

THE TREE COUNCIL

England & Wales · Charity number 279000

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	01459056
Registered	1979-12-17
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	14 Dock Offices Surrey Quays Road London SE16 2XU
Phone	020 7407 9992
Email	info@treecouncil.org.uk
Website	www.treecouncil.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT THE CONSERVATION, PROTECTION AND IMPROVEMENT OF THE PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT THROUGH THE PLANTING CARE NURTURE AND CULTIVATION OF TREES IN TOWN AND COUNTRY.

Activities: The Tree Council works towards making trees matter to people; more trees, of the right kind, in the right places; better care for all trees of all ages and inspiring effective action for trees. An umbrella body and a forum for tackling issues relating to trees and woods, it promotes the improvement of the environment by the planting and conservation of trees and woods throughout the UK.

Classification

- **How:** Makes Grants To Organisations, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, People Of A Particular Ethnic Or Racial Origin, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England And Wales

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£2,756,571	£2,374,411	£1,514,767	23
2024-03-31	£2,152,669	£2,342,055	£1,132,608	22
2023-03-31	£2,524,224	£2,291,346	£1,321,993	17
2022-03-31	£2,803,166	£2,794,169	£1,089,115	15
2021-03-31	£1,294,902	£1,177,714	£1,080,117	12

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Joel Cadbury	Chair	2019-07-16
Andrew Fenwick		2019-11-26
Anna Helen Goulandris		2022-10-18
Eliza Liepina		2023-11-07
Tariq Ahmed		2017-07-18
Toby William Livingston Diggins		2025-11-19

Linked charities

- THE TREE FOUNDATION (279000-1)

Accounts

Company number: 1459056
Charity number: 279000

The Tree Council

Report and financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2025



The Tree Council

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The Tree Council

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Company number 1459056
Country of incorporation United Kingdom

Charity number 279000
Country of registration England & Wales

Registered office and operational address 14 Dock Offices
Surrey Quays Road
LONDON
SE16 2XU

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Joel Cadbury	Chair
Andrew Fenwick	Treasurer
Tariq Ahmed	
Anna Goulandris	
Eliza Newport	

Key management personnel Sara Lom Chief Executive & Company Secretary
Clare Bowen Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Communications
Niloufer Limki Director of Finance
Jon Stokes Director of Trees, Science & Research

Bankers NatWest Bank Ltd
London Bridge Branch
PO Box 35, 10 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TJ

Solicitors Macfarlanes LLP
20 Cursitor Street
London EC4A 1LT

Auditor Sayer Vincent LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
110 Golden Lane
LONDON
EC1Y 0TG

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2025.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association, the requirements of a directors' report as required under company law, and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

Purposes and aims

The Tree Council was established in 1973 when Dutch elm disease swept across the land and urgent action was required to restore precious British treescapes. In response to the loss of millions of elms, The Tree Council, a national charity, brought everyone together to plant and care for trees across the UK.

Today, more than 50 years on, The Tree Council continues to bring people together with a shared mission to care for trees, hedgerows and our planet's future. We inspire and empower organisations, government, communities and individuals, providing knowledge and tools to create positive, lasting change at a national and local level.

Our work has never been more important than it is now, as we face a global climate crisis. We and our volunteers and partners are playing a key role in helping shape policy, find practical solutions, raise awareness, and deliver tree planting and tree care to benefit communities and help achieve the government target of carbon net zero by 2050.

We focus our work on wider treescapes rather than forests – working with partners to protect and establish copses and spinneys, hedgerows and orchards, parkland and wood pasture trees, as well as life-enhancing street trees, urban avenues, community tree nurseries, and city playground plantations.

Our strapline, **'Working Together for the Love of Trees'** emphasises the thread of collaboration that runs through our history. It is the truth most often echoed back to us by our partners and stakeholders, that we bring people together for the benefit of trees. It reflects our desire for partnership and our quest for practical solutions. It expresses our deep-rooted, emotional response to trees. These two things, collaboration to find practical solutions and a love for trees, combined with good care and a great sense of fun, summarise our team and its core values today.

We are supported in our work by thousands of amazing volunteer Tree Wardens, plus a growing force of Young Ambassadors and Young Tree Champions in schools across the UK.

We have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have also considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

Summary: Achievements & Performance

The work of The Tree Council spans the UK and has three branches – Community Action, Young Learning, and Practical Science & Research. Partnership working underpins everything we do and reflects our role as a membership organisation bringing together a diverse range of public, not-for-profit and private bodies united by their concern for trees.

In 2024/25, the charity has seen renewal, growth and achievement in all branches of our work.



The Tree Council is entirely self-funding with income generated through grants and gifts from major donors, charitable trusts, corporate partnership, membership fees and legacy giving, with some government contracts.

Total income has grown from £446,202 in 2018/19 to £2,756,571 in 2024/25.

Total income for 24/25 was £2,756,571 (compared to £2,152,669 for the previous year) and total expenditure was £2,374,411 (compared to £2,342,055 last year).

During the year, we received a donation of £104,245 to support the expansion of our Tree Warden network, and £192,285 from the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the promotion of trees and hedgerows. We also entered into new initiatives with the Greater London Authority and National Highways for tree planting during the year.

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year were £1,190,487 (including £267,896 of designated funds) and restricted reserves were £324,280. Total reserves were £1,514,767.

Highlights of the Year include:

- In 2024/25, with the help of thousands of enthusiastic volunteers and thanks to the generosity of our wonderful supporters, The Tree Council has enabled the planting of more than 282,456 trees (including c32 kms of hedgerows) with more than 685 communities, throughout the length and breadth of the UK.
- Orchards for Schools planted 1,060 fruit trees and 2.6kms of fruiting hedgerow (13,300 whips) in 220 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, supporting invertebrates and bringing new skills and future healthy food for pupils.
- Young Tree Champions programme, supported by M&G plc, engaged young people and their teachers with nature at 318 schools, alongside a new London-focused programme, targeting vulnerable pupils in 35 schools, in partnership with the Greater London Authority.
- Four new and thriving volunteer Tree Warden networks established (Blackpool, Clyde Climate Forest, Mid-Devon and Southend on Sea).
- Work with 50+ tree sector organisations to develop and deliver recommendations to Defra for the future protection and support of Important Trees.
- Winning the 2024 Construction Industry 'Big Biodiversity Challenge Award for Community Engagement' in partnership with Network Rail.

Community Tree Planting: The Tree Warden Scheme

The Tree Warden Scheme was launched in 1990 in the aftermath of the Great Storm of 1987. It is a national initiative which supports local authorities and independent networks to promote, conserve and care for trees, bringing health and wellbeing and new skills to individuals, and an improved environment in their communities.

Tree Warden volunteers gather information about local trees, engage and help with local issues and organise and take part in tree-related activities, such as seed growing, tree and hedgerow planting, tree care, and providing alerts to pests and diseases. Their role promoting, protecting, planting and celebrating trees is vital to help tackle climate change, meet national planting targets, increase biodiversity, and enhance the nation's health and wellbeing.

Thousands of volunteer Tree Wardens across the country work within local networks which, with our help and support, are set up and managed by public and civil society organisations such as local authorities, parish councils and voluntary groups.

The Tree Council is enormously grateful to the Tree Wardens for their support. They are capable, committed and inspirational and participate in activities as our representatives, for example, gathering field data, planting and caring for trees, and disseminating information.

This year, Tree Wardens played a key role in 'Tree Health Walks', a citizen science research programme funded by Defra, in partnership with Forest Research and Observatree. The research engages different volunteer groups to explore their motivations for recording and sharing tree health data and will help shape future volunteer recording of tree health and pests and diseases.

Overall, we are pleased to see the growth in interest from volunteers across the country, including four newly established Networks (Blackpool, Clyde Climate Forest, Mid-Devon and Southend on Sea). This growth has been enabled with the generous support of an anonymous donor, plus the 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust and the Northwick Trust, helping us establish and offer training to new networks.

Community Tree Planting: National Tree Week 2024

The Tree Council's year has five focal points: Seed Gathering Season (autumn), National Tree Week (end of November), Trees Love Care (March/April), National Hedgerow Week (springtime), and Walk in the Woods (May). The highlight and primary focus of activity is National Tree Week. Launched by The Tree Council in 1975, this is the annual event that brings everyone together to celebrate trees and mark the start of the winter tree planting season.

Highlights of the 2024 National Tree Week included:

- Campaign with 200+ libraries nationwide who created tree-themed displays and activities
- Pro bono advertising campaign across 18 major Network Rail stations featuring designs kindly created by MCSaatchi. The campaign generated 55million impressions
- National story-writing competition in partnership with The Week Junior: Science & Nature

Community Tree Planting: *Life on the Hedge* Programme

Hedgerows are a vulnerable and declining part of our heritage, with an estimated 50% loss since WW2, leaving huge gaps in the ecological, environmental, educational and social map of our country. It is vital we safeguard and improve their future.

This year was the final year of our £500,000, three-year partnership programme '*Life on the Hedge*', funded by Defra's Trees Call to Action Fund*. It aimed to raise awareness of the value of urban and rural hedges and to encourage different audiences to help establish bigger, healthier, better-connected hedgerows.

The Tree Council was lead partner guiding the delivery of the programme, which helped build capacity in three smaller charities (National Hedgelaying Society, Another Way and YoungWilders). It also helped increase heritage hedge skills with training for 25 volunteer networks; inspired hundreds of students attending 'Discovery Days' to consider green careers; and encouraged 23 schools to create community tree nurseries in their grounds.

** The Trees Call to Action Fund was funded by Defra and was delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.*

Community Tree Planting: Network Rail

For the past four years, we have worked with Network Rail on community planting programmes.

By March 2025, the combined programmes had established more than 393,200 trees, with 205 community partners, who contributed more than 1,250 volunteer hours, on sites ranging from Glasgow, to Oswestry, to Plymouth.

The schemes have brought a wide variety of environmental and social benefits, including flood attenuation, ancient woodland restoration, habitat conservation and connectivity, urban improvements, and climate change and air pollution mitigation. In September 2024, the programme won the CIRIA 'Big Biodiversity Challenge Award for Community Engagement'.

Community Tree Planting – Scottish Power Energy Networks

In July 2024, we launched a new partnership with SP Energy Networks (SPEN) to deliver a four-year tree planting programme, working with local communities to plant trees across central and southern Scotland, with a specific focus in areas such as parks, schools, and community spaces.

Community Tree Planting – National Highways

In August 2024, we began a new partnership with National Highways supporting their 3 Million Trees project. We are helping National Highways gift the trees to places where they can have the most impact. The trees are being grown at Greenwood Plants, Arundel and are from British sourced seed and are 100% peat free.

Community Tree Planting: Branching Out Grants Programme

The Tree Council's 'Branching Out' grants programme supports smaller planting projects, establishing hedges, street trees, copses and orchards to create greener and healthier local communities, in city and rural locations, for the benefit of the public.

The grants require the involvement of young people and, through the programme, thousands of children have engaged with nature. They have learnt how to plant and care for trees; increased their knowledge of maths and science; discovered the joy of preparing and eating home-grown produce; and seen the benefits of working together as a team.

Equally importantly, the programme instils an understanding of how important trees are for the future of our planet and our wellbeing, nurturing the next generation of active environmentalists. In 2024/25, our Branching Out grants supported 90 small planting schemes with funds from our Tree Partners and Animal Friends partnerships. Circa 20,660 trees and hedge whips were planted with help from young people, usually under the age of 16, in schools and community spaces

across the UK. The children were helped by their parents, teachers, the community and The Tree Council's volunteer Tree Wardens.

Young Learning: National Schools Programme

Learning has been a thread running through The Tree Council's work for decades, whether it be skill-sharing with volunteer Tree Wardens, the learning acquired through citizen science, or the knowledge gained by young people benefiting from the charity's community planting grants.

Our learning programme has become more formal and strategic following the receipt of funds from the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign in 2019 and from M&G plc, our Principal Education Partner since 2020. Since then, our National Schools Programme has continued to thrive and grow, focusing on work with some of the most diverse and deprived communities across the UK (majority 40%+ free school meals).

We have identified four issues that negatively impact children, young people and nature in schools:

1. Growing social anxiety and other related mental health concerns associated with the climate and biodiversity crises (eco-anxiety) and the global pandemic.
2. Gap in understanding the value and role of trees in addressing the crises and in particular a lack of technical horticulture knowledge and skills that could lead to green careers.
3. Inequality that is prevalent in society with regards to children and young people having a voice and opportunity to influence positive change.
4. Nature-poor school grounds and access to nature for the purposes of learning, health and wellbeing.

The schools' team, with support from six part-time regional leads and the wider Tree Council team, aims to tackle these issues and is responsible for the three continuing elements of the programme: 'Orchards for Schools' 'Young Tree Champions' and 'Young Tree Champion Ambassadors', plus a new London-focused element in partnership with the GLA.

Highlights of 2024/25 include:

Orchards for Schools planted 1,060 fruit trees and 2.6kms of fruiting hedgerow (13,300 whips) in 220 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The schools received a package of teacher training and curriculum-linked resources to support them in planning and learning to care for their trees and share their experiences.

Young Tree Champions (YTC) continued to be supported across the UK by generous funding from M&G plc, working in partnership with Speakers Trust and other organisations including Eco-Schools, Forest Schools Association, RHS and many more national charities.

Each of the 318 Young Tree Champion schools has benefited from a combination of free trees, a tech kit and access to an online hub to network and share activities, as well as a comprehensive package of teacher training, support and resources. Pupils also take part in public speaking

workshops to build their confidence and help them find their voice and become ambassadors for trees and nature. In 2024/25, the 318 schools who took up the tree offer planted 1,545 trees and just under 4.8kms of hedgerow (24,240 whips).

Young Tree Champion Senior Ambassadors (15–26 years old) – Eight young Ambassadors bring new views and impetus from a variety of backgrounds including musicians, artists, poets, marine scientists and horticulture students. Following training, their role is to inspire young people to become a #ForceForNature and to help create, plan and deliver the Force for Nature Festival.

School Ambassadors (7–14 years old) – Thanks to funding from WFH Foundation, 150 pupils from schools across the UK became powerful 'Forces for Nature', speaking up for trees and encouraging their fellow pupils to connect with the natural world.

Force for Nature Festival – In June 2024, the academic year culminated in a national Force for Nature Festival at St Fagans National Museum of History in Cardiff bringing together students from across the UK to celebrate the fabulous achievements of the Young Tree Champions Schools.

Big Bang Science Fair – Team Tree Council engaged thousands of young people at the Big Bang Young Scientists & Engineers Fair over four days in June 2024, giving attendees the opportunity to engage with trees in new and unexpected ways through Plant Wave technology.

'Discovery Day' Green Careers – The Tree Council supported a green careers day for 150 horticulture trainees and apprentices with the Royal Parks Guild at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew.

Greater London Authority YTC London – This year, 35 schools took part in a new programme targeting Alternative Provision and Special Needs schools and Pupil Referral Units in London, transforming inner city school grounds and enriching the lives of young people and their teachers.

Practical Science & Research:

The Tree Council began as an informal coalition of tree organisations and our model of collaboration with the public, private and third sector helps develop tree and hedgerow policy with a strong, trusted and unified voice.

In our role as a convenor for the sector, The Tree Council chairs or serves on more than a dozen, national, high-level, policy, practice and advisory boards to governments in the UK nations on the topics of tree health/disease, tree safety, habitats, biodiversity and climate change. In these fora, we represent the views of our charity member organisations, local authorities and volunteer Tree Warden networks, enhancing the operating environment and highlighting issues of concern.

Practical Science & Research: Ash Dieback / Oak Processionary Moth

The Tree Council partners with Defra, Fera Science, Forest Research, Network Rail and leading universities on a variety of research programmes that help shape national policy and best practice.

We aim to increase knowledge and apply science to help establish varied and biodiverse treescapes across Britain, which will be resilient to climate change, pests and diseases.

This year, our research has continued to support government and local authorities in England and Scotland as they tackle threats from Ash Dieback and Oak Processionary Moth.

Practical Science & Research: Shared Outcomes

This research project with Defra and Natural England aims to establish new techniques to grow 'Trees outside Woodlands' and is funded through Treasury's 'Shared Outcomes Fund'. The project's vision is to develop new ways of expanding bio-secure tree cover at reduced costs, to meet increased UK tree planting ambitions and reverse trends in tree losses.

The Tree Council is co-ordinating and sharing the findings of five pilot schemes with local authority partners looking at: urban tree establishment, agro-forestry and orchards, community tree nurseries, hedgerow tree management, and subsidised planting.

Practical Science & Research: UK Treescapes and Connected Treescapes

We are a core part of the 'Connected Treescapes' project funded under the UK Treescapes programme. This three-year research project with the Universities of York, Derby, Strathclyde, Newcastle, Edinburgh and the James Hutton Institute finished in March 2025. It aimed to understand how we can expand treescapes in a way that is resilient and encourages connection between people and trees. The Tree Council produced a toolkit to help land managers navigate decision-making around tree planting, identifying risks and benefits.

Practical Science & Research: Hedgelink

Hedges are Britain's most widespread Priority Habitat – providing connectivity and homes to more than 130 national priority species. They have a high biodiversity and carbon storage value, as well as helping improve air quality in cities.

The Tree Council is Chair of Hedgelink, the partnership that brings everyone interested in hedgerows together, to share knowledge and ideas, to encourage and inspire, and to work with farmers and other land managers to conserve and enhance our hedgerow heritage.

The partnership comprises nearly 30 organisations including, People's Trust for Endangered Species, Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Defra, Woodland Trust, National Farmers Union, and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.

This year, in addition to grant giving for hedgerows and hedgerow trees through our community programme, we have worked with partners to develop joint responses to consultations.

Our 'Life on the Hedge' programme finished in March 2025, however hedgerows will remain an important component of The Tree Council's work going forward and we are seeking a new funding partnership.

Practical Science & Research: PhD Programmes

The Tree Council currently supports three PhD researchers on topics relevant to The Tree Council's broader aims. As part of the programme, two of the students have a three-month placement with The Tree Council, becoming members of our team and contributing to wider programmes.

- In partnership with the University of Oxford and Oxford Botanic Gardens, one student is investigating the impact of mistletoe on trees. Our new citizen science app 'MistleGo', launched in winter 2023, has to date received 2,895 mistletoe recordings.
- We are working with a student at Newcastle University and Fera Science to explore the carbon and biodiversity value of agroforestry – crucial to getting more trees on farms.
- Finally, with the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the University of Reading, we are supporting a student focused on hedgerow expansion; this complements our hedgerow programme and our role as chair of Hedgelink.

Practical Science & Research: Tree Survival

It is common for young trees to be monitored in some form in the first few years after planting, but often the only information collected is a survival rate – the proportion of trees that are still alive. Little information is gathered about the health of the trees or about possible factors that might be having a positive or negative impact on a new planting site. Even less information is shared between organisations.

