

ROWHILL NATURE RESERVE SOCIETY TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT (RNRS TAR)

1. The RNRS TAR covers the Financial Reporting Year 1 February 2024 - 31 January 2025.

Reference and Administrative Details

1. **Charity Name.** Rowhill Nature Reserve Society.

2. **Charity Registration Number.** 267016.

3. **Charity Office Address.** The Field Centre
Cranmore Lane
Aldershot
Hampshire
GU11 3BD

4. **Charity Trustees.** RNRS has 9 Committee Members, 8 appointed Trustees, listed at 4a-h below and 1 co-opted member (non-Trustee) listed at 4i below. Their positions on the Committee are shown for transparency.

- | | | |
|----|-------------------|-----------------------------------|
| a. | Alan Hilliar | Chair |
| b. | Roy De La Haye | Vice Chair & Membership Secretary |
| c. | Libby Pinches | Secretary |
| d. | Anthony Beauchamp | Treasurer |
| e. | Jackie De La Haye | Fundraising |
| f. | Frances Osang | Tech & Marketing |
| g. | Carol Roberts | Conservation Leader |
| h. | Dave Norris | Facilities Management |
| i. | Chris Kennedy | Education |

5. **Structure, Governance and Management.** RNRS Governing Document is its **Constitution** adopted on 10 April 1975.

6. **Objectives.** RNRS Objectives as per its Constitution are.

- To Conserve and Protect for the benefit of the Public the Environment as a whole and its Animal and Plant Life and in particular to Conserve, Protect and Maintain Rowhill Copse in association with Rushmoor Borough Council.
- To establish a Nature Area and a Centre to house Natural History specimens and to organise or conduct lectures with a view to advancing the education of the public (Including Pupils of Schools) in Natural History.

7. **Purposes.** The purposes of RNRS are to maintain Rowhill Nature Reserve, a 55-acre woodland owned by Rushmoor Borough Council. Rowhill Nature Reserve is unique as it straddles two Counties (Hampshire and Surrey) and two Local Authorities (Rushmoor Borough Council - Hampshire and Waverley Borough Council - Surrey). Rowhill Nature Reserve is also the source of the River Blackwater, which forms the County and Local Authority boundaries as it flows through the Reserve on its 23-mile journey to Swallowfield, near Reading. Fundraising and Woodland Management is undertaken by volunteers.

RNRS also promotes the education of the local community in Natural History by maintaining a Field Centre, owned by Rushmoor Borough Council. The Field Centre houses natural history items and a standalone computer, with over 4,000 archived documents relating to Rowhill Nature Reserve, available for the public to view on Sunday afternoons. Guest speakers are occasionally invited in to give talks on Natural History subjects. We also engage with local Schools to promote Rowhill Nature Reserve and educate in nature.

8. **Main Activities.** The Main Activities (fundraising) undertaken by RNRS to further its charitable purposes for the public benefit are detailed below.

- a. **Field Centre opening.** The Field Centre is open on Sundays between 2 - 4.30pm (Summer time) and 2 - 4pm (Winter time) and manned by volunteers. Light refreshments and small gifts are available to purchase. Cream Tea Sundays are run in the Field Centre on the first Sunday of each month. RNRS also run a 'Cuppa Club' on the third Monday of each month for anyone to drop in and have a cuppa, cake and a chat.
- b. **Field Centre Hire.** The Field Centre is available to hire via a Booking Form. Other Societies and a Local Scout Group hire the Field Centre on a regular basis.
- c. **Major Fund-Raising Activities.** Throughout the year, RNRS holds the following activities, generating greater fund raising.
 - Easter Egg Hunt.
 - Plant Sale.
 - Fungus Foray.
 - Christmas Fayre and Starlight Walk.
- d. **Membership.** RNRS has a healthy membership. Members pay an annual fee, which aligns with our Financial Year. Some members are generous, by adding a donation to their annual fee, which is accounted for as such.

