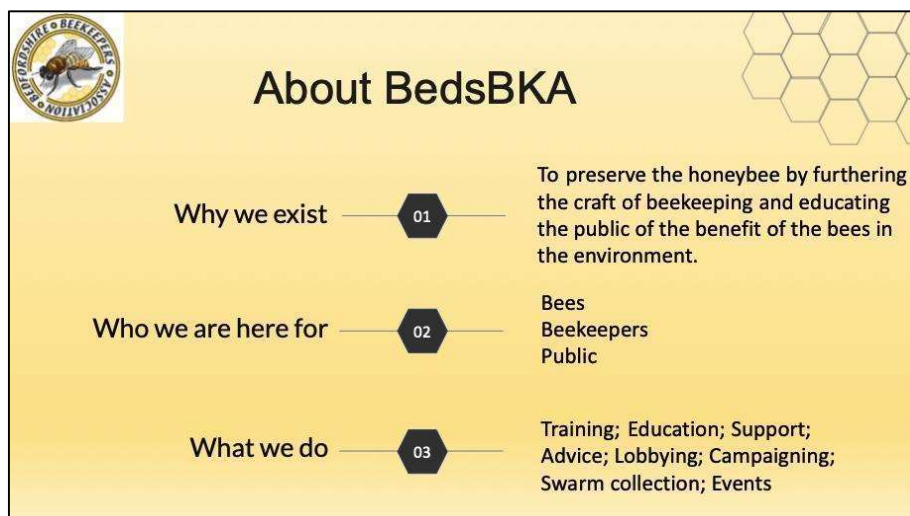


## Trustees' Report (AGM 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)

In this report, the trustees provide a critical review of the work of the Association over the last year in relation to its objectives (objects), which are:

“To preserve the honey bee by furthering the craft of beekeeping and educating the public of the benefit of bees in the environment.”

These objectives translate to services to bees, beekeepers (members and beginners) and the public.



## Summary

**A positive year.** After the difficulties of the year before, 2022 proved to be the year of sunshine – in several senses. Literally for the bees, who just loved it; for the Association, as increasingly we emerged from the isolation of COVID – and moved towards the celebration of the Centenary of Beds BKA.

**Bees and beekeeping.** Many beekeepers wilted as temperatures soared, while the bees prospered, they perhaps reminding us of their African origins.

**Education.** In-person training resumed as far as possible, also with continued activities online.

**For the public.** Our contacts with the public regained momentum as the year unfolded. The Centenary Honey Show and Honey Festival at Stockwood Park was a notable highlight.

**Finances and Assets.** The Association's assets and finances remain in good order, though now stretched with the increased cost of insurance, printing of the yearbook and with a planned measure of possible deficit through one-off spending on the Centenary celebrations.

**Membership.** The numbers of members remain high at 539, if with a small decline from the previous year.

**Insurance.** An improved situation for some members.

**Commitment.** We are in good heart. We can believe in the importance of our role in the future.

## Trustees' Report (AGM 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)

And in more detail...

### Services for Bees and Beekeeping

**Preserving the honey bee.** The Beds BKA Annual Beekeeping Survey each Autumn provides a very helpful guide to how well the bees are doing. Interestingly, one of our members lives in Georgia USA, and commented, "Greatly appreciate the tools & insights your organisation offers beekeepers. Thank you!"

Year	Number of responses	Losses over previous winter	Colonies within Beds	Colonies outside Beds	Swarms dealt with	Honey harvest in lbs	Nucs going into winter of 2022
2022	71	111	322	278	169	20,709*	68
2021	75	91	282	224	213	14,300	50
2020	132	166	780	489	286	39,759	188
2019	127	84	586	319	348	38,630	108
2018	111	174	448	240	154	29,982	?

