

**Charity number: 1200486**

**Company number: CE030261 (England and Wales)**

## **NATURAL NEIGHBOURS CIO**

### **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE PERIOD FROM 1ST OCTOBER 2023 TO 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

#### **LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

##### **Trustees**

- **Annwen Johnson BEM**
- **Kirstie Beaven**
- **Caroline Loden**
- **Lauren Mills**
- **Madeleine Jarratt (Chair)**
- **Christiana Adegoke**
- **Will Kelsey**
- **John Salmon**

**Charity number: 1200486**

**Company number: CE030261**

**Registered office: 52 Vineyard Hill Road, London, SW19 7JH**

**Principal office address: 1 Principal Square, London, E9 6AD**

**Independent examiner: Chris Wheatley ACA, 12 Andre Street, London, E8 2AA**

## **TRUSTEES' REPORT**

### **FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

#### **Chair's Introduction**

This year marked a critical turning point for Natural Neighbours. We deepened our community roots at Daubeney, progressed our work with schools and estates, and strengthened our internal systems, all while navigating financial uncertainties and governance challenges. I am proud of the team's dedication and the resilience that continues to define this charity. From securing new partnerships and grants and rebranding the website, we've made important strides toward our mission: connecting communities and nature to benefit both.

We know the road ahead requires further fundraising success and expanded capacity. But the momentum is with us, and our growing reputation—among residents, schools, and ecological partners alike—points to a bright future.

Thank you to my fellow trustees, volunteers, partners and our exceptional director, Julian Kirby.

#### **Purpose**

The trustees have considered the Charities Act 2011 when defining the charity as a Public Benefit entity. As set out in our governing document, Natural Neighbours operates for the benefit of the public: (a) to promote the conservation of wildlife and the conservation, improvement and protection of the physical and natural environment, in particular but not exclusively by promoting biodiversity; (b) to advance the education of the public in relation to such conservation, improvement and protection and related matters. For the purposes of this object, we are defining biodiversity as richness (number of species), abundance (size of populations) and distribution of species in a geographical area.

#### **Objectives and Activities**

Using public demonstration events backed up by online media, Natural Neighbours inspires and supports people in urban communities to create and connect essential habitat for wildlife in their private or shared outdoor spaces. We raise awareness of the health and wellbeing benefits of supporting and experiencing nature wherever and whoever you are, with a particular focus on the most marginalised communities.

#### **Our Vision**

Our vision is of towns and cities reaching their full potential to buzz, bloom and sing with wildlife, benefitting the health and wellbeing of global climate and local communities alike. During the year, we have made substantial strides in aligning our activities with our vision.

# Achievements and Performance

## 1. Strategy

We made demonstrable progress in our core pilot site, Daubeney School, which now serves as a case study and springboard for further partnerships. New sites onboarded this year include Hackney Adventure Playground, and Robin Hood Community Garden. We opened conversations with Berger, Lauriston and Sebright primary schools and Priory Court and Shrubland Road Estates to discuss how Natural Neighbours can help them to achieve their ambitions for habitat improvements on their land.

Daubeney's transformation also supports Hackney and London's Nature Recovery Strategy. Our strategic framework includes creating ecological networks of habitat. These comprise 'habitat hotspots' in communal spaces like schools and estate gardens with wildlife value equivalent at least to Local SINCS. Connecting between these, we inspire residents to create smaller stepping stone habitats in their domestic and workplace outdoor spaces.

## 2. Governance and Planning

This year saw improvements in our policy framework, the refinement of our Risk Register (now using a clearer RAG scoring system), and several new trustee appointments. We welcomed Madeleine Jarratt (Fundraising, Health & Wellbeing, Planning) who then became Chair of Trustees in June 2024 and Christiana Adegoke (Finance).

Whilst still in this early phase of the charity's establishment we continued to staff our operations on a consultancy contractor basis, with contracts subject to review by the Chair of Trustees. The ambition remains to grow the charity's income to a point at which we can consider moving to a PAYE hiring model with staff recruited at competitive external interview.

We are grateful to the Reach Volunteering site for the great success they have afforded us in finding and retaining brilliant volunteer support across business systems, governance, content development, fundraising and digital infrastructure.