We are working closely with leading scientists at Fera Science and Forest Research on tree survival research. We hope this research, leading to improved data and monitoring, will in the future:

- Highlight significant or common factors that influence tree planting success
- Give us robust evidence to inform all aspects of planting and establishment
- Help us track impacts of climate change and pests/diseases on young trees
- Enhance individual, organisational and sector-wide knowledge about establishment

In 24/25 we carried out a small field trial of a new Tree Establishment Tracker App, with the aim of understanding whether the app is fit for purpose and to collect data from 30–40 sites: The trial included around 30 organisations (including voluntary groups, contractors, charities and councils) that collected data from 36 sites across the UK.

In total 1,254 trees were assessed using the app, which involves scoring trees on a scale of 1–4, with 1 being 'Excellent' and 4 being 'Dead or Missing', while also recording any visible signs or indicators that could contribute to poor tree health, such as damage by pests or vandalism. The trial included a wide range of tree species and we were able to use this small dataset to test the types of analysis, modelling and data presentation that we could do in future.

We carried out a feedback survey, interviews and focus groups and will use the findings to develop an improved version of the app going into 2025/26.

Practical Science & Research: Protecting Important Trees

Following the loss of the Sycamore Gap tree, Defra commissioned The Tree Council to review current protections and potential financial support for trees of social, cultural and environmental importance.

In April 2024, delegates representing 31 organisations attended a workshop to review the legal protections and financial incentives to safeguard important trees outside woodlands. The Tree Council submitted a series of recommendations for future policy development to Defra early in 2025 and will continue to pursue these over the coming year.

Practical Science & Research: Defra Trees Outside Woodlands Future Fund

This year, The Tree Council brought the tree sector together to review the current funding landscape for Trees Outside Woods and identify opportunities for significant improvements and greater efficiency. The project reviewed former grant schemes for planting, drawing on four years' learning from the Nature for Climate Fund programme. The research resulted in a final proposal for a consolidated fund based on input from multiple sector stakeholders. The proposed new scheme could plant more trees at a lower cost per tree, increasing benefits for people and nature, and has been delivered to Defra for consideration as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Looking forward to 2025/26 & beyond

Community Tree Planting:

- In 2025/26, we will continue to work with the Tree Warden networks to support and develop the Tree Warden Scheme, offering further training to volunteers
- We will launch a programme to help establish 20 school and community group tree nurseries in England by July 2026
- We will develop our community planting partnerships with Network Rail, National Highways and Scottish Power Energy Networks

Young Learning:

- We will continue to develop our reach, engaging particularly with Alternative Provision and Special Needs schools and Pupil Referral Units in areas of deprivation and low canopy cover
- We will extend our work with libraries across the UK to engage new audiences with trees and nature and highlight The Tree Council's work
- We will broaden the base of our funding support for the National Schools Programme, securing new partners for 2025–2028

Practical Science & Research:

- We will continue to develop the citizen science 'Tree Health Walks' programme
- We will develop our tree survival research programme with Defra, trialling our new app on a wider basis to help identify the causes of young tree death and finalise a protocol for recording survival that can be used by everyone
- We will pursue the Important Tree recommendations with the aim of securing greater legal protection and financial support for heritage trees and trees of significance
- We will continue action research into Hawthorn Fireblight, Canker Stain of Plane and the social and cultural value of trees

Fundraising:

- Now that the 'Life on the Hedge' lottery programme has finished we will seek long-term support for a new hedgerow programme to help safeguard these precious habitats
- We will continue to grow our Tree Partners programme, consolidating volunteer day opportunities for our corporate partners
- We will renew our NGO Equivalency Determination in addition to our Fundraising Regulator certification enabling us to continue receiving gifts tax efficiently from the USA and to show our commitment to excellent fundraising practice in the UK

Management:

- We will regularly review our Finance function to ensure that it continues to be managed securely and is well-resourced as the charity grows
- We will review the charity's succession planning for Trustees and Executive Team to ensure future continuity of expertise
- We will explore the opportunities, risks and environmental impacts associated with Artificial Intelligence and incorporate into our working life as appropriate

Beneficiaries of our services

The beneficiaries of our services include: our volunteers and members; pupils and teachers participating in our National Schools Programme; communities and landowners receiving grant-funding to establish trees; local authorities supported to help tackle tree pests and diseases and plan future tree strategies; our coalition of conservation charities whom we bring together to comment on consultations and address tree-related challenges; and the UK general public who receive the important social benefits of our tree, hedgerow and orchard planting. In addition, our work helps conserve wildlife and habitats, improves biodiversity and contributes to tackling climate change and safeguarding the future health of our planet. All these are covered in greater detail in the achievements and performance section above.

Financial review

The Tree Council is entirely self-funding with income generated through grants and gifts from major donors, charitable trusts, corporate partnership, membership fees and legacy giving. In

2024/25, the charity's total income for the year was £2,756,571 (compared to £2,152,669 for the previous year) and total expenditure was £2,374,411 (compared to £2,342,055 last year).

During the year, 'Trees Call to Action Fund' one of our major projects funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund came to an end. We collaborated on a new 3M Tree Planting initiative with National Highways during the year. We increased our unrestricted income by £896,100, and distributed grants of £753,967 during the year, £290,750 of which are small community grants. Our year end bank and cash balance has improved, at £1,603,836.

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year were £922,591, an additional £267,896 reserves were designated and restricted reserves (mainly tree planting funds) were £324,280. Total reserves were £1,514,767.

Reserves policy and going concern

It is the policy of the Tree Council to maintain unrestricted funds at a level which equates to between six to twelve months of core costs, with a minimum of six months core costs to allow The Tree Council to help mitigate any unexpected changes through the year, especially given the current economic climate. The budgeted core costs for 2025/26 are £1,252,857 and so unrestricted reserves at £922,591 are equivalent to 8.8 months of core costs.

The Trustees continue to keep the risks facing The Tree Council under close review and ensure that costs are carefully controlled. The Trustees continue to keep all the reserves in the form of interest-earning bank accounts and deposits.

The Trustees, as part of their continuous risk assessment, monitor changes in the economy, plus any ongoing impacts of government policy, flexible working and the charity's normal activities.

The Tree Council has generated many new grants and contracts over the past two years and is confident of its ability to operate as a going concern.

Risk Assessment

The Board maintains a risk assessment system which is based on a numerical assessment of risk, with an accompanying management commentary. Trustees consider these reports regularly both for the organisation as a whole and for major projects. The aim is to highlight and measure potential risks to the success of an activity or process, assess the impact, and put in place appropriate management action. The system encompasses all areas of our activities, although the continuing increased projects and programmes with corporate partners marks this area out for ongoing development.

Risks are reviewed in depth under six headings: financial, operational, regulatory, reputational, strategic and external. Our top three key risks identified and their mitigation are:

- Unrestricted reserves falling below the recommended level approved by Trustees (a band equivalent to 6–12 months of core operating costs). The Finance Committee monitors unrestricted reserves levels quarterly and if the level falls below 6 months, the Chairman, Treasurer and CEO keep income/expenditure under monthly review. We stay in close touch with principal funding partners and begin grant renewal or tender processes in good time to allow alternative funding to be found if necessary. With our supporters' approval, we build a contribution towards core costs into major projects.
- Team retention and succession planning have become ever more important with the move to flexible working, a rapidly changing employment market and The Tree Council's growing programme of activities. We work hard to maintain a strong and positive team ethic and to motivate, support, develop and reward the team, recognising achievements and delivering appraisals in a constructive context. We have brought more employees into the team with formal arboricultural and scientific qualifications to ensure adequate cover.
- The Board and executive team have reviewed the major cybersecurity risks to which the charity is exposed and systems are in place to mitigate those risks.

Fundraising

The charity's target is to reach £4m sustainable annual income by 2028 (£2.7m achieved in 2024/25) of which c25% to be unrestricted. This will enable us to continue developing ambitious programmes for public benefit in our three key areas of work: Community Action, Young Learning, and Practical Science & Research.

We are incredibly grateful to our partners for their support, which has included funding for core costs on projects and programmes, as well as activities such as comms and marketing. Grants from M&G plc, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Network Rail, The Northwick Trust and The Golden Bottle Trust have been greatly appreciated to help us invest in the future successful growth of the charity. These funds have enabled us to achieve significant public benefit with little additional fundraising expenditure.

The current fundraising approach focuses on a mix of corporate partnerships, research applications and philanthropic fundraising. Our fundraising does not include direct marketing or telephone campaigns and we remain mindful at all times of the need to safeguard vulnerable people. The Tree Council does not use professional fundraisers or agencies and received no complaints in this financial year.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, formally incorporated on 5 December 1979 and registered as a charity on 17 December 1979.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. The Trustees have not claimed any expenses.

The members of the Board of Trustees meet regularly to review its affairs, review the charity's aims, objectives and activities, as well as report on the benefits for the public good. The Board has a Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, to oversee the charity's financial affairs, to report to the Board and make recommendations as appropriate at each meeting.

The Chief Executive, Sara Lom, together with the Senior Team comprising the Director of Trees, Science & Research, the Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Communications and the Director of Finance manage the day-to-day administration of the charity.

The Tree Council's pension scheme is professionally managed by Royal London.

I would like to thank my fellow Trustees for their wonderful commitment and shared expertise. Huge thanks too to the executive team, who all juggle daily deadlines and a wide range of national programmes and projects – always with enthusiasm, professionalism and smiles on their faces.

Appointment of Trustees

The Tree Council subscribes to the seven principles of the Nolan Rules in appointing trustees. These are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In addition, the Tree Council looks for the following qualities, skills and experience:

- An appreciation of the importance of trees and the environment
- A willingness to make the time commitment to attend Board meetings, strategic review meetings and other related meetings and activities, including familiarisation with the work of the Council
- An ability to think strategically, formulate direction for the organisation and support management
- An ability to contribute to board discussions, seek advice, exercise sound judgement and contribute to good governance
- A willingness to use their networks on behalf of The Tree Council, in advocacy, fundraising (including pro bono contributions), public affairs and communications

The number of Trustees is required to be no less than three, with no maximum number. One third of Trustees retire at each annual meeting and are eligible for reappointment, subject to the provision in the Articles that Trustees shall normally serve for no more than six years.

The Board is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate succession strategy is adopted for the replacement of Trustees. The Chair and Chief Executive take responsibility for informing the Board when new Trustees need to be appointed.

To identify Trustees, when a vacancy is about to occur, the Chair and Chief Executive review the balance of skills, attributes and experience on the current Board relative to the future needs of the organisation. Trustees are appointed to ensure the positive evolution of the charity.

Prior to appointment, new Trustees meet formally with at least two current Trustees and usually attend at least one Board Meeting as an observer.

Induction for new Trustees is carried out by the Chief Executive and includes familiarisation with people, activities and events over several months.

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

The Tree Council's Remunerations Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, comprises three appropriately experienced Trustees, reviews the remuneration of all employees, based on market data and performance.

Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Tree Council for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law 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 period. 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
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

The Tree Council

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2025 was 10 (2024: 14). The Trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP was re-appointed as the charitable company's auditor during the year and has expressed its willingness to continue in that capacity.

The Trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The Trustees' annual report has been approved by the Trustees on 19 November 2025 and signed on their behalf by

Joel Cadbury
Chairman

Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

The Tree Council

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Tree Council (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2025 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2025 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on The Tree Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

The Tree Council

- The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

The Tree Council

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Fleur Holden (Senior statutory auditor)

Date: 15 December 2025

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor,

110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

The Tree Council

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	186,567	18,765	205,332	103,751	12,377	116,128
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting		915,100	512,854	1,427,954	105,296	964,923	1,070,219
Science and Research		648,343	–	648,343	664,977	–	664,977
Education and community engagement	3	16,167	418,034	434,201	–	276,765	276,765
Investments	4	25,315	–	25,315	18,772	–	18,772
Other		3,212	12,214	15,426	5,808	–	5,808
Total income		1,794,704	961,866	2,756,571	898,604	1,254,065	2,152,669
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	102,129	–	102,129	87,929	44,383	132,312
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting	5	633,797	725,397	1,359,194	250,222	1,113,636	1,363,858
Science and Research	5	528,906	–	528,906	404,192	–	404,192
Education and community engagement	5	13,784	370,398	384,182	72,000	369,693	441,693
Total expenditure		1,278,616	1,095,795	2,374,411	814,343	1,527,712	2,342,055
Net income / (expenditure)		516,088	(133,929)	382,159	84,261	(273,648)	(189,387)
Transfer between funds		–	–	–	–	–	–
Net movement in funds		516,088	(133,929)	382,159	84,261	(273,648)	(189,387)
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		674,399	458,209	1,132,608	590,138	731,855	1,321,993
Total funds carried forward		1,190,487	324,280	1,514,767	674,399	458,209	1,132,608

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17a to the financial statements."

The Tree Council

Balance sheet

Company no. 01459056

As at 31 March 2025

	Note	£	2025 £	£	2024 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	12		<u>8,377</u>		<u>10,464</u>
			8,377		10,464
Current assets:					
Debtors	13	335,077		268,257	
Short term deposits		–		400,000	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>1,603,836</u>		<u>989,290</u>	
		1,938,913		1,657,547	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	<u>(432,523)</u>		<u>(535,403)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>1,506,390</u>		<u>1,122,144</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>1,514,767</u>		<u>1,132,608</u>
Total net assets			<u><u>1,514,767</u></u>		<u><u>1,132,608</u></u>
The funds of the charity:	17a				
Restricted income funds			324,280		458,209
Unrestricted income funds:					
Designated funds		267,896		–	
General funds		<u>922,591</u>		<u>674,399</u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>1,190,487</u>		<u>674,399</u>
Total charity funds			<u><u>1,514,767</u></u>		<u><u>1,132,608</u></u>

Approved by the trustees on 19 November 2025 and signed on their behalf by:

Joel Cadbury
Chairman

Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

The Tree Council

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2025

	Note	2025 £	£	2024 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net income/ (expenditure) for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		382,159		(189,387)	
Depreciation charges		8,533		11,300	
(Increase) in debtors		(66,820)		(40,320)	
(Decrease) in creditors		(102,880)		(95,550)	
Net cash provided by/ (used in) operating activities			220,992		(313,957)
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of fixed assets		(6,446)		(2,734)	
Net cash used in investing activities			(6,446)		(2,734)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			214,546		(316,691)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			1,389,290		1,705,981
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			1,603,836		1,389,290
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents					
				Other non- cash changes	At 31 March 2025
	At 1 April 2024	Cash flows			
	£	£		£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	989,290	214,546		400,000	1,603,836
Short term deposits	400,000	–		(400,000)	–
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,389,290	214,546		–	1,603,836

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

The Tree Council is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales.

The registered office address is 14 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, LONDON, SE16 2XU

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The trustees have considered inflation, the uncertain economic climate and their normal activities and confirm that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. In particular they have reviewed the future cash flows and commitments and have ascertained that there are sufficient unrestricted reserves and future cash flows to confirm that the charity is a going concern.

Key judgements that the charity has made which have a significant effect on the accounts include estimating the liability for multi-year grant commitments.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

e) Income

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

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

g) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, exhibitions and other educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

j) Grants payable

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects. Single or multi-year grants are accounted for when either the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and the trustees have agreed to pay the grant without condition, or the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and that any condition attaching to the grant is outside of the control of the charity.

Provisions for grants are made when the intention to make a grant has been communicated to the recipient but there is uncertainty about either the timing of the grant or the amount of grant payable.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

k) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of salary time by each activity each year. For this year the percentages are

●	Tree and hedge planting	49%
●	Education and community activities	14%
●	Science & Research	19%
●	Fundraising	4%
●	Support costs	12%
●	Governance costs	2%

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

●	Tree and hedge planting	57%
●	Education and community activities	16%
●	Science & Research	22%
●	Fundraising	4%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

l) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

m) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £700. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. Fixtures & Fittings and Office & Computer Equipment are depreciated over 3 years.

n) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

o) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short term maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

p) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

q) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Donations and legacies	158,772	18,765	177,537	59,858	12,377	72,235
Friends of the Tree Council	13,445	–	13,445	27,138	–	27,138
Subscriptions	14,350	–	14,350	16,755	–	16,755
	<u>186,567</u>	<u>18,765</u>	<u>205,332</u>	<u>103,751</u>	<u>12,377</u>	<u>116,128</u>

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Tree and hedge planting						
Network Rail Community Planting	–	240,000	240,000	–	696,500	696,500
Tree planting & Tree management	890,500	6,000	896,500	–	7,020	7,020
Jubilee Partners Fund	–	–	–	16,500	22,000	38,500
Tree Partners Fund	21,200	31,300	52,500	12,000	16,000	28,000
Animal Friends	1,000	4,000	5,000	5,000	20,000	25,000
Queen's Green Canopy	–	–	–	61,796	–	61,796
Northwick Trust	–	–	–	–	10,000	10,000
La Salle	2,400	9,600	12,000	–	–	–
Faith in Trees	–	19,670	19,670	–	–	–
Chiltern Railways	–	10,000	10,000	–	–	–
Trees Call to Action Fund	–	192,285	192,285	10,000	193,403	203,403
	<u>915,100</u>	<u>512,854</u>	<u>1,427,954</u>	<u>105,296</u>	<u>964,923</u>	<u>1,070,219</u>
Science & Research	648,343	–	648,343	664,977	–	664,977
Education and community engagement						
M & G	–	257,920	257,920	–	276,177	276,177
YTC Ambassadors Programme	–	45,500	45,500	–	–	–
GLA – London YTC Funding	–	83,111	83,111	–	–	–
Education Nature Park Funding	16,167	–	16,167	–	–	–
Orchards for Schools	–	31,503	31,503	–	588	588
	<u>16,167</u>	<u>418,034</u>	<u>434,201</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>276,765</u>	<u>276,765</u>
Total income from charitable	<u>1,579,611</u>	<u>930,888</u>	<u>2,510,498</u>	<u>770,273</u>	<u>1,241,688</u>	<u>2,011,961</u>

4 Income from investments

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £
Income from cash deposits	25,315	–	25,315	18,772	–	18,772
	<u>25,315</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>25,315</u>	<u>18,772</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>18,772</u>

5a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities							
	Raising funds £	Tree and hedge planting £	Education and community engagement £	Science & Research £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2025 Total £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (Note 8)	76,229	330,325	292,211	317,621	38,114	215,982	1,270,482	1,086,363
Tree Warden Scheme	–	3,402	105	–	–	–	3,507	366
Office and Facility costs	–	8,554	–	–	–	39,231	47,786	54,736
Grants Payable (Note 6)	–	753,967	–	–	–	–	753,967	863,545
Audit and other governance costs	–	–	–	–	12,169	–	12,169	17,738
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	–	1,951	280	–	206	2,410	4,848	5,737
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	–	14,951	3,450	–	–	30,263	48,664	46,483
Marketing and Brand costs	8,219	27,877	–	–	–	–	36,096	51,869
Learning & Engagement	–	–	–	113,877	–	–	113,877	93,617
Depreciation	–	–	–	–	–	8,531	8,531	11,301
Travel costs	142	25,237	28,503	16,729	331	3,543	74,484	110,300
	84,590	1,166,265	324,549	448,226	50,820	299,960	2,374,411	2,342,055
Support costs	14,998	164,978	50,993	68,991	–	(299,960)	–	–
Governance costs	2,541	27,951	8,639	11,689	(50,820)	–	–	–
Total expenditure 2025	102,129	1,359,194	384,182	528,906	–	–	2,374,411	
Total expenditure 2024	132,312	1,363,858	441,693	404,192	–	–		2,342,055

5b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities						
	Raising funds £	Tree and hedge planting £	Science & Research £	Education and community engagement £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2024 Total £
Staff costs (Note 8)	65,182	249,863	293,318	260,727	32,591	184,682	1,086,363
Tree Warden Scheme	-	-	-	366	-	-	366
Office and Facility costs	-	43,703	-	-	-	11,034	54,737
Grants Payable (Note 6)	-	863,545	-	-	-	-	863,545
Audit and other governance costs	-	5,870	-	-	11,867	-	17,738
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	-	2,332	-	-	-	3,405	5,737
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	-	-	-	-	-	46,483	46,483
Marketing and Brand costs	51,869	-	-	-	-	-	51,869
Learning & Engagement	-	-	93,617	-	-	-	93,617
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	11,301	11,301
Travel costs	-	45,929	24,234	36,267	332	3,538	110,300
	117,051	1,211,242	411,169	297,360	44,791	260,442	2,342,056
Support costs	13,022	130,221	26,044	91,155	-	(260,442)	-
Governance costs	2,240	22,395	4,479	15,677	(44,791)	-	-
Total expenditure 2024	132,312	1,363,858	441,693	404,192	-	-	2,342,056

The Tree Council

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

6a Grant making (current year)

	Grants £	Support costs £	2025 £
Cost			
Network Rail	119,710	–	119,710
Schools & community groups	634,257	–	634,257
At the end of the year	753,967	–	753,967

During 2024 and 2025, The Tree Council used an internal committee to assess grant applications as well as having a joint committee with Network Rail for the grants made from their restricted funds. The most significant individual grants were to the Ogden Valley Environmental Scheme (£8,100) for the ecological and biodiversity assessment for hedge planting and hedge laying in the Ogden Valley, to Market Field Farm (£14,794) to provide young adults with learning needs the opportunity to grow trees in Colchester, to North East Community Forest and Tilhill Forestry (£9,792) to grow 2.839m of hedgerow and in-hedge trees in County Durham, to the National Hedgelaying Society (£9,464), and to Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group East (£14,997) for hedgerow planting.

