



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1st January 2024 to 31st December 2024

Charity name: Treez CIO

Charity registration number: 1185908

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The advancement of environmental protection and improvement for the public benefit in Malawi by providing funding for locally managed reforestation projects.
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	The charity's activities are confined to raising funds and making grants to assist projects carried out by others in Malawi. During the period of this report the projects being supported in this way are those of Zomba TREEZ Ltd, a not for profit company formed in Malawi in an effort to protect and restore the once well forested area of the Zomba Plateau. Work for which grants have been given include new tree planting (and its subsequent maintenance), fire prevention and fire-fighting.
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The trustees have had regard to the guidance from the Charity Commissioners on public benefit

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	The grants that the CIO can make are necessarily dependent on the amount of donations received. The aim is for all donation income ultimately to be given as grants, apart from a minimal amount for expenses and a small working balance. (However in 2023 Malawi experienced a massive currency devaluation, which has shown that it will generally be safer to retain funds in the UK, until they are actually needed). An organisation seeking a grant must submit a costed proposal for a project in Malawi (and at least for the period

		<p>covered by this report it must also be in the Zomba Plateau region). The organisation must hold a bank account in its name.</p> <p>Eligibility for a grant is then assessed against the following criteria: The proposal must be for community based tree planting and protection initiatives that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobilise communities to tackle deforestation • Improve nutrition, food security, incomes and local livelihoods • Support communities' rights to manage natural resources in a sustainable way • Mitigate the negative impacts of climate change • Preserve and promote indigenous knowledge of natural resource management <p>The aim is to support organisations that are based within or close to their community, and which represent the interests of the local community, including women and vulnerable groups; and to help such community-based organisations build their capacity.</p>
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	The charity has no paid employees. All its activities are carried out by volunteers
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
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<p>Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.</p>	<p>Para 1.20</p>	<p><u>Some Background</u> The Charity was formed as a result of the Trustees' awareness of efforts being made in Malawi to reverse the degradation being suffered to the once well forested highland area of the Zomba Plateau. These efforts were at first undertaken by individuals, in particular the proprietors of Zomba Forest Lodge. Then in 2016 a not for profit company was formed to facilitate the work. This was named Zomba TREEZ Ltd (using an acronym that stands for "The Reforestation of the Environment and Ecosystem of Zomba"). The Charity was formed to help raise funds outside of Malawi to help with the work being done by Zomba TREEZ and potentially other similar projects in Malawi. <u>Why reforestation is needed in Malawi</u> Malawi has one of the highest rates of fuelwood use in the world, with 97% of the population dependent on firewood or charcoal for home use. Fast population growth and increased pressure on fuelwood and charcoal have led to the depletion of Malawi's forest resources. In the last few decades, Malawi has lost over half of her forests. The loss of forests brings with it multiple issues. Some of the most pressing ones include the loss of potential forest-based income (fuelwood, timber, honey, wild foods); changes in microclimate, leading possibly to less precipitation in areas with high deforestation; threats to local water resources and overall land degradation due to disturbances like fires and soil erosion. Loss of tree cover also leads to much greater risk to life from flooding. This was tragically illustrated by the devastation caused by Cyclone Freddy in 2023. Poverty is both cause and effect in this scenario; Malawi is one of the poorest countries in the world in terms of per capita income, and the loss of forest resources is likely to disproportionately affect communities in and around forested areas that might already inhabit marginal lands <u>Making a start in Zomba</u> It is against the above backdrop that the current efforts are being made to protect and enhance the forest resources of the Zomba Forest Reserve.</p> <p>Zomba Forest Reserve encompasses Zomba Plateau, a massif rising to 2000m in southern Malawi. The plateau is the <i>only</i> source of water for the city of Zomba, the former colonial capital and now Malawi's fourth largest city with a population of around 100,000. The plateau further gives rise to multiple streams and small rivers that are used for drinking water and</p>
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		<p>irrigation by local communities all around the plateau. Zomba, and the country's second largest city Blantyre (which is only an hour away), have placed rising pressure on Zomba Plateau's forest resources; research has noted that urban areas depend heavily on charcoal (not locally collected firewood), meaning that the rising population of Zomba and Blantyre will continue using more and more charcoal. Zomba Plateau has lost vast amounts of its natural forest in the recent past. The existing forests have been ravaged by human-induced wildfires that are often set to get easier access to stands of trees deeper in the forest and to catch wildlife fleeing the fires. This has led to a vicious cycle of forest depletion, leading to loss of livelihoods, which in turns pressures communities to extract even more resources from the forest</p>
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	<p>In the year the Charity raised donations of £9,9871.81; and, apart from a minimal amount of bank interest, that was their only income. This was a considerable contrast to the previous year when the Charity's income exceeded £55,000. That, however, was an exceptional year, partly because of generous grants received, and partly because of a much-appreciated boost in donations following Cyclone Freddy. Despite the more modest income in 2024, the Charity were able to meet all Zomba TREEZ requests for funding in the year (though relying in part on the surplus from earlier years). The first such request was for just under £5000 to meet the cost of a supply of 2500 bamboo seedlings. These were of a fast-growing species suitable for providing a long-term source of firewood. The plants were then distributed to 500 households in the local communities, with the aim of relieving pressure on the forests for firewood and charcoal. The second request for was for £8000 to cover</p>
