIOLENCE ASSISTED IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH NEXT CHAPTER

+£22.4 MILLION SAVED



EMPLOYEES

27 Employees at the end of the academic year
14.03 Full time Equivalent Employees
25 Essex Residents employed

79.5%
OF EMPLOYEES HAVE
A DISABILITY
OR ARE CARING FOR SOMEONE
WITH A DISABILITY

**LOCAL PEOPLE HIRED
OR RETAINED FOR
1 YEAR OR MORE: 10.51
130% OF OUR TARGET**

LEVELLING UP EMPLOYEES

15

Staff studying additional qualifications



3

jobs created for people with disabilities

3

number of employees who were previously NEET

10

Employees taken on from unemployment

OUR ORGANISATION



4

locations accessible 24/7 for
all registered students

**4 SAFE SPACES
24/7**

LOCATIONS

We're dedicated to ensuring vulnerable
people always have somewhere
to go or someone to go to.



13 Locations across Essex where we provide
education and training to vulnerable
individuals

OUR COURSES

Horticulture
Construction
Carpentry
Textiles
Life Skills
Park Maintenance

Community Garden
Countryside and Environment
Land Based Studies
SEND
Arts and Crafts
Woodlands

OUR WORKING SPACES

NEW SITES THIS YEAR AT

Meadow View, Chelmsford – Horticulture,
Community Garden, Arts & Crafts – more to come!
Abbeyfields, Colchester (NHS) – Horticulture and
Community Garden
All Saints House, Harwich (NHS) – Horticulture and
Community Garden
Great Notley Country Park (ECC) – Park Maintenance
Hadleigh Country Park (ECC) – Park Maintenance



EXISTING PROGRAMME SITES

Wormingford, Colchester - Main Site
Cressing Temple Barns
Avon Road, Chelmsford
Kennedy Way Medical Centre, Clacton
Blackwater Leisure Centre, Maldon
Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome
Hadleigh Garden Project
Personnel Recovery Centre, Colchester
John Bunyan School, Braintree

FRONTFOOT FOR **LIFE**

NEW PROJECT SUPPORTING ARMED FORCES

Supporting service leavers and forces families
into employment, providing holistic care,
including training, mental health support,
and debt advice. In collaboration with leading
UK employers including Taylor Wimpey,
Thales, Colas, Suffolk County Council, etc.

OUR VOLUNTEERS



VOLUNTEERING

234 TOTAL VOLUNTEERS

Corporate Volunteers - **158**
Regular Support Volunteers - **22**
Trustee Volunteers - **10**
Event Volunteers - **24**

6750 hours of support by regular volunteers, including learning support, volunteer drivers, caretakers, and peer to peer mentors

8049
TOTAL
VOLUNTEER HOURS

STAFF PROVIDED
242 HOURS
OF VOLUNTEER WORK
TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING PARTNERS

Essex County Council
RSM
Essex University Student Union
Waterman Aspen
CHP
Guy Carpenter
UK Power Networks

Aegon
MS Amlin
Atkins
Home Partnership
Chelmsford City Racecourse
Angel
Provide





ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT



5864 TREES PLANTED - 1584 THIS YEAR

IMPACT

- Capturing carbon
- Preventing flooding
- Reducing town and city temperatures
- Reducing pollution
- Keeping soil nutrient-rich
- Providing habitats for wildlife and birds to thrive

**ONE OF 300 ORGANISATIONS
TO RECEIVE ONE OF
THE QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY
TREE OF TREES**



PEAT & PESTICIDE FREE

A move towards peat free compost and growing from cuttings has been a focus this year.

IMPACT

- Using peat free compost reduces harmful CO2 emissions and is less harmful to the environment
- Growing from cuttings and seeds collected from food waste and across ART's training sites ensures no pesticides are brought on site.



**THANKS TO TAYLOR WIMPY
FOR DONATING
€12500 OF WOOD
FOR OUR CARPENTRY AND
CONSTRUCTION COURSES**



RECYCLED & DONATED MATERIALS

100% of materials used on ART's textile courses are donated or recycled.

IMPACT:

- Reduced waste to landfill
- Repurposed items provided new and useful products for students on low income
- Items made can be sold to raise essential unrestricted funds for the charity

HABITATS CREATED



Working closely with Councils, landowners and the AONB we are able to support wider strategic plans to improve biodiversity.