\*this total is less the impressive 1,200lbs in USA

Key points from the Survey include:

- Overall, a very good year.
- However, winter colony losses (2021 into Spring 2022) occurred at around 21%, worse than the previous year and somewhat above the three-year average.
- Nevertheless, total hive numbers appear to be stable both in and out of county, compared with other recent years.
- The average number of hives is about 7 (Note the average number of hives across all Full Members is probably about four or five).
- Much swarming occurred very early, especially in April, but overall seems to have been a little less this year, with each member collecting on average 2.4. Some members commented on use of bait hives.
- The average honey crop was nearly 42 lbs per hive, way above the national average over recent years. Strong colonies achieved up to 80 or 100 lbs, with plenty still left on as winter stores.
- Sadly as always, some members were unfortunate, with little or no honey crop, attributing it to the very hot weather or the nectar flow drying up very early in some cases.

**Weather and its effects.** After a very mild winter, all through Spring and Summer the bees revelled in the prolonged drought and heat - the hottest on record in the UK. Imperfect mating still resulted in cases of queen failure, however. Foraging continued into the mild autumn, by now with plenty of moisture in the ground, and some hives at least ended up with a fair supplement of ivy honey.

**Crops.** What the farmers are growing is so important for beekeeping. As many plants flowered earlier than usual, it was often difficult to be sure where the bees were gaining most of their nectar, unless oilseed rape or beans were an obvious target for them in the Spring.

**Nucs.** From the Survey, the average would seem be one nuc for every beekeeper, but this is misleading. Half of the respondents did not have any nucs going into winter. Overwintering nucs is strongly encouraged as insurance against winter losses and early queen failure.

**Temper.** In the hot weather, our bees seemed generally very good-tempered, and we are not aware of any problems.

**Health.** The incidence of varroa seems to have been generally low or very low, though we were still encouraged to treat, in line with NBU policy. Mercifully, the outbreak of European Foulbrood (EFB) in 2021 seems to have been effectively contained. Nosema ceranae was a possible suspect for some

## Trustees' Report (AGM 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)

mysterious colony losses in later winter, especially when a hive would be seemingly well populated in January, only for the bees to have disappeared without trace a month or so later, with no other obvious symptoms. A sample from a "sentinel apiary" just to the south of Luton, again tested negative for Small Hive Beetle.

**Other Pests.** Wasps appeared overall to pose no great threat to beehives, unless you were unlucky. Wax moths loved the heat. They were much present and quick to take over stored equipment, given a chance (the sharp cold spell in December will have reduced them). Asian Hornet may be coming closer – reported near Chelmsford and Rayleigh in nearby Essex.

**Support for beekeeping research.** Our support for the Eastern Associations Research Studentship (EARS) continues with £2,000 donated to work related to CBPV.

## Services to Members and Beginners

**Yearbook.** Our 2022 Yearbook was even better than the previous one, in a high-quality new format. It stands as a marvellous record of the Association and a mine of information.

**Talks.** Four excellent talks were hosted by BedsBKA during 2022:

- "Queen Rearing made Simple" by Sean Stephenson
- "Preparing for the Season ahead" by Robert Smith
- "Wonderful Things about Bees" by Prof Robert Pickard
- "Plants and Pollinators" by Sean Stephenson

**Beginners Course.** An in-person course led by Mike Niemann and team ran successfully at Stockwood, attracting around 15 participants. Around 18 people attended the online course or used the recordings for self-paced learning. Whilst the course was well received, disappointingly the opportunity to gain practical experience in the Bedford teaching apiary was not taken advantage of.

**For Improvers and more established beekeepers.** This year, a deliberate attempt was made to cater for this category of members, who had missed out during the pandemic. Wally Thrale organised a lively daytime in-person event on March 2022 rooted in practical beekeeping was very well attended by roughly 70 beekeepers. A follow-up series of evening sessions on Zoom consisting of panel discussion and Q & A proved very popular.

**Honey Show.** The 2022 Bedfordshire Beekeepers Association honey show was held on Saturday 1st October 2022 at The Discovery Centre, Stockwood Park, Luton. This was a special event as it marked the start of a year of Centenary celebrations for the Association. The date of the show was the nearest Saturday to the first meeting of the Association in its current form that had been held at the end of September in 1922. Entrants had a chance to win special rosettes produced using the centenary logo. The event attracted 41 entrants who submitted a total of 209 entries and represented 10 of the Beds BKA districts. There was a good mix of people winning awards. Best exhibit in show was awarded to Beverley Underwood's outstanding photomicrograph of a honeybee larvae, which captured a lot of detail. It was particularly good to see so many new or inexperienced beekeepers entering, with 8 entries in the novice honey class, which was won by Arnold Talats. There were two classes for schools or home-schooled children and the standard of these entries was very high.

