

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

Period start date Period end date
From 01 07 2022 To 30 06 2023

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name GRIMSARGH WETLANDS TRUST

Other names charity is known by Grimsargh Wetlands Trust, Charity 1174037

Registered charity number (if any) 1174037

Charity's principal address

204 Preston Road,

Grimsargh,

Preston.

Postcode

PR2 5JS

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.	David Hindle	Chairman		
2.	Lesley Walker	Treasurer		
3.	Jayne Woollam	Secretary		
4.	Alan Sargent		Alan was co-opted, Wednesday 17 th August, subject to ratification at the AGM.	
5.	Phil Atkinson			
6.	Steve Whittam			
7.	Mike Fisher			
8.	Andy Small	Deceased June 2023		
9.	John Willan			
10.				
11.				

12.				
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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	Charitable Incorporated Organisation with voting members, other than trustees.
How the charity is constituted	Trust
Trustee selection methods	A yearly re-election of a third of the trustees by the membership at the annual AGM. Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer should stand for re-election annually. Appointment of new trustees is open to anyone who is interested in furthering the Trust's purposes. The role of trustee should be advertised and potential new trustees should be invited to submit a short resume of his/her experience, relevant to the post advertised. A short interview may also take place. Grimsargh Parish Council selected the first trustees, following the submission of a letter of application and an interview.
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.

Section C Objectives and activities

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

New trustees are advised to read the constitution, the handbook and various policy documents. The charity is a trust which abides by the constitution of a charitable incorporated organisation with voting rights by members. There are potentially 9 trustees. Currently we have 9 trustees. On the 28th May 2018 Grimsargh Wetlands Trust signed a lease relating to the land, reservoirs and buildings, with Grimsargh Parish Council for a peppercorn rent, for 25 years. Grimsargh Parish Council are the landlords of the site, and the lease does include various caveats, as agreed with Grimsargh Parish Council. Clearly, there are risks associated with managing this type of site. However, the trustees have public liability insurance, the trustees are insured individually. The trustees have erected multiple signs around the site warning the public of hazards, including avian flu. Volunteers regularly repair or reinstate any damage caused by erosion or vandalism, although, thankfully, vandalism is relatively rare. Trustees risk assess the conditions prior to the volunteer days. Volunteer days occur on a fortnightly basis throughout the year, under normal circumstances. Prior to volunteer days, volunteers are advised via email, and the new website, as to what to wear and the type of tools that will be required. Power tools are not allowed to be used on site by volunteers. Volunteers are given a talk at the start of each session regarding hazards and uneven ground. Volunteers are asked to read the disclaimer on the new website. Volunteers now sign up for volunteer days, via the new website. Children under 16 are not allowed to volunteer unless accompanied by a responsible adult. This information, including a disclaimer, is now on our new website, where most of our volunteers can register their intention to volunteer on a particular day.

Mission statement – “The maintenance and enhancement of the biological status of Grimsargh Wetlands for the benefit of the local community”.

The charity is established to promote for the public benefit the conservation, protection and improvement of both the physical and natural environment in the area known as Grimsargh Wetlands, Grimsargh by promoting its biological diversity. At the same time, the charity promotes the provision of facilities for recreation for everyone, irrespective of age, infirmity, disability or social or economic need.

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)

Originally the site was made up of three disused reservoirs, largely neglected and largely inaccessible to the public, especially in winter, as there was no footpath, or the footpath was in a terrible state of disrepair. In five years, the trustees have constructed footpaths, mobility ramps and steps, erected gates, viewing screens and fences that have made this site accessible to all members of the public, including those with mobility issues, wheelchair users and families with pushchairs. The site is now fully accessible to all. The site is free. The trustees have established volunteering opportunities, educational walks and talks, as well as social activities. It is linking people, who would not otherwise come into contact, with each other and thus is creating a better sense of community.

The trustees have enhanced the site by creating islands in the Island Lake, to encourage wading birds to nest. A sluice has also been installed to regulate the water level to maximise the potential for wading birds to breed. This has paid dividends and this year lapwing, avocets, greater crested grebe and oyster catcher have bred. The trustees' aim is to protect the fauna and flora of the site, while simultaneously, encouraging the whole community to enjoy volunteering activities as well as being able to access the site irrespective of the season. The site is special in that it is really three sites in one. The Fen, the Island Lake and the Mere, each site attracting a wide range of flora and fauna. The site attracts large numbers of wading birds. In these days of encroaching urbanisation, it provides an oasis for nature in an otherwise overdeveloped urban sprawl to the north of Preston.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

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

- policy on grantmaking;