IMPACT:

- Conservation, protection and enhancement of SSSI and AONB areas
- Attracting more species and growing biodiversity of sites and locations across the County



RECYCLING, REUSING & REPURPOSING

Course materials can be expensive so dismantling old furniture, collecting wood off cuts and donated pallets help to reduce cost and is better for the environment.

IMPACT:

- Cutting course material costs by recycling and reusing materials such as wood, furniture and plastic pots.
- Building partnerships with local businesses to take waste materials, reducing their environmental impact too!
- Providing a wide range of materials for students to learn about and experience working with



2 TONNES OF LEAF MULCH CREATED

IMPACT:

- Financial savings for the charity
- Good use of sustainable materials which are natural and safe, used for soil enrichment, weed reduction, pathing and landscaping
- Friendly for insects and wildlife who we share our sites with!



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

art
RURAL
TRAINING

OVER 3000 PEOPLE NOW GROWING FOOD AT HOME



IMPACT

- Supporting behaviour change
- Promoting healthy plant-based eating
- Encouraging pollinators to your garden/ window boxes
- Reducing food miles
- Encourage more sustainable lifestyles
- Reduce health inequalities

**46 TONNES
OF CO₂ SAVED**
**2370 MILES
OF CAR JOURNEYS SAVED**

WALKING & CYCLING

Where possible we car share, cycle and walk to work and meetings, we encourage students to do the same, offering free transport, loan bikes while on site, and travel training for those who need support to use public transport.

IMPACT

- Less carbon emissions from cars on the road
- Reducing health inequalities further by students adopting a more healthy and active lifestyle



SITE IMPROVEMENTS



Environmental improvements to our training sites included:

- Woodlands with native species assistance and non-native and invasive species control
- Nightingale habitat improvements
- Water quality improvements to help otters and kingfishers (and fish!)
- Water vole habitat improvements
- Compost heaps that are sealed off due to habitation by slow worms and stag beetles
- Wildflower meadow creation
- Acid grassland improvement
- Hedges planted on 2 sites
- Wetlands restored
- Ponds created



FEILD TO FORK

Currently providing 94 meals per day for vulnerable students who are choosing between heating and eating.

Students learn about healthy eating and how to prepare and cook low cost meals with fresh seasonal produce.



1000+ BIRD BOXES & BUG HOTELS BUILT

IMPACT:

- Attracting more birds and wildlife to the training grounds and surrounding areas
- Improving biodiversity of sites
- Supporting pollinators
- hundreds of "BEE BOMBS" made and distributed



Case Study 1

Participant Q was referred to us by DWP as he was struggling with alcohol dependence lack of personal care suffering from depression and anxiety. He also struggled with work and a work ethos. He has good handwriting skills and good comprehension of what may be involved in tasks when they have been explained. He also expressed that he used to be good at drawing.

We set participant Q regular check in with a mentor where he can discuss any issues he may have and deal with some of his more negative moments. When participant Q has had a relapse and had a hard session on the booze and feeling negative, we have been providing positive feedback encouraging him to keep going. We have pushed participant Q to be more active role in discussions when it comes to work tasks. We have set him goals on what work he can get done in the day when completing some of the manual tasks. We have looked at some more of participant Q strengths of drawing and encouraged him to draw maps of the areas we have carried out group surveys.

Participant Q has become much more confident within himself and a more positive outlook. He seems to have taken a keener interest of his personal appearance & care. He has started having more days drinking less and shown more interest in enjoying his hobbies again i.e., his drawing. He has actively brought his own research books covering some of the subjects we have covered to get a greater depth of knowledge in wildlife, showing an active interest in developing his skills further and a heightened level of motivation. Has started setting his own goals to see tasks through to the end and taking ownership of projects!

Case Study 2

C started on just 1 day per week with Mum staying all day. After a few weeks, we suggested it was time for C to be more independent and let student C to learn without close family support. Mum agreed. C continued to progress; becoming more confident in class and interacting well, becoming more engaged and opened up about other hobbies and interests. After 3 months C started attending ART for 2 days independently.

