



# Trustees' Annual Report for the period



From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	01	12	2023		30	11	2024

## Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

River Lark Catchment Partnership

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) 1177318

Charity's principal address

24, Northgate Avenue

Bury St Edmunds

Suffolk

Postcode

IP32 6BB

### 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	Ros Alexander	Chair (from 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2024)	25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 to 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	
2	Andrew Hinchley	Chair (to 4 <sup>th</sup> March 2024)		
3	Jim Stephens	Treasurer		
4	Will Cranstoun		1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023 to 2nd May 2024	
5	Graham Showell			
6	Caroline Chamberlain		1 <sup>st</sup> December 2023 to 2nd May 2024	
7	Chris Hainsworth			
8	William Sutherland			
9	Peter Lack		25 <sup>th</sup> January 2024 to 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2024	
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
20				

### 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**

CIO Association Constitution
Association
Elected by members

**Additional governance issues (Optional information)**

Our trustees are nominated and elected directly by our membership and we ensure that trustees are practitioners who bring a full set of competencies for our board to be effective.

In this our sixth year as a registered charity, we have had seven trustees serving on our board throughout the year. Our constitution allows for a maximum of twelve trustees and our policy is to continue to attract nominees to add to the board to enhance the good governance and functioning of the charity.

We also enjoy the strong support of the Cam and Ely Ouse Catchment Partnership within which the Lark Partnership is a sub-catchment.

We have formally adopted an array of policies covering:-

- risk management
- volunteer management
- safeguarding
- complaints handling
- managing conflict of interest
- ensuring equality

## Section C Objectives and activities

The River Lark Catchment Partnership's objectives are to conserve, preserve and improve the River Lark and its catchment area for the benefit of the public, in particular but not exclusively by:

- (i) Improving access and encouraging the appropriate use of the River and its environs by members of the public.
- (ii) Educating the public about the River and its environs
- (iii) Facilitating community involvement in the conservation of the River
- (iv) Monitoring the River & its catchment and reporting any issues or concerns to the appropriate bodies having statutory responsibility.



The Trustees of RLCP actively engage in the formulation of the charity's annual action plan and in so doing ensure that they have due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. The Trustees constantly reviewed the annual work plan as it was underway for 2024.

### **Building a community-based organisation to deliver river monitoring and conservation:**

The river monitoring and conservation activities we aspire to require us to develop an effective linked community organisation along the full extent of the river. We intend to do this progressively over the next few years. In 2024 we continued our river restoration activities through the Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers Landscape Partnership Scheme (BFER).

### **Citizen Science evidence gathering for our catchment:**

RLCP is committed to developing a robust approach involving our community and our volunteers to collecting the scientific evidence required for improving our catchment in partnership with Anglian Water, Environment Agency and Natural England as well as our local Authorities and businesses.

#### **RLCP CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS**

(current and future projects to get involved with)

Water Quality Monitoring

Flow Monitoring

Dissolved Oxygen Monitoring

Sediment Monitoring – MudSpotter

MorPH habitat surveys

Outfall Safari

Invertebrate Monitoring – Riverfly and SmartRivers



We continue to build our Citizen Science programme with volunteer training, water quality and flow gauging activities, GIS mapping and collaboration through the national 'Catchment Systems Thinking Cooperative (CaSTCo)' project. In 2024 we pursued our Lark catchment monitoring and evidence gathering activities with grants from St Edmundsbury Town Council and Anglian Water's Get River Positive programme.

### **Outreach and public engagement:**

Educating the public and engaging with our catchment stakeholders is a high priority. In 2024 we pursued these aims with:-

- River awareness for local schools
- Engagement with catchment landowner and farming stakeholders
- Meetings of the Lark Water Forum.