While we have secured grants totalling £60,000.00 from the "Lancashire Environmental Fund" since 2018, including £10,980.00 January 2021, £3,000.00 from the "Alice and Harold Bridges Trust" March, 2020, and £1,250.00 from "SUEZ Recycling and Recovery Group", December, 2020, we continue to pursue grants from other organisations, for example, "Naturesave Trust". However, while we recognise that membership, legacies and fundraising are important sources of revenue, in order to secure the long-term viability of the Trust, we need to plan for its future sustainability. Long-term it is hoped to develop the site further by reinstating an existing building on site from which an income stream could be derived, if it were to be hired out to various groups. Alternatively, a new building could be erected on site for the same purpose. It is also hoped that gift aid and donations will form a realistic income stream. It is hoped that our new website will also attract new sponsors in the coming years.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Summary of Achievements:

1. It is with great sadness that we must report on the passing of fellow trustee, Andrew Small. He was a founder trustee of Grimsargh Wetlands; he is a great loss to us. Andy worked tirelessly raising funds for the Trust; in addition, he led projects, successfully applied for grants, and organised and led walks for the public. He built up an invaluable relationship with the two local schools, leading guided walks for the school children around the Wetlands. A memorial to honour Andrew's contribution to the Wetlands is being planned by the trustees, in consultation with Andy's family.
2. Alan Sargent was co-opted as a trustee, Wednesday 17th August, 2022. Alan has been a loyal volunteer and possesses hands-on practical skills. He is committed to helping at volunteer days.
3. Following the AGM in July 2022, it was agreed that there should be two categories of corporate membership: Corporate membership, non-business, one vote; Corporate membership; businesses, no votes.
4. At the August 2022 meeting of the trustees, it was agreed that members will be consulted on any of the following:
 - a. Changes in membership.
 - b. Changes in the status of the site.
 - c. Major project spends involving the GPC dowry.
 - d. Any material changes to the site.
 - e. Changes in the constitution.

However, there has been nothing in the year 2022/23 that has warranted contacting members.
5. During August 2022 Trustees met with a specialist for advice in using grazing animals to maintain wildlife sites. During the course of the year this proposal, led by trustee John Willan, was fully explored. However, it was decided that there were too many risk factors and liabilities.
6. Two walks took place in August and September intended to inform, entertain and engage with the public. The "Butterfly Walk" took place August 6th, 2022, and the "5th Anniversary Walk" took place on Saturday 3rd September 2022. Both walks were well attended and well received. Lord Horam, our Patron attended the 5th Anniversary Walk and made a substantial donation to the Trust, which the trustees agreed should be ring-fenced for a specific project.
7. September 2022, GPC agreed to fund the hiring of the Village Hall for trustees' meetings. We now hold monthly meetings on the third Wednesday of each month.
8. September 2022, landscaping contractors, Wilkinsons of Longridge, made excellent progress cutting grass along the sides and tops of the embankments. It was agreed that the Trust should employ Wilkinsons to maintain the banks four times a year.
9. In October 2022, our Warden, Neil Hartley, resigned.
10. October 2022, the Secretary received an estimate from Bowland Ecology to produce a full site survey of the fauna and flora, given that the last site survey of 2007 would now be obsolete. The cost of the survey would be approximately 4.5-5k. It was agreed that this was too great a cost. A site survey is needed, if the site was to be considered as a SSSI. It was agreed that this project should be "put on hold".
11. In October, 2022, there was a serious outbreak of avian flu. Trustees were in daily contact with DEFRA and Preston City Council. A risk assessment was put in place and signage was placed around the site.

Trustees conducted regular walks around the site, noting newly dead birds. Volunteer work and all volunteer days were suspended. It was suggested that, in line with DEFRA guidance, volunteer days could resume 14 days after the last carcass had been logged. Members and volunteers were kept updated about the avian flu situation.

