

Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

Trustee's Report for year ending 31st December 2020

In common with many charities the pandemic had a negative impact on our ability to access funds from institutional donors as many focussed their grants on schemes to aid recovery from the effects of the pandemic. However, despite this and working within the government restrictions our volunteers have once again produced a magnificent performance enabling us to further strengthen our financial position. This has placed us in a good position to further our charitable objectives and to move forward with the acquisition of land of conservation value within the Lower Derwent Valley and to pursue our other objectives in conservation and research.

Land Acquisition

As we had looked forward to in last year's report, our first land purchase was completed when we secured a key parcel of SSSI/SAC/SPA Ramsar designated land (2.67 ha) within North Duffield Carrs. This land was one of the last areas which was not in conservation ownership within North Duffield Carrs and one of our key targets. The land comes with a Countryside Stewardship scheme and together with income from hay cutting and grazing will therefore also a modest income into the future. We have named this land "Fleeman's Snippets" to retain the name of the previous owner. Snippets is the local country name of the Snipe whose presence along with other wading birds such Black Tailed Godwits and wintering Whooper Swans make this such a valuable habitat.

Our efforts to arrange the purchase of a key parcel of land around 1ha in size which borders the designated site have met with delays from the local council regarding documentation but we still hope to move ahead with this acquisition.

We made an offer for a further parcel of land near Ellerton (1.86 ha) which we hope will be successful. This is an important parcel of land having been managed as a traditional species rich hay meadow for generations and a is breeding place for both Curlew and Snipe

Working closely with Natural England and other conservation organisations we continue to identify potential purchase conservation targets throughout the Lower Derwent Valley.

Conservation Projects

Reedbed and reed fen creation projects were undertaken taken at North Duffield Carrs and Thornton Ellers thanks to grants from Yorkshire Water

and Betty's Tree for Life. This included earth works and the planting of 12,000 reed plugs, and involved the engagement of volunteers, young people and local communities.

A successful bid and crowd funding campaign, with additional funds from Natural England, saw the delivery of 500m of an easy access for all pathway at Bank Island, from the car park to the observation hides. Earthworks required for raising the path also led to the creation of improved scrapes for breeding and passage waders with enhanced public enjoyment as a result. We also undertook repairs on behalf of Natural England to boardwalks and decking around the reserve base at Bank Island and at North Duffield Carrs for public enjoyment, access and safety. Again, this included volunteers, young people, a social enterprise group and corporate volunteers from Aviva. Another grant from the Tree Council allowed gaps in the hedge adjacent to the path to be planted and new hedges to be planted elsewhere in the Valley.

Research Work

With thanks to a donation from the York Ornithological Club and private donors we were able to complete the purchase of a Motus tracking station during the year although installation is still awaited due to Covid related delays. This represents cutting edge bird and mammal migration tracking abilities of newly developed technology and is only in second for Yorkshire and second inland site in the UK.

Two more two Tern rafts and an additional Sand Martin bank were purchased – a single pair of Common Terns bred on the new raft producing two chicks to fledging which were ringed as part of an ongoing project. Sand Martins once again used the artificial sites at Bank Island and we were able to demonstrate through ringing that this included several returning adults and young from 2019.

We continued to undertake Waterfowl ringing on behalf of the Wildfowl and Wetland Trust and the British Trust for Ornithology. The catches of Wigeon undertaken with the cannon net provided by the Friends were significant at a national level with around 75% of the UK total of Wigeon being caught and ringed in the Lower Derwent Valley. However, training opportunities provided to others were however reduced due to Covid restrictions and distancing requirements.

Conclusion

This year was marked by a key milestone in which we completed our first land acquisition, ensuring that it will be held in conservation ownership into the future. Despite the difficulties and restrictions caused by the pandemic we have delivered projects of great conservation importance and engaged with the local community in their delivery. Once again none of this would have been possible without the continuing efforts of the

volunteers who have worked tirelessly in undertaking works and raising funds. The trustees send heartfelt thanks to them all. We continue to develop our relationships with other key conservation organisations in the Valley such as the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England and have established excellent levels of cooperation. A special thank you is also due to Craig Ralston of Natural England whose expert knowledge and guidance has been vital in all our areas of operation.

The Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

Accounts

for the year ended 31st December 2020

The Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

Information

Trustees

John Matthew Stone
Josephine Thorpe
Michael Jackson
Nicholas Carter

Business address

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Accountants

Accurate Accounting
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DN14 7EN

The Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

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The Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

Accountants' report on the unaudited accounts

As described on page 3 you have approved the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2020 as set out on pages 2 to 3.

In accordance with your instructions we have compiled these unaudited accounts from the accounting records, information and explanations supplied to us.

Accurate Accounting
69 Boothgate Drive
Howden
Goole
DN14 7EN

The Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

Trading and profit and loss account
for the year ended 31st December 2020

	2020	2019
Income		
Sales	26,721	9,805
Donations / Grant Funding	21,730	20,134
	<u>48,451</u>	<u>29,939</u>
Cost of sales		
Purchases	5,223	5,259
	<u>5,223</u>	<u>5,259</u>
	5,223	5,259
Expenses		
Match Funding	0	0
Legal & Professional		1,958
	<u>0</u>	<u>1,958</u>
	0	-1,958
Profit for the period	<u>43,228</u>	<u>22,722</u>

The Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

Balance sheet
as at 31 December 2020

	Notes	2020	2019
		£	£
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets		20,000	
Current assets			
Cash at bank and in hand		91,003	91,003
		<u>91,003</u>	<u>91,003</u>
Current liabilities			
Other creditors (Grant repayable)		11,300	11,300
		<u>11,300</u>	<u>11,300</u>
Net current assets		<u>79,703</u>	<u>79,703</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		99,703	79,703
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		0	0
Net assets		<u>99,703</u>	<u>79,703</u>
Capital Accounts			
Balance at start of period		79,703	56,981
Net Profit		43,228	22,722
		<u>122,931</u>	<u>79,703</u>

We approve these accounts and confirm that we have made available all relevant records and information for their preparation.

John Matthew Stone

Josephine Thorpe

Michael Jackson

Nick Carter

Dated

John Matthew Stone
J. J. Thorpe
M. F. Jackson
Nick Carter
 22nd October 2021