

Charity Number: 1183986

FRIENDS OF THE LOWER DERWENT VALLEY CONSERVATION GROUP
(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Period ended

31 December 2022

Phoenix Accountancy and Business Consultancy Limited

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For the period ended 31 December 2022**

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**Trustees Annual Report
For the period ending 31 December 2022**

The Trustees present their report with the Independently examined financial statements of Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Reference and Administrative Details of the Charity, its Trustees and Advisers.

Name of charity: Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group

Charity Registration Number: 1183986

Contact Address: Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group
Natural England
Church Lane
Wheldrake
York
YO19 6FE

Trustees

Names of trustees who served during the period were as follows:

Michael Frederick Jackson
Josephine Jean Thorpe MBE
Nicholas Carter
John Matthew Stone

Independent Examiner Rebecca Triffitt MAAT
Phoenix Accountancy and Business Consultancy Limited
Morley's Cottage
Morley's Yard
Walkergate
Beverley
East Yorkshire
HU17 9BY

Trustees Annual Report
For the period ending 31 December 2022

Bankers

HSBC
Market Place
Selby
North Yorkshire
Goole
YO8 4PA

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) governed by its constitution (Foundation model), registered with the Charity Commission on 20 June 2019.

Recruitment and Appointment of Trustees

The Constitution outlines the procedure for the appointment of Trustees. There must be a minimum of 3 trustees and there is no maximum number of Trustees.

Trustees are elected for a term of two years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the Charity Trustees. Any person retiring as a Charity Trustee is eligible for reappointment.

Trustee Induction and Training

All Trustees are provided with a copy of the Constitution, Charity Commission guidance "The Essential Trustee" and a copy of the CIO's latest Trustees Annual Report and financial statements.

Organisational Structure

The charity is managed by the Board of Trustees and is responsible for all strategic decisions. Trustees are made aware that any conflicts of interest must be declared and minuted.

Trustees Annual Report
For the period ending 31 December 2022

Risk Management

The major risks to which the charity is exposed, as identified by the Trustees, are regularly reviewed and systems have been established to mitigate those risks.

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the charity as set out in the constitution are:

"To promote for the public benefit the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of the Lower Derwent Valley, in particular but not exclusively by conducting environmental improvement works and providing or assisting in the provision of research activities relevant to the species and the habitat of the Lower Derwent Valley and to publish the useful results thereof.

To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of the Lower Derwent Valley."

The Trustees have given regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.

Achievement and Performance

Review of Activities 2022

In line with our constitutional objectives, we have completed the purchase of a strategic piece of land adjacent to the River Derwent. We have successfully managed our existing land holding to produce excellent conservation outcomes. Our Countryside Stewardships are generating a continuing income stream and we anticipate that this will continue and grow as we acquire more land holdings. Due once again to the magnificent efforts of our volunteers we have continued to grow our reserves throughout the year. Our volunteers made substantial contributions to the completion of several projects of conservation value and carried out important conservation monitoring. In the aftermath of Covid grant opportunities in our sector have been very limited but despite this we have had another successful year and are in a strong position going forward

**Trustees Annual Report
For the period ending 31 December 2022**

Achievement and Performance

Review of Activities 2022 (continued)

Land purchase and management

We completed our purchase of a small but strategically positioned plot of land from North Duffield PC which we have designated as Thorpe's Tangle. This acquisition completes ownership by conservation bodies of the riverside between Bubwith Bridge and North Duffield Carrs. The plot allows us to become an owner of riparian habitat adjacent to the River Derwent itself and we intend to manage it to provide benefits for Willow Tits and pollinators.

We have had an offer accepted for a plot of land near Acaster Malbis on Acaster South Ings. We are working with the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to eventually transfer the land to them in return for an equivalent plot in the Lower Derwent Valley. We were able to step in and secure this land for conservation ownership using our land acquisition fund and act on a timescale which is not always possible for other conservation bodies and a good example of our close partnership with other local conservation bodies

Land Management of Existing Land Holdings

We have applied for a Higher-Level Stewardship under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme in respect of Carter's Corner which if successful will generate an ongoing income. We received our payments under the Countryside Stewardship scheme for Fleeman's Snippets. On the practical side land management was carried out successfully at both Fleemans Snippets and Carters Corner, delivering our conservation objectives and meeting our Countryside Stewardship requirements, the hay making also providing a useful additional income.

The group also continued to offer advice and practical habitat management assistance to other Conservation Groups in their nature recovery projects, providing materials such as hay meadow seed which provided a further source of income for the Friends.

Research and Monitoring

On our land holdings Curlew bred successfully, and also supported Black-tailed Godwits on their spring passage north, Ruff lekking prior to breeding, summering Garganey, Snipe, Redshank, Quail and Willow Tits. Our land was used as part of the wider Lower Derwent Valley ringing, research and monitoring programme with several Icelandic Black-tailed Godwits caught and ringed at Fleemans Snippets on spring passage.