9. **Achievements.** A summary of this is outlined in Para 9a-k below.

- a. **Income.** RNRS income was £27,054.
- b. **Field Centre Heating.** Thanks to Roy de la Haye and David Norris who have taken a far more proactive approach to the management of the Field Centre facilities, we have now managed to make the existing heating system far more effective, to the point where we think we can manage for the foreseeable future with the heating system we already have we have.

c. **Water flows.** All credit must go to Roy's Renegades for their sterling work in bringing back to life the area around what was Andrew's Pond. The pond had dried up partly due to streams becoming silted up, and Roy's group has now demolished the old concrete weir, changing that into a 1-metre-high waterfall, and significantly improved the water flows to create an area which we could use as a reflection zone.

d. **Members talks / presentations.** We've made a beginning on restarting the Members talks / presentations on the third Thursday of each month. So far, we've had Friends of Fleet Pond and Friends of Farnham Park give interesting and information presentations. We plan to continue to put effort behind finding other speakers who can add to our understanding of environmental and ecological issues both locally and more generally. As ever any suggestions from members on potential speakers or topics would be very much appreciated.

e. **Archiving of historic material.** Thanks to Andy Hawkins and to Jackie de la Haye, we have now completed the first stage of our archiving project. This grew from simply moving earlier records of minutes etc to a digital format, to a far more comprehensive archiving of what turned out to be a huge trove of historical material giving some rich insights into the development of Rowhill Copse over the past 150 years or so. The material is now available on a stand-alone computer in the Field Centre office, and members and other interested parties are welcome to book time on the system to explore a fascinating insight into the rich past of this important part of our local history and traditions.

f. **Field Centre lighting.** We now have much improved lighting in the main hall of the Field Centre. This makes the whole place look far brighter and is of course to the latest environmental standards. Once again, all credit must go to Roy de la Haye and David Norris for organising the lighting upgrade.

g. **Hall flooring revarnishing.** The Field Centre Hall has been stripped and revarnished in recent months. Again, this all makes the hall look more attractive and we hope will attract future hirers of the facility.

h. **Tech and Marketing.**

- Found that charities can use Canva Pro for free - so now have more resources available for the quick production of posters, FB headers for events, and Instagram posts.
- Working closer with the HiJackers (Fundraising Group) to promote events and new initiatives (e.g. Cuppa Club, Travelling Twiggies). Check out our new Travelling Twiggie FB Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1639642016916935/?ref=share>
- Society now has a new printer and A3 laminator which means we are now able to print A3 posters.
- Fostering a good working relationship with BVCP rangers regarding the promotion of 3rd Sunday volunteering. Raf (BVCP ranger) often passes photos back from volunteering sessions to be used for FB posts.
- Been updating the website to improve Search Engine Optimisation (SEO). Most of the "heavy lifting" has been done as our website homepage is very much improved. Through this Amanda (copywriter by trade) and Frances have been

improving their Wordpress skills and gradually bringing Rowhill higher up on Internet searches.

- Gradually replacing images used on the website with our own. Including fully searchable descriptions to help with SEO.
- Been publishing regular monthly events to both FB and the website i.e. cream teas, 3rd sunday volunteering, Cuppa club.
- Developed house branding style for the posters/wesbsite etc. using only the colours from our new kingfisher logo and a house writing style. It was felt that though modern, the logo was not close enough to actual kingfisher colours.