I encouraged C to participate in the group more and ask other students for help or equipment with the result that C engages and chats with more participants. A personal target has been to sit with the main group which C has achieved with some lessons. I encouraged C to do further research at home, on different topics, as it is a method for C to maintain focus during a garden session. C was determined to set their own personal target, with support, to manage their energy levels for longer each day which C has achieved. Lessons have incorporated information and links to grow and achieve the same activities away from ART. A good outcome is that C has taken things they have learnt at ART and practiced them at home. Examples include: ordering their own sweet peas after we grew the seeds and shared seed catalogue information and then C was growing them at home; Random bulb planting in grass; lettuce growing to feed the family tortoise; and buying and planting up a seasonal container with a family member. C's knowledge of horticulture has increased and the discussions at ART about growing have sparked an interest which C wants to continue.

Mum said: "After leaving College and then being deemed unfit to work due to C's health issues, it seemed he was written off. We felt we had nowhere to turn but knew C needed something to help C socialise, to help C's mental health and a reason to leave the house, which C finds hard. After finally finding the right person in the know, she put us in touch with ART. Which after our first visit felt a good fit for C.

ART is a great lifeline for C and, in turn, helps us as a family. All the staff at ART are so friendly, and knowledgeable. C likes them all very much (as do I). C has benefited greatly from being a part of ART and we are so thankful to have found them."

Case Study 3

B had worked full time in various jobs since leaving school, but unfortunately poor health left him unemployed. He was very isolated, living alone, with no family members in the area. He was referred by his work coach at the job centre and joined Countryside & Environment.

At first, B was extremely vocal and not happy about attending the course. His confidence and self-esteem was extremely low, his health wasn't great, and it took weeks of continuous attendance before he began to positively chat to other participants. It was made clear to B with weekly check ins, chats and spending time getting to know the person he was that ART is completely unjudgmental and welcomes all who attend.

After several weeks and with consistent attendance, myself, peer encouragement and reassurance of his surroundings, B slowly began to enjoy his day, improving his confidence carrying out various tasks & challenges and participated in group discussions. Due to physical health limitations, I ensured that Barry could rest when he needed to. Barry was nervous of paperwork such as handouts, questions and was very vocal about that also. I sat with Barry giving him the time and reassurance he needed and explained the importance of completing paperwork and that support would be given to him to help increase his interest in what he had to complete to pass the course. Barry soon realised that most participants attending alongside him were also fearful of completing paperwork, so began working within a small group to achieve this. Barry went onto complete a Certificate in UKRS Level 1 in Countryside & Environment.

Since enrolling on that first day, Barry has met 12 other people who he now considers his friends and only ever missing one session due to some work being carried out on his home.

He travels independently by minibus provided by ART to access the course. I have introduced safeguarding and prevention activities as Barry is aware he is vulnerable as he lives on his own and has highlighted that he knows who to speak to if he gets into any type of trouble. He is understanding completely the importance of maintaining exercise to help his breathing and now eats a healthy well-balanced diet.

Joining the course enabled him to change his routine, leave his home, be in the fresh air, meet new people and gain friendships, improving and maintaining his anxieties, physical health, and wellbeing. He has since become a volunteer with ART across 3 different sites within the area he lives and completely embraces the role of supporting the charity and others needing additional help. Barry is due to receive an award in the coming weeks for his dedicated contribution for going the extra mile in his volunteering role.



Case Study 4

A is a 50 year old male, alcohol dependent suffering with severe anxiety. A lost his Mother in August 2022, and only 8 weeks later had begun a Countryside & Environment course with us. He lived with his Mother for many years, and was her carer. Since her death he has been living in the house alone and had become depressed and very isolated. His health was poor, not eating properly and drinking heavily. The house is larger than he needs and he had taken to living in one room to minimise living expenses. He is single with no children with one sister with a poor relationship.

A was open to a mentor check in from day one. He was very open and honest about his struggles and where he needed support. I was able to sort out Universal Credit for him by informing the referrer who kindly helped him with the forms. This meant that A could afford some good food to eat and to heat the part of the house he was living in.

A also had no mobile phone. He managed to get a basic one and I helped him to navigate the apps and how to make calls, texts and emails. During the time A did not have a good relationship with his sister, he hit a low patch and forgot to take his medication. This resulted in him being very depressed. Both myself and our volunteer minibus driver were able to liaise with A and collect his meds and I was able to speak with him and make sure he was now taking them again. I advocated for him about the property which was jointly owned by himself and his sister. This opened up conversation between them and transparency was created. A has a good relationship with his sister now and is a bit more confident to put in boundaries to protect his interest and well-being. Since then he has continued to thrive.

