

UNSTEAD NATURE COMMUNITY GROUP

England & Wales · Charity number 1196835

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2021-11-29

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 9 Home Farm Road
Godalming
GU7 1TX

Phone 01483417471

Email treasurer@unstead-reserve.org

Website [HTTPS://UNSTEAD-RESERVE.ORG](https://unstead-reserve.org)

Activities

Objects: THE OBJECT OF THE CIO IS TO PROMOTE, FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUBLIC, THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF UNSTEAD WETLAND NATURE RESERVE.

Activities: The charity cares for the Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve in Surrey for the benefit of both its wildlife and the general public. Through volunteer action, the Group restores, develops and maintains diverse habitats for the benefit of wildlife. It provides visitor facilities and information about the Reserve and its wildlife to create an educational and recreational resource.

Classification

- **How:** Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Surrey

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£11,519	£9,744	-	-
2024-03-31	£2,814	£7,014	-	-
2023-03-31	£17,347	£5,993	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
John Hartland Mairs	Chair	2021-11-29
Christopher Hedley Kirton		2021-11-29
Deborah Simmons		2023-06-28
John Michael Cheesman		2024-10-31
Keith Lightfoot		2021-11-29
Peter Thomas Cornish		2021-11-29
Richard Acton		2023-06-28
Stuart Christopher Smith		2021-11-29

UNSTEAD NATURE COMMUNITY GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1196835

Accounts

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

Contents	Page
Legal and administrative information	1
Trustees' Report	2
Receipts and Payments Account	5
Balance Sheet	6
Notes to the Accounts	7

TRUSTEES

The Trustees in office during the year were:

John Mairs (Chair)
Richard Acton
John Cheesman (appointed 31 October 2024)
Peter Cornish
Christopher Kirton
Keith Lightfoot (Warden)
Deborah Simmons
Stuart Smith

SITE ADDRESS

Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve, Trunley Heath Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU5 0BS

CONTACT ADDRESS

c/o 9 Home Farm Road, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1TX

PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS

Lloyds Bank plc, 25 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7HN

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1196835

**TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

The Trustees present their Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Constitution

Unstead Nature Community Group ('the Charity') is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, established on 29 November 2021. It is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales with registered number 1196835.

Objects and activities

The object of the Charity is to promote, for the benefit of the public, the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve. Through volunteer action, the Group develops and maintains diverse habitats of the Reserve for the benefit of wildlife. It provides visitor facilities and information about the Reserve and its wildlife to create an educational and recreational resource.

The charity has no staff and all its activities are undertaken by volunteers. Workparties for volunteers are held on site every Thursday with administrative duties being undertaken by the Trustees.

Trustees

The trustees who held office during the Year are set out on the previous page. The Charity's constitution allows for between 3 and 12 trustees. One third of the trustees are required to retire each year, albeit normally being eligible for reappointment. No trustee may hold office for more than three terms. Trustees are elected by members at the AGM by simple majority of those present.

Accounting principles

As a small Charity, the Trustees have chosen to present the annual accounts on a receipts and payments basis. There is no requirement for the accounts to be independently examined or audited and the Trustees do not feel that this is necessary, given the small scale of operations.

Reserves and Investments

Donations and grants to the Charity which have been given for a specific purpose or project are held as 'restricted funds' and cannot be used for other purposes. To the extent that these funds are not fully spent at the year-end, they are carried forward to be used for those purposes in the future. Other income – primarily membership subscriptions – is available for general expenditure for the Reserve without restriction. The Trustees aim to hold at least 6 months' expenditure in reserve to meet future unforeseen expenditure. The sums involved are modest and are held with Lloyds Bank. The Charity has no investments.

TRUSTEES' REPORT *(continued)***Financial Review**

During the year the Charity received £ 11,519 of income (2024- £2,814) of which £ 7,519 (2024- £nil) was restricted funds. Expenditure during the year totalled £ 9,744 (2024 - £7,014), resulting in funds at the end of the year of £ 8,929 (2024 - £7,154). Of this, £ 3,414 (2024 - £2,994) was restricted funds, leaving £ 5,515 (2024 - £4,160) available as general reserves.

Risk review

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

Review of the Year's Activities

A major project during the year was the construction of a pond dipping platform overlooking one of the South Meadow lagoons together with an access path and gate. This will be available for organised school and youth group visits, to encourage young people's involvement in, and appreciation of local wildlife. The materials were funded by a grant from Surrey County Council, but the construction was undertaken by our band of enthusiastic – and skilful – volunteers. A second significant project was the construction of a sand martin nest bank overlooking the 'Dry Lagoon'. This was generously supported by individual donations and, in particular, the construction of the main box itself by UK Power Network Services Ltd. The new 'cross-path' that joins the hide footpath at Stan's gate with the viewing platform and compound path was opened to members during the year. Work has continued to improve its drainage. It is closed to visitors during the bird-nesting season but is opened to members again in the autumn.