i. **Education.**

- We welcome Chris Kennedy who has joined the committee and will be preparing an education pack and working on liaising with local schools to explain the advantages of using our Reserve to enhance the educational opportunities our Reserve has to offer.
- Alderwood, a local Secondary school used the Reserve in the summer with 18 pupils and support staff. Unfortunately they did not book their visit with us. William Cobbett sent three classes on the same day in late spring to study rivers. Although they booked and requested a guide they gave very short notice. Three classes in one day is exhausting but I feel also a very diluted experience as it becomes a quick walk with very little 'hands on' learning. Glad to report that this year they are coming on three separate days and have had a pre-visit to organize what we are covering.
- We have had several wreath making sessions, one last year and one this year for Easter and two last Christmas. This appears to be a popular event and the upside is the social interaction people have had. Jackie has worked out how to make the wreath base from willow whips which makes this sustainable using our own woodlands to provide the willow. In future we will ask for payment to be made in advance as on one of the Christmas sessions three people were unable to attend with only one person letting me know in advance. This meant a significant reduction in the amount raised but also we had a waiting list of people who would have liked to attend but were denied the opportunity.
- The local scout groups have started to book visits to support their badge work and these children have been enthusiastic and eager to complete their tasks. The 8th Aldershot Beaver, Cub, and Scout group continue to hire the Field Centre for their meetings but more importantly frequently help us at events as well. One of the older youths is working towards their King's award and was an enormous help with the Christmas Starlight walk.
- Two girls have completed their bronze Duke of Edinburgh award and proved to be invaluable helping in the kitchen when serving the cream teas. There has also been support by Raf from Blackwater Valley for youngsters working on these awards as well in the conservation sessions. He has overseen these teenagers alongside their parents.
- Farnham Council organized two walks through the Reserve as part of the walking Festival and our members were also informed and cordially invited to take part. The first walk saw no participants and the second one saw six of which we had one member attending.
- Early last Spring a student from Farnham Creative Art's College requested permission to use the Reserve for filming to support their university course. We were thanked and understand the film was a success. In March 2025 a group from Farnborough Tech also did a filming session.

- Escape to the Country series 25 episode 36 also saw some filming near Stickleback Pond.
- At the beginning of 2025 we received a phone call that at first thought was some sort of hoax or scam call because the caller said she needed to train some people to do fly testing. As the conversation developed it turned out a local group concerned about water quality throughout the River Blackwater wished to train up a group of volunteers to look for evidence of the quality of the water in streams and one of the markers was evidence of life in the streams. They came early one Sunday morning and worked near the bog area. They were very pleased to report back that they found plenty of evidence of life in the part of the stream they tested. A week later they had a meeting at the Field Centre to find out about the work that Josh Bowe does for South East Rivers and some of our Thursday and Monday volunteers attended. We look forward to hearing from them in the near future.

j. **Fundraising.** In terms of fundraising, we have regular Cream teas at very reasonable rates but attendance is up and down dependent upon weather and sporting fixtures we think. One of the most successful ways of getting the public across the threshold is to have someone in the car park telling people we are open and what we are doing. Francis Osang does a sterling job of keeping people informed on facebook, Anne Stewardson informs people on next door neighbour and Roy De La Haye sends regular emails to members. The area that needs to be covered is instagram. so if there is anyone out there that feels they could fill this slot we would welcome you with open arms. The last few years have seen walking groups ending their walk with soup and cake at lunchtime in the Field Centre. This has been not only enjoyable meeting people but the Hijackers have been able to make it a profitable venture too! A local caravan club have hired the hall and held their AGM for many years and they too are ending their session with afternoon tea! The event that sees most footfall tends to be the Plant Sale held in May. So much work goes into this event in terms of organization and growing! Thank you to all the growers and people who support this event.