After the low patch A stopped drinking. He has had the odd drink since but very minimal indeed. He has really progressed. His confidence has grown and he has become a natural mentor for the group. The group he is part of now also attend our Head Office site. This site has felt very therapeutic for A and he is eager to attend not only each weeks session but also make use of the "Safe Place" initiative by using the garden on weekends and on other days too. He also joined, off his own bat, our Monday Arts & Crafts group which he now attends regularly and really enjoys. A is a popular member of the group. He is supportive and non-judgemental. We check in regularly and it is really positive to see the person he is today. He is eating well, and hardly drinking. He is happy in himself and can attend his appointments by himself. Something that would have been impossible 8 months ago as he was crippled by anxiety. A continues to thrive and take more responsibility within the group. He is learning to be self-governing and using boundaries to support his well-being. For the future A has goals of mentorship, health and well-being, gaining leadership skills and continuing to build positive friendships. He is a great support to others and continues to thrive.





ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees

Anne Brown (Chair)
Andrew Grimwade (resigned Mar 2023)
Anna MacDonald (resigned Mar 2023)
Paul Hinsley
Alistair Heron (resigned Mar 2023)
Tristan Bourne
Anthony Stamp (appointed Mar 2023)
Tim Frances (appointed Mar 2023)
Rebecca Chilver (appointed Mar 2023)

Charity number 1169247

Registered office

1 Whitbreads Business Centre
Whitbreads Farm Lane
Chatham Green
Chelmsford
Essex
CM3 3FE

Independent examiner

Paul Pritchard FFA
Abacus Accountancy
105 Courtyard Studios
Braintree
Essex
CM7 3AN

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

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ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016).

Objectives and activities

The objects of the Charity are:

- The advancement of education, training or retraining and
- The relief of those in need in particular but not exclusively among unemployed people in Essex providing them with work experience, volunteering opportunities, mentoring and rural employability and craft skills courses, and by supporting their re-integration back into the rural community or by such other means as may from time to time be determined subject to the prior written consent of the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

ART is and will remain a not-for-profit organisation focused on helping to develop the skills needed for jobs in the local economy of Essex and surrounding areas. We are "A Place to Grow".

Our vision is: Abberton Rural Training will deliver a participant led programme of quality rural skills training with a particular focus on individual support to those facing social and emotional barriers or disadvantage, improving confidence and holistic wellbeing. Enabling progression to training, further education, employment/self-employment or volunteering whilst protecting and enhancing the environment.

To deliver this vision ART must be sustainable in the long term so that it can continue to deliver training services. In doing this ART will adopt the following aims. ART will:

- Focus on education and through that also deliver benefits in terms of improved employability and wellbeing
- Focus on meeting skills needs in the community
- Provide a route back into training and careers for those who are temporarily excluded from the jobs market
- Support those who are struggling to enter the jobs market for the first time
- Support people who need new skills and strategies to adapt to changes in the jobs market
- Support those with mental health or physical health issues or other barriers
- Promote the opportunities for rewarding careers in rural and local industries including the land, woodlands, conservation, environment, water management sector, construction and crafts.

In pursuing this vision, the Charity is committed to making a real difference to the lives of people in Essex and surrounding areas by focussing on helping those who are outside the workforce, education and training to re-engage with training. The aim is to equip trainees with the confidence, skills and qualifications to enable them to progress into employment, self-employment or further education and training. In doing this, the Charity will help employers to secure the motivated, skilled and qualified staff they need to grow their organisations, and in turn to strengthen the local economy.

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

In addition to the benefits the Charity brings to its participants, the local community and society through the education it offers, the Charity's help and assistance to those in need including mentoring, advocacy and employability create a social asset and so reduces the long term costs to the Exchequer. Our estimated Social Value, as calculated by Essex County Council, gave an estimate of £3.5million (July 2022) plus an estimated £8million in suicide prevention value (HM Government estimate).

The Trustees are responsible for setting a strategy for achieving the objectives they have set. The focus is on the development of participants and their educational and social progress and to widen further the access to the education the Charity provides.