6b Grant making (prior year)

	Grants £	Support costs £	2024 £
Cost			
Network Rail	329,441	–	329,441
Schools & community groups	775,238	–	775,238
At the end of the year	1,104,679	–	1,104,679

During 2023 and 2024, The Tree Council used an internal committee to assess grant applications as well as having a joint committee with Network Rail for the grants made from their restricted funds. The most significant individual grants were to the Wylde Valley Project (£16,997) to re-establish elms to support local moth populations, to City of Doncaster Council (£25,330) for tree planting in schools and cemeteries, Petersfield Community Garden (£21,226) to plant a Miyawaki method forest, new hedgerows and for habitat restorations. to Misbourne Greeway–Russell Farm (£20,000) for a hedgerow along a new 4km walking and cycling route, to Action for Conservation's Penpoint Project (£19,989) to plant Miyawaki method mini-forests, restore wood pasture and an orchard, to Bradgate Park Trust (£21,931) to plant English oak and hawthorn in a historic deer park, create a community tree nursery and provide education sessions, to London Borough of Newham (£14,950) for school planting and street tree replacement.

7 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging / (crediting):

	2025 £	2024 £
Depreciation	8,533	11,300
Operating lease	11,602	11,602
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	10,500	9,950

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2025 £	2024 £
Salaries and wages	1,016,340	887,078
National insurance	104,345	89,684
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	149,797	109,602
	<u>1,270,482</u>	<u>1,086,363</u>

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2025 No.	2024 No.
£90,000 – £99,999	–	1
£80,000 – £89,999	1	–
£70,000 – £79,999	1	–
£60,000 – £69,999	–	2
	<u>–</u>	<u>2</u>

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £356,604 (2024: £341,008).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2024: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2024: £nil). There were no payments to trustees for expenses (2024: nil).

9 Team numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of team members employed) during the year was 23 (2024: 22).

The team is split across the activities of the charity as follows (full time equivalent basis):

	2025 No.	2024 No.
Tree and hedge planting	7.0	5.6
Science & Research	5.2	5.9
Education and community engagement	5.8	5.6
Support, Fundraising and marketing	4.6	4.9
Governance	0.3	0.4
	<u>22.9</u>	<u>22.4</u>

10 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2025. In 2024, the charity paid grants to the value of £29,144 to Bradford Farming LLP, a company of which Trustee Eliza Newport's spouse was a director. Although paid in 2023/24, the grants were approved a year earlier and accrued in the 2023/24 accounts. This was before Eliza was appointed a Trustee in November 2023, and she was not involved in the award of the grants, nor has she ever been a member of the Grant Approvals Committee.

In 24/25, the charity received restricted donations from related parties amounting to £5,275 and unrestricted donations amounting to £300 (2024: £3,500).

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and furniture £	Office and computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At the start of the year	2,838	74,438	77,276
Additions in year	–	6,446	6,446
At the end of the year	2,838	80,884	83,722
Depreciation			
At the start of the year	2,838	63,974	66,812
Charge for the year	–	8,533	8,533
At the end of the year	2,838	72,507	75,345
Net book value			
At the end of the year	–	8,377	8,377
At the start of the year	–	10,464	10,464

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

13 Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Grants and sponsorship receivable	167,303	119,252
Prepayments and other debtors	4,785	4,383
Accrued income	162,989	144,622
	335,077	268,257

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade creditors	194,095	159,631
Taxation and social security	133,486	105,523
Grants payable	79,575	209,196
Accruals	25,367	61,053
	432,523	535,403

15 Pension scheme

The company pays 7% of salary to the Royal London for its employees, and the employee contributes 1% in compliance with the rules of auto enrolment.

16a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	8,377	–	–	8,377
Net current assets	914,214	267,896	324,280	1,506,390
Net assets at 31 March 2025	922,591	267,896	324,280	1,514,767

16b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	10,464	–	–	10,464
Net current assets	663,935	–	458,209	1,122,144
Net assets at 31 March 2024	674,399	–	458,209	1,132,608

The Tree Council

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2025

17a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2025 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	107,056	23,274	(40,202)	(38)	90,090
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	34,063	–	(31,847)	–	2,216
Orchards for Schools	36,355	31,503	(46,986)	–	20,872
Special Assignment Fund	588	–	(155)	–	433
Network Rail Fund	7,338	240,000	(181,022)	–	66,316
M & G Fund	46,783	257,920	(229,999)	–	74,704
Siemens Fund	1,439	–	(1,439)	–	–
Kusuma Trust Fund	3,140	–	–	–	3,140
Southern Network Rail	165,051	10,950	(173,534)	–	2,467
Animal Friends Fund	(793)	4,000	(3,245)	38	–
29 May Charitable Trust	820	1,263	(2,083)	–	–
YTC Ambassadors Programme	11,796	45,500	(11,550)	–	45,746
Trees Call to Action Fund	16,756	192,285	(209,040)	–	–
The Queen's Green Canopy	336	–	(336)	–	–
The Northwick Trust	3,978	–	(3,554)	–	424
Tree Partner Fund	23,503	31,300	(54,202)	–	601
Faith in Trees	–	19,670	(14,339)	–	5,331
La Salle Fund	–	9,600	(1,445)	–	8,155
King's Ely Fund	–	1,492	(25)	–	1,467
Chiltern Railways Fund	–	10,000	(8,929)	–	1,071
GLA – London YTC Fund	–	83,111	(81,863)	–	1,248
Total restricted funds	458,209	961,866	(1,095,795)	–	324,280
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated funds:					
Tree Warden Activities	–	–	–	98,590	98,590
Tree Care & Management	–	–	–	169,306	169,306
Total designated funds	–	–	–	267,896	267,896
General funds	674,399	1,794,704	(1,278,616)	(267,896)	922,591
Total unrestricted funds	674,399	1,794,704	(1,278,616)	(267,896)	1,190,487
Total funds	1,132,608	2,756,570	(2,374,410)	(267,896)	1,514,767

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

17b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 2 April 2023 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	113,831	12,377	(19,151)	–	107,057
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	78,697	–	(44,634)	–	34,063
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	–	(10,411)	–	–
Tree Angel Planting Funds	52,183	–	(52,183)	–	–
Orchards for Schools	99,776	588	(64,009)	–	36,355
Special Assignment Fund	628	–	(40)	–	588
Network Rail Fund	66,853	359,000	(418,515)	–	7,338
M & G Fund	52,622	276,177	(282,016)	–	46,783
Siemens Fund	3,790	–	(2,351)	–	1,439
Kusuma Trust Fund	3,140	–	–	–	3,140
Southern Network Rail	209,943	337,500	(382,392)	–	165,051
Jubilee Partner Fund	–	22,000	(5,102)	(16,898)	–
Animal Friends Fund	–	20,000	(20,793)	–	(793)
29 May Charitable Trust	5,979	7,020	(12,179)	–	820
YTC Ambassadors Programme	35,464	–	(23,668)	–	11,796
Trees Call to Action Fund	(1,863)	193,403	(174,784)	–	16,756
The Queen's Green Canopy	402	–	(66)	–	336
The Northwick Trust	–	10,000	(6,022)	–	3,978
Tree Partner Fund	–	16,000	(9,395)	16,898	23,503
Total restricted funds	731,855	1,254,065	(1,527,712)	–	458,209
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	590,138	898,604	(814,343)	–	674,399
Total unrestricted funds	590,138	898,604	(814,343)	–	674,399
Total funds	1,321,993	2,152,669	(2,342,055)	–	1,132,608

Purposes of restricted funds

The Branching Out 1 Tree Planting Funds are for planting with schools and community groups. The majority of the funds have been donated by an anonymous donor's Charitable Trust.

The Vernon Hill Branching Out 2 Tree Planting Funds are for planting projects for schools and community groups. The Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Vernon Hill to the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Orchards for Schools Funds are to fund orchards and fruiting hedgerows planting in schools. The fund was created following generous gifts from Lord Sugar, Richard Caring and Sir Jony Ive plus an anonymous donor following the Daily Mail campaign.

The Special Assignment Fund is to carry out specific tree research projects in overseas countries.

The Network Rail Fund is a four-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in cities and the countryside, mainly in England.

M&G Fund is a three-year programme dedicated to inspiring young people in schools across the UK to become Young Tree Champions and to gain the skills to become a #ForceForNature.

The Welsh Trees Siemens Fund is dedicated to a tree planting project with the local community at Wolf's Castle in Pembrokeshire.

The Kasuma Trust supports The Tree Council's Young Ambassadors programme.

The Southern Network Rail Fund is a three-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in the Southern Network Rail region.

Animal Friends Fund is a programme focussed on tree and hedgerow planting projects that prioritise wildlife and biodiversity benefits.

29 May Charitable Trust is a fund to support volunteer Tree Warden networks, especially new networks, with training and other materials.

YTC Ambassadors Programme supports young people in schools to develop into effective Senior Brand Ambassadors.

The Trees Call to Action Fund is a programme which supports the planting and management of hedgerows and Community Seed nurseries.

Queen's Green Canopy is an initiative to support the planting of a million trees to celebrate the late Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee celebrations.

The Northwick Trust provided funding to support our volunteer Tree Wardens and the trees they look after by helping to establish golden orchards as part of our 50th anniversary celebrations and enabling us to deliver in-person and online training sessions for our volunteers on pruning, grafting and fruit tree care.

The Tree Partners programme is a 3-year partnership enabling organisations to support community tree, orchard and hedgerow planting and care in city streets, urban parks and school playgrounds across the nation.

Faith in Trees represents a conduit arrangement, where The Tree Council received funds on behalf of Adrian Houston, from the Silicon Valley Foundation, to support the Faith in Trees project.

The La Salle Fund provided funding for volunteer days and a guided tree walk.

Kings Ely is an initiative to support the future of the London Plane of Ely, a magnificent 360 year old tree located in the Cambridgeshire cathedral city of Ely.

Chiltern Railways Fund provided funding to deliver 'Rail Roots' workshops at Chiltern Railways stations and with local community groups, upskilling community volunteers in tree planting, pruning and training techniques and tree propagation.

The GLA – London YTC Fund enabled the extension of the Young Tree Champions programme to a higher proportion of London schools providing opportunities for young Londoners in GLA priority tree planting areas to engage in positive social action through tree planting, introduce them to careers caring for London's Urban Forest, and improve the environment in London's schools by improving tree cover in school playgrounds.

Purposes of designated funds

We received a donation to promote, train and expand our regional tree warden network, of which £98,590 will be spent in full next year. We received funds to help support community tree care, site assessments and long-term establishment of trees, of which £169,306 is carried forward, which we expect to spend in full next year.

18 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Land and buildings	
	2025	2024
	£	£
Within one year	18,077	16,115
Within one to five years	29,795	–
	<u>47,872</u>	<u>16,115</u>

19 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

Accounts

Company number: 1459056

Charity number: 279000

The Tree Council

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024



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For the year ended 31 March 2024

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The Tree Council

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Company number 1459056
Country of incorporation United Kingdom

Charity number 279000
Country of registration England & Wales

Registered office and operational address 14 Dock Offices
Surrey Quays Road
LONDON
SE16 2XU

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Joel Cadbury	Chair
Andrew Fenwick	Treasurer
Tariq Ahmed	
Anna Goulandris	
Eliza Newport	(from 7 November 2023)

Key management personnel Sara Lom Chief Executive & Company Secretary
Clare Bowen Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Communications
Niloufer Limki Director of Finance
Jon Stokes Director of Trees, Science & Research

Bankers NatWest Bank Ltd
London Bridge Branch
PO Box 35, 10 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TJ

Solicitors Macfarlanes LLP
20 Cursitor Street
London EC4A 1LT

Auditor Sayer Vincent LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
110 Golden Lane
LONDON
EC1Y 0TG

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association, the requirements of a directors' report as required under company law, and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

Purposes and aims

The Tree Council was established in 1973 when Dutch elm disease swept across the land and urgent action was required to restore precious British treescapes. In response to the loss of millions of elms, The Tree Council, a national charity, brought everyone together to plant and care for trees across the UK.

Today, as we celebrate our 50th anniversary, The Tree Council continues to bring people together with a shared mission to care for trees, hedgerows and our planet's future. We inspire and empower organisations, government, communities and individuals, providing knowledge and tools to create positive, lasting change at a national and local level.

Our work has never been more important than it is now, as we face a global climate crisis. We and our volunteers and partners are playing a key role in helping shape policy, find practical solutions, raise awareness, and deliver tree planting and tree care to benefit communities and help achieve the government target of carbon net zero by 2050.

We focus our work on wider treescapes rather than forests – working with partners to protect and establish copses and spinneys, hedgerows and orchards, parkland and wood pasture trees, as well as life-enhancing street trees, urban avenues, community tree nurseries, and city playground plantations.

Our strapline, **'Working Together for the Love of Trees'** emphasises the common thread of collaboration that runs through our history. It is the truth most often echoed back to us by our partners and stakeholders, that we bring people together for the benefit of trees. It reflects our desire for partnership and our quest for practical solutions. It expresses our deep-rooted, emotional response to trees. These two things, collaboration to find practical solutions and a love for trees, combined with good care and a great sense of fun, summarise our team and its core values today.

We are supported in our work by thousands of amazing volunteer Tree Wardens, plus a growing force of Young Ambassadors and Young Tree Champions in 338 schools across the UK.

We have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have also considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

Summary: Achievements & Performance

The work of The Tree Council spans the UK and has three branches – Community Action, Young Learning, and Practical Science & Research. Partnership working underpins everything we do and reflects our role as a membership organisation bringing together a diverse range of public, not-for-profit and private bodies united by their concern for trees.

In 2023/24, our 50th anniversary year, the charity has seen renewal, growth and achievement in all three branches of our work.



The Tree Council is entirely self-funding with income generated through grants and gifts from major donors, charitable trusts, corporate partnership, membership fees and legacy giving and some government contracts.

Total income has grown from £446,202 in 2018/19 to £2,152,669 in 2023/24.

Total income for 23/24 was £2,152,669 (compared to £2,524,224 for the previous year) and total expenditure was £2,342,055 (compared to £2,291,346 last year).

During the year, one of our major partnerships with The Queen's Green Canopy, which marked Queen Elizabeth's 70 years on the throne, came to an end. Our total revenue fell from £2.5m to £2.1m, mainly because of the project ending.

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year were £674,399 and restricted reserves (mainly tree planting funds) were £458,209. Total reserves were £1,132,608.

Highlights of the Year include:

- **In 2023/24, with the help of thousands of enthusiastic volunteers and thanks to the generosity of our wonderful supporters, The Tree Council has enabled the planting of more than 170,000 trees (including c25 kms of hedgerows) in more than 800 communities, throughout the length and breadth of the UK.**
- BBC Radio4 'Charity of the Week' 50th anniversary appeal presented by Ben Fogle, raising just under £50,000 to support the work of The Tree Council
- Orchards for Schools planted 1,550 fruit trees and 3.3kms of fruiting hedgerow (16,800 whips) in 335 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.
- Young Tree Champion Ambassadors played an inspirational role at Birmingham's Big Bang Science Fair and a green careers Discovery Day at Hampton Court Palace in London, as well as delivering a lesson to Kingfisher Primary School at No 10 Downing Street.
- Five new volunteer Tree Warden networks established (Dorset County, Ceredigion County, Walsall City, Wirral City, Hartlepool Town)
- Winning the 2024 Rail Business Award for 'Sustainability and Environmental Excellence' in partnership with Network Rail.

Community Tree Planting: The Tree Warden Scheme

The Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme is a national initiative which supports local authorities and independent networks to promote, conserve and care for trees, bringing health and wellbeing and new skills to individuals, and an improved environment in their communities.

Tree Warden volunteers gather information about local trees, engage and help with local issues and organise and take part in tree-related activities, such as seed growing, tree and hedgerow planting, tree care, woodland walks and providing alerts to pests and diseases. Their role promoting, protecting, planting and celebrating trees is vital to help tackle climate change, meet nationally ambitious planting targets, increase biodiversity, and enhance the nation's health and wellbeing.

Thousands of volunteer Tree Wardens across the country work within local networks which, with our help and support, are set up and managed by public and civil society organisations such as local authorities, parish councils and voluntary groups. The Tree Warden Scheme was launched in 1990 in the aftermath of the Great Storm of 1987.

The Tree Council is enormously grateful to the Tree Wardens for their support. They are capable, committed and inspirational and participate in activities as our representatives, for example, gathering field data, planting and caring for trees, and disseminating information.

