



TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

1st April 2022 – 31st March 2023

*Celebrating 27 Years of
Helping to prevent homelessness*

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Registered Charitable Incorporated Organisation - No. 1171222

1 Objectives and Activities

The Wycombe Rent Deposit Guarantee Scheme (WRDGS) is a charity set up for the relief of poverty amongst people who are homeless or inadequately housed in the Wycombe District area. The Scheme provides guarantees for rent deposits, and other assistance on behalf of said persons who are in need of accommodation and who would otherwise be unable to secure accommodation in the Wycombe District.

The Scheme meets its objectives by:

1. Providing a Guarantee as an alternative to the cash deposit normally required by a landlord to secure a tenancy. The landlord can claim against the guarantee if he would be entitled to make deductions from a pre-paid deposit. This can help those who are able to pay rent, for example if they qualify for Universal Credit Housing Costs, but who cannot afford a deposit.
2. Maintaining and sustaining existing tenancies by liaising with tenants, landlords, benefits agencies and other support bodies to pre-empt and address issues threatening a tenancy.
3. Giving free, confidential advice on housing-related matters.

2 Background

The early planning stages of the Scheme were started in 1995 by a partnership between the members of The Wycombe District Council Housing Forum and The Source Group - a lay ecumenical Christian covenant community based in High Wycombe.

The Charity was registered in 1996 as a charitable trust but converted to being a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) for the year 2017-18. The charitable objects, staff and trustees remained the same but a CIO is the recommended legal structure for a small charity like WRDGS.

At WRDGS' inception it was agreed that Wycombe District Council (WDC) would provide an annual grant to pay for on-costs (the costs of employing staff), the churches of High Wycombe would contribute towards running costs and The Guinness Partnership Limited would set aside £30,000 to cover the guarantees.

WRDGS applies for an annual grant from the Council (which is now Buckinghamshire Council). The Council grant no longer fully covers on-costs so the Scheme has to raise money from other grants, donations and fund-raising activities.

3 Achievements and Performance

In 2022 - 23 we celebrated **27** years of helping to prevent homelessness in the Wycombe area. Our 2 members of staff provided highly specialised advice via 520 calls or meetings with **303** individual people. Some of these clients only contacted the Scheme once, whilst others are contacted on a weekly basis. We housed **52** households with **9** different landlords. Using our tenancy support service, most of our clients have renewed their tenancies without a guarantee being required, indicating that our landlords consider them to be reliable tenants.

Our Operations Manager also assisted at a local legal drop-in which the general public can attend for free housing-related advice. Different experts helped including a solicitor and our Ops Manager attended as a Benefits advisor. In 22-23 he had 68 interactions with people in this capacity.

We helped **20** households rescue their tenancies and **58** households to sustain their tenancies, thus preventing them from becoming homeless. Thanks must go to Bucks Council's Housing Benefit Department for providing advice and Discretionary Housing Payments, and also to the Wycombe Homeless Connection Housing Legal Clinic.

This year has been our busiest for some time, with demand returning to pre-pandemic levels. We have worked closely with Buckinghamshire Council, Connection Support and Wycombe Homeless Connection, to help clients access local hostels and then move on to private sector accommodation. For example, One YMCA refers clients to us who are considered ready and able to sustain a tenancy. In 22-23 moved 11 of their residents into self-contained studio flats.

We have had no claims against our guarantees this year proving that, with our help, our tenants are reliable and manage their finances well.

As we offer local landlords a free professional service (the Operations Manager is a Fellow of The National Association of Estate Agents) they continue to house our homeless clients.

People Helped by the Scheme since inception as at 2022/2023

By the end of 2022/2023, the Scheme had HOUSED 1754 households, a total of 1927 adults and 757 children housed. Of these, 52 households (53 Adults and 1 child) were new to the Scheme and 12 households (12 Adults and 0 children) renewed their tenancies with the help of the Scheme. By the end 2022/23, the Scheme had RESCUED 683 clients' tenancies. Of these 20 were new in 2022/23. We also helped to SUSTAIN 58 tenancies during 22/23 in order to keep clients in their accommodation who would have been at risk of becoming homeless.