Through the year we have continued to develop the Nature Reserve to create a wider diversity of natural habitats attractive to wildlife of all kinds. Several hundred more sapling trees have been planted, particularly in the Works Field, to establish light woodland and hazel copses. Dead-hedge coups have been constructed around the hazel to reduce damage by deer. The boundary along Trunley Heath Road, beside the hide footpath, has been improved by laying the hedge, including planting more sapling native trees to fill in gaps.

In the South Meadow we have continued our work to diversify the flora and we have received further support from the charity Buglife in the form of wild flower seeds. After we had broadcast-sown the seeds, their introduction to the soil was greatly assisted by the hooves of Ronnie and Reggie – two Devon Red steers grazed by local farmer Tom Bowra of Upper Unstead Farm. New saplings were planted along the eastern edge of the meadow area to create a new hedgerow in due course.

As well as the more high-profile projects referred to above, the Reserve requires management - keeping access paths clear, looking after newly planted trees in their early years, hedge-laying, mending broken fences and gates, selective reed-cutting and willow coppicing and a myriad other jobs. These projects and maintenance tasks are all undertaken by volunteers on Thursday workparties. The Trustees are grateful for the willingness and enthusiasm of those volunteers and are pleased that the number of volunteers coming along has been increasing, now with a weekly average of 12, and adding up to 3,069 hours over the year. The Trustees also greatly appreciate the time given by other volunteers undertaking surveys at the Reserve – of birds, butterflies, reptiles, moths, bats, mammals, invertebrates, flora, fungi, lichens and water quality.

TRUSTEES' REPORT *(continued)***Review of the Year's Activities** *(continued)*

Membership has also been increasing as more people hear about the site and have been enjoying the birds and other wildlife to be seen at the Reserve. There were 219 members (including joint members) at the year end. Throughout the year members have been kept informed of activities through an excellent, well-illustrated monthly newsletter put together by the Warden.

Future Plans

We are discussing with Thames Water (the owner of the site) ways to enhance the wildlife habitats in the 'Back of Lagoon' area of the Reserve. Additionally we hope to work with our new neighbouring landowners to extend the benefit of the Reserve for local wildlife.

This annual report was approved by the Trustees at a meeting held on 22 May 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

John Mairs

John Mairs

Chair of Trustees

Christopher Kirton

Christopher Kirton

Trustee

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Unrestricted Funds 2025 £	Restricted Funds 2025 £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Notes				
<u>Income</u>				
Subscriptions	2,723	-	2,723	1,913
Grants	-	6,602	6,602	-
Other Donations	943	825	1,768	563
Gift Aid	426	-	426	338
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total Receipts	4,092	7,427	11,519	2,814
	-----	-----	-----	-----
<u>Charitable Expenditure</u>				
Materials	486	5,143	5,629	6,011
Tools	1,202	1,864	3,066	74
Bird food	236	-	236	285
Publicity and signage	110	-	110	249
Donation to bird-ringing group	200	-	200	-
<u>Governance Expenditure</u>				
Insurance	481	-	481	395
AGM venue hire	22	-	22	-
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total Payments	2,737	7,007	9,744	7,014
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Excess of Receipts over Payments/ (Payments over Receipts)	1,355	420	1,775	(4,200)
Fund balances brought forward	4,160	2,994	7,154	11,354
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Fund balances carried forward	5,515	3,414	8,929	7,154
	=====	=====	=====	=====

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2025
--

	Notes	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
<u>Assets</u>			
Bank balance		8,929 =====	7,154 =====
<u>Reserves</u>			
Restricted Funds	2	3,414	2,994
Unrestricted Funds	3	5,515 -----	4,160 -----
		8,929 =====	7,154 =====

The financial statements on pages 5-10 were approved by the Trustees at a meeting held on 22 May 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

John Mairs

John Mairs

Chair of Trustees

Christopher Kirton

Christopher Kirton

Trustee

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency and have been rounded to the nearest pound.

Income and expenditure

Income and expenditure is accounted for in the period in which it was received or paid. Expenditure is inclusive of VAT.

Tangible Fixed Assets

Expenditure is accounted for on a cash basis and thus no value is included in the accounts for any fixed assets other than the initial capital expenditure, shown in the Receipts and Payments Account.

Donated Goods and Services

The charity is grateful to its benefactors – both individuals and organisations - who have supplied tools and equipment, many trees (with stakes and guards), timber and other materials. These gifts in kind are not included in the accounts as there is no cash-based transaction to record.

The charity is also grateful for the services of its trustees, workparty volunteers, species surveyors and others who have given their expert time freely. However, no value is included in the accounts for the hours of unpaid work that they undertake.

Gift Aid

The Charity is eligible to claim Gift Aid on donations. Where donations are treated as restricted funds, any Gift Aid associated with such donations is treated as part of the relevant restricted fund.

Restricted Funds

These are gifts and grants which have been given to the Charity to be used in accordance with the wishes of the donor/grantor. They may only be applied for the purposes for which the funds were donated or granted.