As part of our work that adds social value and transforms communities nationwide, The Tree Council holds annual Tree Warden Forums across the country. These are a mix of online and in person events. The Forums are an opportunity for volunteers to hear key speakers present on locally and nationally important tree-related topics and to see and hear about other Tree Wardens' projects.

We are pleased to see the growth in interest from volunteers across the country, including five newly established Networks (Dorset County, Ceredigion County, Walsall City, Wirral City, Hartlepool Town). This growth has been enabled with the kind support of 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust and the Northwick Trust, helping us establish and offer training to new networks.

Community Tree Planting: National Tree Week 2023

The Tree Council's year has five focal points: Seed Gathering Season (autumn), National Tree Week (end of November), Trees Love Care (March/April), National Hedgerow Week (springtime), and Walk in the Woods (May). The highlight and main focus of activity is National Tree Week. Launched by The Tree Council in 1975, this is the annual event that brings everyone together to celebrate trees and mark the start of the winter tree planting season.

Highlights of the 2023 National Tree Week, themed on 'Grow a Tree in 23', included:

- Planting 50 Golden Orchards of apple, plum, pear and apricot trees to celebrate our 50th anniversary with communities, schools and volunteers across the UK
- Publication, with the Hampshire Forest Partnership, of the 'Young Tree Growers Guide', a series of fun, free to download, Key Stage 2 resources, taking children through all the steps required to grow trees from seed
- National story-writing competition in partnership with The Week Junior: Science & Nature

Community Tree Planting: *Life on the Hedge* Programme

Hedgerows are a vulnerable and declining part of our heritage, with an estimated 50% loss since WW2, leaving huge gaps in the ecological, environmental, educational and social map of our country. It is vital we safeguard and improve their future.

This year is the second year of our £500,000, three-year partnership programme '*Life on the Hedge*', funded by Defra's Trees Call to Action Fund. It aims to raise awareness of the value of

urban and rural hedges and to encourage different audiences to help establish bigger, healthier, better-connected hedgerows.

Life on the Hedge develops partnerships with People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Hedgelink and Royal Parks Guild. In addition, it is establishing new collaborations with two smaller conservation charities, Another Way (led by 20-year-old Defra Plant Health Ambassador, Amy Bray) and the National Hedgelaying Society (NHLS).

The Tree Council is the lead partner guiding the delivery of the programme, which is helping build capacity in four charities, safeguard heritage hedge-laying skills, engage hundreds of students attending 'Green Careers Discovery Days', find sites for community tree nurseries, inspire urban and rural planting, and bring new long-term finance for planting hedgerows and their trees.

**The Trees Call to Action Fund is funded by Defra and is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.*

Community Tree Planting: Network Rail

For the past three years, we have worked with Network Rail on two £1 million community planting programmes focused on National and Southern regions. In February 2024, the programme won the Rail Business Award for 'Sustainability and Environmental Excellence'.

By March 2024, the combined programmes had established more than 350,000 trees, in collaboration with 180 community partners, who contributed more than 1,000 volunteer hours, on sites ranging from Glasgow, to Oswestry, to Plymouth.

The schemes have brought a wide variety of environmental and social benefits, including flood attenuation, ancient woodland restoration, habitat conservation and connectivity, urban improvements, and climate change and air pollution mitigation.

Community Tree Planting: Branching Out Grants Programme

The Tree Council's 'Branching Out' grants programme focuses on supporting smaller planting projects, hedges, copses and orchards – establishing the right trees, in the right places, to create greener and healthier local communities, in city and rural locations, for the benefit of the public.

The grants require the involvement of young people and, through the programme, thousands of children have engaged with the wonders of the natural world and started to explore the importance of nature in their everyday lives. They have learnt how to plant and care for trees; increased their knowledge of maths and science; discovered the joy of preparing and eating home-grown produce; and seen the benefits of working together as a team.

Equally importantly, the programme instils an understanding of the importance of trees for the future of our planet and for their own wellbeing – and it nurtures the next generation of active environmentalists.

In 2023/24, our Branching Out grants continued to support small planting schemes with funds from our Jubilee Partners and Animal Friends partnership. More than 35,000 trees and hedge whips were planted with help from young people, usually under the age of 16, in schools and community spaces across the UK. The children were helped by their parents, teachers, the community and The Tree Council's volunteer Tree Wardens.

Community Tree Planting: Golden Orchards

To celebrate The Tree Council's 50th anniversary, we supported the planting of 50 Golden Orchards across England, Wales and Scotland. Half of the orchards, comprising 'golden' varieties of apple, plum, pear and apricot trees, were established by our long-standing Tree Warden networks, with the remainder split equally between schools and community groups.

Young Learning: National Schools Programme

Learning has been a thread running through The Tree Council's work for decades, whether it be skills shared with volunteer Tree Wardens, the learning acquired through citizen science, or the new knowledge gained by young people benefiting from the charity's community planting grants. Our learning programme has become more formal and strategic in nature following the significant receipt of funds from the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign in 2019 and from M&G plc, our Principal Education Partner since 2020. Since then, our National Schools Programme has continued to thrive and grow, focusing on work with some of the most diverse and deprived communities across the UK.

We have identified four issues that negatively impact children, young people and nature in schools:

1. Growing social anxiety and other related mental health concerns associated with the climate and biodiversity crises (eco-anxiety) and the global pandemic.
2. Gap in understanding the value and role of trees in addressing the crises and in particular a lack of technical horticulture knowledge and skills that could lead to green careers.
3. Inequality that is prevalent in society with regards to children and young people having a voice and opportunity to influence positive change.
4. Nature-poor school grounds and access to nature for the purposes of learning and health and wellbeing.

The schools' team, with support from six part-time regional leads and the wider Tree Council team, aims to tackle these issues and is responsible for the three elements of the programme: 'Orchards for Schools' 'Young Tree Champions' and 'Young Tree Champion Ambassadors'.

Highlights of 2023/24 include:

Orchards for Schools planted 1,550 fruit trees and 3.3kms of fruiting hedgerow (16,800 whips) in 335 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The schools received a package of teacher training and curriculum-linked resources to support them in planning and learning to care for their trees and share their experiences.

Young Tree Champions continued to be supported by generous funding from M&G plc, working in partnership with Speakers Trust and other organisations including Eco-Schools, Forest Schools Association, RHS and many more national charities

Each of the 338 Young Tree Champion schools has benefited from a combination of free trees, a tech kit and access to an online hub to network and share activities, as well as a comprehensive package of teacher training, support and resources. Pupils also take part in public speaking workshops to build their confidence and help them find their voice and become ambassadors for trees and nature. In 2023/24, the 338 schools who took up the tree offer planted 325 trees and just under 3kms of hedgerow (14,580 whips).

Young Tree Champion Senior Ambassadors (15–26 years old) Ten young Ambassadors have been appointed from a wide variety of backgrounds including musicians, artists, poets, marine scientists, bakers and horticulture students. Following training, their role is to inspire young people to become a #ForceForNature and to help create, plan and deliver the Force for Nature Exhibition tour and Festival. In 2023/24, the Ambassadors also played a key role, sharing the exhibition at the Big Bang Science Fair in Birmingham, a green careers Discovery Day at Hampton Court Palace and delivering a special lesson to a visiting school at No 10 Downing Street.

School Ambassadors (7–14 years old) – Thanks to funding from WFH Foundation, 50 inspiring 7–14 year olds from schools across the UK became powerful ‘Forces for Nature’, speaking up for trees and encouraging their fellow pupils to connect with the natural world. Senior Ambassadors delivered carefully crafted, online Masterclasses throughout the spring and summer terms including ‘Art in Nature’, ‘Story in Nature’ and ‘Actions for Nature’.

Force for Nature Festival – The academic year culminated in a national Force for Nature Festival at Birmingham Botanical Gardens in June 2023 which celebrated all the fabulous achievements of the Young Tree Champions Schools. It brought together thousands of students from across the UK who had been championing trees and nature. A recording of the event attracted 92 schools to watch and was later made available on The Tree Council’s YouTube channel. Highlights included a sensory experience combining music, light and sculpture, accompanied by audio recordings of school children taken throughout the year.

Force for Nature Exhibition – Touring the UK since June 2023, the aim of the exhibition is to give Young Tree Champions and Ambassadors a platform to speak up and share the impact of their work with a wider public audience. Teaming up with visual effects company “Squid Soup”, the schools team used AI sound and light technology, together with Plantwave, an electrical

conductivity sensor, to create an immersive installation known as Voices of Nature. The installation inspired over 10,000 young people, community groups and members of the public to listen to the voices of young people speaking about their personal connections with nature and concerns for the future, whilst physically connecting into a living tree to compose music through the tree.

Big Bang Science Fair – The Tree Council’s schools team engaged thousands of young people at the ‘Routes into Rail’ stand hosted by our partners, Network Rail, at Birmingham NEC’s Big Bang Young Scientists & Engineers Fair over four days in June 2023. Team Tree Council and Young Ambassadors contributed a glade of birch and gave attendees an opportunity to engage with trees in new and unexpected ways.

‘Discovery Day’ Green Careers at Hampton Court Palace (October 2023) – The Tree Council joined a green careers day for 150 horticulture trainees and apprentices organised by the Royal Parks Guild. This included Plantwave and ‘Murder Mys-tree’ workshops plus a session for 50 secondary school pupils focused on the importance of hedgerows to nature and society.

Lessons 10 with Akshata Murty – The schools’ team were invited to Number 10 Downing Street during National Tree Week to showcase the Young Tree Champions core workshops with school children from Yeovil in Somerset. The children connected with trees using the Plantwave technology, a ‘Murder Mys-tree’ tree health workshop and speaking up experience, all delivered by our Young Tree Champion Ambassadors.

Teesside Exhibition – The Force for Nature Exhibition spent five days in Teesside, in the North East at two venues – Preston Park Museum and Grounds in Stockton-on-Tees and St Peter’s Catholic College in Middlesbrough. Team Tree Council delivered 28 workshops to 334 school children from six primary schools and two secondary schools. We held a teacher training session engaging 43 teachers and organised a planting event with school children and three community groups, planting 525 trees.

Practical Science & Research:

The Tree Council began as an informal coalition of tree organisations and our model of collaboration with the public, private and third sector helps develop tree and hedgerow policy with a strong, trusted and unified voice.

In our role as a convenor for the sector, The Tree Council chairs or serves on more than a dozen, national, high-level, policy, practice and advisory boards to governments in the UK nations and EU on the topics of tree health/disease, tree safety, habitats, biodiversity and climate change. In these fora, we represent the views and concerns of our charity member organisations, local authorities and volunteer Tree Warden networks, enhancing the operating environment and highlighting issues of concern.

Practical Science & Research: Ash Dieback (ADB) / Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

The Tree Council partners with Defra, Fera Science, Forest Research, Network Rail and leading universities on a variety of research programmes that help shape national policy and best practice. We aim to increase knowledge and apply science to help establish varied and biodiverse treescapes across Britain, which will be resilient to climate change and pests and diseases.

Our science and action research this year has continued to support government and local authorities in England and Scotland as they tackle threats from ash dieback and OPM.

Practical Science & Research: Local Authority Tree Strategies

A strategic approach is one of the most important factors underpinning well-planned and well-resourced treescapes – and yet just over one third of local authorities have a tree strategy. A well-written local tree strategy sets out the vision for how a local treescape will be managed now and for the future and acts as go-to reference for a wide range of local stakeholders.

As large and increasing numbers of local authorities are announcing climate emergencies, we have continued our work with Defra and Fera Science to give practical guidance to help local authorities develop tree strategies for themselves.

Following the publication of our Trees and Woodland Strategy Toolkit in Spring 2023, we held four workshops across the country to help tackle some of the challenges local authorities must overcome when planning and implementing their strategies. More than 36 local authorities attended, bringing their own regional context and perspectives. Overall, there was a real sense of positivity, ambition, and collaboration, with a desire for practical support and an appreciation of the collective opportunity to work together to develop useful resources.

Practical Science & Research: Shared Outcomes

This research project with Defra and Natural England aims to establish new techniques to grow 'Trees outside Woodlands' and is funded through Treasury's 'Shared Outcomes Fund'. The project's vision is to develop new ways of expanding bio-secure tree cover at reduced costs, to meet increased UK tree planting ambitions and reverse trends in tree losses.

The Tree Council is co-ordinating and sharing the findings of five pilot schemes with local authority partners looking at: urban tree establishment, agro-forestry and orchards, community tree nurseries, hedgerow tree management, and subsidised planting.

Practical Science & Research: UK Treescapes and Connected Treescapes

We are a core part of the 'Connected Treescapes' project funded under the UK Treescapes programme. This three-year research project with the Universities of York, Derby, Strathclyde, Newcastle, Edinburgh and the James Hutton Institute, aims to understand how we can expand treescapes in a way that is resilient and encourages connection between people and trees. The

Tree Council will produce a tool to help land managers navigate decision-making around tree planting, identifying risks and benefits.

Practical Science & Research: Hedgelink

Hedges are Britain's most widespread Priority Habitat – providing connectivity and homes to more than 130 national priority species. They have a high biodiversity and carbon storage value, as well as helping improve air quality in cities.

The Tree Council is Chair of Hedgelink, the partnership that brings everyone interested in hedgerows together, to share knowledge and ideas, to encourage and inspire, and to work with farmers and other land managers to conserve and enhance our hedgerow heritage.

The partnership comprises nearly 30 organisations including, People's Trust for Endangered Species, Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group, Campaign to Protect Rural England, Defra, Woodland Trust, National Farmers Union, and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology.

This year, in addition to grant giving for hedgerows and hedgerow trees through our community programme, we have worked with partners to develop joint responses to consultations. We coordinated discussions between Hedgelink and Defra on government's proposals to replicate into domestic legislation, the EU's hedgerow cross-compliance rules.

With the ongoing 'Life on the Hedge' programme, hedgerows will remain an important component of The Tree Council's work going forward.

Practical Science & Research: PhD Programmes

The Tree Council is currently supporting three PhD researchers, currently in their second year studying topics relevant to The Tree Council's broader aims. As part of the programme, each student has a three-month placement with The Tree Council, becoming members of our team and contributing to wider programmes.

- In partnership with the University of Oxford and Oxford Botanic Gardens, one student is investigating the impact of mistletoe on trees. We launched a new citizen science app 'MistleGo' in winter 2023, which has to date received 1,250 mistletoe recordings.
- We are working with a student at Newcastle University and Fera Science to explore the carbon and biodiversity value of agroforestry – crucial to getting more trees on farms.
- Finally, with the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the University of Reading, we are supporting a student focused on hedgerow expansion; this complements our hedgerow programme and our role as chair of Hedgelink.

Looking forward to 2024/25 & beyond

Community Tree Planting:

- In 2024/25, we will continue to work with the Tree Warden networks to support and develop the Tree Warden Scheme
- We will continue our programme to help establish 18 community tree nurseries in England by 31 March 2025
- We will develop our community planting partnerships to: include more trees in riparian and urban settings, increase social value and work with more groups with special needs

Young Learning:

- We will work secure support for more work with young people in London, engaging particularly with Alternative Provision and Special Needs schools and Pupil Referral Units
- We will publish a 'Young Tree Growers Guide' online with Hampshire County Council
- We will focus on securing/renewing Principal Partner funding for the Young Tree Champions programme 2025–2028

Practical Science & Research:

- We will continue with year two of the mistletoe research and citizen science programme with Oxford University and Oxford Botanic Garden
- We will develop our tree mortality research programme with Defra, looking for ways to identify the causes of young tree death and develop a protocol for recording survival that can be used by everyone
- We will lead sector-wide research into the protection of heritage trees and trees of significance, which will feed into future Defra policy on tree protection and support
- We will continue work with the Defra team and our five local authority partners on disseminating the findings of the Shared Outcomes programme
- We will work with Defra to explore the way funding is provided for Trees outside Woodlands

Fundraising:

- We will launch 'Tree Partners' – the exciting next chapter of our Jubilee Partners programme
- We will seek longer-term support for our national network of volunteer Tree Wardens, enabling them to expand their work and benefit from additional training
- We aim to secure new partners for our community planting programmes, so that we can engage with more communities in Scotland
- We will register with the Fundraising Regulator to show our commitment to excellent fundraising practice

Management:

- We will regularly review our Finance function to ensure that it continues to be managed securely and that it is well-resourced as the charity grows
- We will review the charity's succession planning for Trustees and Executive Team to ensure future continuity of expertise

Beneficiaries of our services

The beneficiaries of our services include: our volunteers and members; pupils and teachers participating in our National Schools Programme; communities and landowners receiving grant-funding to establish trees; local authorities supported to help tackle tree pests and diseases and plan future tree strategies; our coalition of conservation charities whom we bring together to comment on consultations and address tree-related challenges; and the UK general public who receive the important social benefits of our tree, hedgerow and orchard planting. In addition, our work helps conserve wildlife and habitats, improves biodiversity and contributes to tackling climate change and safeguarding the future health of our planet. All these are covered in greater detail in the achievements and performance section above.

Financial review

The Tree Council is entirely self-funding with income generated through grants and gifts from major donors, charitable trusts, corporate partnership, membership fees and legacy giving. In 2023/24, the charity's total income for the year was £2,152,669 (compared to £2,524,224 for the previous year) and total expenditure was £2,342,055 (compared to £2,291,346 last year).

During the year, one of our major partnerships with The Queen's Green Canopy, which marked Queen Elizabeth's 70 years on the throne, came to an end. Our total revenue fell from £2.5m to £2.1m, mainly because of the project ending. In spite of a reduction in our restricted income, we distributed grants of £863,545 during the year, £240,766 of which are small community grants, increasing the proportion of grants awarded from restricted income. This reduced our year end bank and cash balance.

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year were £674,399 and restricted reserves (mainly tree planting funds) were £458,209. Total reserves were £1,132,608.

Reserves policy and going concern

It is the policy of the Tree Council to maintain unrestricted funds at a level which equates to at least six months core costs. The budgeted core costs for 2024/25 are £1,353,657 and so unrestricted reserves at £674,399 are equivalent to 6.0 months of core costs.

The Trustees continue to keep the risks facing The Tree Council under close review and ensure that costs are carefully controlled. The Trustees continue to keep all the reserves in the form of interest-earning bank accounts and deposits.

The Trustees, as part of their continuous risk assessment, monitor the changes in the economy, plus any ongoing impacts of government policy, flexible working and the charity's normal activities.

The Tree Council has generated many new grants and contracts over the past two years and is confident of its ability to operate as a going concern.

Risk Assessment

The Board maintains a risk assessment system which is based on a numerical assessment of risk, with an accompanying management commentary. Trustees consider these reports regularly both for the organisation as a whole and for major projects. The aim is to highlight and measure potential risks to the success of an activity or process, assess the impact, and put in place appropriate management action. The system encompasses all areas of our activities, although the continuing increased projects and programmes with corporate partners marks this area out for ongoing development.