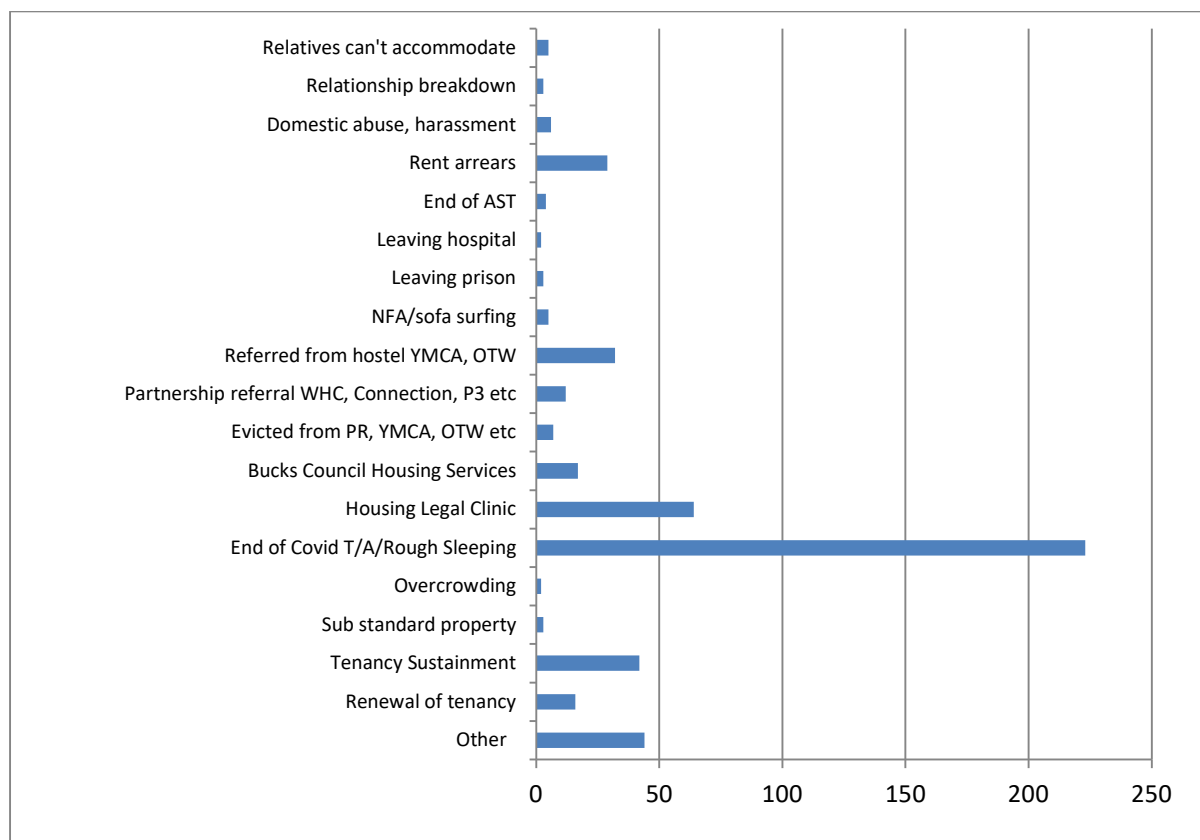
4 People helped by the Scheme in 2022-23

The figures below show breakdowns by household type and ethnic origin of people housed and advised by the Scheme this year.

HOUSED HOUSEHOLD BREAKDOWN	
Couples	01
Families	00
Single Females	09
Single Males	41
Single-Parent Families	01

Ethnic Breakdown of Clients Advised		
White	British	152
	European	04
	Irish	03
	Any other Background	20
Black	British	04
	European	00
	Caribbean	07
	African	12
	Any other Black Background	00
Asian	British	02
	Indian	00
	Pakistani	00
	Bangladeshi	01
	Chinese	00
	Any other Asian Background	00
Mixed	White and Black British	01
	White and Black European	00
	White and Black Caribbean	00
	White and Black African	02
	White and Asian	00
	Any Other Mixed Background	00
Other Ethnic Groups		00
Other	Not known/Prefer not to say	312

2022-23 SCHEME APPLICANTS – REASON FOR HOMELESSNESS



The following case studies are based on real people, although names and details have been changed to preserve anonymity. Much of the work that we do is more complicated than simply housing someone...