**The River Lark chalk-stream Flagship Project:**

The National Chalk Stream Restoration Strategy was launched in October 2021 as a 'Catchment Based Approach' (CaBA) initiative sponsored by DEFRA, EA and Ofwat by CaBA's chalk stream restoration group which is made up of representatives from the Environment Agency, Natural England, Ofwat, Water UK, WWF, Angling Trust, Salmon and Trout Conservation, The Rivers Trust, Wild Trout Trust and Wildlife Trusts. In 2022 Anglian Water selected the Lark to be the chalk stream 'Flagship' in its area guided by the following criteria:

- Local Passion**—The creation and development of the River Lark Catchment Partnership charity. Lots of public interest/involvement (Mildenhall & Bury St Edmunds).
- Landowners**—Anglian Water are currently building a landowner network for AMP7 WINEP delivery and there are known connections through local partnerships.
- Scale**—The Lark catchment is large, but the chalk stream sections are of the right scale for this proposal.
- Designation**—The River Lark currently has no legal designation.
- Condition**—Across the Lark catchment, waterbodies have moderate or worse ecological status. There is a clear opportunity for improvement (as seen in targeted stretches of the Lark already), but there are also challenges around technical feasibility and timescales of improvements.

We recognised the close alignment of our action plan for the Lark with the chalk stream recovery strategy and engaged with AW as the key community-based partner for the initiative. In September 2023 we entered into a Partnering Agreement with Anglian Water for the Flagship project which will be implemented through AW's 2025 to 2030 business plan. Through 2024 we have undertaken preparation activities for flagship for project planning and RLCP capacity building.

**Wider water sector collaboration and engagement:**

The River Lark is a sub-catchment of the Cam and Ely-Ouse catchment (CamEO). Throughout the year we have participated in the regular CamEO 'collaboration and engagement' meetings and other events including the annual conference held in November at Bury St Edmunds Guildhall where we interacted vibrantly with our partners across the region.



**Celebrating the year's achievements:**

In August we held our Evening Summer Garden Party at Fullers Mill where some 50 of our members and volunteers attended. We are so grateful to the team at [Fullers Mill](#) for allowing us to use their beautiful setting, and a big thankyou to Steph Holland for organising the event. For those that couldn't make it, we hope you can join us next year!

**River restoration work in 2024:**

This was the last year of the five year of our Lark River Channel Restoration Project within the Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers Landscape Partnership Scheme (BFER).

The year's river restoration works completed our improvement of the river from the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds into the South end of the Lark Valley golf course.



We have now completed the RLCP five-year BFER project and we hit or exceeded our delivery targets for restored channel works, volunteers trained and engaged, training events and workshops and various other technical development and public awareness metrics. The only target we were not in a position to deliver was for tree planting which was dropped early in the programme. Well done to our more than forty volunteers who contributed so vibrantly to the project.



**Citizen Science in the Lark Catchment:**

In 2024 our main focus was delivering into our citizen science monitoring programme as one of the Anglian region's demonstration catchments in the national 'Catchment Systems Thinking Cooperative (CaSTCo)' project. Our main focus has been on water quality monitoring. However we have actively participated in flow monitoring, invertebrate monitoring and MorPH habitat surveys.

We received two grants from Bury St Edmunds Town Council this year which have supported our programme. The first received in December 2023 was an equipment grant which funded purchasing water quality instruments and annex equipment as well as peripheral IT. The second received in May 2024 was a volunteer training and development grant specifically aimed at Mud spotter training and the establishment through CaSTCo of a public access portal for the citizen science data and evidence gathering for the Lark catchment.