Unrestricted Funds

The use of these funds has not been restricted to a particular purpose by donors. They are subdivided into Designated Funds and General Reserves.

Designated Funds

Designated funds are those funds which have been allocated by the Trustees for particular purposes. Further information on the nature and basis of the designated funds used by the Charity is given in Note 3.

General Reserves

General Reserves are the working fund of the Charity and are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the Charity's objectives. Among the uses of the General Reserves are the costs of maintenance and improvement of the Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve and the general administration of the Charity.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

2. RESTRICTED FUNDS

Year ended 31 March 2025	Public	Sand	Dipping	Tools &	Total
	Access	martin	Dipping	Tools &	
	Fund	Nestbank	Platform	Lectern	
	£	Fund	Fund	Fund	£
Brought forward	2,994	-	-	-	2,994
Donations received	-	825	-	-	825
Grants received	-	-	2,500	4,102	6,602
Gift Aid added	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure*	(266)	(483)	(2,329)	(3,929)	(7,007)
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Carried forward at 31 March 2025	2,728	342	171	173	3,414
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Year ended 31 March 2024	Public	Trees			Total
	Access	Fund			
	Fund				
	£	£			£
Grant from Thames Water	7,056	125			7,781
Donations received	-	-			-
Gift Aid added	-	-			-
Expenditure*	(4,662)	(125)			(4,787)
	-----	-----			-----
Carried forward at 31 March 2024	2,994	-			2,994
	=====	=====			=====

*Where actual expenditure exceeds the restricted fund available, the balance is covered by the Charity's general fund and is shown in the Receipts and Payments Account under 'Unrestricted Funds'.

The Public Access Fund results from a grant from Thames Water to enhance the public access to the Reserve. A significant proportion of this has been spent on materials for the construction of the new viewing platform.

The Sand martin Nestbank Fund arose from donations by individuals to fund the construction of a nest bank for sand martins overlooking a Reserve lagoon. This was substantially completed during the year, generously assisted by the free supply of materials and construction services by UK Power Networks Services Ltd.

The Dipping Platform Fund arose from a grant from Surrey County Council for the construction of a pond-dipping platform on one of the Reserve ponds. It was substantially completed during the year, being constructed by Unstead volunteers.

The Tools and Lectern fund derives from a grant from Surrey County Council for the provision of an information display board and for specific tools. Most of the tools were purchased during the year. The lectern was paid for during the year, although delivered and installed after the year-end.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)
--

3. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	2025	2024
	£	£
Designated Fund –Stan Capewell Fund	-	-
General Reserves	5,515	4,160
	<u>5,515</u>	<u>4,160</u>
	=====	=====

During the previous year donations were received in memory of Stan Capewell. The Trustees decided to designate these donations towards the cost of purchase and installation of a gate to access a new path in the Reserve. The gate was purchased and installed during that year.

4. FIXED ASSETS

The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis and thus no value is included in the accounts for any fixed assets that the Charity owns. At the Year end the Charity held numerous tools and equipment – mainly second-hand - that had been donated or purchased. Its most significant fixed assets are the hide constructed in about 2000 by Thames Water, a shed purchased in 2023, the viewing platform constructed in 2023 and the pond dipping platform constructed in 2024.

The nature reserve land is owned by Thames Water and the Charity has developed and maintained the site with their support. The Trustees are in the process of agreeing a formal lease for the site with Thames Water.

5. DONATIONS IN KIND

No value is included in the accounts for donations in kind. Many individuals have kindly volunteered their time in support of the Charity's work, both in developing and maintaining the Nature Reserve (including species surveying) and in the administration of the Charity. The Trustees are also grateful for legal advice provided free of charge in relation to the negotiation of a lease with Thames Water. A record of hours worked by volunteers on organised workparties is maintained, although many more hours are freely given by Trustees and others.

	2025	2024
Workparty volunteer hours	3,191	2,806
	=====	=====

In addition to regular or occasional Unstead volunteers, corporate and group volunteering was undertaken by the following during the year:

Atlantic Technology Ltd
 Haslemere Draca Explorers
 Biological Sciences Society, Royal Holloway, University of London
 UK Power Networks Services Ltd

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)
--

5. DONATIONS IN KIND (continued)

The Charity has also received numerous donations of tools, equipment, materials and trees as well as advice and assistance. The Trustees are grateful to all these benefactors. Organisations that have given to the Charity during the year include:

- Buglife
- Surrey Amphibian and Reptile Group
- Surrey County Council
- Surrey Wildlife Trust
- The Conservation Volunteers
- The Woodland Trust
- UK Power Networks Services Ltd
- Upper Unstead Farm

UNSTEAD NATURE COMMUNITY GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1196835

Accounts

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

Contents	Page
Legal and administrative information	1
Trustees' Report	2
Receipts and Payments Account	5
Balance Sheet	6
Notes to the Accounts	7