Risks are reviewed in depth under six headings: financial, operational, regulatory, reputational, strategic and external. Our top three key risks identified and their mitigation are:

- Unrestricted reserves falling below the recommended level approved by Trustees (a band equivalent to 6–12 months of core operating costs). The Finance Committee monitors unrestricted reserves levels quarterly and if the level falls below 6 months, the Chairman, Treasurer and CEO keep income/expenditure under monthly review. We stay in close touch with principal funding partners and begin grant renewal or tender processes in good time to allow alternative funding to be found if necessary. With our supporters' approval, we build a contribution towards core costs into major projects.
- Team retention and succession planning have become ever more important with the move to flexible working, a rapidly changing employment market and The Tree Council's growing programme of activities. We work hard to maintain a strong and positive team ethic and to motivate, support, develop and reward the team, recognising achievements and delivering appraisals in a constructive context. We have brought more employees into the team with formal arboricultural and scientific qualifications to ensure adequate cover.
- Given rising levels of fraud and phishing emails in the UK, the Finance Committee agreed to review The Tree Council's cyber security. As part of the review, we were offered a free 'cyber risk assessment report' by cyber insurance specialists Coalition. No critical security failings were identified. We continue to be cyber protected via our IT consultants, we maintain our CyberEssentials certification, and the team takes part in ongoing cyber and fraud training. Accordingly, we can confirm that the major risks to which the Council is exposed have been reviewed and systems are in place to mitigate those risks.

Fundraising

The charity's fundraising objective was to reach £2m sustainable annual income by 2022/23, of which c25% to be unrestricted. This has been achieved once again in 2023/24, which will enable us to develop and, in the longer-term, establish ambitious programmes for public benefit in our three key areas of work: Community Action, Young Learning, and Practical Science & Research.

Life on the Hedge is supporting the core costs of our Head of Development 2022–2025 (in addition to two hedge-related roles), which gives us confidence and continuity to grow our fundraising initiatives.

We are incredibly grateful to our partners for their support, which has included funding for core costs on projects and programmes, as well as activities such as comms and marketing. Grants from M&G, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Network Rail, The Northwick Trust and The Golden Bottle Trust have been greatly appreciated to help us invest in the future successful growth of the charity. These funds have enabled us to achieve significant public benefit with little additional fundraising expenditure.

The current fundraising approach focuses on a mix of corporate partnerships, research applications and philanthropic fundraising. Our fundraising does not include direct marketing or telephone campaigns and we remain mindful at all times of the need to safeguard vulnerable people.

The Tree Council does not use professional fundraisers or agencies and received no complaints in this financial year.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, formally incorporated on 5 December 1979 and registered as a charity on 17 December 1979. The organisation's genesis however, dates back to '*Plant a Tree in '73*', hence the 50th anniversary celebrations in 23/24.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association. All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. The Trustees have not claimed any expenses.

The members of the Board of Trustees meet regularly to review its affairs, review the charity's aims, objectives and activities, as well as report on the benefits for the public good. The Board has a Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, to oversee the charity's financial affairs, to report to the Board and make recommendations as appropriate at each meeting.

The Chief Executive, Sara Lom, together with the Senior Team comprising the Director of Trees, Science & Research, the Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Communications and the Director of Finance manage the day-to-day administration of the charity.

On 1 May 2023, following a review by specialist consultants SecondSight and the Trustees' discussion and approval of their report and recommendations, The Tree Council's pension scheme migrated from NEST to Royal London. The charity simultaneously introduced a salary sacrifice scheme, offering guidance to all employees during and after the transition.

I would like to thank my fellow Trustees for their wonderful commitment and shared expertise.

We have appointed five new team members through the year, growing from 17 to 22 people. We offer them a warm welcome and huge thanks to the existing team, who juggle daily deadlines and a wide range of national programmes and projects – always with enthusiasm, professionalism and smiles on their faces.

Appointment of Trustees

The Tree Council subscribes to the seven principles of the Nolan Rules in appointing trustees. These are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In addition, the Tree Council looks for the following qualities, skills and experience:

- An appreciation of the importance of trees and the environment
- A willingness to make the time commitment to attend Board meetings, strategic review meetings and other related meetings and activities, including familiarisation with the work of the Council
- An ability to think strategically, formulate direction for the organisation and support management
- An ability to contribute to board discussions, seek advice, exercise sound judgement and contribute to good governance
- A willingness to use their networks on behalf of The Tree Council, in advocacy, fundraising (including pro bono contributions), public affairs and communications

The number of Trustees is required to be no less than three, with no maximum number. One third of Trustees retire at each annual meeting and are eligible for reappointment, subject to the provision in the Articles that Trustees shall normally serve for no more than six years.

The Board is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate succession strategy is adopted for the replacement of Trustees. The Chair and Chief Executive take responsibility for informing the Board when new Trustees need to be appointed.

In order to identify Trustees, when a vacancy is about to occur, the Chair and Chief Executive review the balance of skills, attributes and experience on the current Board relative to the future needs of the organisation. Trustees are appointed to ensure the positive evolution of the charity. Prior to appointment, new Trustees meet formally with at least two current Trustees and usually attend at least one Board Meeting as an observer.

Induction for new Trustees is carried out by the Chief Executive and includes familiarisation with people, activities and events over a number of months.

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

The Tree Council's Remunerations Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, comprises three appropriately experienced Trustees, reviews the remuneration of all employees, based on market data and performance.

Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Tree Council for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law 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 period. 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
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Tree Council

Trustees` annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2024

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2024 was 14 (2023: 12). The Trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP was re-appointed as the charitable company's auditor during the year and has expressed its willingness to continue in that capacity.

The Trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The Trustees' annual report has been approved by the Trustees on 20 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by

Joel Cadbury
Chairman

Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Tree Council (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on The Tree Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;

Independent auditor`s report

To the members of

The Tree Council

- The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditor`s report

To the members of

The Tree Council

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Fleur Holden (Senior statutory auditor)

6 December 2024

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor,

110 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TG

The Tree Council

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	103,751	12,377	116,128	200,172	10,259	210,431
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting		105,296	964,923	1,070,219	82,649	1,594,972	1,677,621
Science and Research		664,977	-	664,977	399,368	-	399,368
Education and community engagement	3	-	276,765	276,765	2,000	225,483	227,483
Investments	4	18,772	-	18,772	774	-	774
Other		5,808	-	5,808	8,546	-	8,546
Total income		898,604	1,254,065	2,152,669	693,509	1,830,714	2,524,224
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	87,929	44,383	132,312	122,980	20,442	143,422
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting	5	250,222	1,113,636	1,363,858	11,503	1,514,517	1,526,020
Science and Research	5	404,192	-	404,192	264,215	-	264,215
Education and community engagement	5	72,000	369,693	441,693	151,736	205,953	357,689
Total expenditure		814,343	1,527,712	2,342,055	550,434	1,740,912	2,291,346
Net income / (expenditure)		84,261	(273,648)	(189,387)	143,075	89,803	232,878
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		84,261	(273,648)	(189,387)	143,075	89,803	232,878
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		590,138	731,855	1,321,993	447,063	642,052	1,089,115
Total funds carried forward		674,399	458,209	1,132,608	590,138	731,855	1,321,993

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17a to the financial statements."

The Tree Council

Balance sheet

Company no. 01459056

As at 31 March 2024

	Note	£	2024 £	£	2023 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	12		<u>10,464</u>		<u>19,030</u>
			10,464		19,030
Current assets:					
Debtors	13	268,257		227,937	
Short term deposits		400,000		–	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>989,290</u>		<u>1,705,981</u>	
		1,657,547		1,933,918	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	<u>(535,404)</u>		<u>(630,955)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>1,122,144</u>		<u>1,302,963</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>1,132,608</u>		<u>1,321,993</u>
Total net assets			<u><u>1,132,608</u></u>		<u><u>1,321,993</u></u>
The funds of the charity:	17a				
Restricted income funds			458,209		731,855
Unrestricted income funds:					
General funds		<u>674,399</u>		<u>590,139</u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>674,399</u>		<u>590,138</u>
Total charity funds			<u><u>1,132,608</u></u>		<u><u>1,321,993</u></u>

Approved by the trustees on 20 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Joel Cadbury
Chairman

Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

The Tree Council

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	£	2023 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net (expenditure)/ income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		(189,387)		232,878	
Depreciation charges		11,300		10,536	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		(40,320)		287,844	
(Decrease)/ Increase in creditors		(95,550)		80,581	
Net cash (used in)/ provided by operating activities		(313,957)		611,839	
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of fixed assets		(2,734)		(4,312)	
Net cash used in investing activities		(2,734)		(4,312)	
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(316,691)		607,527	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,705,981		1,098,453	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		1,389,290		1,705,981	
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents					
	At 1 April 2023	Cash flows	Other non-cash changes	At 31 March 2024	
	£	£	£	£	
Cash at bank and in hand	1,705,981	(716,691)	–	989,290	
Short term depositis	–	400,000		400,000	
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,705,981	(316,691)	–	1,389,290	

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

The Tree Council is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales.

The registered office address is 14 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, LONDON, SE16 2XU

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The trustees have considered inflation, the uncertain economic climate and their normal activities and confirm that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. In particular they have reviewed the future cash flows and commitments and have ascertained that there are sufficient unrestricted reserves and future cash flows to confirm that the charity is a going concern.

Key judgements that the charity has made which have a significant effect on the accounts include estimating the liability for multi-year grant commitments.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

e) Income

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

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

g) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, exhibitions and other educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

j) Grants payable

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects. Single or multi-year grants are accounted for when either the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and the trustees have agreed to pay the grant without condition, or the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and that any condition attaching to the grant is outside of the control of the charity.

Provisions for grants are made when the intention to make a grant has been communicated to the recipient and the amount of grant payable is known.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

k) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of salary time by each activity each year. For this year the percentages are

●	Tree and hedge planting	52%
●	Education and community activities	13%
●	Science & Research	18%
●	Fundraising	5%
●	Support costs	10%
●	Governance costs	2%

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

●	Tree and hedge planting	58%
●	Education and community activities	17%
●	Science & Research	19%
●	Fundraising	6%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

l) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

m) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. Fixtures & Fittings and Office & Computer Equipment are depreciated over 3 years.

n) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

o) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

p) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

q) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Donations and legacies	59,858	12,377	72,234	160,985	10,259	171,244
Friends of the Tree Council	27,138	–	27,138	22,089	–	22,089
Subscriptions	16,755	–	16,755	17,098	–	17,098
	<u>103,751</u>	<u>12,377</u>	<u>116,128</u>	<u>200,172</u>	<u>10,259</u>	<u>210,431</u>

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Tree and hedge planting						
Network Rail Community Planting	–	696,500	696,500	–	795,500	795,500
Close the Gap	–	–	–	–	358,255	358,255
Tree planting grants	–	7,020	7,020	–	7,000	7,000
Jubilee Partners Fund	16,500	22,000	38,500	81,000	110,500	191,500
Tree Partners Fund	12,000	16,000	28,000	–	–	–
Animal Friends	5,000	20,000	25,000	1,649	23,351	25,000
Queen's Green Canopy	61,796	–	61,796	–	180,000	180,000
Northwick Trust	–	10,000	10,000	–	–	–
Trees Call to Action Fund	10,000	193,403	203,403	–	120,366	120,366
	<u>105,296</u>	<u>964,923</u>	<u>1,070,219</u>	<u>82,649</u>	<u>1,594,972</u>	<u>1,677,621</u>
Science & Research	<u>664,977</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>664,977</u>	<u>399,368</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>399,368</u>
Education and community engagement						
M & G	–	276,177	276,177	2,000	161,927	163,927
YTC Ambassadors Programme	–	–	–	–	40,900	40,900
Orchards for Schools	–	588	588	–	22,656	22,656
	<u>–</u>	<u>276,765</u>	<u>276,765</u>	<u>2,000</u>	<u>225,483</u>	<u>227,483</u>
Total income from charitable	<u>770,273</u>	<u>1,241,688</u>	<u>2,011,961</u>	<u>484,017</u>	<u>1,820,455</u>	<u>2,304,472</u>

4 Income from investments

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2024 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £
Income from cash deposits	18,772	–	18,772	774	–	774
	<u>18,772</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>18,772</u>	<u>774</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>774</u>

5a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities							
	Raising funds £	Tree and hedge planting £	Science & Research £	Education and community engagement £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2024 Total £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (Note 8)	65,182	249,863	293,318	260,727	32,591	184,682	1,086,363	895,311
Tree Warden Scheme	-	-	-	366	-	-	366	2,777
Office and Facility costs	-	43,703	-	-	-	11,034	54,736	77,018
Grants Payable (Note 6)	-	863,545	-	-	-	-	863,545	1,104,679
Audit and other governance costs	-	5,870	-	-	11,867	-	17,738	19,598
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	-	2,332	-	-	-	3,405	5,737	10,071
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	-	-	-	-	-	46,483	46,483	46,229
Marketing and Brand costs	51,869	-	-	-	-	-	51,869	51,153
Learning & Engagement	-	-	93,617	-	-	-	93,617	-
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	11,301	11,301	10,536
Travel costs	-	45,929	24,234	36,267	332	3,538	110,300	73,974
	117,050	1,211,242	411,169	297,361	44,791	260,442	2,342,055	2,291,346
Support costs	13,022	130,221	26,044	91,155	-	(260,442)	-	-
Governance costs	2,240	22,395	4,479	15,677	(44,791)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2024	132,312	1,363,858	441,693	404,192	-	-	2,342,055	
Total expenditure 2023	143,422	1,526,020	357,689	264,215	-	-		2,291,346

5b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities						
	Raising funds £	Tree and hedge planting £	Science & Research £	Education and community engagement £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2023 Total £
Staff costs (Note 8)	62,672	196,968	214,875	250,687	35,812	134,297	895,311
Tree Warden Scheme	–	–	–	2,777	–	–	2,777
Office and Facility costs	–	33,831	–	–	–	43,187	77,018
Grants Payable (Note 6)	–	1,104,679	–	–	–	–	1,104,679
Audit and other governance costs	–	2,941	–	–	16,656	–	19,598
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	–	5,381	–	–	–	4,690	10,071
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	–	–	–	–	–	46,229	46,229
Marketing and Brand costs	51,153	–	–	–	–	–	51,153
Depreciation	–	–	–	–	–	10,536	10,536
Travel costs	–	34,231	19,742	15,431	1,654	2,916	73,974
	113,825	1,378,031	234,617	268,895	54,123	241,855	2,291,346
Support costs	24,186	120,928	24,186	72,557	–	(241,855)	–
Governance costs	5,412	27,061	5,412	16,237	(54,123)	–	–
Total expenditure 2023	143,422	1,526,020	264,215	357,689	–	–	2,291,346

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

6a Grant making (current year)

	Grants £	Support costs £	2024 £
Cost			
Network Rail	435,988	–	435,988
Schools & community groups	427,556	–	427,556
At the end of the year	<u>863,545</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>863,545</u>

During 2024 and 2023, The Tree Council used an internal committee to assess grant applications as well as having a joint committee with Network Rail for the grants made from their restricted funds. The most significant individual grants were to the Wylde Valley Project (£16,997) to re-establish elms to support local moth populations, to City of Doncaster Council (£25,330) for tree planting in schools and cemeteries, Petersfield Community Garden (£21,226) to plant a Miyawaki method forest, new hedgerows and for habitat restorations, to Misbourne Greeway–Russell Farm (£20,000) for a hedgerow along a new 4km walking and cycling route, to Action for Conservation's Penpoint Project (£19,989) to plant Miyawaki method mini-forests, restore wood pasture and an orchard, to Bradgate Park Trust (£21,931) to plant English oak and hawthorn in a historic deer park, create a community tree nursery and provide education sessions, to London Borough of Newham (£14,950) for school planting and street tree replacement.

6b Grant making (prior year)

	Grants £	Support costs £	2023 £
Cost			
Network Rail	329,441	–	329,441
Schools & community groups	775,238	–	775,238
At the end of the year	<u>1,104,679</u>	<u>–</u>	<u>1,104,679</u>

7 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging / (crediting):

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation	11,300	10,536
Operating lease	11,602	11,602
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	9,950	9,300
Under-provision in respect of the prior year	–	3,700
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Salaries and wages	887,078	762,343
National insurance	89,684	80,781
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	109,602	52,187
	1,086,363	895,311

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
£90,000 – £99,999	1	1
£60,000 – £69,999	1	2

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £341,008 (2023: £325,781).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2023: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2023: £nil).

There were no payments to trustees for expenses (2023: nil).

9 Team numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of team members employed) during the year was 22 (2023: 17).

The team is split across the activities of the charity as follows (full time equivalent basis):

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Tree and hedge planting	5.6	4.8
Science & Research	5.9	3.2
Education and community engagement	5.6	5.3
Support, Fundraising and marketing	4.9	3.6
Governance	0.4	0.3
	22.4	17.2

10 Related party transactions

In April and May 24, the charity paid grants to the value of £29,144 to Bradford Farming LLP, a company of which trustee Eliza Newport's spouse is a director. Although paid in 23–24, the grants were approved a year earlier and accrued in the 2023/24 Audited Accounts. Eliza was appointed as a Trustee of the charity in November 23 and was not involved in the award of the grants, nor has she ever been a member of the Grant Approvals Committee.

In 23/24, the charity received donations from related parties amounting to £3,500 (2023: £9,500).

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and furniture £	Office and computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At the start of the year	2,838	71,704	74,542
Additions in year	–	2,734	2,734
At the end of the year	<u>2,838</u>	<u>74,438</u>	<u>77,276</u>
Depreciation			
At the start of the year	2,838	52,674	55,512
Charge for the year	–	11,300	11,300
At the end of the year	<u>2,838</u>	<u>63,974</u>	<u>66,812</u>
Net book value			
At the end of the year	<u>–</u>	<u>10,464</u>	<u>10,464</u>
At the start of the year	<u>–</u>	<u>19,030</u>	<u>19,030</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

13 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Grants and sponsorship receivable	119,253	129,480
Prepayments and other debtors	4,383	6,086
Accrued income	144,622	92,372
	<u>268,257</u>	<u>227,937</u>

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	159,631	218,489
Taxation and social security	105,523	84,287
Grants payable	209,196	292,929
Accruals	61,053	35,250
	<u>535,404</u>	<u>630,955</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2024

15 Pension scheme

The company pays 7% to the Royal London for its employees, and the employee contributes 1% in compliance with the rules of auto enrolment. The company moved from Nest to Royal London in May 23 following a pension review by Foster Denovo.