As the 2022 Honey Show was the first event of the Centenary celebrations a lot of work had been put in to restoring some of the older trophies that had either been damaged, replaced or simply run out of room, so that all awards now have a full history of winners. There was also a new Centenary cup (actually a silver cup dating from 1922) engraved with the Centenary logo donated by Fiona and Peter Cook that was awarded to the best instructive exhibit, which was won by Wally Thrale.

We would like to thank Sue Lang for all her help on the day, and particularly for working through all the results, Karen Glasse and Matt Alabaster for acting as Stewards and Claire O'Brien and Stephen Guest for judging, plus all the exhibitors for taking part and making the day a success.

**District Advisors (DAs) services.** We had the benefit of DAs in post for every area of the county. They are so important for members in terms of advice and support as need arises.

**Stockists for our Bulk Purchase Scheme (BPS).** Our BPS Manager, Simon Cockle, continues to organise this large-scale operation on behalf of members in terms of containing high costs and thus making beekeeping more affordable. Our stockists as ever continued to provide an excellent service,

## Trustees' Report (AGM 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)

storing goods and supplying members with basic equipment at much reduced prices. The wax exchange ran very successfully again thanks to a small, hardworking team of members, in concert with Maisemore, our new supplier.

**Facebook Chat Page.** The Facebook chat forum continues to host lively debates and opportunities for beekeepers to ask questions and provide advice on a daily basis.

**Teaching apiaries.** Our two teaching apiaries progressively returned to normal (one at Stockwood Park in Luton managed by Mike Niemann and team, the other at Priory country Park in Bedford run by Matt Alabaster and helpers). Honey sales from both teaching apiaries were strong – our thanks to both Matt and Mike and their teams for their continuous efforts and sharing their expertise with beginners.

## Services to the Public

**Swarm-collection.** Our free swarm-collection service to the public remained operational. Although it seemed a quieter year for the scheme, perhaps still due to Covid, many queries from the public about bees (not only honeybees) and beekeeping were addressed. This is a vital service to our bees as many swarms would die if left to their own devices.

**Talks and Visits.** Five visits to classes in primary schools in the south of the county took place in 2022, two as entirely “live events”, three by Zoom using a pre-recorded talks as well as Q&A with the children. Members may have given talks to schools or other groups that we do not know about. Do please contact the Education Liaison Officer (Colin Hall) to keep Trustees informed about this important work that is a fundamental part of our mission as a charity.

**Bee Gallery at Stockwood.** We have been able to advise Luton Culture Trust about the restoration of the Bee Gallery at Stockwood Discovery Centre, including the installation of a new observation hive. There is a possibility of further links with local schools in terms of learning about bees and beekeeping.

**Attendance at outside events.** Attendance at outside events recommenced, with stalls at Taste Bedford in early September and Bromham Xmas Fayre (Bromham Mill) in December.

**Honey Donations.** Our thanks go to members who generously donated 100 pots of honey to mark our centenary. These were distributed to the Luton Foodbank, Bedford Foodbank and the Trussell Trust. The honey was added to food hampers for those in need.

**Honey Festival.** The Honey Festival that accompanied the Honey Show at Stockwood Park was well received with approximately 500 members of the public visiting. Activities included honey tasting, T-shirt designing, face painting and apple pressing. Various stalls included flowers, jewellery, books, trying on bee suits, hive and equipment demonstrations plus several talks by Wally Thrale and Gill Brewer.

## Beds BKA Operation

**Trustees and Officers.** Trustees continued to meet throughout the year to monitor the state of the Association and to guide its activities. The Secretarial Team continued to work “behind the scenes” on the detailed management of the Association.

We mourn the loss of Ray Smith as a trustee and DA for NW Beds. Ray was devoted to the Association. See the separate article about Ray. Helen Vaughan will take on the position of DA for NW Beds for this coming year.

