

**Charity Name: BIOGRAPHICAL ARBORETUM, LITTLE MESOPOTAMIA CIO**

**Charity Number: 1185818**

Financial year end: 5 April 2025

Ref: AR24-CIO-REM-11a

## **ANNUAL REPORT April 2024- April 2025**

The charity owns 12.5 acres which are managed for environmental benefit and to encourage biodiversity. A shed and 8 acres of grazing land within this land have been let for the grazing of sheep.

The land is between two rivers, in the centre of the Village of Beckermest in West Cumberland. Three properties adjoin the land, one of which is The White Mare Public House.

Trustees:

Dr Thomas Tuohy FSA

Philip Braithwaite

Yvonne Clarkson

Lilian Tuohy Main

### **Tenancy Termination**

The tenant was given 12 months notice to quit and the tenancy was terminated on 31 March 2025.

Yvonne Clarkson advised on possible forms of a future tenancy (a Farm Business Tenancy is not appropriate) and Phil Braithwaite was assigned the role of negotiating with the Tenant, who wanted to buy the shed and the largest field, which was naturally refused, and no agreement could be reached about future grazing. The tenant had overgrazed and sheep had poached sections of the lands and he was unsympathetic to the aims of the BALM charity to encourage biodiversity and environmental improvement. An offer of the possibility of grazing with limited numbers of sheep and periods of grazing timings in the future was made.

**Maintenance** was carried by local farmers and arborists, in addition to PB, TT, LMT, and a volunteer neighbour Mark Jacques.

**Visitors** 57, advertising through Cumbria Wildlife Trust and Beckermest Parish Magazine.

**White Mare wall collapse**, Since December 2024 TT has sent several emails to Star pubs (Heineken) from BALM email requesting site visits and emphasizing Health & Safety implication for landlord , but no action has been taken to repair the wall. Instead workers have been sent to clear the narrow path between the property and BALM land, without any advance notice, and left a considerable mess of cut branches on BALM land. We have moved this alongside the collapsed wall to deter trespassers.

**Funding for hedges** . Cumbrian/Coastal Woodlands keep changing name and staff, who made site visits offering advice, but were unspecific about values of grants. On the suggestion of a local farmer, TT contacted Sandy Brown of Mitchells, Cockermouth, and a site visit with her assistant Joe Taylforth was made on 31 March, with TT and PB. There is no longer a minimum area for grants. Free PSI tests were recommended, together with no large flocks of sheep, but a few in autumn, or 5 small hairy cattle . We discussed grants for hay/wildflower meadows, but DEFRA funding was not yet operating. However funding for fencing and hedging is available and has been applied for.

## **BALM Accounts 2024-25**

### **INCOME**

P Braithwaite £ 1000

Kate Tuohy Main £ 2000

Y Clarkson £200

T Tuohy £1183

qualifying for Gift Aid..... £4383

GADS (visitors)	£285	sub total £4668
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Way Leave £37

Rent £500

Gift Aid £1191.13 paid Dec 2025	sub total £1691
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Total income £6359

### **EXPENDITURE**

Insurance NFU £925

Ledgard £500

Robinson £1039

Noble £96

Ebay plants £161

Stationary £170	Total £2891
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Excess income over expenditure	£3468
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Bank Balance 1 April 2025	£8580
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