TRUSTEES

The Trustees in office during the year were:

John Mairs (Chair)
Richard Acton (appointed 28 June 2023)
Peter Cornish
Christopher Kirton
Keith Lightfoot (Warden)
Janet Pizzey (resigned 29 February 2024)
Deborah Simmons (appointed 28 June 2023)
Stuart Smith

SITE ADDRESS

Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve, Trunley Heath Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU5 0BS

CONTACT ADDRESS

c/o 9 Home Farm Road, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1TX

PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS

Lloyds Bank plc, 25 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7HN

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1196835

**TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

The Trustees present their Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Constitution

Unstead Nature Community Group ('the Charity') is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, established and registered on 29 November 2021. It is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales with registered number 1196835.

Objects and activities

The object of the Charity is to promote, for the benefit of the public, the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve. Through volunteer action, the Group restores, develops and maintains diverse habitats of the Reserve for the benefit of wildlife. It provides visitor facilities and information about the Reserve and its wildlife to create an educational and recreational resource.

The charity has no staff and all its activities are undertaken by volunteers. Workparties for volunteers are held on site every Thursday with administrative duties being undertaken by the Trustees.

Trustees

The trustees who held office during the Year are set out on the previous page. The Charity's constitution allows for between 3 and 12 trustees. One third of the trustees are required to retire each year, albeit normally being eligible for reappointment. No trustee may hold office for more than three terms. Trustees are elected by members at the AGM by simple majority of those present.

Janet Pizzey resigned as a Trustee towards the end of the year. The Trustees are grateful for all her work, right from (and even before) the start of the Group. As a token of appreciation, Janet was awarded life membership.

Accounting principles

As a small Charity, the Trustees have chosen to present the annual accounts on a receipts and payments basis. There is no requirement for the accounts to be independently examined or audited and the Trustees do not feel that this is necessary, given the small scale of operations.

Reserves and Investments

Donations to the Charity which have been given for a specific purpose or project are held as 'restricted funds' and cannot be used for other purposes. To the extent that these funds are not fully spent at the year-end, they are carried forward to be used for those purposes in the future. Other income – primarily membership subscriptions – is available for general expenditure for the Reserve without restriction. The Trustees aim to hold at least 6 months' expenditure in reserve to meet future unforeseen expenditure. The sums involved are modest and are held with Lloyds Bank. The Charity has no investments.

TRUSTEES' REPORT *(continued)***Financial Review**

During the year the Charity received £2,814 of income (2023- £17,347) of which £nil (2023- £10,038) was restricted funds. Expenditure during the year totalled £7,014 (2023 - £5,993), resulting in funds at the end of the year of £7,154 (2023 - £11,354). Of this, £2,994 (2023 - £7,781) was restricted funds and £nil (2023 - £723) was designated funds, leaving £4,160 (2023 - £2,850) available as general reserves.

Risk review

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

Review of the Year's Activities

A major project at the start of the year was the construction of a viewing platform overlooking the newly-created lagoons in the South Meadow. The materials had been funded by Thames Water, but the construction was undertaken by our band of enthusiastic – and skilful – volunteers. Enhancements were made to the access paths, and the viewing platform was opened to members in January this year. Work has continued to improve the 'cross-path' that connects across from beyond the viewing platform to the hide footpath – via the newly installed 'Stan's Gate'. This will be closed to visitors during the bird-nesting season but it is hoped that access can be opened to members in the autumn.

Through the year we have continued to develop the Nature Reserve to create a wider diversity of natural habitats attractive to wildlife of all kinds. Several hundred more sapling trees have been planted, particularly in the Works Field to establish light woodland and a hazel copse, and along the side of the hide footpath to replace the non-native laurel. This planting has included a small 'orchard' of sizeable fruiting trees, donated by Thames Water. Individual donations of specimen native oak trees have also been planted at the edge of the South Meadow and in the Works Field.

In the South Meadow we have worked with the charity Buglife to enhance the variety of wild flowers. This has involved cutting hay (undertaken with assistance from a local farmer Tom Bowra), scything, raking and seeding with wildflower seeds supplied by Buglife. In the North Meadow, views from the hide have been improved by repositioning the fence, and in the far corner, a summer bat roost has been constructed above an existing small brick tower.

As well as the more high-profile projects referred to above, the Reserve requires management - keeping access paths clear, looking after newly planted trees in their early years, hedge-laying, mending broken fences and gates and a myriad other little jobs. These projects and maintenance tasks are all undertaken by volunteers on Thursday workparties. The Trustees are grateful for the willingness and enthusiasm of those volunteers and are pleased that the number of volunteers coming along has been increasing, now with a weekly average of 12. The Trustees also greatly appreciate the time given by other volunteers undertaking surveys at the Reserve – of birds, butterflies, reptiles, moths, bats, mammals, flora, fungi ... and water quality.