The committee of Trustees has remained generally stable. Fiona Cook is ending her long contribution as our excellent Honey Show Secretary, also David Chapman is stepping down.. Colin Hall has stepped down as Chair of Trustees after ten successful and dedicated years in the post. Happily, Paul Rubens has taken on the role – for the start of our new century.

So much is done by our various officers and postholders to provide key services. Richard Dowsett has acted as our new H&S Officer.

## Trustees' Report (AGM 25<sup>th</sup> February, 2023)

**Centenary Celebrations.** An energetic group, led by our Secretary Karen Glasse, has worked imaginatively on a range of ways to commemorate our Centenary. As previously noted, the Honey Show and Honey Festival was timed to coincide as closely as possible with the inaugural meeting of Beds BKA on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1922. Other projects include planting a hundred mainly pollinator-friendly trees (Liz Anderson), themed Christmas cards and notelets (Jennie Tysom), a Centenary tamper-proof label (designed by Pasquale Lafiosca). The Centenary Booklet (Chris Jenkins and Andrew Ulyett) draws on wide research to vividly record the history of the Association and those who have contributed in so many ways. 100 pots of honey were distributed to food banks at Christmas. 100 packets of seeds will be distributed to schools across Bedfordshire, with an offer for schools to bring their children to visit a new bee garden and bee gallery at Stockwood Park, experience both live bees and a talk on bees. Schools will also be encouraged to enter our 2023 Honey Show and Festival that will be held at Stockwood Park.

**Membership numbers.** 2022 membership totalled 539, a slight fall from the very high numbers in 2021 (565), but in line with 2020 (541). In 2022 there were 479 Full Members, 45 Associate Members, 12 Student Members and 3 Honorary.

**IT Systems.** The promised "Members Only" area on the Beds BKA website is now available. Two outstanding past talks can currently be accessed there with much other member related information.

**Insurance.** A change to our public and product liability insurance provided a pleasant surprise: Full and Honorary members with a turnover no greater than £10,000 were now to be covered (see the details in the 2022 Yearbook). The great difficulty in finding Insurance for members means that this must remain a matter of concern for trustees and all of us. In any case, Insurance also presents a much-increased cost for the Association overall.

**Re-affiliation to the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA).** Not all members may be aware that we are not affiliated to the BBKA, unlike many but not all county or local associations. Trustees debated the question of whether to seek re-affiliation. After careful consideration, they decided against this. Deciding factors were confidence in what we are doing as an independent association, and in the insurance that we had been able to secure at this time.

**Policies.** The Safeguarding Policy has been updated and published on the website.

## And Finally

This is our centenary year – a time to celebrate and honour those who have come before us. We remain a thriving Association with much to offer. This is only due to the enthusiasm of the various people who donate their time and expertise. We know that everyone has busy lives – but would still ask each member to consider what they could contribute, however small, to ensure that the next 100 years for the Association builds on our past.

We want our Association to learn from our bees – being truly social, giving to each other selflessly like honey bees, and serving the planet that we share with all other creatures as part of the fabric of life.

## Addendum to Beds BKA Trustees Report for 2022

This addendum provides the additional information required for the Trustees Annual Return by the Charity Commission in the Charity SORP (FRSSE) - Statement of Recommended Practice (Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities). ([Link to SORP.](#))

### SORP 1.9

- The reporting period (financial year) is 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022

### SORP 1.19

- Trustees have had regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit.


### SORP 1.26

- The governing document for Beds BKA is the Constitution (see <https://www.bedsbka.org.uk/membership/constitution/>)
- The charity is constituted as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
- The methods used to recruit and appoint trustees are included in the Constitution

### SORP 1.28

- The CIO name is Bedfordshire Bee Keepers Association
- Charity registration number is 1184466
- Address of principal office is 30 High Street, Haversham, Milton Keynes, MK19 7DX
- Names of all trustees holding office at any time in 2022 – see table below.