For the period ending 31 December 2022

Achievement and Performance

Review of Activities 2022 (continued)

Common Terns once again bred on the rafts provided at Wheldrake Ings, to the enjoyment of numerous visitors to the hides and elsewhere in the valley where fishing birds could be seen. Our third colour-ringed tern resighting was received from the Farne Islands in Northumberland. Unfortunately the Sand Martin banks weren't used in 2022 following a poor return spring passage of the species.

The Motus tracking station continued to produce results with two Starlings from the Netherlands picked up by the station. This represents cutting edge bird and mammal migration tracking abilities of newly developed technology and is only the second site in Yorkshire and second inland site in the UK. We also hosted several visits by individuals/groups/organisations to see the station and learn about installing and operating the station. At least two groups have subsequently ordered stations for sites at Humberhead Peatlands NNR in south Yorkshire and on the Isle of Man.

Reedbed and reed fen creation projects continued to flourish at North Duffield Carrs, Bank Island, Wheldrake and Thornton Ellers thanks to previous grants from Yorkshire Water and Bettles Tree for Life. Cetti's warblers bred for the first time in the valley (with juveniles caught and ringed) and are known to have used these areas during the year. The increase in reed in the valley may also have helped in the recording of Webbs Wainscot (a new moth for the valley and still rare in Yorkshire) during the year. Towards the end of the year one of the wintering Hen Harriers was seen to use the area of reedbed/reed fen at Bank Island to roost during the day.

The Friends also forged a successful working relationship with the Derwent Lions in parishes around the area. A grant was secured to replace 60 Barn Owl boxes as part of the long running nest box scheme in the area. Natural England confirmed that 95% of all Barn Owls in the area were now breeding using nest boxes – compared with 49% in 2000, confirming the importance of this project. Members of the Lions Club attended an evening hosted by the Friends at Bank Island for feedback and to experience the Friends' wider work. All boxes were constructed by young people from Ad Astra, community volunteers and corporate volunteer groups for local organisations, with 28 nest boxes placed in suitable locations by the end of 2022.

Over 1100 waterfowl were caught and ringed using the Cannon Nets provided by the Friends in partnership with NE, WWT, YWT and BASC, providing a considerable evidence base both locally and on a national and international basis for waterfowl conservation.

For the period ending 31 December 2022

Achievement and Performance

Review of Activities 2022 (continued)

Conclusion

The Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley continued to make good progress with further land acquisitions and valuable research work and conservation projects completed. None of this would have been possible without our magnificent volunteers whose contributions underpin everything we do. The trustees give their heartfelt thanks to them all. We are also extremely grateful for the continuing support of Natural England and offer particular thanks to Mr Craig Ralston, Senior Reserve Manager for his invaluable help, support and advice.

Future Plans

The charity greatly values its close working relationship with key partners whom continue to support the reserve, charity and its aims, whether through donations, purchase of services or supporting each other in grant bids and is grateful for all the on going support it receives. In 2022 the charity has successfully grown its financial reserves and aims to use the funds raised to competitively bid and purchase further land in and around the Lower Derwent Valley National Nature Reserve that is of high conservation value, as and when such land becomes available for purchase. Targeted on going land purchase will be the main use of the charities accumulated funds. Further the charity has continued to undertake on-going scientific monitoring, including the ringing of wildfowl and other bird species on the reserve. In 2023 the charity and its volunteers hope to be involved in tagging and tracking projects of wildfowl and wader species, from which knowledge will be gained of individual species movements and their use of areas of habitat. This knowledge may further inform the charity to target land for purchase by providing evidence of its ecological importance and functional linkage.

Financial Review

Reserves policy

The Trustees regularly review the Reserves policy of the charity to ensure it meets the needs of the Charity. Whilst the charity has only nominal operating costs, e.g., the payment of annual drainage rates for land owned, the charity seeks to hold an absolute minimum of £5,000 in reserve. This level of funds would allow the charity to meet all High-Level Stewardship (HLS) obligations for land owned for a three-year period, given current land ownings. Beyond this level of minimum reserve, the charity aims to ensure that funds in the region of a total of £20,000 are available to capitalise on any opportunities, such as match funding with key partners, such as the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust. All other income and cash holdings, i.e., above £20,000 are held principally to support the purchase of new land, the development of new activities or where the Trustees decide it to be financially prudent.