Isabelle approached us as she remembered that, many years ago, we had helped her father resolve some benefit issues that had put his tenancy at risk. She had lived with him in this house virtually all her life. Sadly, her father had died and consequently her social landlord wished to regain possession of their property. The house was too big and unaffordable for her, but she needed some time to look at her future housing options as she had to give up work due to ill health. We helped her claim Universal Credit and other benefits, which enabled her to pay the rent. We also negotiated with her landlord who agreed to transfer her to an affordable 1-bedroom property as soon as one is available.

Bill was sleeping in his car when he contacted us. Due to previous addiction issues, his relationship had failed, he lost his job and was homeless. He had been sober for a year and was looking for work, but having no address was hindering his job search. We found him an affordable room and, within 2 months, he had found employment and no longer needed assistance to pay his rent.

Jimmy had become homeless due to a family bereavement and this has led to a mental health crisis. He was referred to us by his GP's social prescriber. We sourced an affordable flat for him, paid his first month's rent in advance, covered his deposit and provided him with furniture. His mental health has improved immeasurably and as part of his recovery, he is now volunteering for a local charity.

5 Organisations who referred Clients to WRDGS during 2022-23

Buckinghamshire Council Housing Options Team	Thames Valley Police
Buckinghamshire Council Customer Service Centre	Chiltern Adult Mental Health Team
Buckinghamshire Social Care	Old Tea Warehouse
Connection Floating Support – Bucks	Padstones
Connection Reset – Bucks Thrive Homes	Private Sector Landlords
Citizens Advice Bureau	P3 Housing Support Service
H.M. Prison & Probation Service	Saunderton Lodge
GP Surgeries –Social Prescribers	Wycombe Women’s Aid
Job Centre Plus	Wycombe Homeless Connection
Oasis Partnership	Youth Enquiry Service
	YMC

6 Organisations who WRDGS referred clients to during 2022-23

Central Aid www.central-aid.org.uk
 Wycombe Homeless Connection www.wyhoc.org.uk/
 P3 www.p3charity.org
 Connection Support www.connectionsupport.org.uk/buckinghamshire/
 St Martin in the Fields www.smitfc.org/
 YMCA High Wycombe Hostel <https://oneymca.org/>
 Old Tea Warehouse <https://www.riverside.org.uk/>

7 Financial Review

Guarantee Funds

In the 2022/23 financial year the total value of new guarantees written by the scheme was £12,023.09.

By the end of 2022/23 the total value of Guarantees written by the Scheme since its inception was

£432,261.02 with a total claim pay out of £4,863.26. This makes the Scheme’s average claim rate 1.13%

Review of the Charity’s Financial Position at the end of the Period

During 2022-23 the Scheme’s operation was financed by:

- a revenue grant from Buckinghamshire Council
- a grant received from the National Lottery Community Fund at the end of 2021-22
- St Peter’s Church Loudwater
- All Saints Parish Church High Wycombe

- St Francis of Assisi Church
- Private donors
- Buckinghamshire Council Lottery

WRDGS has the following funds ear-marked for specific uses. These are documented on the Balance Sheet of the annual accounts.

- a) Restricted fund holding grant from Deposit Protection Service for general rent in advance payments: £978 left at the end of the year.
- b) Restricted fund holding grant for Buckinghamshire Council Grant Scheme to assist people to move on from temporary and hostel accommodation (eg. money for deposits, rent in advance, arrears payments).

This fund was set up in 2018-19 as a result of receiving a grant of £20,000 from Wycombe District Council for this purpose. It has been topped up several times since then. In 2022-23 a further £20,000 was received from Buckinghamshire Council funds and £33,590 was passed on from the Council from a grant received from Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

In 22-23 the receipts to and payments from this fund were also shown on the Income and Expenditure page but a note was made that this fund cannot be used by WRDGS for its general running costs. With the income and Expenditure for this fund, the accounts show a surplus of £25,392 in the income for the year. Whereas, for operating there was actually a deficit of net receipts of (£11,840).

