



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From **01-06-24** To **31-5-25**

Charity name: **Benson Community Green Space Trust**

Charity registration number: 1186960

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	The constitution establishing BCGST sets out the objective of the CIO as being to further or benefit the inhabitants of the parishes of Benson and Berrick Salome and the neighbourhood without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the local authorities, voluntary organisations and inhabitants in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure-time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the said inhabitants.
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 Trust owns Warwick Spinney, a community nature reserve on the edge of Benson village, which it manages to provide nature-rich access to the outdoors for the benefit of the people in the area. There is strong scientific evidence that access to nature-rich green spaces is beneficial to people's physical and mental well-being. And there is a mutually reinforcing relationship with volunteering - additional benefits for individuals and communities accrue when opportunities are offered to help look after these places; physical exercise, a sense of community and connection, and the wildlife benefits too. There are multiple wins.

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 noted the published guidance, and are confident that the Trust's planning and activities are undertaken so as to ensure that benefits are provided to the residents of the area defined in the charity's constitution. https://www.gov.uk/guidance/public-benefit-rules-for-charities
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	The trust may make grants, subject to there being sufficient surplus - its constitution gives trustees the power to do anything which is calculated to further its objects or is conducive or incidental to doing so. But at present the Trustees do not believe there is sufficient surplus to do so.
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	The trust does not have a social investment programme, although its constitution gives trustees the power to do anything which is calculated to further its objects or is conducive or incidental to doing so
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	<p>The Trust draws on the support of volunteers to manage Warwick Spinney, with tasks including the maintenance of footpaths, planting and laying of hedges, and mowing of the meadow to maintain the biodiversity interest. Volunteers are drawn from Wallingford Green Gym, although the volunteer coordinator draws on the support of Benson Area Nature Group (BANG) to organise and run events.</p> <p>Supporting volunteering better, making it easy for them to undertake the work that the Trust relies on, for example by ensuring equipment is available on site, has been an important feature of the Trustees work in the reporting period.</p> <p>The estimate of volunteers is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Coordinator 6 BNG volunteers 12-18 Wallingford Green Gym Additional adhoc volunteers from the village (variable number) <p>For more detail, see below.</p>

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
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.	Para 1.20	<p>This reporting period is the fifth for the CIO. The Trust's working arrangements are well established.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is reliant on partners, primarily Benson Area Nature Group, and an array of volunteers to manage Warwick Spinney, including a local coordinator, some Benson village volunteers, and 12-18 Wallingford Green Gym volunteers. 2. In this reporting period, we were beginning to capitalise on the success of a brilliant community event, <i>Wild about Benson</i>, coordinated by our sister organisation BANG. This celebrated the nature we have across 4 parishes including Benson and Berrick Salome and encouraged people to get involved in caring for it. Over 800 people visited the event over the 1.5 day period it ran. One of the purposes of the event was to generate new volunteers to help look after green spaces in the area including Warwick Spinney. 3. About half way through this reporting period, BANG was successful in winning a grant from Oxfordshire Community Foundation's 'Thriving in Nature' fund to enable the group to appoint a self-employed volunteer coordinator to improve the offer to volunteers. This has proved really valuable in increasing the profile of volunteering across the group of parishes that have a stake in Warwick Spinney. We will continue to support BANG in building volunteering. We are reliant on this capacity into the longer term (i) to look after Warwick Spinney but more crucially (ii) to generate commitment to acting as trustees. 4. One new trustee was appointed at the start of the reporting period, representing Warborough parish. 5. Midway through the reporting period, one of our founding trustees (our Treasurer) stepped down with immediate effect due to a personal move. The remaining trustees agreed to begin the search for new trustees to improve the resilience of the CIO. 6. In terms of practical activities, the Trustees continued to host volunteers working on the boundary hedge, a measure designed to increase the wildlife value of the site and provide a pollution and noise screen along the adjacent road. We also hosted volunteers following scything and mowing of the main meadow to rake up and remove arisings as part of a measure to maintain and enhance the biodiversity interest on the site. 7. Supporting public access to our field, Warwick Spinney, is a key driver for the Trust. The construction of a new road layout associated with the development has addressed the most dangerous aspect of the approach by pedestrians.

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	N/A
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	N/A
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	N/A
Other		

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	Through the successful and considered use of grant applications the financial accounts are in a satisfactory position. The charity has sufficient reserves to cover regular outgoing payments
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	The Charity holds a reserve of funds, which is needed to cover ongoing liabilities such as annual site/ public liability insurance at Warwick Spinney. Investment in infrastructure and activities in only possible therefore through grants, donations and other fund-raising. A future task for the Trustees will be the development of a funding strategy.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	At the end of the reporting the charity held reserves of to confirm value £4589.07
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	N/A
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	The fund is not materially in deficit
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	None

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	The Trust can seek to raise funds through applying for grants and inviting donations (by publicising what it does) and legacies.
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	N/A
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	<p>Risks include: Injury or death of a user or volunteer. Theft of tools stored on the site.</p> <p>The Trust is insured in respect of both of these risks.</p> <p>Another risk is that the Trust may be hampered in achieving its objectives if it is unable to attract community volunteer support to manage the site. The Trust is managing this risk by investing with local partners in developing a shared Volunteering Strategy and seeking resources to build interest locally in participation in wildlife volunteering. (some ongoing achievements in this regard are listed in Achievements section above.)</p>
Other		<p>The charity has a number of assets in addition to Warwick Spinney, the small nature reserve it owns. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A storage shed for tools A selection of tools including two mowers which are shared with Benson Area Nature Group A metal gate A security bollard at entrance

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	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	<p>The approach to selection of trustees is set out in the constitution -</p> <p><i>'every trustee must be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees, and</i></p> <p><i>In selecting individuals for appointment as charity trustees, the charity trustees must have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.'</i></p> <p>The constitution also sets out that a new Trustee must expressly acknowledge that they accept the office of trustee.</p>
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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	
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Benson Community Green Space Trust
Other name the charity uses	Benson Green Space Trust
Registered charity number	1186960

Charity's principal address	C/o Benson Parish Council, Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, Oxfordshire. OX10 6LZ

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	Edel McGurk	Chair		Any trustee
2	Jon Fowler	Treasurer		Any trustee
3	Helen Stevenson	Trustee		Any trustee
4	Emma Simpson	Trustee		Any trustee
5	Steve Ash	Trustee		Any trustee

Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		
None		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	
None		

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	N/A
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
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None		
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Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

The CIO has no staff

Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

Nothing to declare

Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	Edel McGurk	
Full name(s)	EDEL MCGURK	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	CHAIR	
Date	21 Mar 26	