The Strategy, as reviewed in January 2023, sets out our priorities:

- Deliver a programme of relevant land based, skills and construction courses to at least 750 participants p.a. by December 2023 and to be in a position to aim to reach 1000 participants by December 2025.
- Review portfolio of courses to ensure that they remain relevant to the target audience, local authority and government and prospective employers in the light of COVID, Brexit and other issues, new technology and other changes that may occur
- Develop a network of outreach facilities and partnerships to provide relevant courses within acceptable distances of its core markets. In achieving this, the operational focus for ART is to deliver a range of land, conservation, construction and other linked skills courses for trainees of all ages.

Focus will be maintained on six linked enabling areas (organisational structure, premises, staffing, ICT, marketing and financial performance) to achieve and maintain a sustainable business which delivers ART's strategic objectives. This will include:

- 1) Service
 - Course portfolio – develop and maintain a portfolio of courses which stays current with both trainee and employer demands, whilst being fundable and aligned with ART's strategic focus on those who are disadvantaged, outside the jobs market or at risk of exclusion from the training and jobs market in the local economy.
- 2) Enabling:
 - Organisational structure – ART will continue to operate as a charitable organisation (CIO)
 - Staffing – continue to ensure appropriate cover for roles with a senior management team enabling a focus on high quality training delivery supported by a team of core and contract tutors with appropriate relationship management, communication and business development and robust financial control assisted where appropriate by external professionals.
 - Premises – Administrative HQ currently at Chatham Green will move to a new site at Meadow View, Chelmsford from 1st May 2023, which will be able to provide additional participant programmes and garden, at a reduced cost to the charity compared with the current premises. Wormingford continues as our main operational site with satellite partner sites providing additional coverage across the county and further afield as appropriate. The Board and senior management will continue to regularly review the strategy for main premises for ART.
 - Marketing – continue to develop and implement a marketing strategy which focuses on keeping ART's profile as a lead provider and resource with potential trainees, delivery partners and funding bodies via engagement and promotion of ART's provision
 - Compliance – ensure that ART remains fully compliant with all appropriate legislation

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

In taking forward the Charity's strategy, the Charity will:

- Review the Charity's courses, progress and achievements;
- Ensure the range of courses available to its participants is meeting their needs;
- Invest in establishing the necessary infrastructure of the Charity;
- Co-operate and work with public bodies, other charities, community organisations and partners; and
- Continue to review and develop its methods to ensure wider access to participants from all backgrounds.

Abberton Rural Training (ART) is a charitable trust which seeks to benefit the public through the pursuit of its stated aims. Its courses are free to participants in order to ensure accessibility for all, and particularly those from difficult backgrounds or in difficult circumstances including homelessness.

The Charity welcomes participants from all backgrounds. The Charity has continued to seek to be all inclusive, particularly to those in isolation seeking to be trained. We continue to ensure our courses are accessible to all. An individual's economic status, health, gender, ethnicity, race, religion or disability does not form part of the Charity's acceptance processes.

The Charity is an equal opportunities organisation and is committed to a working environment that is free from any form of discrimination on the grounds of colour, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability. The Charity makes reasonable adjustments to meet the needs of staff or participants who are or become disabled.

The Charity is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of its participants and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. We have had significant welfare cases this year, including the prevention of suicide, and we consider that our support and interventions have majorly assisted in the avoidance of 16 potential suicides during this financial year with 69 SetSaf reported risk cases. We have worked closely with Essex Adult Social Care to ensure the correct safeguarding procedures have been in place and have been effective.

The Trustees have paid due regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission in deciding what activities the charity should undertake.

Achievements and performance

The Charity has continued to evolve and develop courses, subject to funding availability and demand. Current courses for this year include Horticulture, Land Based Studies, Countryside & Environment, Woodlands, Construction, Carpentry, Rural Crafts and Textiles. We provide courses for people over 16, with our eldest student this year being 83. We have general adult groups, together with separate groups to facilitate accessibility for NEETs, SEN, Wounded and Injured Service Personnel (Rustic Recover Programme – RRP), Domestic Abuse victims, Moderate Learning Difficulties and multiple disadvantage groups. 417 individual participants took part in these ART courses in the academic year 2022/23 with 3412 learning days completed with a total of 22,492 Guided Learning Hours provided.

We have also been requested to assist as a partner organisation for delivery of "Shortbreaks" programmes for children with disabilities during school holiday periods, which has been successfully completed during this financial year and has developed into a 3 year contract as a delivery partner with "SEND Sensations".