12. Following the crisis, a newly formed "Crisis Sub-Committee" was formed to act when necessary.
13. During October the contractors, Wilkinsons, completed 4 days work, cutting grass on the south side of the embankment of the Fen and making incursions into the Fen itself.
14. There has been much discussion regarding the installation of an electric fence to protect breeding waders from mammalian predation. However, such an installation would not prevent avian predation. The trustees have also discussed installing wildlife trail cameras on the site.
15. In January 2023, the Treasurer reported that there had been fraudulent activity on the Trust Stripe payments account in December, 2022. As soon as we became aware of the fraudulent activity, the website payment facility was deactivated. Monies were refunded to all USA citizens involved in the card testing incident.
16. In January 2023, following the crisis of a deer being injured on the railings, a trustee offered to make contact with a local contractor, who, he said, may be able to file the railings down by half an inch to help prevent the deer being injured.
17. In February the issue of improved signage for the site was discussed. A trustee said that he had a contact in the village who could produce signs for the Trust.
18. Volunteer days resumed in January 2023. The number of volunteers has decreased this year. Reduced rates of volunteering could be due to avian flu and the pandemic. We will relaunch an appeal for volunteers in autumn 2023.
19. The Trust held a successful "Spring Flower Walk", Saturday, March 18th 2023.
20. This year we have had visits from the Fylde Rangers and the Ribble Rivers Trust. Both these organisations have coppiced the willow.
21. 14th March 2023, a local walking group, "Lancashire Dot Com Walkers" enjoyed a guided walk of the site.
22. Volunteer photographers regularly continue to take excellent photographs for the Trust's Face Book site.
23. Fundraising: Andy Small continued to raise funds with his book stall, calendars and other initiatives, until his untimely death in June 2023.
24. Monday 8th May 1st Grimsargh Scouts visited the site for the "King's Big Coronation Help Out" The scouts weeded the site and enjoyed Coronation cup-cakes, baked by a volunteer.
25. In May, Andy, Phil, and Mike led two classes from Alston Lane School around the Wetlands. They received very positive feedback.
26. At May's meeting, a Fen project was discussed. The trustees would like to install a boardwalk, improved fencing, a sluice and steps down to the Fen. It was suggested that the Trust should apply to the LEF for funding.
27. It has been noted that the site is now attracting many more ornithologists from a wider area, possibly due to the website and social media sites. The site is attracting a wide range of "good" birds, including avocets, garganeys, little ringed plover, lapwing, whimbrel, scoter, greater crested grebe, and cormorants. This year has paid dividends;

lapwing, oyster catcher, avocet and greater crested grebe have bred. Several little egrets also visited the site this year. Trustee David Hindle and local ornithologist Geoff Carefoot regularly log recent bird sightings on the East Lancashire Ornithologists' Club website.

28. Trustees regularly attend Field Days and other events in the area, including the "Goosnargh and Longridge Agricultural Show".
29. Dog faeces continues to be a problem on the public footpath.
30. GPC has donated several nesting boxes and bat boxes to the Trust.
31. Mike Fisher continues to produce and circulate an excellent quarterly newsletter, updating volunteers and members with news and progress on the Wetlands. Hard copies of the newsletter are also given to visitors to the site, new residents to the village and to new members. The newsletter is now archived on the website. Mike also writes a biannual article for Grimsargh Parish Council's newsletter.
32. The trustees continue to have an excellent working relationship with Grimsargh Parish Council. The clerk to the Parish Council is now invited to attend meetings, so that she can update the trustees with relevant planning applications etc She receives agendas and minutes and is invited to each meeting. GPC is the freeholder of the site. Currently Councillor Terry Cryer and Deputy Councillor, Peter Burton, represent the Parish Council at the Trust AGM and any other meetings that would require the Parish Council to vote.
33. While we have faced a challenging twelve months, the trustees have worked tirelessly to keep the Trust going. A lot has been achieved and ongoing maintenance continues to be a challenge but, hopefully, the re-established volunteer days, and the use of professional contractors, will help us to face this challenge successfully. We look forward to re-engaging with the public through our volunteer days and guided walks, and we look forward to relaunching and increasing our membership and our volunteering base.
34. Membership – There are currently 29 members. Membership has dropped significantly. This could be for many reasons, not least the pandemic.
35. The trustees have held monthly meetings, which have been very well attended. Trustees continue to adopt a positive and proactive approach to managing and improving the Wetlands.

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

Details of any funds materially in deficit

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.

Section F Other optional information

Section G Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)

Jayne Woollam

Full name(s)

Jayne Woollam

Date 19/08/2023

Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)

Secretary



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Grimsargh Wetlands Trust

1174037

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

1st. July 2022

To

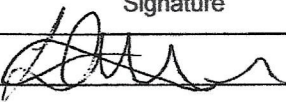
30th June 2023

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Membership Fees	286			286	176
Grants	-			-	-
Fund Raising & Sales	4,352			4,352	4,699
Parish Council	-			-	-
Donations	6,600			6,600	1,508
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	11,238			11,238	6,383
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
Sub total					
Total receipts	11,238			11,238	6,383
A3 Payments					
Insurance	3,970			3,970	3,397
Improvements & Repairs	2,000			2,000	4,028
Equipment	1,509			1,509	2,236
Expenses	1,092			1,092	305
Sub total	8,571			8,571	9,966
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Sub total	8,598			8,565	9,966
Total payments	8,598			8,565	9,966
Net of receipts/(payments)	2,640			2,667	- 3,583
A5 Transfers between funds					
A6 Cash funds last year end	19,166			19,166	22,749
Cash funds this year end	21,833			21,833	19,166

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank Account	21,833		
	Petty Cash Account	20		
	Total cash funds (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	21,853		
B2 Other monetary assets				
B3 Investment assets				
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use				
B5 Liabilities				

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		LC Walker	26/8/23