- c) Fund to cover our statutory redundancy liabilities if our staff had to be made redundant.
- d) Fund to cover 26 weeks statutory sick pay.
- e) £2,000 given to the Scheme by Guinness Partnership Ltd in the early days to alleviate cash flow problems. It is kept aside to enable a quick payout of a claim on a deposit guarantee while the Scheme waits for Guinness to pay the claim.

Funding for the Future

It is estimated that WRDGS will need £86,552 to run during the year 2023-24 (including money required to top-up its statutory liabilities for possible redundancy and sick pay).

Before the end of 2022-23, WRDGS had secured a grant from Buckinghamshire Council of £62,500 for 2023 – 24. This grant has remained the same since 2014 so a request for an increase will be made during the next financial year.

During 2022 – 23, fundraising proved to be difficult and this has resulted in our having just £2,146 of unrestricted, undesignated reserves to carry forward into 2023 - 24 at the end of the year.

Further funds will have to be raised from donations from local churches, private donors and grants.

WRDGS was noted as a key partner in Wycombe District Council's Homelessness Strategy and has collaborated with Buckinghamshire Council as it did with Wycombe District Council.

Policy for holding reserves and amounts at end of 2022 - 23

WRDGS has the following reserves:

- Liability for Statutory Redundancy Pay if staff had to be made redundant: £31,700
- Liability for 26 weeks' Statutory Sick Pay for one member of staff: £2,583
- Money from Guinness Partnership's reserve for guarantees: £2,000. (Guinness Partnership Ltd holds a further £30,000 for guarantees in its bank account)

8 Structure, Governance and Management

WRDGS is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) whose governing document is a constitution. As well as individual people applying to be trustees, the following organisations can nominate trustees for the charity:

- Buckinghamshire Council,
- Guinness Partnership Ltd.,
- Churches Together High Wycombe,
- The Youth Enquiry Service,
- The Citizen's Advice Bureau.

The Scheme is managed by a steering committee comprising the trustees and its two members of staff.

The Scheme's Steering Committee during 2022 - 23

Catriona Plummer	Trustee nominated by Churches Together High Wycombe (Chair of trustees)
Cllr. Paul Turner	Trustee nominated by Buckinghamshire Council
Nancy Bradshaw	Trustee (Fundraising)
Clive Bradshaw	Trustee (Secretary)
Eddie Maguire	Trustee (Treasurer)
Phil Thomas	Operations Manager (paid member of staff)
Tracey Thomas	Client Servicing Officer (paid member of staff).

The trustees would like to thank the following people who donated their services free of charge:

Anthony Pearmain – Web site design and IT Consultant @ StratMetrix

Sharon Marshall - Keeping Books 4 U

Steven Potts – Independent Examiner of End of Year Accounts

We are very grateful to our many donors during 2022 - 23 who continued to support us in spite of the difficulties arising from the cost of living crisis.

9 Future Aims of the Scheme

- To recruit more accommodation providers.
- To secure permanent long-term funding to ensure a more secure financial position; to increase our general unrestricted reserves.
- To improve the conditions in private rented accommodation, especially Houses of Multiple Occupation, by ensuring that reasonable standards are met.
- To recognise that, when seeking accommodation, certain groups and individuals are discriminated against and to oppose such discrimination.
- Through good management to maintain our low claim rate.
- To strive to improve our service.

Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	C.A. Plummer	Clive Bradshaw
Full name(s)	CATRIONA PLUMMER	CLIVE BRADSHAW
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	CHAIR of Trustees	SECRETARY
Date	8th Jan 2024	