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

We further continued to work with vulnerable and isolated people and families with our Stay at Home, Grow Your Own Project, which has provided packs to a further 1000 households across Essex over the past two years, in partnership with Active Essex giving a total of 2500 households assisted to grow their own produce at home. This project has also seen evaluation results of some 48% claiming reduced medication need due to the project, which was far higher than expected.

We also have completed a large project as Lead Partner, with 4 further partners, with project management provided by Essex County Council as part of the Community Renewal Fund scheme, funded by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. This funding provided all partners with a total of £507,000 in initial funding and a further £30,000 for extension funding. The evaluation report was very positive with 168 participants involved through ART programmes for this project with very impressive results.

The Charity's work continues work at locations throughout Essex, including our main head office at Chatham Green, together with Wormingford; Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome; Blackwater Leisure Centre, Maldon; Kennedy Way, Clacton; Cressing; Hadleigh; Avon Road, Chelmsford; Hadleigh Country Park and Great Notley Country Park. We have also recently commenced a new programme at Abbeyfields Medical Centre, Colchester at the request of the NHS Medical Centre, and a further site under funding development currently at All Saints House, in Harwich, which is a further NHS site.

As above, we will be moving our Administrative HQ from Chatham Green to Meadow View, Chelmsford from the 1st May 2023, at a reduced cost to the charity compared with the current Chatham Green site, with the additional benefit of a garden and facilities in order to provide further participant programmes at this site.

The Charity has been awarded The Queens Award for Voluntary Service, has been awarded a Queens Green Canopy "Tree of Trees" – one of only 300 organisations to be awarded in the country for our work during the Platinum Jubilee Year. We have also been recognised again by the High Sheriff; Rural Business Awards, winning two National awards for Best Rural Social Enterprise, Charity or Community Project and Triumph Over Adversity Award and awarded Best Rural Life Skills Organisation 2023 – Essex in the Non-profit Organisation Awards 2023.

We have also gained Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme Bronze Award; Disability Confident Level 2, completed our Social Mobility Pledge and are working towards Working Well accreditation.

Financial review

The Charity's Reserves Policy requires ART's minimum unrestricted funds neither committed nor invested in tangible assets (i.e. the charity's minimum 'Free Core Charitable Funds' or 'Free Reserves') to be sufficient to enable the charity to meet its next three months' direct expenditure on its unrestricted activities and, in addition, its next three months' expenditure on all its support costs, as defined in Note 1.5 to the Financial Statements.

As at 31 March 2023 this equated to a minimum requirement of £ 86,075.18 in Unrestricted Reserves.

This is however the minimum requirement, and the Board had set a target for unrestricted reserves of £120,000 for end of 2023, and rising to £150,000 by the end of March 2024 to ensure adequate protection of courses and provision without interruption.

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

The actual unrestricted Reserves as at 31st March 2023 amounted to £96,456.79.

The Trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed, and are satisfied that systems are in place to mitigate exposure to the major risks. The Board of Trustees review the charity's Risk Register at each of its bi-monthly meetings. The main strategic risks facing the charity going forward are:

1. Loss of key staff
2. Security of assets
3. Lack of ongoing funding
4. Loss of reputation

Internal financial risks are minimised through the implementation of robust financial control procedures including regular reports to the Board of Trustees. Loss of key staff has been a challenge this year due to COVID continuing and long-term illness of two members of staff. Further recruitment of new staff has helped reduce this impact and risk.

The Charity continues to develop further partnerships and funding opportunities to increase further the number of participants able to participate in its programmes, liaising with over 200 different organisations for referrals and partnerships. ART recognises the importance of working with others and will work to ensure it has and maintains clear partnerships in place with:

- One or more strategic educational partner(s) (currently ACL) who can help it to access funding opportunities and/or validate ART's course provision (with a preference for an FE College provider as its core partner). We have also applied for direct Department for Education funding which will be announced in June 2023.
- Councils, DWP, DfE, Essex Community Foundation (ECF), Active Essex, businesses and other strategic partners who have funding to support training
- Colleges and employers who can offer progression opportunities for those trained by ART
- Local landlords including Eastlight Community Homes, CB Homes, CSH, Phoenix Homes, Peabody etc.