Trustees Annual Report
For the period ending 31 December 2022

Statement of Disclosure of Information to the Independent Examiner

We, the trustees of the Charity who held office at the date of approval of these financial statements, each confirm that so far as we are aware:

- There is no relevant information of which the Charity's Independent Examiner is unaware.
- All steps have been taken to make ourselves aware of any relevant information and to establish that the Charity's Independent Examiner is aware of that information.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity Law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial period which gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Charity and of the excess of income over expenditure for that period.

The Trustees confirm that the accounts comply with the above requirement. The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and which enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. 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.

During the period the income of the Charity was below £250,000, therefore in line with Charity Legislation the trustees have elected to prepare their accounts on the Receipts and Payments basis.

Independent Examiner

The Independent Examination was undertaken by Rebecca Triffitt, MAAT, Chartered Management Accountant, Director of Phoenix Accountancy and Business Consultancy Limited.

By order of the Board,



Michael Frederick Jackson
Chairperson

Date: 27th September 2023

**Independent Examiner's Report to the Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley
Conservation Group**

I report on the accounts of The Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group for the year ended 31 December 2022, which are set out on pages 11 to 14.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this financial period under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 145 (5)(b) of the Charities Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

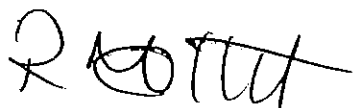
Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - a. to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 and 131 of the Charities Act; and
 - b. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Acthave not been met; or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Rebecca Triffitt, MAAT
Phoenix Accountancy and Business Consultancy Limited
Morley's Cottage, Morley's Yard, Walkergate
Beverley, East Yorkshire HU17 9BY

Date: 2/10/23 .



Receipts and Payments Account
For the year ending 31 December 2022

	Notes	2022 Unrestricted £	2022 Restricted £	2022 Total £	2021 Unrestricted £	2021 Restricted £	2021 Total £
RECEIPTS	1	£	£	£	£	£	£
Grants	2	-	-	-	-	1,244	1,244
Donations		1,537	-	1,537	1,543	-	1,543
Conservation Services		36,005	-	36,005	30,032	-	30,032
Countryside Stewardship		710	-	710	1,420	-	1,420
Sale of logs and wildflower seeds		21,363	-	21,363	21,275	-	21,275
		59,615	-	59,615	54,270	1,244	55,514
PAYMENTS							
Land Purchases		5,000	-	5,000	18,000	-	18,000
Conservation Works		-	-	-	-	1,244	1,244
Rates		49	-	49	12	-	12
Legal and Professional Fees		2,177	-	2,177	2,302	-	2,302
Bank Charges		116	-	116	5	-	5
Accounts Fee		480	-	480	-	-	-
		7,822	-	7,822	20,319	1,244	21,563
Net Surplus/(Deficit) for the period		51,792	-	51,792	33,951	-	33,951
Monetary balances brought forward		148,182	-	148,182	114,231	-	114,231
Monetary balances carried forward		199,974	-	199,974	148,182	-	148,182

The notes on pages 13 form part of these financial statements.

**Statement of Assets and Liabilities
As at 31 December 2022**

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Monetary Assets			
Current Account		199,974	148,182
Total Monetary Assets		199,974	148,182
Comprising:			
Unrestricted Funds		199,974	148,182
Restricted Funds	3	-	-
		<u>199,974</u>	<u>148,182</u>
Non-Monetary Assets			
Fixed Assets for the Charity's Use (at cost)			
Land – North Duffield		25,000	20,000
Land – Ellerton Ing's		18,000	18,000
Motus Tracking Electronics		614	614
		<u>43,614</u>	<u>38,614</u>
Debtors		-	-
Creditors			
Accounts Fees		(480)	(480)
		<u>(480)</u>	<u>(480)</u>

These financial statements were approved by the committee on 26/09/2023 (date) and signed on its behalf by:

M. F. Jackson

Michael Frederick Jackson, Chairperson

Matthew Stone

Matthew Stone, Treasurer

The notes on pages 13 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements
For the period ended 31 December 2022

Notes

1 Basis of Preparation

These accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments (R&P) basis in line with Charity Commission guidance for a charity of this size.

Prior years accounts were prepared on the accruals basis, these have been restated to the receipts and payments basis.

2 Grants

	2022	2022	2022	2021	2021	2021
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
The Tree Council	-	-	-	-	1,244	1,244
	-	-	-	-	1,244	1,244

3 Restricted Funds

No restricted funds for this year.

4 Payments to Trustees

No remuneration directly or indirectly out of the funds of the Charity was paid or payable for the financial period to any Trustee.

There was no reimbursement of travel expenses in respect of the financial period.

5 Taxation

Friends of the Lower Derwent Valley Conservation Group is a registered charity. All the Charities' income is applied to its charitable objectives and the association is therefore exempt under current legislation from most forms of taxation.

The charity is not VAT registered and all expenditure includes irrecoverable VAT.