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		<p>the cost of survival payments for 40,000 trees. This relates very much to the strategy that Zomba TREEZ have adopted, involving numerous community groups. Each group is allotted a zone and encouraged to establish and maintain it as forest. This they can do not only by new planting (using seedlings from local nurseries), but also by protecting established trees and self-sown saplings. Towards the end of the year the total number of living trees is counted in each area and the groups are paid a sum for each tree. This provides an incentive for the groups not only to plant trees, but to maintain and protect them.</p> <p>Another charity working with Zomba TREEZ is Sustainable Global Gardens (SGG), whose remit overlaps with ours in the areas of agro-forestry and forest gardens. In the previous two years SGG provided funding for tree planting in Zomba by giving grants to us, which were passed on to Zomba TREEZ. In 2024, however, they funded their work in Zomba more directly. Also in 2024 we pledged support in the sum of £4000 towards a 4 year project of SGG (backed by Rotary) for the reforestation and regeneration of the Zomba area through the planting 250,000 trees.</p> <p>Zomba TREEZ held their annual Run4Reforestation on the plateau again in September. Although this was not as successful a fund-raiser as in the last few years, nevertheless the run (together with offshoot “virtual runs” elsewhere) resulted in an increase in donations to the Charity around that time.</p> <p>2024 has been a difficult year in</p>
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		<p>Malawi, with the country suffering high inflation and fuel shortages. In addition, a poor rainy season at the beginning of the year led to many crop failures for subsistence farmers. As the year went on temperatures were unusually high. This made forested areas particularly vulnerable to fire. As usual Zomba TREEZ sponsored local community groups (particularly football and netball teams) to clear fire breaks etc. Nevertheless, the area did suffer several worrying fires. A wonderful response from the community groups helped to keep the fires contained and the damage limited. But at times it was a close thing. Finally in December Malawi was hit by Cyclone Chido. 13 people were killed across the country. In the Zomba area high winds brought down a number of trees and caused disruption, but the effects were short lived and reforestation efforts were not seriously affected.</p>
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	The Charity's income for the year was £9,903, which was a considerable reduction from the previous year's figure of £55,674. However, expenditure was also very considerably down, at £13, 978 against last year's £53,526. At the end of the year the Charity had a closing cash balance of £13,974, down from £17,868 at the start of the year
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	Funds are retained for the purpose of making future grants as needed
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£13,974 at the year end
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	Donations Grants An annual fund- raising event- the Run4Reforestation
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	A written Constitution adopted in August 2019
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	As a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO)
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	The Constitution named the first trustees. It further provides that the CIO shall have a board of trustees comprising at least 3 persons; and that the Board may recruit new trustees. In selecting these the Board must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	As described elsewhere in this report the Charity is achieving its charitable objectives by providing funding to Zomba TREEZ Ltd in Malawi. That organisation was the Charity's inspiration and so far has been the Charity's only direct beneficiary.
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	Two of the trustees are related to Thomas Inch who is a director of Zomba TREEZ Ltd (and also the proprietor of Zomba Forest Lodge). James Inch is Thomas's father and Laura Coyle is his cousin. The other trustees, Selena Gleadow-Ware and Colin Doney, are not related, but were acquainted with Thomas Inch during the respective times they lived in Malawi. The trustees are aware of the need to treat Zomba TREEZ Ltd as they would any other beneficiary and expect them to submit written, costed applications in accordance with the Charity's grant making policy before making any funding available to them.
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Treez CIO
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1185908
Charity's principal address	2 Underwood Cottages, The Coombe, Streetly-on Thames, RG8 9RA

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	Mrs Laura Coyle			
2	Dr Selena Gleadow-Ware			
3	Mr James Inch			
4	Mr Colin Doney		From 17/02/24 to 31/12/2024	
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Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

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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Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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Other optional information

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Declarations

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 Davidson Inch	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Trustee	
Date	28 th January 2025	

Treez CIO (Charity number 1185908) (incorporation date 21/10/2019)

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS for period from 01/01/2024 to 31/12/2024

Opening Balance £17,868.69

Income

Donations	£9,871.81	
Grants received	-	
Bank interest	<u>£31.90</u>	
	£9,903.71	<u>£9,903.71</u>
		£27,772.40

Expenditure

Fundraising expenses-	
Just Giving subscription	£446.40
Enthuse subscription	£251.94
Bank charges	£116.00

Grants

Zomba Treez	<u>£12,984.05</u>	
	£13,798.39	<u>£13,798.39</u>

Surplus £13,974.01

Balance Sheet

	<u>at 31 /12/23</u>	<u>at 31/12/24</u>
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Assets		
Cash at Bank	£17,868.69	£13,974.01
Retained surplus	£17,868.69	£13,974.01