	Trustee	Note
1	Matt Alabaster	
2	Neil Blakemore	from 25/4/22
3	David Chapman	
4	Fiona Cook	
5	Anne Cross	
6	Richard Dowsett	
7	Karen Glasse	
8	David Goodridge	
9	Colin Hall	
10	Chris Higham	resigned 6/6/22
11	Chris Jenkins	
12	Carly Jordan	
13	Rosemary Long	
14	John Macdougall	
15	Mike Niemann	
16	Paul Rubens	from 26/9/22
17	Ray Smith	died 5/12/22
18	Dawn Talats	from 7/11/22
19	Wally Thrale	
20	Jennie Tysom	

Signature	
Name and position	John Macdougall, Trustee and Assistant Secretary
Date	17 <sup>th</sup> October 2023

## Treasurer's Report (AGM 25<sup>th</sup> February 2023)

The annual accounts for the Association were prepared by myself, for the first time and have been reviewed and examined in accordance with the Charity Commission's regulations. The review was carried out by Caroline Rainbow, an Associate of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, England & Wales. Caroline trained with KPMG as an auditor, and worked in local government as an auditor and has more years' experience in this field than she would probably like to admit. A big thank you to Caroline for agreeing to do this review.

Overall revenue increased by £4,745 to £41,077. Membership subscriptions were £6,473, £901 higher than last year, and close to what was expected in the budget.

Revenue from the bulk purchase scheme increased by £4,893 to £27,283 a 24% increase. The margin stayed the same as last year at 5.4%. Whilst wax costs have stayed reasonably constant, the price of jars has increased by 30% in the year, accounting for much of this increased revenue. My thanks to all the stockists, and Simon Cockle for working hard to find suppliers with the best prices, so members get the best value possible in these inflationary times.

Training revenue was lower than last year, as the doubling up of courses cancelled in 2020 and attended in 2021 due to COVID, was not repeated. That said £2,662 was slightly above expectations.

Apiary sales were again very strong, at £3,393 an increase of £464 with both Bedford and Luton producing and selling significant quantities of honey to the Priory Café and Discovery Centre.

Overall expenditure for the year was £16,684, an increase of £4,936. There 2 main areas of increased expenditure. Firstly, the cost of events, £1,971 an increase of £1,793. This was principally the re-establishment of the Honey Show following COVID for £1,366, and a one-off significant overhaul of a number of trophies for £220. Secondly, we increased our donation to the Eastern Associations Research Studentship to £2,000 from £1, 500 last year and in addition donated £900, with matched funding from Central Beds Council to plant 100 trees at Marston Vale to mark our Centenary.

Other cost changes were:

- Print and post at £2,782 an increase of £761, which is almost entirely the yearbook at £2,738, which including mailing out costs was just short of £5 per copy.
- Committee costs were £161 less at £358
- Training costs were £266 an increase of £141, reflecting mostly online delivery of the Beginners Course again in 2022.
- Apiary costs were £1,710 an increase of £527, reflecting increased jar costs and some equipment replacement/repairs.
- Insurance costs rose only slightly from £3,974 to £4,136, representing an average cost per member of approximately £7.50 each.
- Bank charges increased to £475, an increase of £211, reflecting higher bulk purchases sales and increased use of izettle for payments by members.

The net result was a deficit of £1,415, a significant change from last year's surplus of £3,412. Although some of this expenditure can be considered as one-off, it is clear that the Association is not immune to the cost of living inflationary increases being seen elsewhere.

# Treasurer's Report (AGM 25<sup>th</sup> February 2023)

<b>PROFIT/LOSS 2022</b>			
	<b>Actual Full Year 2022 GBP</b>	<b>Budget Full Year 2022 GBP</b>	<b>Actual Full Year 2021 GBP</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Subscriptions	6,473	6,687	5,572
Bulk purchase scheme	27,283	20,763	22,390
Training	2,662	2,500	4,530
Events	338	300	50
Apiary sales	3,393	2,064	2,929
Donations	184	97	97
Interest earned	108	1	3
Magazines	635	731	761
Other revenue	0	0	0
Total revenue	41,077	33,144	36,332
<b>COSTS</b>			
Bulk purchase scheme	25,808	19,414	21,172
margin %	5.4%	6.5%	5.4%
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Subscriptions	418	422	422
Print & Post	2,782	2,021	2,021
Committee	358	555	519
Events	1,971	1,710	178
Training	266	1,000	125
Apiary	1,710	446	1,183
Insurance	4,136	3,974	3,974
Donations	2,900	2,000	1,500
Bank charges	475	264	293
Depreciation	930	900	925
Magazines	740	608	608
Total expenses	16,684	13,900	11,748
surplus/(deficit)	-1,415	-170	3,412