THE WYCOMBE RENT DEPOSIT GUARANTEE SCHEME

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31st March 2023

		Total 31-Mar-23	Total 31-Mar-22
<u>INCOME AND EXPENDITURE</u>			
	Note		
<u>INCOME</u>			
Donations	3	2,380	13,897
BC Grant	5	62,500	62,500
Other Income	4	0	0
COIF Deposit Interest		176	4
Bank Interest		135	2
Gift Aid Tax Refund	3	782	48
BC RIA Grant Top-Up	12	53,590	10,000
TOTAL INCOME		119,564	86,451
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>			
Salaries & On-costs		71,563	70,717
Printing, Postage & Stationery		87	27
Telephone / IT		884	1,020
Travel & Parking		127	252
Subscriptions		295	280
Bank Charges		121	192
Rent		3,810	3,600
Insurance		860	965
PPE Equipment		0	83
Miscellaneous		66	168
BC RIA Grant Spending	12	16,359	12,236
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		94,172	89,540
TOTAL NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR THE YEAR		25,392	(3,089)
NET SURPLUS (DEFICIT) FOR RUNNING COSTS FOR THE YEAR	14	(11,840)	(853)

The notes on page 3 and 4 form part of these accounts.

THE WYCOMBE RENT DEPOSIT GUARANTEE SCHEME

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH 2023

	Note	31-Mar-23		31-Mar-22	
		£	£	£	£
CURRENT ASSETS					
Cash at Bank		30,019		42,032	
COIF Deposit		10,000		10,000	
BOSH/DPS Account	10/11	45,803		5,550	
Debtors & Prepayments	8	280		0	
		<u>86,102</u>		<u>57,582</u>	
CURRENT LIABILITIES					
Creditors & Accruals	9	<u>1,869</u>		<u>1,764</u>	
		<u>1,869</u>		<u>1,764</u>	
NET CURRENT ASSETS			84,233		55,818
NET ASSETS			<u>84,233</u>		<u>55,818</u>
FUNDS					
Guinness Fund	7	2,000		2,000	
Redundancy Reserve	7	31,700		28,547	
SSP Reserve	7	2,583		2,535	
DPS Fund	11	978		978	
BOSH RIA Fund	10	0		123	
BC RIA Fund (Restricted)	12	44,826		4,449	
BC Cllr Funds x2	13			11	
Undesignated Reserves	6	<u>2,146</u>		<u>17,175</u>	
		<u>84,233</u>		<u>55,818</u>	

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 7th November 2023 and signed on its behalf by

Catriona Plummer Chairman

THE WYCOMBE RENT DEPOSIT GUARANTEE SCHEME

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31/03/2023

1) ACCOUNTING POLICIES

General

These accounts have been prepared under the historic cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards and the Statement of Recommended Practice on Accounting by Charities

2) ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BY FUND

	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
	£	£
Guinness Partnership Fund	2000	2000
Redundancy Reserve	31700	28547
SSP Reserve	2583	2535
BOSH RIA	0	123
DPS Fund (restricted)	978	978
BC Scheme (restricted)	44826	4449
BC Councillors Fund x2	0	11
Undesignated Fund	2146	17175
	<u>84233</u>	<u>55818</u>

3) DONATIONS (Incl Lotto)

DONATIONS

2022 - 2023
£

S Connolly	120
N Hanbury	120
St Peters Loudwater	415
Anonymous	100
C. & W. Bunting	240
All Saints Church	500
Deacon P Priestley	120
St Francis of Assisi Church	64
G & H Dodgson	60
Easy Fundraising	61
Online Donations	112
Amazon Europe	39
P Hogwood	240
W. & C. Plummer	140
BC Lotto	49
	<u>2380</u>
Gift Aid Received 2022/23	<u>782</u>
	<u>3162</u>

4) OTHER INCOME

	£	£
	31 March 2023	31 March 2022
	0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

5) BC GRANT

Used towards staff salaries and oncosts

6) MOVEMENT IN RESERVES

	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
	Profit & Loss	SSP Reserve	Redundancy Reserve	Designated Reserves BOSH, BC & DPS Funds	BC Cllr Funds	Guinness Fund	Total
O/Bal 1 April 2022	17,176	2,535	28,547	5,550	11	2,000	55,819
movement in year surplus/(deficit) before movement to reserves	(11,840)						(11,840)
Payments for Deposits/Rent In Advance from Reserves				40,254			40,254
to SSP Reserve	(48)	48					0
To general reserve from BC fund	11				(11)		0
to Redundancy Reserve	(3,153)		3,153				0
C/Bal 30 Mar 23	<u>2,146</u>	<u>2,583</u>	<u>31,700</u>	<u>45,804</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>84,233</u>

The movement in the BOSH, DPS and BC Funds represents the payments for Rent Deposits and Rent in Advance made during the year and further grants received from BC.