k. **Conservation and Woodland Management.**

- **2 task groups.** Another busy year for the Conservation Volunteers. Seasonal work is the basis of our Sunday tasks. Having the leadership of Raf Wane from BVCP on the third Sunday of the month, has allowed us to use a core of experienced Volunteers to make progress in coppice cant 6. Raf can devote his time to the D of E students and new Volunteers with more craft and maintenance-based work. We are near to completion on the wood store project. In the summer we done a temporary fix on the store. This springtime has seen us create a permanent structure fit to house our seasoned wood. Raf's ambition to have a charcoal burn is coming into focus. The burn area has been cleared of vegetation and sand collected for reuse. The kiln itself has been cleaned and inspected for all it's component parts. He plans to get somebody in for advice on running the first burn.
- **Electric Chainsaws.** This coppice season has given us the opportunity to use electric chainsaws for the first time, courtesy of BVCP. Our operators felt that it wasn't an outright replacement for fuel saws but would complement working on the majority of trees we cut. They are a quieter alternative. Bearing in mind the coppicing season in woodland management will generate an amount of noise

but this isn't sustained throughout the year. Thanks go to Oli Mousley for a great job in leading the core group of Conservation Volunteers. Oli is the definition of multi-tasking. He organises the task, the equipment, the tool maintenance, liaises with BVCP and tops up the biscuit tin!

- **Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Week and Midland Hawthorn.** We are grateful to Raf and BVCP for running mid-week Conservation tasks at Rowhill. In May the national Invasive Non-Native Species week highlighted the need to remove non-natives of flora and fauna as well as animal species from the wrong environments. Blackwater Valley Volunteers tackled invasive garden species such as variegated yellow archangel and montbretia. Their session helped to protect the Reserve's ancient woodland indicators. Visitors to Rowhill couldn't fail to notice that contractors have been dealing with our biggest invasive culprit – Rhododendron. After delays due to poor weather, the clearance finally got underway. A species that we are actively protecting is the Midland Hawthorn we have growing in cant 6. Steve Bailey (BVCP) was the first to identify this species for us. It is rarer than (surprise, surprise!) Common Hawthorn. Midland has softer, rounder edges than the deeper cut leaves of the Common variety. It is growing along the boardwalk side of cant 6, near the Luke road entrance. You should be able to see it as it establishes itself.
- **Heathland and Bat Walk.** Summertime meant working up on the heath clearing bracken, gorse and saplings to encourage the heather. We pulled the bracken, aiming to get as much root out as possible as you would with weeding at home. This task was a low point in Volunteer numbers; only two Volunteers and the Ranger! (It was a scorching hot day during the summer holidays). There was a guided bat walk in August organised by BVCP that sold out quickly. Visitors had success using the bat detectors supplied.
- **Fungus Foray.** The popular annual Fungus Foray on Sunday 27 October was attended by the President of RNRS, Dr Brian Spooner. The route chosen was up from the back of the Field Centre, down to the Spine Path to follow a circular route past Stickleback Pond and return to the Field Centre. A list of 30 species was recorded. Three new additions were noted. The two listed above (*Chromelosporium terrestre* and *Fuscolachnum misellum*) and plus one with the user-friendly name of Upright Coral! (*Ramaria stricta*) Thanks to Dr Spooner's continuing support and his sharp eyes for discovering more Rowhill gems.
- **The Tornado and Storm Research Organisation (TORRO).** The Reserve experienced high winds in October. As a result, an oak fell across the path near to the Luke Road entrance. A routine job for Emma and Declan to clear it during the morning session. During lunchtime a woman from TORRO appeared and asked us about the recent Aldershot tornado. She was tracking the route of the tornado – it was a weak one – and had a map of the assessed damage. She said it glanced off the Reserve and thinks the oak limb on the path that morning was likely damaged by the tornado.
- **Final thanks.** That gives an idea of what's been happening over the past year. The best way to enjoy Rowhill is to visit during every season. Thank you to the Society Members and Committee Members who support us in promoting Conservation, with path and building maintenance, along with enthusiasm and

encouragement. Staff at Rushmoor Borough Council and numerous individuals who recognise Rowhill's beauty and value.

10. **Financial Review.** RNRS Reserve Policy is set to £10K maximum. This has been set in place for the following reasons.