Membership has also been increasing as more people hear about the site and have been enjoying the birds and other wildlife to be seen at the Reserve. There were just over 150 members (including joint members) at the year end. Throughout the Year Members have been kept informed of activities through an excellent, well-illustrated monthly newsletter put together by the Warden.

TRUSTEES' REPORT (*continued*)

Furure Plans

Work will continue on the preparing the cross-path for member access later in the year. Funding applications have recently been made for a few small projects, but undertaking those projects will depend on the success of those applications.

This annual report was approved by the Trustees at a meeting held on 28 June 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

John Mairs

John Mairs

Chair of Trustees

Christopher H Kirton

Christopher Kirton

Trustee

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Unrestricted Funds Year to 31 Mar 2024 £	Restricted Funds Year to 31 Mar 2024 £	Total Year to 31 Mar 2024 £	Total 29 Nov 2021 to 31 Mar 2023
Income				
Subscriptions	1,913	-	1,913	3,318
Grants	-	-	-	8,000
Donation – Transfer from Association 2	-	-	-	2,239
Other Donations	563	-	563	3,006
Gift Aid	338	-	338	784
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total Receipts	2,814	-	2,814	17,347
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Charitable Expenditure				
Materials	1,224	4,787	6,011	814
Tools	74	-	74	173
Bird food	285	-	285	162
Shed purchase and construction	-	-	-	4,126
Publicity and signage	249	-	249	281
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total Payments	2,227	4,787	7,014	5,993
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Excess of Receipts over Payments/ (Payments over Receipts)	587	(4,787)	(4,200)	11,354
Fund balances brought forward	3,573	7,781	11,354	-
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Fund balances carried forward	4,160	2,994	7,154	11,354
	=====	=====	=====	=====

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2024
--

	Notes	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<u>Assets</u>			
Bank balance		7,154 =====	11,354 =====
<u>Reserves</u>			
Restricted Funds	3	2,994	7,781
Unrestricted Funds	4	4,160	3,573
		7,154 =====	11,354 =====

The financial statements on pages 5-9 were approved by the Trustees at a meeting held on 28 June 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

John Mairs

John Mairs

Chair of Trustees

Christopher H Kirton

Christopher Kirton

Trustee

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency and have been rounded to the nearest pound.

Income and expenditure

Income and expenditure is accounted for in the period in which it was received or paid. Expenditure is inclusive of VAT

Tangible Fixed Assets

Expenditure is accounted for on a cash basis and thus no value is included in the accounts for any fixed assets other than the initial capital expenditure, shown in the Receipts and Payments Account.

Donated Goods and Services

The charity is grateful to its benefactors – both individuals and organisations - who have supplied tools and equipment, many trees (with stakes and guards), timber and other materials. These gifts in kind are not included in the accounts as there is no cash-based transaction to record.

The charity is also grateful for the services of its trustees, workparty volunteers and others who have given their expert time freely. However, no value is included in the accounts for the hours of unpaid work that they undertake.

Gift Aid

The Charity is eligible to claim Gift Aid on donations. Where donations are treated as restricted funds, any Gift Aid associated with such donations is treated as part of the relevant restricted fund.

Restricted Funds

These are gifts which have been given to the Charity to be used in accordance with the wishes of the donor. They may only be applied for the purposes for which the funds were donated.

Unrestricted Funds

The use of these funds has not been restricted to a particular purpose by donors. They are subdivided into Designated Funds and General Reserves.

Designated Funds

Designated funds are those funds which have been allocated by the Trustees for particular purposes. Further information on the nature and basis of the designated funds used by the Charity is given in Note 4.

General Reserves

General Reserves are the working fund of the Charity and are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the Charity's objectives. Among the uses of the General Reserves are the costs of maintenance and improvement of the Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve and the general administration of the Charity.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

2. DONATION FROM ASSOCIATION

The Unstead Nature Community Group was originally established as an Association which invited subscription membership. On 29 November 2021 Unstead Nature Community Group was formally registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Following this, on 2 December 2021, the Committee of the Association formally agreed to transfer its operations and accumulated funds to the CIO. In reality this represented the final stage of the formation of the Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve's support and management organisation. However, legally this transfer represented a donation to the CIO of £2,239 in the prior year.

3. RESTRICTED FUNDS

Year ended 31 March 2024	Bench Fund	Public Access Fund	Trees Fund	Shed Fund	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Brought forward	-	7,656	125	-	7,781
Donations received	-	-	-	-	-
Gift Aid added	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure*	-	(4,662)	(125)	-	(4,787)
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Carried forward at 31 March 2024	-	2,994	-	-	2,994
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

Period 29 November 2021 to 31 March 2023	Bench Fund	Public Access Fund	Trees Fund	Shed Fund	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Grant from Thames Water	-	8,000	-	-	8,000
Donations received	38	-	100	1,500	1,638
Gift Aid added	-	-	25	375	400
Expenditure*	(38)	(344)	-	(1,875)	(2,257)
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Carried forward at 31 March 2023	-	7,656	125	-	7,781
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

*Where actual expenditure exceeds the restricted fund available, the balance is covered by the Charity's general fund and is shown in the Receipts and Payments Account under 'Unrestricted Funds'.