7) RESTRICTED & DESIGNATED RESERVES

	£
Guinness Partnership	2000
Redundancy Reserve	31700
SSP Reserve	2583
DPS Fund (restricted)	978
BOSH RIA Fund	0 see note 10
BC Scheme (restricted)	44825
BC Cllrs Fund x2	0 see note 13
	<u>82086</u>

NB. Guinness Partnership holds £30,000 in its accounts for deposit guarantees; the £2000 held in WRDGS accounts was given to WRDGS at start-up to assist with cash-flow WRDGS has chosen to keep this separately for swift payment of claims while a claim with Guinness is processed.

8) DEBTORS			£
Phil Thomas Expense overpayment			280
			<u>280</u>
9) CREDITORS			£
Anticipated HMRC month 12			<u>1,869</u>
			<u>1869</u>
10) BOSH DONATION			
£10,938 received into the Current Account and transferred to dedicated account in 2014. Money was used as payments of rent in advance to landlords for single homeless people			
			£
Years 2014-2019, 25 Payments total			<u>10815</u>
Years 2020 -2023, no payments			<u>0</u>
			<u>10815</u>
			Remaining £123 included in RIA funds and will no longer be tracked separately
11) DPS DONATION			
£10,000.00 received into the Current Account and included in the BOSH bank account to be used as payments for rent in advance			
			£
	Y/e 2016	1 payment	300
	Y/e 2017	3 payments	1003
	Y/e 2018	2 payments	649
	Y/e 2019	11 payments	3596
	Y/e 2020	4 payments	2674
	Y/e 2021	0 payments	0
	Y/e 2022	1 payment	<u>800</u>
			<u>9022</u>
Remaining DPS Funds			<u>978</u>
12) BC RIA Grant			
BCRIA	Receipts		
	Received in 2018/19 as a grant to fund fur	20000	
	Rent in Advance and rent Deposits		
	a further £20,000 received in 2019/20	20000	
	a further £10,000 received in 2021/22	10000	
	a further £20,000 received in 2022/23	20000	
	a further £33589 received in 2022/23	33590	
	Total Receipts	103590	£
		Y/e 2019 6 Payments	3895
		Y/e 2020 24 Payments	15294
		Y/e 2021 28 Payments	14126
		Y/e 2022 23 Payments	12236
		Y/e 2023 47 Payments	<u>16359</u>
			<u>61910</u>
	Remaining BC RIA funds		41680
	Remaining from BOSH Scheme		123
	Other Receipts 2022/23		<u>3022</u>
	Remaining RIA Funds excluding DPS		<u>44825</u>
	Original accounts for 21-22 did not report receipts to and payments from this fund on the Income and Expenditure, just in Balance Sheet and notes. However, they have been added to this year's accounts for comparison.		
13) BC Cllr Fund			
£2,000 received Q1 2020/21 re Covid emergency funding.			
£1,000 received Q4 2019/20 re Cllrs Ward Budgets			
	Y/e 2021 4 Payments	Covid	2000
	Y/e 2021 Office Furniture	ward budgets	233
	Y/e 2022 Office Equipment	ward budgets	<u>756</u>
			<u>2989</u>
	Remaining		11
	Will no longer be tracked and identified separately - added to general reserve. See movement in reserves on Note 6		

14 Figure excluding the BC RIA grant spending as it does not relate to our running costs.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

THE WYCOMBE RENT DEPOSIT GUARANTEE SCHEME

On accounts for the year ended

31 MARCH 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1171222

Set out on pages

1-4

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended DD/MM/YYYY.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

~~The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. Delete [] if not applicable.~~

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did 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 accounts to be reached.

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

Signed:

SRPotts

Date:

07/11/2023

Name:

STEVEN ROBERT POTTS

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body

FCCA

(if any):

Address:

15 HYLTON ROAD

HIGH WYCOMBE

BUCKS HP12 4BZ

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

NONE