**River Lark – Anglian Water’s chalk-stream Flagship Project:**

In 2023 RLCP entered into a Partnering Agreement with Anglian Water (AW) for the preparatory and implementation stages of the Lark chalk-stream Flagship Project. From 2025 to 2030 AW will be implementing the project aimed at significantly improving the health of our precious chalk stream. Our Partnership Agreement with AW provides the framework for us to develop our capabilities as AW's community partner in the project's implementation. We have also benefitted from a first grant made to us under the partnership agreement from Anglian Water's 'Get River Positive' scheme to support our participation in the preparation for Flagship from mid-2023 through to the end of 2024

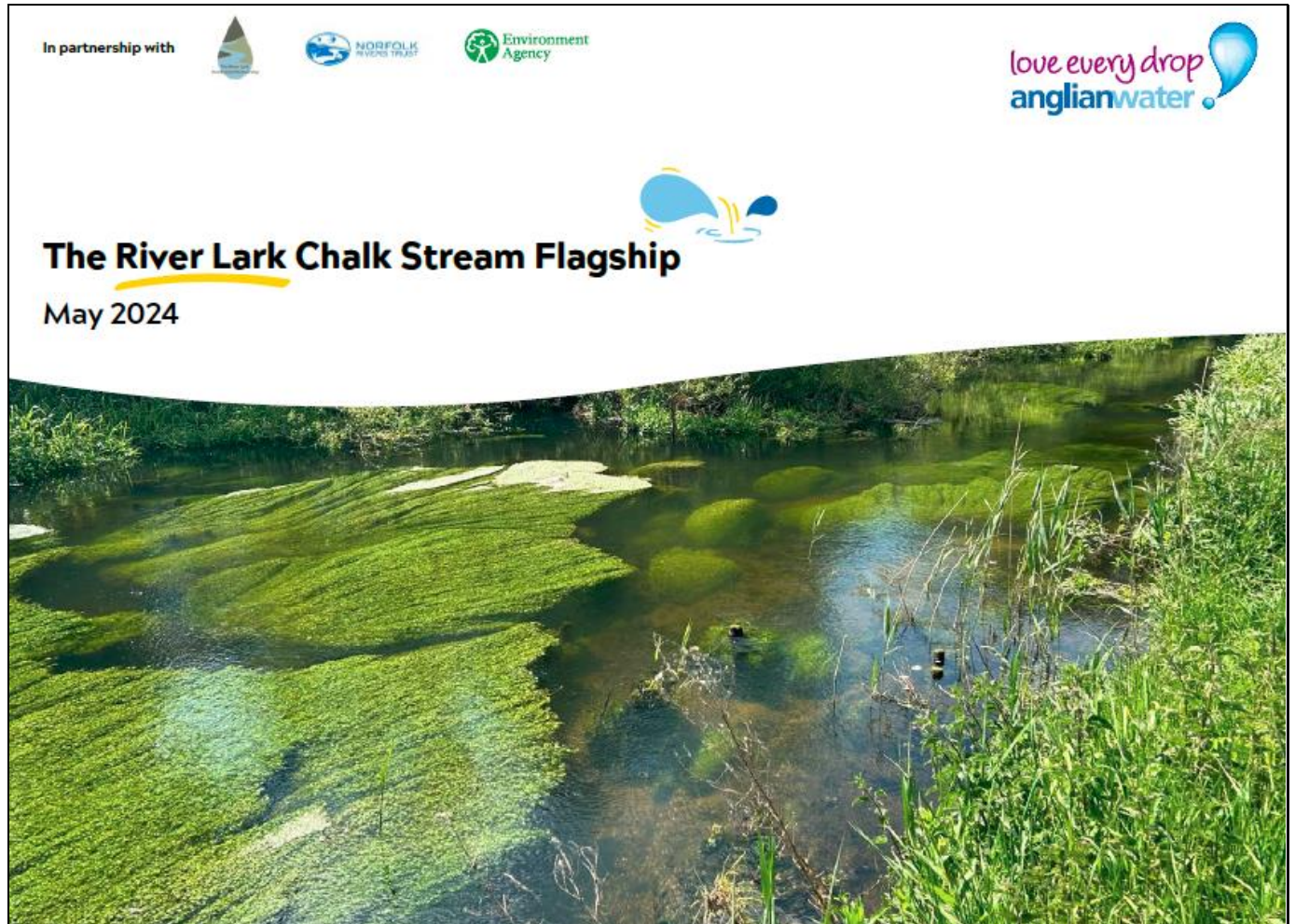
In 2024 we progressed Flagship preparation by supporting Norfolk Rivers Trust (NRT) who have been



## Section D

## Achievements and performance

commissioned by Anglian Water to deliver a catchment development plan for the Lark and Wissey catchments. We have also been busy developing and promoting our vision for Flagship implementation. In May Anglian Water issued its public facing promotional document for the project which you can download by visiting the RLCP website (<https://www.riverlark.org.uk>). We held coordination and technical development meetings throughout the year with our partners, AW, EA and NRT and we reported progress to our catchment stakeholders at Lark Water Forum meetings.