The Bench Fund resulted from an original donation of £900 before the Charity was formed. The purchase of two benches also took place before the Charity was formed, leaving £38 transferred in from the Association, which was spent during the previous period on installation costs.

The Public Access Fund results from a grant from Thames Water to enhance the public access to the Reserve. A significant proportion of this has been spent on materials for the construction of the new viewing platform.

The Shed Fund represents donations from two anonymous donors towards the purchase of a new shed for the Reserve in which to store tools and materials. The shed was purchased in early 2023.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)
--

4. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	2024	2023
	£	£
Designated Fund –Stan Capewell Fund	-	723
General Reserves	4,160	2,850
	-----	-----
	4,160	3,573
	=====	=====

During the previous period donations were received in memory of Stan Capewell. The Trustees decided to designate these donations towards the cost of purchase and installation of a gate to access a new path in the Reserve. The gate was purchased and installed during the year.

5. FIXED ASSETS

The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis and thus no value is included in the accounts for any fixed assets that the Charity owns. At the Year end the Charity held numerous tools and equipment – mainly second-hand - that had been donated or purchased. Its most significant fixed assets are the hide constructed in about 2000 by Thames Water, the shed purchased in 2023 and the viewing platform constructed in 2023.

The nature reserve land is owned by Thames Water and the Charity has developed and maintained the site with their support. The Trustees are in the process of agreeing a formal lease for the site with Thames Water.

6. DONATIONS IN KIND

No value is included in the accounts for donations in kind. Many individuals have kindly volunteered their time in support of the Charity's work, both in developing and maintaining the Nature Reserve and in the administration of the Charity. The Trustees are also grateful for legal advice provided free of charge in relation to the negotiation of a lease with Thames Water. A record of hours worked by volunteers on organised workparties is maintained, although many more hours are freely given by Trustees and others.

	2024	2023
Workparty volunteer hours	2,806	2,359
	=====	=====

The Charity has also received numerous donations of tools, equipment, materials and trees as well as advice and assistance. The Trustees are grateful to all these benefactors. Organisations that have given to the Charity during the year include:

- Buglife
- Surrey County Council
- Surrey Wildlife Trust
- Thames Water
- The Conservation Volunteers
- The Woodland Trust

UNSTEAD NATURE COMMUNITY GROUP

England & Wales - Charity number 1196835

Accounts

**ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

Contents	Page
Legal and administrative information	1
Trustees' Report	2
Receipts and Payments Account	5
Balance Sheet	6
Notes to the Accounts	7

TRUSTEES

The Trustees in office during the period were:

John Mairs (Chair)
Peter Cornish
Christopher Kirton
Keith Lightfoot (Warden)
Janet Pizzey
Stuart Smith

SITE ADDRESS

Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve, Trunley Heath Road, Guildford, Surrey, GU5 0BS

CONTACT ADDRESS

c/o 9 Home Farm Road, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1TX

PROFESSIONAL ADVISERS

Lloyds Bank plc, 25 Gresham Street, London, EC2V 7HN

REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1196835

**TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

The Trustees present their Report and Accounts for the Charity's first period of operation, from 29 November 2021 to 31 March 2023.

Constitution

Unstead Nature Community Group ('the Charity') is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. It is registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales with registered number 1196835. It was established and registered on 29 November 2021.

Prior to the Charity's inception, a group of individuals assembled in early September 2020 with a view to restoring the dilapidated Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve. That group subsequently (in April 2021) formed an Association to which it invited membership by its supporters. The assets and activities of that Association were transferred to the Charity on 2 December 2021. The Association's name was the same as the Charity's.

Objects and activities

The object of the Charity is to promote, for the benefit of the public, the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment of Unstead Wetland Nature Reserve. Through volunteer action, the Group restores, develops and maintains diverse habitats of the Reserve for the benefit of wildlife. It provides visitor facilities and information about the Reserve and its wildlife to create an educational and recreational resource.

The charity has no staff and all its activities are undertaken by volunteers. Workparties for volunteers are held on site every Thursday with administrative duties being undertaken by trustees.

Trustees

The six trustees who held office during the period are set out on the previous page. These are the first trustees of the Charity, as set out in its constitution. This allows for between 3 and 12 trustees. All the initial trustees are required to retire at the Charity's first AGM but are all eligible for reappointment. Thereafter, one third of the trustees are required to retire each year, albeit again normally being eligible for reappointment. No trustee may hold office for more than three terms (ignoring this first period). Trustees are elected by members at the AGM by simple majority of those present.

Accounting principles

As a small Charity, the Trustees have chosen to present the annual accounts on a receipts and payments basis. There is no requirement for the accounts to be independently examined or audited and the Trustees do not feel that this is necessary, given the small scale of operations.