## Treasurer's Report (AGM 25<sup>th</sup> February 2023)

<b>BALANCE SHEET</b>			
		2022	2021
		GBP	GBP
<b>ASSETS</b>			
Fixed Assets		2,073	3,003
Cash		29,828	30,470
Stock		7,063	2,922
Debtors		689	1,418
Creditors		-4,568	-1,313
Total		<b>35,085</b>	<b>36,500</b>
<b>REPRESENTED BY</b>			
Surplus b/f		36,500	33,088
Profit/(loss) for period		-1,415	3,412
Total		<b>35,085</b>	<b>36,500</b>

The key figures to point out on the balance sheet are:

Fixed assets: No purchases in the year, the book value of the assets decline to £2,073 after depreciation.

Stock finished the year significantly up at £7,063 versus £2,922 with increased quantities of stocks of wax foundation, Ambrosia, fondant and jars to sell in 2023.

Debtors at £689 versus £1,418 in 2022 were lower mostly £514 for honey due from Stockwood Discovery Centre now paid.

Creditors of £4,568 versus £1,313 in 2022 were higher as our donation to EARS of £2,000, Marston Vale of £900 and £1,235 owing to members for the cancelled Centenary Dinner, had not be paid at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022. All these amounts have now be paid.

Our cash balance is £29,828, slightly down on 2021, which was £30,470.

Our Reserves at £25,948, are just below the lower band of £26,370, and significantly below the £29,300, set at the end of 2021.

**BEDFORDSHIRE BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION  
PROFIT/LOSS 2022**

	Actual	Budget	Actual
	Full Year 2022 GBP	Full Year 2022 GBP	Full Year 2021 GBP
<b>REVENUE</b>			
Subscriptions	6,473	6,687	5,572
Bulk purchase scheme	27,283	20,763	22,390
Training	2,662	2,500	4,530
Events	338	300	50
Apiary sales	3,393	2,064	2,929
Donations	184	97	97
Interest earned	108	1	3
Magazines	635	731	761
Other revenue	0	0	0
Total revenue	41,077	33,144	36,332
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Bulk purchase scheme	25,808	19,414	21,172
margin %	5.4%	6.5%	5.4%
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Subscriptions	418	422	422
Print & Post	2,782	2,021	2,021
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Apiary	1,710	446	1,183
Insurance	4,136	3,974	3,974
Donations	2,900	2,000	1,500
Bank charges	475	264	293
Depreciation	930	900	925
Magazines	740	608	608
Total expenses	16,684	13,900	11,748
surplus/(deficit)	-1,415	-170	3,412

**BALANCE SHEET**

	2022 GBP	2021 GBP
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Fixed Assets	2,073	3,003
Cash	29,828	30,470
Stock	7,063	2,922
Debtors	689	1,418
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Total	<b>35,085</b>	<b>36,500</b>
<b>REPRESENTED BY</b>		
Surplus b/f	36,500	33,088
Profit/(loss) for period	-1,415	3,412
Total	<b>35,085</b>	<b>36,500</b>

# Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Report to the trustees/ members of Bedfordshire Beekeepers Association on accounts for the twelve months to December 2022 as set out on page 2 of this report.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts (under sections 43 of the Act).
- To follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 43(7)(b) of the 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 General Directions given by the Charity Commission. 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 us as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act, and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 1993 Act have 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.

Signed: *CJ Rainbow*

Date: *3 February 2023*

Name: *CAROLINE RAINBOW*

Professional qualification or body: *ICAEW (ACA)*

Address: *45 PARK AVENUE, BEDFORD, MK40 2NF*

Disclosures: *None to report*