Going forward we will continue to liaise with local and national government bodies including the Department of Work and Pensions, the Police and South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP), the High Sheriff of Essex and Essex County Council Employability and Skills team and other charity organisations, such as Essex Community Fund, to ensure that the Charity's programme and courses remain relevant and up to date with local requirements, particular skills shortage relevant to local employment opportunities.

The Charity continues to develop a network of outreach facilities to provide relevant courses within acceptable distances to meet the demands and needs of the community aligned with the Charity's strategic focus for those who are outside the jobs market or at risk of exclusion from training and the jobs market in the local community. The Charity continues to work with Adult Community Learning to help access funding opportunities and/or validate the Charity's course provision.

The Charity anticipates that its future plans will continue to be financed primarily from funding income (generally on an annual cycle) and therefore the Board of Trustees continue to maintain an appropriate balance between delivery for the benefit of current participants and ensuring a sound infrastructure and financial base are preserved for future participants.

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

TRUSTEES' REPORT (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Charity's marketing approach focuses on raising the Charity's profile with potential trainees, delivery partners and funding bodies through engagement and promotion of the work and success of the Charity's work. Our social media profile has increased by 113% this year, in terms of followers, commencing our new Instagram account, and 10,235 page visits and 106009 views. Our main social media channel remains Facebook, with Linked In, Twitter and Instagram also active. We have continued to review and update our website.

Structure, governance and management

The Charity operates under a constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (Association Model), with the date of the constitution (last amended) of 8th September 2016 and was sealed by the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales on 19th September 2016 which included the regulations for appointment of trustees.

The Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

Anne Brown (Chair)
Andrew Grimwade (resigned March 2023)
Anna MacDonald (resigned March 2023)
Paul Hinsley
Alistair Heron (resigned March 2023)
Tristan Bourne
Anthony Stamp (appointed Mar 2023)
Tim Frances (appointed Mar 2023)
Rebecca Chilver (appointed Mar 2023)

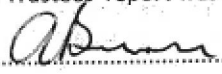
The Board of Trustees are responsible for the overall management and control of the Charity and meet at least six times a year. The work of implementing their policies is carried out by the Chief Executive Officer and reviewed and amended or accepted by the Board of Trustees.

The Charity's Chief Executive Officer is responsible for co-ordinating the work of the Board of Trustees and any sub-committees as may be required, preparation of papers and management accounts and the review of matters arising.

The Trustees determine the general policy of the Charity. The day to day running of the Charity is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer.

All trustees give their time freely. The trustees receive no remuneration. No trustee expenses were paid in this year.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.


.....
Trustee

Dated: 3.7.23.....

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Abberton Rural Training (the charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Trustees of the charity you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act).

I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Your attention is drawn to the fact that the charity has prepared financial statements in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) in preference to the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice issued on 1 April 2005 which is referred to in the extant regulations but has now been withdrawn.

I understand that this has been done in order for financial statements to provide a true and fair view in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Practice effective for reporting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2015.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Paul Pritchard FFA
Abacus Accountancy
105 Courtyard Studios
Braintree
Essex
CM7 3AN



Dated: 28th June 2023

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	18,981.76	-	18,981.76	48,574
Charitable activities	4	322,742.79	556,137.52	878,880.31	232,987
Investments	5	700.46	-	700.46	9
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total income		342,425.01	556,137.52	898,562.53	281,570
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	328,404.09	446,927.52	775,331.61	253,630
Net (expenditure)/income for the year/ Net movement in funds		14,020.92	109,210.00	123,230.92	27,940
Fund balances at 1 April 2022		82,435.87	0.00	82,435.87	54,496
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Fund balances at 31 March 2023		96,456.79	109,210.00	205,666.79	82,436
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

		2023		2022	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Assets			5,500		5,500
Current assets					
Debtors	11				
Cash at bank and in hand		214,966		90,986	
		214,966		90,986	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	12	(14,799)		(14,050)	
Net current assets			200,167		79,936
Total net assets of the charity			205,667		82,436
Income funds					
Restricted funds	13		109,210		0.00
Unrestricted funds			96,457		82,436
			205,667		82,436

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on



Anne Brown
Chair of Trustees

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Accounting policies

Charity information

Abberton Rural Training is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, incorporated in England & Wales.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Constitution, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a true and fair view. This departure has involved following the Statement of Recommended Practice for charities applying FRS 102 rather than the version of the Statement of Recommended Practice which is referred to in the Regulations but which has since been withdrawn.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling , which is the functional currency of the charity.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the Trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the Trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds comprise grants and donations, contract income and other income receivable or generated for the objects of the charity without further specified purpose. In ART's case this includes the charity's commissioning grants from Essex County Council, which is applied across all the charity's objects and are fully utilised over the course of the year. Unrestricted funds which are not utilised during the year are carried forward as general funds.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably, and it is probable that income will be received.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount.