TRUSTEES' REPORT *(continued)***Reserves and Investments**

Donations to the Charity which have been given for a specific purpose or project are held as 'restricted funds' and cannot be used for other purposes. To the extent that these funds are not fully spent at the period-end, they are carried forward to be used for those purposes in the future. Other income – primarily membership subscriptions – is available for general expenditure for the Reserve without restriction. The Trustees aim to hold at least 6 months' expenditure in reserve to meet future unforeseen expenditure. The sums involved are modest and are held with Lloyds Bank. The Charity has no investments.

Financial Review

The Charity took on a bank balance of £2,239 from the former Association, which had come principally from membership subscriptions. During the period there was a further £15,108 of income (of which £10,038 was restricted funds). Expenditure during the period totalled £5,993, resulting in funds at the end of the year of £11,354. Of this, £7,781 was restricted funds and £723 was designated funds leaving £2,850 available as general reserves.

Risk review

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

Review of the Period's Activities

The original group of volunteers undertook the first workparty at Unstead on 3 September 2020. Since then there has been at least one workparty each week on the site (keeping within covid-19 restrictions when appropriate). The nature (and enthusiasm) of the workparties has not changed over the iterations of the organisation from a group of like-minded individuals to a more formal Association to the Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

In the initial stages, from a dilapidated, overgrown and dried-up 'wetland' nature reserve, the volunteers have removed trees from the North Meadow, restored the water supply to the North Meadow and the lagoon and have renovated the hide access path. Subsequently volunteer workparties have undertaken numerous activities on the Reserve, all designed to enhance the natural environment for wildlife of all kinds and to improve visitor access. Over 3,000 young trees have been planted across the reserve, either as hedgerows or as future woodland copses or specimen trees and more recently a 'Miyawaki Forest'. Specific areas for invertebrate wildlife have been created including bug hotels, stag beetle pyramids and a shallow pond. For birds, numerous nesting platforms and boxes of various designs have been installed across the site. Access paths have been extended and three benches installed to improve visitor access and enjoyment. Work has been carried out more recently to prepare the South Meadow western section for sowing of wildflower seeds with the aim, over time, of creating a wildflower meadow.

The site's original compound and storage shed were cleared and renovated in 2021 and, in early 2023 an additional, larger shed was purchased and installed in the compound to provide storage space for tools, equipment and materials. The Trustees are grateful to two anonymous donors who provided extra funds which allowed for a suitably sized shed to be acquired.

TRUSTEES' REPORT *(continued)***Review of the Period's Activities *(continued)***

Towards the end of the period, Thames Water's aquatic engineering contractors undertook major landscaping works on the East side of the South Meadow to provide new pools, lagoons and marsh areas. Although initiated by Thames Water, the detailed design of the wet areas was guided by our Trustee Warden. Thames Water had, earlier in the period, given the Charity a grant of £8,000 to enhance public access and a substantial part of this will be used for a new viewing platform, the foundation piles for which were installed by the contractors.

Throughout the period Members have been kept informed of activities through an excellent well-illustrated monthly newsletter put together by the Warden. An open day was held in July for Members and the wider public.

Future Plans

Work will continue on the viewing platform and to further enhance the new ponds and lagoons. A new path was created during 2022 from the hide footpath to the compound area, but this is often waterlogged and not suitable for public use. It is hoped that funding can be obtained to make this suitable for wider use.

This annual report was approved by the Trustees at a meeting held on 25 May 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

John Mairs

John Mairs

Chair of Trustees

Christopher H Kirton

Christopher Kirton

Trustee

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNT FOR THE PERIOD 29 NOVEMBER 2021 TO 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total £
<u>Income</u>				
Subscriptions		3,318	-	3,318
Grants		-	8,000	8,000
Donation – Transfer from Association	2	2,239	-	2,239
Other Donations		1,368	1,638	3,006
Gift Aid		384	400	784
Total Receipts		7,309	10,038	17,347
<u>Charitable Expenditure</u>				
Materials		432	382	814
Tools		173	-	173
Bird food		162	-	162
Shed purchase and construction		2,251	1,875	4,126
Publicity and signage		281	-	281
<u>Governance Expenditure</u>				
Insurance		268	-	268
Land Registry searches re lease		169	-	169
Total Payments		3,736	2,257	5,993
Excess of Receipts over Payments		3,573	7,781	11,354

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2023
--

	Notes	Total £
<u>Assets</u>		
Bank balance		11,354 =====
<u>Reserves</u>		
Restricted Funds	3	7,781
Unrestricted Funds	4	3,573
		----- 11,354 =====

The financial statements on pages 5-9 were approved by the Trustees at a meeting held on 25 May 2023 and signed on their behalf by:

John Mairs

John Mairs

Chair of Trustees

Christopher H Kirton

Christopher Kirton

Trustee

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared on a receipts and payments basis in accordance with the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements are prepared in sterling which is the functional currency and have been rounded to the nearest pound.