16a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	10,464	–	–	10,464
Net current assets	663,935	–	458,209	1,122,144
Net assets at 31 March 2024	674,399	–	458,209	1,132,608

16b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	19,030	–	–	19,030
Net current assets	571,108	–	731,855	1,302,963
Net assets at 31 March 2023	590,138	–	731,855	1,321,993

17a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	113,831	12,377	(19,151)	–	107,056
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	78,697	–	(44,634)	–	34,063
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	–	(10,411)	–	–
Tree Angel Planting Funds	52,183	–	(52,183)	–	–
Orchards for Schools	99,776	588	(64,009)	–	36,355
Special Assignment Fund	628	–	(40)	–	588
Network Rail Fund	66,853	359,000	(418,515)	–	7,338
M & G Fund	52,622	276,177	(282,016)	–	46,783
Siemens Fund	3,790	–	(2,351)	–	1,439
Close the Gap Fund	–	–	–	–	–
Kusuma Trust Fund	3,140	–	–	–	3,140
Southern Network Rail	209,943	337,500	(382,392)	–	165,051
Jubilee Partner Fund	–	22,000	(5,102)	(16,898)	–
Animal Friends Fund	–	20,000	(20,793)	–	(793)
29 May Charitable Trust	5,979	7,020	(12,179)	–	820
YTC Ambassadors Programme	35,464	–	(23,668)	–	11,796
Trees Call to Action Fund	(1,863)	193,403	(174,784)	–	16,756
The Queen's Green Canopy	402	–	(66)	–	336
The Northwick Trust	–	10,000	(6,022)	–	3,978
Tree Partner Fund	–	16,000	(9,395)	16,898	23,503
Total restricted funds	731,855	1,254,065	(1,527,712)	–	458,209
General funds	590,138	898,604	(814,343)	–	674,399
Total unrestricted funds	590,138	898,604	(814,343)	–	674,399
Total funds	1,321,993	2,152,669	(2,342,055)	–	1,132,608

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

17b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	103,070	10,259	502	–	113,831
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	79,697	–	(1,000)	–	78,697
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	–	–	–	10,411
Tree Angel Planting Funds	52,183	–	–	–	52,183
Orchards for Schools	122,659	22,656	(30,485)	(15,054)	99,776
Special Assignment Fund	628	–	–	–	628
Network Rail Fund	35,082	408,000	(376,229)	–	66,853
M & G Fund	60,727	161,927	(170,032)	–	52,622
Siemens Fund	3,790	–	–	–	3,790
Close the Gap Fund	24,655	358,255	(382,910)	–	–
Kusuma Trust Fund	3,140	–	–	–	3,140
Southern Network Rail	113,886	387,500	(291,443)	–	209,943
Jubilee Partner Fund	19,051	110,500	(144,605)	15,054	–
Animal Friends Fund	6,074	23,351	(29,425)	–	–
29 May Charitable Trust	7,000	7,000	(8,021)	–	5,979
YTC Ambassadors Programme	–	40,900	(5,436)	–	35,464
Trees Call to Action Fund	–	120,366	(122,229)	–	(1,863)
The Queen's Green Canopy	–	180,000	(179,598)	–	402
Total restricted funds	642,052	1,830,714	(1,740,912)	–	731,855
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	447,063	693,509	(550,434)	–	590,138
Total unrestricted funds	447,063	693,509	(550,434)	–	590,138
Total funds	1,089,115	2,524,224	(2,291,346)	–	1,321,993

Purposes of restricted funds

The Branching Out 1 Tree Planting Funds are for planting with schools and community groups. The majority of the funds have been donated by an anonymous donor's Charitable Trust.

The Vernon Hill Branching Out 2 Tree Planting Funds are for planting projects for schools and community groups. The Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Vernon Hill to the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Good Gifts Catalogue makes grants to the Tree Council for the planting of oak saplings, bluebell woods and meadows of flowers.

Tree Angel Funds are dedicated to a variety of tree planting and have been funded by public and corporate gifts to the 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Orchards for Schools Funds are to fund orchards and fruiting hedgerows planting in schools. The fund was created following generous gifts from Lord Sugar, Richard Caring and Sir Jony Ive plus an anonymous donor following the Daily Mail campaign.

The Special Assignment Fund is to carry out specific tree research projects in overseas countries.

The Network Rail Fund is a four-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in cities and the countryside, mainly in England.

M&G Fund is a three-year programme dedicated to inspiring young people in schools across the UK to become Young Tree Champions and to gain the skills to become a #ForceForNature.

The Welsh Trees Siemens fund is dedicated to a tree planting project with the local community at Wolf's Castle in Pembrokeshire and other tree planting projects in Wales.

Purposes of restricted funds

The Green Recovery Challenge Fund supports an 18-month programme, 'Close the Gap', to establish bigger, healthier, better connected hedgerows and hedgerow trees in England, working with Defra, National Lottery Heritage Fund and five charity partners.

The Kusuma Trust supports The Tree Council's Young Ambassadors programme.

The Southern Network Rail fund is a three-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in the Southern Network Rail region.

The Jubilee Partner Fund is a two-year programme in partnership with The Queen's Green Canopy to plant trees in celebration of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's 70 years on the throne.

Animal Friends Fund is a programme focussed on tree and hedgerow planting projects that prioritise wildlife and biodiversity benefits.

29 May Charitable Trust is a fund to support volunteer Tree Warden networks, especially new networks, with training and other materials.

YTC Ambassadors Programme supports young people in schools to develop into effective Senior Brand Ambassadors.

The Trees Call to Action Fund is a programme which supports the planting and management of hedgerows and Community Seed nurseries.

Queen's Green Canopy is an initiative to support the planting of a million trees to celebrate the late Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee celebrations.

The Tree Partners programme is a 3-year partnership enabling organisations to support community tree, orchard and hedgerow planting and care in city streets, urban parks and school playgrounds across the nation.

The Northwick Trust provided funding to support our volunteer Tree Wardens and the trees they look after by helping to establish golden orchards as part of our 50th anniversary celebrations and enabling us to deliver in-person and online training sessions for our volunteers on pruning, grafting and fruit tree care.

18 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Land and buildings	
	2024	2023
	£	£
Within one year	16,115	17,580
Within one to two years	–	16,115
	<u>16,115</u>	<u>33,695</u>

19 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

Accounts

Company number: 1459056

Charity number: 279000

The Tree Council

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023



Contents

For the year ended 31 March 2023

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The Tree Council

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2023

Company number 1459056
Country of incorporation United Kingdom

Charity number 279000
Country of registration England & Wales

Registered office and operational address 14 Dock Offices
Surrey Quays Road
LONDON
SE16 2XU

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Joel Cadbury	Chair
Elizabeth Hiester	Deputy Chair (to 18 October 2022)
Andrew Fenwick	Treasurer
Tariq Ahmed	
Jeremy Simons	(to 18 October 2022)
Anna Goulandris	(from 18 October 2022)

Key management personnel Sara Lom Chief Executive & Company Secretary
Clare Bowen Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Communications
Niloufer Limki Director of Finance
Jon Stokes Director of Trees, Science & Research

Bankers NatWest Bank Ltd
London Bridge Branch
PO Box 35, 10 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TJ

Solicitors Macfarlanes LLP
20 Cursitor Street
London EC4A 1LT

Auditor Sayer Vincent LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
Invicta House
108–114 Golden Lane
LONDON
EC1Y 0TL

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association, the requirements of a directors' report as required under company law, and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

Purposes and aims

The Tree Council was established in 1973 when Dutch elm disease swept across the land and urgent action was required to restore precious British treescapes. In response to the loss of millions of elms, The Tree Council, a national charity, brought everyone together to plant and care for trees across the UK.

Today, nearly fifty years later, The Tree Council continues to bring people together with a shared mission to care for trees, hedgerows and our planet's future. We inspire and empower organisations, government, communities and individuals, providing knowledge and tools to create positive, lasting change at a national and local level.

Our work has never been more important than it is now, as we face a global climate crisis. We and our volunteers and partners are playing a key role in helping shape policy, find practical solutions, raise awareness, and deliver tree planting and tree care to benefit communities and help achieve the government target of carbon net zero by 2050.

We focus our work on wider treescapes rather than forests – working with partners to protect and establish copses and spinneys, hedgerows and orchards, parkland and wood pasture trees, as well as life-enhancing street trees, urban avenues, community tree nurseries, and city playground plantations.

Our strapline, **'Working Together for the Love of Trees'** emphasises the common thread of collaboration that runs through our history. It is the truth most often echoed back to us by our partners and stakeholders, that we bring people together for the benefit of trees. It reflects our desire for partnership and our quest for practical solutions. It expresses our deep-rooted, emotional response to trees. These two things, collaboration to find practical solutions and a love for trees, combined with good care and a great sense of fun, summarise our team and its core values today.

We are supported in our work by thousands of amazing volunteer Tree Wardens, plus a growing force of Young Ambassadors and Young Tree Champions in 243 schools across the UK.

We have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have also considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

Summary: Achievements & Performance

The work of The Tree Council spans the UK and has three branches – Community Action, Young Learning, and Practical Science & Research. Partnership working underpins everything we do and reflects our role as a membership organisation bringing together a diverse range of public, not-for-profit and private bodies united by their concern for trees.

This year has seen renewal, growth and achievement in all three branches of our work.



The Tree Council is entirely self-funding with income generated through grants and gifts from major donors, charitable trusts, corporate partnership, membership fees and legacy giving.

Total income has grown from £446,202 in 2018/19 to £2,524,224 in 2022/23.

In 2022/23, the charity's restricted income was £1,830,714. The charity's unrestricted reserves increased by £143,075. Total income for the year was £2,524,224 (compared to £2,803,166 for the previous year) and total expenditure was £2,291,346 (compared to £2,794,169 last year).

During the year, 'Close the Gap', one of our major projects funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund came to an end. Although our total revenue fell from £2.8m to £2.5m because of the project ending, we increased our unrestricted income from £645,297 to £693,509, and grew our team from 15 to 17 people.

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year were £590,138 and restricted reserves (mainly tree planting funds) were £731,855. Total reserves were £1,321,993.

Highlights of the Year include:

- **In 2022/23, with the help of thousands of enthusiastic volunteers and thanks to the generosity of our wonderful supporters, The Tree Council has enabled the planting of nearly 220,000 trees (including c24 kms of hedgerows) in 852 communities, throughout the length and breadth of the UK.**
- Ceremonial plum tree planting by our Patron, HRH The Duke of Kent, with members of the Grenfell community at the Lancaster West Estate
- Orchards for Schools planted 1,710 fruit trees and 2.73 kms of fruiting hedgerow in 373 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
- Launch of a new Trees and Woodland Strategy Toolkit following consultation with 22 local authorities and a range of conservation charities and community volunteer groups
- Young Tree Champion Ambassadors played an inspirational role at Birmingham's Big Bang Science Fair and a green careers Discovery Day at RHS Wisley
- 14.6 kms of new hedgerows planted in cities and rural communities in partnership with The Queen's Green Canopy as a legacy to celebrate the life of the late HM Queen Elizabeth
- Five new volunteer Tree Warden networks established (Fife, North Northamptonshire, Barnsley Volunteers, Gloucestershire and London Borough of Ealing)

Community: The Tree Warden Scheme

The Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme is a national initiative which supports local authorities and independent networks to promote, conserve and care for trees, bringing health and wellbeing and new skills to individuals, and an improved environment in their communities.

Tree Warden volunteers gather information about their local trees, engage and help with local issues and organise and take part in tree-related activities, such as seed growing, tree and hedgerow planting, tree care, woodland walks and providing alerts to pests and diseases. Their role promoting, protecting, planting and celebrating trees is vital to help tackle climate change, meet nationally ambitious planting targets, increase biodiversity, and enhance the nation's health and wellbeing.

Thousands of volunteer Tree Wardens across the country work within local networks which, with our help and support, are set up and managed by public and civil society organisations such as local authorities, parish councils and voluntary groups. The Tree Warden Scheme was launched in 1990 in the aftermath of the Great Storm of 1987.

The Tree Council is enormously grateful to the Tree Wardens for their support. They are capable, committed and inspirational and participate in activities as our representatives, for example, gathering field data, planting and caring for trees, and disseminating information.

As part of our work that adds social value and transforms communities nationwide, The Tree Council holds annual Tree Warden Forums across the country. These are a mix of online and in person events. The Forums are an opportunity for volunteers to hear key speakers present on locally and nationally important tree-related topics and to see and hear about other Tree Wardens' projects.

We are pleased to see the growth in interest from volunteers across the country, including five newly established Networks (Fife, North Northamptonshire, Barnsley Volunteers, Gloucestershire and London Borough of Ealing). This growth has been enabled with the kind support of 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust, helping us establish and offer training to new networks.

Community: National Tree Week 2022

The Tree Council's year has five focal points: Seed Gathering Season (autumn), National Tree Week (end of November), Trees Love Care (March/April), National Hedgerow Week, and Walk in the Woods (May). The highlight and main focus of activity is National Tree Week. Launched by The Tree Council in 1975, this is the annual event that brings everyone together to celebrate trees and mark the start of the winter tree planting season.

Highlights of the 2022 National Tree Week included:

- Ceremonial plum tree planting by our Patron, HRH The Duke of Kent, with members of the Grenfell community at the Lancaster West Estate
- Launch of Trees and Woodland Strategy Toolkit in partnership with Defra, Fera Science, Forest Research, the Forestry Commission and dozens of local authorities
- National story-writing competition in partnership with The Week Junior: Science & Nature
- First Miyawaki forest planting in Hants as part of the Shared Outcomes initiative
- Launch of #TreeTime – a social media campaign to encourage people to take a break and appreciate nature around them.

Community: *Talk to the Hedge* Project

Hedgerows are a vulnerable and declining part of our heritage, with an estimated 50% loss since WW2, leaving huge gaps in the ecological, environmental, educational and social map of our country.

We were therefore delighted to hear, on 25 March 2022, that our application for £500,000 to Defra's Trees Call to Action Fund to continue our work raising awareness of the value of urban and rural hedges and helping establish bigger, healthier, better-connected hedgerows, had been successful.

The new three-year programme called *Life on the Hedge* began in June 2022 and follows on from *Close the Gap*, which finished in March 2022.

Life on the Hedge develops existing partnerships with People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Hedgelink and Royal Parks Guild. In addition, it is establishing new collaborations with two smaller conservation charities, Another Way (led by 20-year-old Defra Plant Health Ambassador, Amy Bray) and the National Hedgelaying Society (NHLS). The project also includes partnerships with The Queen's Green Canopy and The Week Junior, Science & Nature.

The Tree Council is the lead partner guiding the delivery of the programme, which will build capacity in four charities, safeguard heritage hedge-laying skills, engage hundreds of students attending 'Green Careers Discovery Days', find sites for community tree nurseries, inspire urban and rural planting, and bring new long-term finance for planting hedgerows and their trees.

A major achievement in June 2023 was the publication of The Tree Growers Guide – a beginner's guide to identifying and growing trees from seed and starting a community tree nursery. The 100-page, richly illustrated book retails at £12.60 and was created in partnership with Moor Trees, Norfolk County Council and Cornwall Council.

**The Trees Call to Action Fund is funded by Defra and is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.*

Community: Network Rail

For the past three years, we have worked with Network Rail on two £1 million community planting programmes focused on National and Southern regions.

By the end of the planting season in March 2023, the combined programmes had established more than 250,000 trees, in collaboration with 108 community partners, who contributed more than 1,000 volunteer hours, on sites ranging from Glasgow, to Oswestry, to Plymouth.

The schemes have brought a wide variety of environmental and social benefits, including flood attenuation, ancient woodland restoration, habitat conservation and connectivity, urban improvements, and climate change and air pollution mitigation.

Community: Branching Out Grants Programme

The Tree Council's 'Branching Out' grants programme focuses on supporting smaller planting projects, hedges, copses and orchards – establishing the right trees, in the right places, to create greener and healthier local communities, in city and rural locations, for the benefit of the public.

The grants require the involvement of young people and, through the programme, thousands of children have engaged with the wonders of the natural world and started to explore the importance of nature in their everyday lives. They have learnt how to plant and care for trees; increased their knowledge of maths and science; discovered the joy of preparing and eating home-grown produce; and seen the benefits of working together as a team.

Equally importantly, the programme instils an understanding of the importance of trees for the future of our planet and for their own wellbeing – and it nurtures the next generation of active environmentalists.

In 2022/23, our Branching Out grants continued to support small planting schemes with funds from our Jubilee Partners and Animal Friends partnership. More than 60,803 trees and hedge whips were planted with help from young people, usually under the age of 16, in schools and community spaces across the UK. The children were helped by their parents, teachers, the community and The Tree Council's volunteer Tree Wardens.

Community: The Queen's Green Canopy

The Tree Council sat on the Urban Greening Advisory Board of The Queen's Green Canopy (QGC) until its work was complete in March 2023. This unique tree planting initiative encouraged people across the UK to 'Plant a tree for the Jubilee' in honour of Her Majesty The Queen's 70 years of service to the nation. The Jubilee planting and tree care took place over two winter seasons, with the majority being planted in 22/23.

To support the programme, we have been delighted to welcome a group of corporate Jubilee Partners who have collectively, pledged funds to plant 35,000 trees and 7 kms of hedgerow and have joined us for volunteer days not only planting, but also caring for the trees over the summer of 2022.

We are hugely grateful to QGC and Defra for an additional grant of £180,000 to establish 14.6 kms of new hedgerows as a legacy to celebrate the life of HM Queen Elizabeth following her demise in September 2022. This was delivered in partnership with Farming and Wildlife Group, local farming communities and our volunteer Tree Wardens across England.

Young Learning: National Schools Programme

Learning has been a thread running through The Tree Council's work for decades, whether it be skills shared with volunteer Tree Wardens, the learning acquired through citizen science, or the new knowledge gained by young people benefiting from the charity's community planting grants.

Our learning programme has become more formal and strategic in nature following the significant receipt of funds from the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign in 2019 and from M&G plc in 2020. We launched our new National Schools Programme in 2020/21 and, since then, the programme has continued to thrive and grow, focusing on work with some of the most diverse and deprived communities across the UK.

We have identified four issues that negatively impact children, young people and nature in schools:

1. Growing social anxiety and other related mental health concerns associated with the climate and biodiversity crises (eco-anxiety) and the global pandemic.
2. Gap in understanding the value and role of trees in addressing the crises and in particular a lack of technical horticulture knowledge and skills.
3. Inequality that is prevalent in society with regards to children and young people having a voice and opportunity to influence positive change.
4. Nature poor school grounds and access to nature for the purposes of learning and health and wellbeing.

The schools' team (comprising a National Programme Manager and Officer), with support from the wider Tree Council team, aims to tackle these issues and is responsible for the three elements of the programme: 'Orchards for Schools' 'Young Tree Champions' and 'Young Tree Champion Ambassadors'.

The programme's call to action is to be a #ForceForNature, with young people working together to connect, learn, care and share the power of trees and nature to help tackle the climate crisis.

Highlights of 2022/23 include:

Orchards for Schools planted 1,710 fruit trees and 2.73 kms of fruiting hedgerow in 373 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The schools received a package of teacher training and curriculum-linked resources to support them in planning and learning to care for their trees and share their experiences.

Young Tree Champions continued to be supported by generous three-year funding from M&G plc, working in partnership with Speakers Trust, Learning through Landscapes and Derby University.