**The front cover of the promotional document for the Lark Chalk-Stream Flagship Project**

With EA taking the lead, we have engaged Southampton University in a collaborative agreement to undertake a research project in order to design, collect and analyse data on the River Lark to guide future flagship restoration actions with the objectives to:

- assess the current state of the Lark and provide recommendations for achieving best possible state by 2030 and beyond
- undertake a combination of desk- and field-based data collection including a fluvial audit and network of sediment samplers to better understand and quantify sediment inputs, storage and transport through the catchment
- undertake sediment coring, paleo-environmental analysis and other analysis, which alongside the fluvial audit will determine the 'feasibility' for restoration at specifically agreed sites. The outputs will guide future projects to 'design-phases during flagship implementation
- Train RLCP volunteers to maintain equipment and undertake additional surveys.

In 2024 we have established the sediment monitoring sites and prepared the way for this important preparatory project for the Flagship project which will deliver through next year.



**Outreach, stakeholder and public engagements in 2024:*****Lark Water Forum:***

The Lark Water Forum is a regular gathering of the significant water stakeholders across the socio-economic sectors of the Lark catchment. RLCP hosts the initiative and our treasurer Jim Stephens is the convener for the Forum.

We held Lark Water Forum meetings in December 2023 and April and November 2024. These meetings included presentations from our stakeholders on Bury St Edmunds industrial water use, Agricultural water use and on how West Suffolk council views its role for Lark water management.

***Cam and Ely Ouse Partnership participation:***

We have kept up our participation in CamEO by attending all their partnership engagement events as well as their conference in April. In April CamEO initiated a steering group with the primary purpose *to provide strategic direction to the numerous parties* that share the common objective of improving the water environment in CamEO Catchment Area, and thereby help CamEO progress towards the **vision of a Cam and Ely Ouse catchment with good quality and resilient water environments, that are protected and enhanced and able to benefit communities and businesses.**

RLCP is a permanent member of the steering group and is represented at meeting by our chair Ros Alexander and/or our treasurer Jim Stephens.



## Section E

## Financial review

The charity held a total of £12,649 in funds at the end of the period comprising £10,267 as restricted funds and £2,382 as unrestricted funds.

For the previous year the corresponding sums were a total of £3,954.

For 2024 the charity does not have a reserves policy and does not hold funds in reserve. This will be actively reviewed in 2025 together with considerations about any necessary decisions to have funds in reserve.

The charity registers Receipts & Payments accounts. No funds were materially in deficit in 2024.

### Further financial review details (Optional information)

In 2024 the charity received grant funds from the following donors:

- Environment Agency
- The Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) Water Resources Communications and Engagement Fund administered by The Rivers Trust
- Heritage Lottery Funded Brecks Fen Edge and Rivers Landscape Partnership (BFER)
- Bury St Edmunds Town Council
- Anglian Water

Grant funded expenditure has supported our capacity building for catchment-based approach awareness raising, Lark River restoration works, preparation for the Lark chalk-stream Flagship project, pollution action plan and citizen science monitoring efforts, and our outreach campaigns.