## 3. Marketing and Communications

2024 brought major steps forward in public-facing communications:

- The **new website** soft-launched in April with a new structure and design. We are exceedingly grateful to the contractor for the discounted construction rate and our formidable volunteer who led on the content structure and much of the copy
- A refreshed **promotional film** and new **Spotlight Species illustrations** have enhanced our visual identity
- Our **social media presence** now spans four platforms, with regular updates and cross-channel reach
- We completed two successful **crowdfunding campaigns** - one on the Aviva Community platform off the back of the BBC Wild Isles campaign and one - our 'Green September' campaign - that we were proud to have conceived and delivered ourselves. Both demonstrated the strong public support we enjoy for our work locally
- We held a launch and celebration event in partnership with Daubeney School to mark the official opening of the transformed 'Hop Garden' and wider school grounds by Natural Neighbours and the school community. This was held under the auspices of the GROW Urban

festival, the organisers of which feted Natural Neighbours as one of two particularly outstanding contributors to the festival of local greening events.

#### **4. Stakeholder Engagement**

Our main stakeholder engagement activity focused on a very successful launch event at Daubeney School in June 2024 as part of the Grow Urban festival. This was a very well attended event that allowed us to showcase our work and spread awareness of how improved biodiversity is not only good for nature but also good for humans too. During 2023/24 we were also able to begin partnership working with the Robin Hood Gardens community space.

#### **5. Funding and Finance**

During 2023/24 we received a corporate donation of £5,000 from SNG towards our hugely successful Aviva Community Fund campaign. As part of this same campaign we received £2,721.09 from Aviva in matched funding and, with individual givers from our public support base, exceeded our £10,000 fundraising target, raising over £10,500. We were pleased to have been able to work in partnership with Daubeney School PCTA, combining our funds and resources with £6,500 they had raised previously for outdoor infrastructure as well as a further £2,000 that they contributed towards our co-designed plans.

During our second financial year we were focussed on establishing the organisation's structures and delivering impact on the funding received to date; both in accordance with our mission's stated impact area, and in order to demonstrate the value of NN as a fundable partner charity. We are pleased that we did this and now have demonstrable impact in the field as documented on our website, social media and report.

We have established an organisational beating heart of volunteer teams including expert and energetic fundraisers whose impact will land in financial Yr3.

### **Financial Review**

Income during 2023/24 totalled £21,641 and expenditure exceeded this at £36,691 as we drew on the previous financial year's £25,000 Postcode Society Trust grant to deliver our pilot projects at Daubeney School and Robin Hood Community Garden. We also undertook onboarding with Hackney Marsh Adventure Playground, including agreeing an impact plan. Delivery at this site did not commence until the following financial year. Detailed financial statements are included below.

We are working toward holding 3 months' reserves. At present, reserves are insufficient for this target. We intend to adopt our drafted Reserves Policy once fundraising allows.

### **Plans for the Future**

Looking ahead, our priorities for 2024–25 include:

- Continuing to develop an innovative hybrid digital and in-person platform to support site engagement

- Deepening our partnerships with schools and estates
- Expanding trustee capacity by recruiting new trustees according to the needs identified in our skills audit
- Continue to expand our fundraising capacity so that we can build toward financial sustainability, including core cost coverage and reserves
- As fundraising allows, to develop and start to deliver our Phase 2 Community engagement programme. Activities will include habitat creation workshops such as bird box and bug hotel making, bulb planting, seed and cutting sharing, informative events promoting the health benefits of experiencing nature, and celebration and cultural events related to nature and the community.

## Structure, Governance and Management

Natural Neighbours is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) governed by a board of trustees who meet regularly to oversee the strategic direction and management of the charity. We are committed to adhering to best practices in governance and ensuring transparency and accountability in all our activities.

Trustees are appointed for 3-year terms, with all voting powers held by the board. The charity is run day-to-day by the Director, Julian Kirby, contracted on a part-time consultancy basis. Julian has also contributed considerable time and skills to Natural Neighbours in a voluntary capacity.

### Trustees (1st Oct 2023 to 30th Sept 2024)

- **Sion Ellis** (Chair - June 2022-June 2024)
- **Vicki Hird** (from June 2022-June 2024)
- **Lauren Mills** (from Sep 2022)
- **Kirstie Beaven** (from Feb 2023)
- **Annwen Johnson** (from Mar 2023)
- **Caroline Loden** (reappointed Mar 2024)
- **Madeleine Jarratt** (from Mar 2024 - Chair from June 2024)
- **Christiana Adegoke** (from Mar 2024)
- **Will Kelsey** (from Nov 2024)
- **John Salmon** (from Dec 2024)

Trustees are recruited via online platforms and personal referrals to fill the needs of the charity - which are defined by a skills and experience needs requirement audit as recommended by Charity Excellence. Each potential Trustee is asked to submit a covering letter and CV and undertake an informal interview with a Trustee. We also acknowledge the support of our advisors and volunteers who have contributed immensely to our progress this year.

## Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Charities SORP requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent, and
- State whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees' report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MJarratt', written in a cursive style.

**Madeleine Jarratt, Chair**

**Date: 20 June 2025**

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024**

I report on the financial statements of Natural Neighbours CIO for the year ended 30 September 2024.

### **Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Charities Act") and that an independent examination is needed. Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit under company law and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act),
- and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

### **Basis of independent examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

### **Independent examiner's statement**

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair" view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

*Chris Wheatley*

Chris Wheatley ACA  
12 Andre Street London E8 2AA  
Date: 25 June 2025

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES**  
**PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

				YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024		YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023	
				UNRESTRICTED FUNDS		UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	
	NOTE	£	£			£	£
<b>INCOME</b>							
Donations	3.1	9,049				35,439	
Fundraising	3.1	10,947					
Gift Aid	3.2	1,357					
Investment Income	3.3	<u>288</u>					
			21,641				35,439
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	4						
Charitable activities		(24,055)				(1,637)	
Raising funds		(7,642)				(16,306)	
Others		<u>(58)</u>				<u>(463)</u>	
			(31,755)				(18,405)
<b>NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS</b>			<u>(10,115)</u>				<u>17,034</u>

All income and expenditure are from continuing activities.



**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

		AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024	AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2023
	NOTE	£	£
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash at bank		11,103	26,153
<b>CREDITORS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR</b>			
Accruals	6	(4,184)	(9,120)
<b>TOTAL ASSET</b>		<u>6,919</u>	<u>17,034</u>
<b>RESERVES</b>	5	<u>6,919</u>	<u>17,034</u>

These financial statements were approved by the Board on and are signed on its behalf by



**Madeleine Jarratt**, Chair  
20th June 2025

**NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS**  
**PERIOD ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**

**1.1 BASIS OF ACCOUNTING**

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" and the Charities SORP.

Natural Neighbours qualifies as a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

The financial statements are being prepared using the historical cost convention.

The financial statements are prepared in pounds sterling, which is the functional currency of the company. These financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

**1.2 GOING CONCERN**

The trustees have assessed the charity's ability to continue as a going concern and have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. As a result, the financial statements were prepared on a going-concern basis.

**1.3 CHARITABLE FUNDS**

Unrestricted funds are used at the trustees' discretion to advance their charitable goals. The cost for the ongoing website design at stage two is yet to be capitalized.

**1.4 INCOME**

Income is recognised when the charity is entitled to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be measured reliably

**1.5 EXPENDITURE**

Expenditure is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

**2. CRITICAL ACCOUNTING ESTIMATES AND JUDGEMENTS**

In applying the charity's accounting policies, the trustees made judgments, estimates, and assumptions regarding the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. These estimates and assumptions are based on historical experience and other relevant factors. These estimates and judgments are reviewed regularly to ensure they reflect current conditions and the best available information.

### 3. ANALYSIS OF INCOME

UNRESTRICTED FUNDS	
<b>3.1</b>	£
Fundraising	10,947
Donation	<u>9,049</u>
	<u>19,996</u>
<b>3.2</b> Gift Aid	<u>1,357</u>
<b>3.3</b> Investment Income	<u>288</u>

### 4. ANALYSIS OF EXPENDITURE

#### CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES

#### RAISING FUNDS

	£	OTHERS	£	TOTAL
		£		£
Website Design	3,701			3,701
Consultancy fee	14,274			14,274
Daubeney school project		7,642		7,642
Bank Charge			58	58
Film production Expenses	550			550
Garden expenses	<u>5,531</u>			<u>5,531</u>
	<u>24,055</u>	<u>7,642</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>31,755</u>

### 5. Reserves

	£
Opening Balance Reserve 2024	17,034
Net Movement in Fund	<u>(10,115)</u>
	6,919

### 6. CREDITORS DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	£
Accruals	<u>4,184</u>

### 7. TRUSTEES

The trustees were unpaid, did not claim any expenses, and did not receive any additional benefits from working with the charity during this period

### 8. EMPLOYEES

The charity did not have any employees during this period.

### 9. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTION

There were no related-party transactions during this period.