- The risk of an unforeseen emergency or other unexpected need for funds, eg an unexpected large bill or finding 'seed-funding' for an urgent project
- Rushmoor Borough Council (RBC) not reimbursing RNRS the following on an annual basis,
 - The Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) fund
 - Insurance Fees
- RBC not waiving Council Tax Payments for the Field Centre.

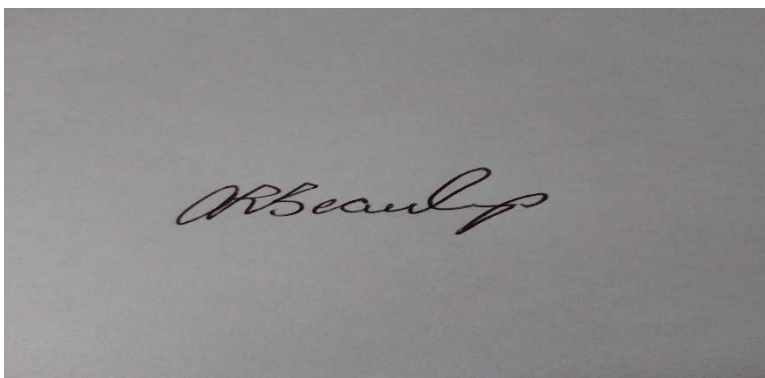
There is no suggestion that RBC will not reimburse our annual SANG or Insurance Fees or waive Council Tax Payments at present, but impending Devolution and Local Government Reorganisation may place this under threat.

RNRS has no funds in deficit

11. **Funds held as custodian trustee on behalf of others.** This does not apply to RNRS.

12. **Serious Incidents.** There were no Serious Incidents affecting RNRS as a Charity.

13. **Public Benefit Statement.** The Trustees of RNRS have, to their best belief, paid due regard to the Charity Commission's Public Benefit Guidance. This TAR has, we believe, explained what RNRS has achieved - its purposes and what it has done to carry out those purposes for the Public Benefit.

A photograph of a handwritten signature in black ink on a light-colored background. The signature is cursive and appears to read 'A Beauchamp'.

Anthony Robert Beauchamp
Treasurer and Trustee
Rowhill Nature Reserve Society

Dated 28 July 2025



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name Rowhill Nature Reserve Society	No (if any) 267016
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Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 01/02/2024	To	Period end date 31/01/2025
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations, Legacies and Grants	8,439	-	-	8,439	5,563
Fundraising	7,459	-	-	7,459	5,998
Interest on Deposit Accounts	5,205	-	-	5,205	3,954
Members Subscriptions	1,406	-	-	1,406	1,051
Hire of Hall	4,545	-	-	4,545	4,048
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	27,054	-	-	27,054	20,614
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	27,054	-	-	27,054	20,614
A3 Payments					
Repairs and Maintenance	6,342	-	-	6,342	1,808
Lighting and Heating	3,329	-	-	3,329	3,400
Water and Sewerage	341	-	-	341	330
Insurance	1,944	-	-	1,944	1,870
Tel / Internet	563	-	-	563	550
Printing, Postage and Stationery	504	-	-	504	847
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	13,023	-	-	13,023	8,805
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	13,023	-	-	13,023	8,805
Net of receipts/(payments)	14,031	-	-	14,031	11,809
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	14,031	-	-	14,031	11,809

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	NatWest Current Account	20,470	-	-
	Epworth Cash Plus Fund Account	93,228	-	-
	Scottish Widows Deposit Account	23,602	-	-
	Total cash funds	137,300	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
	Motor Vehicles	Unrestricted	-	7,196
	Printer, Furniture and Fixings	Unrestricted	-	600
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		<i>A R Beauchamp</i>	ANTHONY ROBERT BEAUCHAMP	01/07/2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Rowhill Nature Reserve Society

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above society ("the Society") for the year ended 31st January 2025. As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Society's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below) 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 no concerns and 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.

J P Stewardson CA,
2 Amberley Grange, Aldershot, GU11 3XQ
3rd April 2025