Each of the 63 special project Young Tree Champion schools has benefited from a combination of free trees, a tech kit and access to an online hub to network and share activities, as well as a comprehensive package of teacher training, support and resources. Pupils also take part in public speaking workshops to build their confidence and help them find their voice and become ambassadors for trees and nature. In 2022/23, the 63 special project schools who took up the tree offer planted 320 fruit trees and 1,530 metres of hedgerow.

Young Tree Champion Ambassadors (15–26 years old) Eight young Ambassadors have been appointed from a wide variety of backgrounds including musicians, artists, poets, marine scientists and horticulture students. Following training, their role is to inspire young people to become a #ForceForNature and to help create, plan and deliver the annual #ForceForNature Schools Tour and Festival. In 2022/23, the Ambassadors also played a key role at the Big Bang Science Fair in Birmingham and a green careers Discovery day at RHS Wisley.

Junior Ambassadors (11–14 years old) – Thanks to a Big Give Green Match Fund campaign for Young Tree Champion Junior Ambassadors, c78 inspiring 7–14 year olds from schools across the UK became powerful ‘Forces for Nature’, speaking up for trees and encouraging their fellow pupils to connect with the natural world. Senior Ambassadors delivered six carefully crafted, online Masterclasses throughout the year including ‘Art in Nature’, ‘Story in Nature’ and ‘Words in Nature’ before the end of March, with two more planned before the end of the academic year.

Force for Nature Festival – The academic year culminated in a national Force for Nature Festival on 15 June 2022 which celebrated all the fabulous achievements of the Young Tree Champions Schools. It brought together thousands of students from across the UK who had been championing trees and nature. A recording of the event attracted 92 schools to watch and was later made available on The Tree Council’s YouTube channel. Highlights included: Artist Rachel Gadsden and Young Ambassador Muhammed, leading an interactive poetry in motion session.

Big Bang Science Fair – The Tree Council’s schools team engaged thousands of young people at the ‘Routes into Rail’ stand hosted by our partners, Network Rail, at Birmingham NEC’s Big Bang Young Scientists & Engineers Fair over four days in June 2022. Team Tree Council and young ambassadors contributed a 15-foot centrepiece silver birch and gave attendees an opportunity to engage with trees in new and unexpected ways. The Team recorded ‘newsflash’ interviews with young people, who used mobile microscope cameras to look at soil particles and mycorrhizal networks and the micro-structure of trees.

‘Discovery Day’ Green Careers at RHS Wisley (September 2022) – The Tree Council joined a green careers day for 200 horticulture trainees and apprentices organised by the Royal Parks Guild. This included a ‘words in nature’ workshop and a session focused for 50 secondary school children focused on the importance of hedgerows to nature and society.

Science & Research:

The Tree Council began as an informal coalition of tree organisations and our model of collaboration with the public, private and third sector helps develop tree and hedgerow policy with a strong, trusted and unified voice.

In our role as a convenor for the sector, The Tree Council chairs or serves on more than a dozen, national, high-level, policy, practice and advisory boards to governments in the UK nations and EU on the topics of tree health/disease, tree safety, habitats, biodiversity and climate change.

In these fora, we represent the views and concerns of our charity member organisations, local authorities and volunteer Tree Warden networks, enhancing the operating environment and highlighting issues of concern.

In 2022/23, working with members of our charity coalition group, we reviewed and fed back to government on the review of Environmental Land Management System (ELMS) and worked with our partners to persuade the nation's water companies to lift the hosepipe ban for local authorities so that they could water young trees through the prolonged summer drought.

Science & Research: Ash Dieback (ADB) and Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

The Tree Council partners with Defra, Fera Science, Forest Research, Network Rail and leading universities on a variety of research programmes that help shape national policy and best practice. We aim to increase knowledge and apply science to help establish varied and biodiverse treescapes across Britain, which will be resilient to climate change and pests and diseases.

Our science and action research this year has continued to support government and local authorities in England and Scotland as they tackle threats from ash dieback and Oak Processionary Moth.

Science & Research: Local Authority Tree Strategies

A strategic approach is one of the most important factors underpinning well-planned and well-resourced treescapes – and yet just over one third of local authorities have a tree strategy. A well-written local tree strategy sets out the vision for how a local treescape will be managed now and for the future and acts as go-to reference for a wide range of local stakeholders.

As large and increasing numbers of local authorities are announcing climate emergencies, we have continued our work with Defra and Fera Science to give practical guidance to help local authorities develop tree strategies for themselves.

Following consultation with 22 local authorities and a range of conservation charities, community volunteer groups and expert consultants, we launched a new Trees and Woodland Strategy Toolkit in Spring 2023, with workshops in the North East, Midlands, South East and London. Each workshop had its own character and reflected the regional context and perspectives of those in the room. Overall, there was a real sense of positivity, ambition, and collaboration, with a desire for practical support and an appreciation of the collective opportunity to work together to develop useful resources.

Science & Research: Shared Outcomes

This research project with Defra and Natural England aims to establish new techniques to grow 'Trees outside Woodlands' and is funded through Treasury's 'Shared Outcomes Fund'. The project's vision is to develop new ways of expanding bio-secure tree cover at reduced costs, to meet increased UK tree planting ambitions and reverse trends in tree losses.

The Tree Council is co-ordinating five pilot schemes with local authority partners looking at: urban tree establishment, agro-forestry and orchards, community tree nurseries, hedgerow tree management, and subsidised planting.

Science & Research: Sentinel Treescapes

This tree-health monitoring project, in partnership with Newcastle University, Fera Science and our Norfolk Tree Wardens, has installed 'tree talkers' on the trunks of Sentinel Trees and, through the year, has been recording data on their health. Volunteer Tree Wardens have downloaded their observations onto a new App, alongside the data provided by the 'Tree Talkers'. This is the first step towards developing a Regional Tree Health Index, using the Sentinel Trees as signposts for the state of the wider health of the tree population.

Science & Research: UK Treescapes and Connected Treescapes

We are a core part of the 'Connected Treescapes' project funded under the UK Treescapes programme. This 3-year research project with the Universities of York, Derby, Strathclyde, Newcastle, Edinburgh and the James Hutton Institute, aims to understand how we can expand treescapes in a way that is resilient and facilitates connection between people and trees. The Tree Council will produce a tool to help land managers navigate decision-making around tree planting, identifying risks and benefits.

Science & Research: Hedgeline

Hedges are Britain's most widespread Priority Habitat – providing connectivity and homes to more than 130 national priority species. They have a high biodiversity and carbon storage value, as well as helping improve air quality in cities.

The Tree Council is Chair of Hedgeline, the partnership that brings everyone interested in hedgerows together, to share knowledge and ideas, to encourage and inspire, and to work with farmers and other land managers to conserve and enhance our hedgerow heritage.

The partnership comprises nearly 30 organisations including, People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), Defra, Woodland Trust, National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH).

This year, in addition to grant giving for hedgerows and hedgerow trees through our community programme, we have worked with partners to develop joint responses to consultations and policy announcements, such as the Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes.

With the ongoing work of 'Talk to the Hedge' hedgerows will remain an important component of The Tree Council's work going forward.

Science & Research: PhD Programmes

The Tree Council is currently supporting three PhD researchers studying topics relevant to The Tree Council's broader aims. As part of the programme, each student will take up a three-month placement with The Tree Council, becoming members of our team and contributing to wider programmes.

- In partnership with the University of Oxford and Oxford Botanic Gardens, one student is investigating the impact of mistletoe on trees, with a new citizen science app to be launched in winter 2023.
- We are working with a student at Newcastle University and Fera Science to explore the carbon and biodiversity value of agroforestry – crucial to getting more trees on farms.
- Finally, with the UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology and the University of Reading, we are supporting a student focused on hedgerow expansion; this complements our hedgerow programme and our role as chair of Hedgelink.

Looking forward to 2023/24 & beyond

Community:

- In 2023/24, we will continue to work with the Tree Warden networks to support and develop the Tree Warden Scheme
- We will develop a programme to help establish 18 community tree nurseries in England over the coming three years
- We will develop our community planting partnerships with Network Rail to include: more trees in riparian and urban settings; work with groups with special needs; and PhD research into wood pasture landscapes

Young Learning:

- Working with schools and our Young Tree Champion Ambassadors, we will develop and deliver the Force4Nature light and sound installation and tour it to at least four UK venues in 2023/24
- We will publish a 'Young Tree Growers Guide' online with Hampshire County Council in Autumn 2023
- We will focus on securing/renewing Principal Partner funding for the Young Tree Champions programme 2024–2027

Science & Research:

- We will launch the citizen science element of the mistletoe research with Oxford University and Oxford Botanic Garden
- We will research tree mortality, looking for ways to identify the causes of young tree death and develop a system for recording it that can be used by everyone
- We will work with the Defra team and our local authority partners to secure funding to continue the Shared Outcomes programme for the next three years 2023–25
- We will update our suite of ash dieback resources to reflect the latest science and practice

Fundraising:

- We will celebrate The Tree Council's 50th anniversary, launching a BBC Radio4 Charity of the Week appeal in December 2023
- We will launch 'Tree Partners' – the exciting next chapter of our Jubilee Partners programme

Management:

- We will continue to review our Finance function to ensure that it continues to be managed securely and is well-resourced as the charity grows and manages increasing numbers of transactions
- We will appoint a new member to the Finance Committee to replace the outgoing member
- We will transition to a new Royal London workplace pension and introduce a salary sacrifice scheme on 1 May 2023

Beneficiaries of our services

The beneficiaries of our services include: our volunteers and members; pupils and teachers participating in our National Schools Programme; communities and landowners receiving grant-funding to establish trees; local authorities supported to help tackle tree pests and diseases and plan future tree strategies; our coalition of conservation charities whom we bring together to comment on consultations and address tree-related challenges; and the UK general public who receive the important social benefits of our tree, hedgerow and orchard planting. In addition, our work helps conserve wildlife and habitats, improves biodiversity and contributes to tackling climate change and safeguarding the future health of our planet. All these are covered in greater detail in the achievements and performance section above.

Financial review

The Tree Council is entirely self-funding with income generated through grants and gifts from major donors, charitable trusts, corporate partnership, membership fees and legacy giving. In 2022/23, the charity's restricted income was £1,830,714. The charity's unrestricted reserves increased by £143,075. Total income for the year was £2,524,224 (compared to £2,803,166 for the previous year) and total expenditure was £2,291,346 (compared to £2,794,169 last year).

During the year, 'Close the Gap', one of our major projects funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund came to an end. Although our total revenue fell from £2.8m to £2.5m because of the project ending, we increased our unrestricted income from £645,297 to £693,509, and grew our team from 15 to 17 people.

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year were £590,138 and restricted reserves (mainly tree planting funds) were £731,855. Total reserves were £1,321,992.

Reserves policy and going concern

It is the policy of the Tree Council to maintain unrestricted funds at a level which equates to at least six months core costs. The budgeted core costs for 2023/4 are about £943,212 and so unrestricted reserves at £590,138 are equivalent to 7.5 months of core costs.

The Trustees continue to keep the risks facing The Tree Council under close review and ensure that costs are carefully controlled. The Trustees continue to keep all the reserves in the form of interest-earning bank accounts and deposits.

The Trustees, as part of their continuous risk assessment, monitor any ongoing implications of the pandemic, the rapid changes in the economy, and their normal activities.

The Tree Council has generated many new grants and contracts over the past two years and is confident of its ability to operate as a going concern.

Risk Assessment

The Board maintains a risk assessment system which is based on a numerical assessment of risk, with an accompanying management commentary. Trustees consider these reports regularly both for the organisation as a whole and for major projects. The aim is to highlight and measure potential risks to the success of an activity or process, assess the impact, and put in place appropriate management action. The system encompasses all areas of our activities, although the continuing increased projects and programmes with corporate partners marks this area out for ongoing development.

Risks are reviewed in depth under six headings: financial, operational, regulatory, reputational, strategic and external. Our top two key risks identified and their mitigation are:

- Unrestricted reserves falling below the recommended level approved by Trustees (a band equivalent to 6–12 months of core operating costs). The Finance Committee monitors unrestricted reserves levels quarterly and if the level falls below 6 months, the Chairman, Treasurer and CEO keep income/expenditure under monthly review. We stay in close touch with principal funding partners and begin grant renewal or tender processes in good time to allow alternative funding to be found if necessary. With our supporters' approval, we build a contribution towards core costs into major projects.
- Team retention and succession planning have become ever more important with the move to flexible working, a rapidly changing employment market and The Tree Council's growing programme of activities. We work hard to maintain a strong and positive team ethic and to motivate, support, develop and reward the team, recognising achievements and delivering appraisals in a constructive context. We have brought more employees into the team with formal arboricultural and scientific qualifications to ensure adequate cover. Now that the team is more widespread geographically, we are establishing an induction programme for new team members to meet and engage with each other operationally and personally.

Accordingly, we can confirm that the major risks to which the Council is exposed have been reviewed and systems are in place to mitigate those risks.

Fundraising

The charity's fundraising objective was to reach £1m sustainable annual income by 2021, of which c25% to be unrestricted. This has been achieved once again in 2022/23, which will enable us to develop and, in the longer-term, establish ambitious programmes for public benefit in our three key areas of work: Community Action, Young Learning, and Practical Science & Research.

Talk to the Hedge is supporting the core costs of our Head of Development 2022–2025 (in addition to two hedge-related roles), which gives us confidence and continuity to grow our fundraising initiatives.

In April 2022 we took part in our first ever Big Give fundraising challenge (Big Green Give), raising £11,722 for our Young Tree Champion Junior Ambassador programme. Learnings from the Green Give campaign informed our next campaign with the Big Give Christmas Challenge in December 2022, which raised £23,774 to support Orchards for Schools. Nearly half the supporters were previously unknown to us so, although the campaigns were resource intensive, they offered a good opportunity to reach new audiences.

We are incredibly grateful to our partners for their support, which has included funding for core costs on projects and programmes, as well as activities such as comms and marketing. Grants from M&G, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Network Rail, The Queen's Green Canopy and C. Hoare & Co have been greatly appreciated to help us invest in the future successful growth of the charity. These funds have enabled us to achieve significant public benefit with little additional fundraising expenditure.

The current fundraising approach focuses on a mix of corporate partnerships, research applications and philanthropic fundraising. Our fundraising does not include direct marketing or telephone campaigns and we remain mindful at all times of the need to safeguard vulnerable people.

The Tree Council does not use professional fundraisers or agencies and received no complaints in this financial year.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, formally incorporated on 5 December 1979 and registered as a charity on 17 December 1979. The organisation's genesis however, dates back to '*Plant a Tree in '73*', hence the 50th anniversary celebrations in 23/24.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. The Trustees have not claimed any expenses.

The members of the Board of Trustees meet regularly to review its affairs, review the charity's aims, objectives and activities, as well as report on the benefits for the public good. The Board has a Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, to oversee the charity's financial affairs, to report to the Board and make recommendations as appropriate at each meeting.

The Chief Executive, Sara Lom, together with the Senior Team comprising the Director of Trees, Science & Research, the Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Comms and the Director of Finance manage the day-to-day administration of the charity.

In October 2022, The Tree Council commissioned specialist consultants SecondSight to undertake a pensions review on behalf of The Tree Council. Following discussion of SecondSight's report and recommendations, the Trustees approved a transition from Nest to Royal London to take effect on 1 May 2023, including setting up a new salary sacrifice scheme.

I would like to thank our outgoing Deputy Chair, Elizabeth Hiester and Jeremy Simons, for their outstanding support over more than half a decade and my fellow Trustees for their wonderful commitment and shared expertise.

We have appointed new team members through the year. We offer them a warm welcome and huge thanks to the existing team, who juggle daily deadlines and a wide range of national programmes and projects – always with enthusiasm, professionalism and smiles on their faces.

Appointment of Trustees

The Tree Council subscribes to the seven principles of the Nolan Rules in appointing trustees. These are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In addition, the Tree Council looks for the following qualities, skills and experience:

- An appreciation of the importance of trees and the environment
- A willingness to make the time commitment to attend Board meetings, strategic review meetings and other related meetings and activities, including familiarisation with the work of the Council
- An ability to think strategically, formulate direction for the organisation and support management
- An ability to contribute to board discussions, seek advice, exercise sound judgement and contribute to good governance
- A willingness to use their networks on behalf of The Tree Council, in advocacy, fundraising (including pro bono contributions), public affairs and communications

The number of Trustees is required to be no less than three, with no maximum number. One third of Trustees retire at each annual meeting and are eligible for reappointment, subject to the provision in the Articles that Trustees shall normally serve for no more than six years.

The Board is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate succession strategy is adopted for the replacement of Trustees. The Chair and Chief Executive take responsibility for informing the Board when new Trustees need to be appointed.

In order to identify Trustees, when a vacancy is about to occur, the Chair and Chief Executive review the balance of skills, attributes and experience on the current Board relative to the future needs of the organisation. Trustees are appointed to ensure the positive evolution of the charity. Prior to appointment, new Trustees meet formally with at least two current Trustees and usually attend at least one Board Meeting as an observer.

Induction for new Trustees is carried out by the Chief Executive and includes familiarisation with people, activities and events over a number of months.

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

The Tree Council's Remunerations Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, comprises three appropriately experienced Trustees, reviews the remuneration of all employees, based on market data and performance.

Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Tree Council for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law 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 period. 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
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2023 was 14 (2022: 14). The Trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP was appointed as the charitable company's auditor during the year and has expressed its willingness to continue in that capacity.

The Trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The Trustees' annual report has been approved by the Trustees on 7 November 2023 and signed on their behalf by



Joel Cadbury
Chairman



Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Tree Council (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2023 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2023 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on The Tree Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;

Independent auditor`s report

To the members of

The Tree Council

- The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.
- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Independent auditor`s report

To the members of

The Tree Council

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Fleur Holden (Senior statutory auditor)

Date: 7 December 2023

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

The Tree Council

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2023

		Unrestricted	Restricted	2023 Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	2022 Total
	Note	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	200,172	10,259	210,431	163,890	37,500	201,390
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting		82,649	1,594,972	1,677,621	10,000	1,955,869	1,965,869
Science and Research		399,368	-	399,368	441,097		441,097
Education and community engagement	3	2,000	225,483	227,483	10,990	164,500	175,490
Investments	4	774		774	174	-	174
Other		8,546	-	8,546	19,146	-	19,146
Total income		693,509	1,830,714	2,524,224	645,297	2,157,869	2,803,166
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	122,980	20,442	143,422	147,837	54,000	201,837
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting	5	11,503	1,514,517	1,526,020	86,428	2,129,743	2,216,171
Science and Research	5	264,215	-	264,215	59,111		59,111
Education and community engagement	5	151,736	205,953	357,689	183,838	133,212	317,050
Total expenditure		550,434	1,740,912	2,291,346	477,214	2,316,955	2,794,169
Net income / (expenditure)		143,075	89,803	232,878	168,083	(159,086)	8,998
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		143,075	89,803	232,878	168,084	(159,086)	8,998
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		447,063	642,052	1,089,115	278,979	801,138	1,080,117
Total funds carried forward		590,138	731,855	1,321,993	447,063	642,052	1,089,115

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17a to the financial statements."

