

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

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**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 £
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
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
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>7,309</b>	<b>10,038</b>	<b>17,347</b>
<b><u>Charitable Expenditure</u></b>				
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
<b><u>Governance Expenditure</u></b>				
Insurance		268	-	268
Land Registry searches re lease		169	-	169
<b>Total Payments</b>		<b>3,736</b>	<b>2,257</b>	<b>5,993</b>
<b>Excess of Receipts over Payments</b>		<b>3,573</b>	<b>7,781</b>	<b>11,354</b>

<b>BALANCE SHEET</b> <b>AS AT 31 MARCH 2023</b>
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	Notes	Total £
<b><u>Assets</u></b>		
Bank balance		<b>11,354</b> =====
<b><u>Reserves</u></b>		
Restricted Funds	3	7,781
Unrestricted Funds	4	3,573 -----
		<b>11,354</b> =====

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*

<b>NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS</b>
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**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**

	<b>Bench Fund</b>	<b>Public Access Fund</b>	<b>Trees Fund</b>	<b>Shed Fund</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
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
	-----
	<b>3,573</b>
	=====

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 freely given by Trustees and others.

Workparty volunteer hours (year to 31 March 2023)	<b>2,359</b>
	=====

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