## Section F

## Other optional information

### List of Abbreviations:



AW	Anglian Water
BFER	The Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers Landscape Partnership (funded by National Lottery)
CaBA	The Catchment Based Approach
CaSTCo	Catchment Systems Thinking Cooperative Project
CamEO	The Cam and Ely Ouse Catchment Partnership
EA	The Environment Agency
GIS	Geographical Information System
MorPh	Modular river physical field surveys
NRT	Norfolk Rivers Trust
RLCP	River Lark Catchment Partnership

## Section G

## Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	James Stephens	Graham Showell
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Treasurer, Trustee	Trustee
Date	7th May 2025	



## Receipts & Payments Accounts

Name River Lark Catchment Partnership  
 Charity Number 1177318  
 For the period from (start date) 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023 To (end date) 30th November 2024

Section A Receipts & 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 £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
CamEO Hosting Grant	2000			2000	2000
Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers LPS Claims	698			698	1000
Water for Tomorrow Grant					7597
WfT CaBA WR021		2500		2500	7500
Localities - Citizen science grants					1074
BSE Town Council CS Grant 2023 - 2024		3792		3792	
BSE Town Council CS Grant 2024 - 2025		3600		3600	
EA Partnership for River Restoration 2022					7358
EA Partnership for River Restoration 2023		9956		9956	
AW Lark flagship Support MOU					17000
AW GDP Flagship Grant No.1		21000		21000	
CaBA WR023		5000		5000	5000
Donations	1768			1768	300
<i>Sub total</i>	4466	45848		50314	48829
<b>A2 Asset &amp; investment sales, etc</b>	0	0		0	0
<i>Total receipts</i>	4466	45848		50314	48829
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
RLCP Administration services	268			268	0
RLCP Annual Insurance Premium	982			982	1194
RLCP Web Hosting				0	29
RLCP Entertainment Expenses	537			537	785
RLCP Admin & Events Expenses	667			667	25
RLCP Equipment&Materials Expenses	322			322	94
BFER Glenn Smithson Ltd Support Services				0	1000
BFER Expenses	834			834	35
NCVO Training (AW flagship support MOU)		1597		1597	8041
GRP Flagship Grant No.1 Engagement and Coordination		17982		17982	2802
Water for Tomorrow Grant Payments				0	13389
Localities Citizen Science Grants - Water Quality					
Equipment purchases				0	1822
EA Partnership for River Restoration 2022 - Costs					7359
EA Partnership for River Restoration 2023 - Procurement and expenses		6335		6335	3551
WfT CaBA WR021 - Admin & Coordination				0	4604
WfT CaBA WR021 - CS Engagement and Equipment Costs		1284		1284	3574
CaBA WR023 - Farm Systems Ltd Payments, coordination and expenses		4990		4990	4500
BSE Town Council CS equipment and training procurement and expenses		5821		5821	
<i>Sub total</i>	3610	38009		41619	52804
<b>A4 Asset &amp; investment purchases, etc</b>	-	-		-	-
<i>Total payments</i>	3610	38009		41619	52804
<i>Net of receipts/(payments)</i>	856	7839		8695	-3975
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	187	-187			
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	1339	2615	0	3954	9050
<i>Cash funds this period end</i>	2382	10267	0	12649	5075



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

	Details	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Receipts	4466	45848	0
	Payments	3610	38009	0
	Cash funds last year end	1526	2428	0
	<i>Total cash funds</i>	2382	10267	0

	Details	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>				

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>				

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>	IT Equipment	unrestricted		
	Gardening equipment	unrestricted		
	Water Quality Testing equipment	unrestricted		
	River restoration tools	unrestricted		
	River restoration materials	restricted		
	PPE (Waders, Gauntlets, etc)	unrestricted		
	Display kit and Banners	unrestricted		

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>				

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature

Print name

Date of approval



James Stephens

27th January 2025



## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of River Lark Catchment Partnership CIO**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the River Lark Catchment Partnership CIO (the Charity) for the year ended 30 November 2024.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Charity 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 Charity'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**

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material 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 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts 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 accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Name: Ian Campbell

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies:  
Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants  
Affiliate Member of the Association of Independent Examiners

Address: 27 Victoria Street, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3BB

Date: 