Income and expenditure

Income and expenditure is accounted for in the period in which it was received or paid. Expenditure is inclusive of VAT

Tangible Fixed Assets

Expenditure is accounted for on a cash basis and thus no value is included in the accounts for any fixed assets other than the initial capital expenditure, shown in the Receipts and Payments Account.

Donated Goods and Services

The charity is grateful to its benefactors – both individuals and organisations - who have supplied tools and equipment, many trees (with stakes and guards), timber and other materials. These gifts in kind are not included in the accounts as there is no cash-based transaction to record.

The charity is also grateful for the services of its trustees, workparty volunteers and others who have given their expert time freely. However, no value is included in the accounts for the hours of unpaid work that they undertake.

Gift Aid

The Charity is eligible to claim Gift Aid on donations. Where donations are treated as restricted funds, any Gift Aid associated with such donations is treated as part of the relevant restricted fund.

Restricted Funds

These are gifts which have been given to the Charity to be used in accordance with the wishes of the donor. They may only be applied for the purposes for which the funds were donated.

Unrestricted Funds

The use of these funds has not been restricted to a particular purpose by donors. They are subdivided into Designated Funds and General Reserves.

Designated Funds

Designated funds are those funds which have been allocated by the Trustees for particular purposes. Further information on the nature and basis of the designated funds used by the Charity is given in Note 4.

General Reserves

General Reserves are the working fund of the Charity and are available for use at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the Charity's objectives. Among the uses of the General Reserves are the costs of maintenance and improvement of the Unstead Nature Reserve and the general administration of the Charity.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)
--

2. DONATION FROM ASSOCIATION

The Unstead Nature Community Group was originally established as an Association which invited subscription membership. On 29 November 2021 Unstead Nature Community Group was formally registered with the Charity Commission of England and Wales as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. Following this, on 2 December 2021, the Committee of the Association formally agreed to transfer its operations and accumulated funds to the CIO. In reality this represented the final stage of the formation of the Unstead Wetlands Reserve's support and management organisation. However, legally this transfer represented a donation to the CIO of £2,239.

3. RESTRICTED FUNDS

	Bench Fund	Public Access Fund	Trees Fund	Shed Fund	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Grant from Thames Water	-	8,000	-	-	8,000
Donations received	38	-	100	1,500	1,638
Gift Aid added	-	-	25	375	400
Expenditure*	(38)	(344)	-	(1,875)	(2,257)
	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
	-	7,656	125	-	7,781
	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====

*Where actual expenditure exceeds the restricted fund available, the balance is covered by the Charity's general fund and is shown in the Receipts and Payments Account under 'Unrestricted Funds'.

The Bench Fund resulted from an original donation of £900 before the Charity was formed. The purchase of two benches also took place before the Charity was formed, leaving £38 transferred in from the Association, which was spent during the period on installation costs.

The Public Access Fund results from a grant from Thames Water to enhance the public access to the Reserve. The majority of this has been earmarked for public access work now the re-landscaping of the South Meadow has been completed.

The Trees Fund represents a donation for trees. So far the Charity has received many sapling trees free-of-charge such that the Trees Fund has yet to be spent.

The Shed Fund represents donations from two anonymous donors towards the purchase of a new shed for the Reserve in which to store tools and materials. The shed was purchased in early 2023.

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS (continued)

4. UNRESTRICTED FUNDS

	£
Designated Fund –Stan Capewell Fund	723
General Reserves	2,850

	3,573
	=====

During the period donations were received in memory of Stan Capewell. The Trustees have decided to designate these donations towards the cost of purchase and installation of a gate to access a new path in the Reserve.

5. FIXED ASSETS

The accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis and thus no value is included in the accounts for any fixed assets that the Charity owns. At the period end the Charity held numerous tools and equipment – mainly second-hand - that had been donated or purchased. It's most significant fixed asset is the shed purchased in 2023.

The nature reserve land is owned by Thames Water and the Charity has developed and maintained the site with their support. The Trustees are in the process of agreeing a formal lease for the site with Thames Water.

6. DONATIONS IN KIND

No value is included in the accounts for donations in kind. Many individuals have kindly volunteered their time in support of the Charity's work, both in developing and maintaining the Nature Reserve and in the administration of the Charity. The Trustees are also grateful for legal advice provided free of charge in relation to the negotiation of a lease with Thames Water. A record of hours worked by volunteers on organised workparties has been maintained from 1 April 2022, although many more hours are feely given by Trustees and others.

Workparty volunteer hours (year to 31 March 2023)	2,359
	=====

The Charity has also received numerous donations of tools, equipment, materials and trees. The Trustees are grateful to all these benefactors. Organisations that have given to the Charity during the period include:

- RSPB Farnham Heath
- Surrey County Council
- Surrey Wildlife Trust
- Thames Water
- The Conservation Volunteers
- The Woodland Trust