ABBERTON RURAL TRAINING

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONTINUED) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1 Accounting policies

(Continued)

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis. All income and expenditure is allocated to a particular activity where it relates directly to that activity. Support functions (including finance, human resources, facilities management and governance) are apportioned across the activities that the functions support. Overhead costs (including office running costs and consumables, information technology, insurances and affiliation fees) are similarly apportioned. To the extent that activity-related funding agreements allow, support costs are apportioned to activities based on the full-time equivalent number of staff employed within that activity.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost. Financial assets comprise cash at bank and in hand, together with trade and other debtors. A specific provision is made for debts for which recoverability is in doubt. Cash at bank and in hand is defined as all cash held in instant access bank accounts and used as working capital. Financial liabilities held at amortised cost comprise all creditors except social security and other taxes, deferred income and provisions.

1.6 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received. Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total funds
	2023	2023	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Donations and legacies	18,981.76	-	18,981.76	48,574
	=====	=====	=====	=====

4 Charitable activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted funds	Total	Total funds
	2023 £	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £
Services provided under contract	322,742.79 =====	556,137.52 =====	878,880.31 =====	386,576 =====

5 Investments

	Unrestricted funds	Total
	2023 £	2022 £
Investments – interest receivable	700.46 =====	9 =====

6 Charitable activities

	Education & training 2023 £	Education & training 2022 £
Staff costs	192,143.93	167,335
Education and training	261,981.75	129,186
Rent and venue hire	57,301.01	42,833
Repairs and maintenance	37,247.47	17,453
Printing, postage and stationary	6,031.08	1,817
Telephony and internet	1,911.55	1,347
Travel and subsistence (now incl. small purchases)	91,567.04	49,564
Office expenses	4,244.00	605
Professional fees (incl. RCCE previous staff costs/fees)	0.00	0
Insurance	2,353.27	95
Memberships	9,685.00	3,886
Bank charges	216.00	96
Share of governance costs	6,113.20	5,141
Other expenses	104,536.31	7,352
	-----	-----
Total	775,331.61	426,710
	-----	-----
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds	328,404.09	253,630
Restricted funds	446,927.52	173,080
	-----	-----
	775,331.61	426,710
	-----	-----

7 Support Costs

	Support Costs £	Governance costs £	2023 £	Support costs £	Governance costs £	2022 £
Accountancy	1,807	4,306	6,113	835	4,306	5,141
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	1,807	4,306	6,113	835	4,306	5,141
Analysed between Charitable activities	1,807	4,306	6,113	835	4,306	5,141
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

Governance costs includes fees payable to the independent examiners of £4,306

8 Trustees

No payments or remuneration from the charity was paid to Trustees (or any persons connected with them) during the year.

9 Employees**Number of employees**

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
	19	12

Employment Costs	2023	2022
	£	£
Staff cost salaries	192,143.93	167,335
Education salaries	227,319.16	115,607
	-----	-----

10 Financial Instruments

Carrying amount of financial assets	2023	2022
	£	£
Debt instruments measured at amortised cost	-	-
Carrying amount of financial liabilities		
Measured at amortised cost	14,799.31	14,050
	-----	-----

11 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2023	2022
	£	£
Trade debtors	-	-
Other debtors	-	-
	-----	-----
	-	-

12 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year:	2023	2022
	£	£
Creditors	14,779.31	14,050
	-----	-----
	14,779.31	14,050

13 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted Funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £	Unrestricted funds 2022 £
Fund balances at 31 March 2023 are represented by:				
Current assets/(liabilities)	96,457	109,210	205,667	82,436
	-----	-----	-----	-----
	96,457	109,210	205,667	82,436
	-----	-----	-----	-----

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