The Tree Council

Balance sheet

Company no. 01459056

As at 31 March 2023

	Note	£	2023 £	£	2022 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	12		19,030		25,254
			19,030		25,254
Current assets:					
Debtors	13	227,937		515,781	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,705,981		1,098,453	
		1,933,918		1,614,234	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(630,955)		(550,374)	
Net current assets			1,302,963		1,063,859
Total assets less current liabilities			1,321,993		1,089,115
Total net assets			1,321,993		1,089,115
The funds of the charity:	17a				
Restricted income funds			731,855		642,052
Unrestricted income funds:					
General funds		590,138		447,063	
Total unrestricted funds			590,138		447,063
Total charity funds			1,321,993		1,089,115

Approved by the trustees on 7 November 2023 and signed on their behalf by:



Joel Cadbury
Chairman



Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2023

	Note	2023 £	£	2022 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		232,877		8,998	
Depreciation charges		10,536		5,730	
Decrease in debtors		287,844		(362,161)	
Increase in creditors		80,581		323,801	
Net cash provided by operating activities			611,839		(23,632)
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of fixed assets		(4,312)		(27,125)	
Net cash used in investing activities			(4,312)		(27,125)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year			607,527		(50,757)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year			1,098,453		1,149,210
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year			1,705,981		1,098,453
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents					
					At 31 March 2023
	At 1 April 2022	Cash flows	Other non- cash changes		
	£	£	£		£
Cash at bank and in hand	1,098,453	607,527	-		1,705,981
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,098,453	607,527	-		1,705,981

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

The Tree Council is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales.

The registered office address is 4 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, LONDON, SE16 2XU

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The trustees have considered inflation, the uncertain economic climate and their normal activities and confirm that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. In particular they have reviewed the future cash flows and commitments and have ascertained that there are sufficient unrestricted reserves and future cash flows to confirm that the charity is a going concern.

Key judgements that the charity has made which have a significant effect on the accounts include estimating the liability for multi-year grant commitments.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

e) Income

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

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

g) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, exhibitions and other educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

j) Grants payable

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects. Single or multi-year grants are accounted for when either the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and the trustees have agreed to pay the grant without condition, or the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and that any condition attaching to the grant is outside of the control of the charity.

Provisions for grants are made when the intention to make a grant has been communicated to the recipient but there is uncertainty about either the timing of the grant or the amount of grant payable.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

1 Accounting policies (continued)

k) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of salary time by each activity each year. For this year the percentages are

●	Tree and hedge planting	60%
●	Education and community activities	12%
●	Science & Research	10%
●	Fundraising	5%
●	Support costs	11%
●	Governance costs	2%

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

●	Tree and hedge planting	67%
●	Education and community activities	16%
●	Science & Research	12%
●	Fundraising	5%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

l) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

m) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £750. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. Fixtures & Fittings and Office & Computer Equipment are depreciated over 3 years.

n) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

o) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

p) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1 Accounting policies (continued)**q) Financial instruments**

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £
Donations and legacies	160,985	10,259	171,244	91,685	4,000	95,685
Jubilee Partners Fund	-	-	-	25,000	33,500	58,500
Friends of the Tree Council	22,089	-	22,089	29,310	-	29,310
Subscriptions	17,098	-	17,098	17,896	-	17,896
	<u>200,172</u>	<u>10,259</u>	<u>210,431</u>	<u>163,891</u>	<u>37,500</u>	<u>201,390</u>

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £
Tree and hedge planting						
Network Rail Community Planting	-	795,500	795,500	-	682,000	682,000
Close the Gap	-	358,255	358,255	-	1,226,545	1,226,545
Tree planting grants	-	7,000	7,000	-	7,324	7,324
Jubilee Partners Fund	81,000	110,500	191,500			
Animal Friends	1,649	23,351	25,000	10,000	40,000	50,000
Queen's Green Canopy	-	180,000	180,000	-	-	-
Trees Call to Action Fund	-	120,366	120,366	-	-	-
Science & Research	399,368	-	399,368	441,097	-	441,097
Education and community engagement						
M & G	2,000	161,927	163,927	10,990	164,500	175,490
YTC Ambassadors Programme	-	40,900	40,900	-	-	-
Orchards for Schools	-	22,656	22,656	-	-	-
Total income from charitable activities	<u>484,017</u>	<u>1,820,455</u>	<u>2,304,472</u>	<u>462,087</u>	<u>2,120,369</u>	<u>2,582,456</u>

4 Income from investments

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2023 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £
Income from cash deposits	774	-	774	498	-	498
	<u>774</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>774</u>	<u>498</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>498</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

5a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities							
	Raising funds £	Tree and hedge planting £	Education and community engagement £	Science & Research £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2023 Total £	2022 Total £
Staff costs (Note 8)	62,672	196,968	250,687	214,875	35,812	134,297	895,311	733,553
Tree Warden Scheme	-	-	2,777	-	-	-	2,777	7,857
Office and Facility costs	-	33,831	-	-	-	43,187	77,018	56,546
Grants Payable (Note 6)	-	1,104,679	-	-	-	-	1,104,679	1,847,087
Audit and other governance costs	-	2,941	-	-	16,656	-	19,598	8,100
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	-	5,381	-	-	-	4,690	10,071	19,370
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	-	-	-	-	-	46,229	46,229	31,203
Marketing and Brand costs	51,153	-	-	-	-	-	51,153	63,917
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	10,536	10,536	5,730
Travel costs	-	34,231	15,431	19,742	1,654	2,916	73,974	20,806
	113,825	1,378,031	268,895	234,617	54,123	241,855	2,291,346	2,794,169
Support costs	24,186	120,928	72,557	24,186	-	(241,855)	-	-
Governance costs	5,412	27,061	16,237	5,412	(54,123)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2023	143,422	1,526,020	357,689	264,215	-	-	2,291,346	
Total expenditure 2022	201,837	2,216,171	317,050	59,111	-	-		2,794,169

5b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities						
	Raising funds	Tree and	Education and	Science &	Governance	Support costs	2022
	£	hedge planting	community	Research	costs	£	Total
		£	engagement		£	£	£
Staff costs (Note 8)	115,467	240,055	238,001	32,826	50,251	56,954	733,554
Tree Warden Scheme	-	-	7,857	-	-	-	7,857
Office and Facility costs	-	-	-	-	-	56,546	56,546
Grants Payable (Note 6)	-	1,847,087	-	-	-	-	1,847,087
Audit and other governance costs	-	-	-	-	8,100	-	8,100
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	-	3,624	-	-	-	15,746	19,370
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	-	-	-	-	-	31,203	31,203
Marketing and Brand costs	63,917	-	-	-	-	-	63,917
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	5,730	5,730
Travel costs	-	13,140	3,833	3,833	-	-	20,806
	179,385	2,103,906	249,691	36,659	58,351	166,179	2,794,170
Support costs	16,618	83,089	49,853	16,618	-	(166,178)	-
Governance costs	5,835	29,175	17,505	5,835	(58,351)	-	-
Total expenditure 2022	201,837	2,216,171	317,050	59,111	-	-	2,794,169

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

6a Grant making (current year)

	Grants to institutions £	Support costs £	2023 £
Cost			
Network Rail	329,441	-	329,441
M & G	-	-	-
Schools & community groups	775,238	-	775,238
At the end of the year	1,104,679	-	1,104,679

During 2023 and 2022 the Tree Council used an internal committee to assess grant applications as well as having a joint committee with Network Rail for the grants made from their restricted funds. We collaborated with FWAG on the Queen's Green Canopy initiative in awarding £156,263 of grants to support tree planting. Our 'Close the Gap' project with NLHF came to an end this year, with the most significant grants awarded to Moor Trees for capital works and trainee programme of a community tree nursery in Devon £68,041, the University of Reading for work to deliver an online Hedgerow Hub on best practise management of hedgerows £70,075 and PTES for development of Hedgerow App and volunteer training £42,283 (2022: Moor Trees £423,876, the University of Reading £31,000, PTES £74,860 and FWAG £385,000).

6b Grant making (prior year)

	Grants to institutions £	Support costs £	2022 £
Cost			
Network Rail	262,724	-	262,724
M & G	38,857	-	38,857
Schools & community groups	1,545,506	-	1,545,506
At the end of the year	1,847,087	-	1,847,087

7 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging:

	2023 £	2022 £
Depreciation	10,536	5,730
Operating lease	11,602	30,546
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	9,300	8,100
Under-provision in respect of 2022	3,700	-

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2023 £	2022 £
Salaries and wages	762,343	628,587
National insurance	80,781	62,671
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	52,187	42,294
	895,311	733,553

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2023 No.	2022 No.
£90,000 - £99,999	1	-
£60,000 - £69,999	2	2

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £325,781 (2022: £276,399).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2022: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2022: £nil).

There were no payments to trustees for expenses (2022: nil).

9 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 17 (2022: 15.2).

Staff are split across the activities of the charity as follows (full time equivalent basis):

	2023 No.	2022 No.
Tree and hedge planting	4.8	4.5
Science & Research	3.2	1.5
Education and community engagement	5.3	6.9
Support, Fundraising and marketing	3.6	2.0
Governance	0.3	0.3
	17.2	15.2

10 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2023 (2022: none).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and furniture £	Office and computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At the start of the year	2,838	67,392	70,230
Additions in year	-	4,312	4,312
At the end of the year	<u>2,838</u>	<u>71,704</u>	<u>74,542</u>
Depreciation			
At the start of the year	2,838	42,138	44,976
Charge for the year	-	10,536	10,536
At the end of the year	<u>2,838</u>	<u>52,674</u>	<u>55,512</u>
Net book value			
At the end of the year	<u>-</u>	<u>19,030</u>	<u>19,030</u>
At the start of the year	<u>-</u>	<u>25,254</u>	<u>25,254</u>

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

13 Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Grants and sponsorship receivable	129,480	256,339
Prepayments and other debtors	6,086	3,836
Accrued income	92,372	255,605
	<u>227,937</u>	<u>515,781</u>

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade creditors	511,418	235,564
Taxation and social security	84,287	84,536
Accruals	35,250	230,275
	<u>630,955</u>	<u>550,374</u>

15 Pension scheme

The company pays 7% to Nest for its employees, and the employee contributes 1% in compliance with the rules of auto enrolment.

16a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	19,030	-	-	19,030
Net current assets	571,108		731,855	1,302,963
Net assets at 31 March 2023	590,138	-	731,855	1,321,993

16b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	25,254	-	-	25,254
Net current assets	421,809		642,052	1,063,861
Net assets at 31 March 2022	447,063	-	642,052	1,089,115

17a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2023 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	103,070	10,259	502	-	113,831
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	79,697	-	(1,000)	-	78,697
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	-	-	-	10,411
Tree Angel Planting Funds	52,183	-	-	-	52,184
Orchards for Schools	122,659	22,656	(30,485)	(15,054)	99,776
Special Assignment Fund	628	-	-	-	628
Network Rail Fund	35,082	408,000	(376,229)	-	66,853
M & G Fund	60,727	161,927	(170,032)	-	52,622
Siemens Fund	3,790	-	-	-	3,790
Close the Gap Fund	24,655	358,255	(382,910)	-	-
Kusuma Trust Fund	3,140	-	-	-	3,140
Southern Network Rail	113,886	387,500	(291,443)	-	209,943
Jubilee Partner Fund	19,051	110,500	(144,605)	15,054	-
Animal Friends Fund	6,074	23,351	(29,425)	-	-
Shoosmiths	-	-	-	-	-
29 May Charitable Trust	7,000	7,000	(8,021)	-	5,979
YTC Ambassadors Programme	-	40,900	(5,436)	-	35,464
Trees Call to Action Fund	-	120,366	(122,229)	-	(1,863)
The Queen's Green Canopy	-	180,000	(179,598)	-	402
Total restricted funds	642,052	1,830,714	(1,740,912)	-	731,855
General funds	447,063	693,509	(550,434)	-	590,138
Total unrestricted funds	447,063	693,509	(550,434)	-	590,138
Total funds	1,089,115	2,524,224	(2,291,346)	-	1,321,993

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

17b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	109,263	2,500	(8,693)	-	103,070
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	81,650	180	(2,133)	-	79,697
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	-	-	-	10,411
Tree Angel Planting Funds	52,349	-	(167)	-	52,182
Orchards for Schools	292,043	144	(169,528)	-	122,659
Special Assignment Fund	628	-	-	-	628
Network Rail Fund	1,807	408,000	(374,725)	-	35,082
M & G Fund	29,439	164,500	(133,212)	-	60,727
Siemens Fund	19,790	-	(16,000)	-	3,790
Close the Gap Fund	195,118	1,226,545	(1,397,008)	-	24,655
Kusuma Trust Fund	8,640	-	(5,500)	-	3,140
Southern Network Rail	-	274,000	(160,114)	-	113,886
Jubilee Partner Fund	-	33,500	(14,449)	-	19,051
Animal Friends Fund	-	40,000	(33,926)	-	6,074
Shoosmiths	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
29 May Charitable Trust	-	7,000	-	-	7,000
Total restricted funds	801,138	2,157,869	(2,316,955)	-	642,052
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	278,979	645,297	(477,213)	-	447,063
Total unrestricted funds	278,979	645,297	(477,213)	-	447,063
Total funds	1,080,117	2,803,166	(2,794,169)	-	1,089,115

Purposes of restricted funds

The Branching Out 1 Tree Planting Funds are for planting with schools and community groups. The majority of the funds have been donated by an anonymous donor's Charitable Trust.

The Vernon Hill Branching Out 2 Tree Planting Funds are for planting projects for schools and community groups. The Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Vernon Hill to the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Good Gifts Catalogue makes grants to the Tree Council for the planting of oak saplings, bluebell woods and meadows of flowers.

Tree Angel Funds are dedicated to a variety of tree planting and have been funded by public and corporate gifts to the 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Orchards for Schools Funds are to fund orchards and fruiting hedgerows planting in schools. The fund was created following generous gifts from Lord Sugar, Richard Caring and Sir Jony Ive plus an anonymous donor following the Daily Mail campaign.

The Special Assignment Fund is to carry out specific tree research projects in overseas countries.

The Network Rail Fund is a four-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in cities and the countryside, mainly in England.

M&G Fund is a three-year programme dedicated to inspiring young people in schools across the UK to become Young Tree Champions and to gain the skills to become a #ForceForNature

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2023

The Welsh Trees Siemens fund is dedicated to a tree planting project with the local community at Wolf's Castle in Pembrokeshire

The Green Recovery Fund supports an 18-month programme, 'Close the Gap', to establish bigger, healthier, better connected hedgerows and hedgerow trees in England, working with Defra, National Lottery Heritage Fund and five charity partners.

The Kasuma Trust funds The Tree Council's Young Ambassadors programme.

The Southern Network Rail fund is a four-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in the Southern Network Rail region.

The Jubilee Partner Fund is a two-year programme in partnership with the Queen's Green Canopy to plant trees in celebration of Her Majesty's 70 years on the throne.

Animal Friends Fund is a programme focussed on tree and hedgerow planting projects that prioritise wildlife and biodiversity benefits.

Shoosmiths was a fund to plant trees at Cold Ashby in Northants.

29 May Charitable Trust is a fund to support volunteer Tree Warden networks, especially new networks, with training and other materials.

YTC Ambassadors Programme supports young people in schools to develop into effective Senior Brand Ambassadors.

The Trees Call to Action Fund is a programme which supports the planting and management of hedgerows and Community Seed nurseries.

Queen's Green Canopy is an initiative to support the planting of a million trees to celebrate the late Queen Elizabeth's Jubilee celebrations.

18 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Land and buildings	
	2023	2022
	£	£
Within one year	17,580	17,600
Within one to two years	16,115	35,200
	33,695	52,800

19 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

Accounts

Company number: 1459056

Charity number: 279000

The Tree Council

Report and financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022



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For the year ended 31 March 2022

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The Tree Council

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2022

Company number 1459056
Country of incorporation United Kingdom

Charity number 279000
Country of registration England & Wales

Registered office and operational address 14 Dock Offices
Surrey Quays Road
LONDON
SE16 2XU

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Joel Cadbury	Chair
Elizabeth Hiester	Deputy Chair
Jeremy Simons	
Andrew Fenwick	Treasurer
Tariq Ahmed	

Key management personnel

Sara Lom	Chief Executive & Company Secretary
Jon Stokes	Director of Trees, Science & Research
Clare Bowen	Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Communications
Ken Sleat	Director of Finance (to 31 October 2021)
Niloufer Limki	Director of Finance (from 1 November 2021)

Bankers

NatWest Bank Ltd
London Bridge Branch
PO Box 35, 10 Southwark Street
London SE1 1TJ

Solicitors

Macfarlanes LLP
20 Cursitor Street
London EC4A 1LT

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
Invicta House
108-114 Golden Lane
LONDON
EC1Y 0TL

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2022.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association, the requirements of a directors' report as required under company law, and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

Purposes and aims

The Tree Council was established in 1973 when Dutch elm disease swept across the land and urgent action was required to restore precious British treescapes. In response to the loss of millions of elms, The Tree Council, a national charity, brought everyone together to plant and care for trees across the UK.

Today, nearly fifty years later, The Tree Council continues to bring people together with a shared mission to care for trees, hedgerows and our planet's future. We inspire and empower organisations, government, communities and individuals, providing knowledge and tools to create positive, lasting change at a national and local level.

Our work has never been more important than it is now, as we face a global climate crisis. We and our volunteers and partners are playing a key role in helping shape policy, find practical solutions, raise awareness, and deliver tree planting and tree care to help achieve the government target of carbon net zero by 2050.

We focus our work on wider treescapes rather than forests – working with partners to protect and establish copses and spinneys, hedgerows and orchards, parkland and wood pasture trees, as well as life-enhancing street trees, urban avenues, roof gardens and city playground plantations.

Our strapline, **'Working Together for the Love of Trees'** emphasises the common thread of collaboration that runs through our history. It is the truth most often echoed back to us by our partners and stakeholders, that we bring people together for the benefit of trees. It reflects our desire for partnership and our quest for practical solutions. It expresses our deep-rooted, emotional response to trees. These two things, collaboration to find practical solutions and a love for trees, combined with good care and a great sense of fun, summarise our team and its core values today.

We are supported in our work by thousands of amazing volunteer Tree Wardens, plus a growing force of Young Tree Champions in 300 schools across the UK.

We have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have also considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

Achievements & Performance

The work of The Tree Council spans the UK and has four branches – Community Action, Young Learning, Practical Science & Research, and Partnership. This year has seen renewal, growth and achievement in all four areas.

Working together to...



In 2021/22, with the help of thousands of fabulous volunteers and thanks to the generosity of our wonderful supporters, The Tree Council has enabled the planting of nearly 440,000 trees (including 79 kms of hedgerows) in 1,545 communities, throughout the length and breadth of the UK.

Community: The Tree Warden Scheme

The Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme is a national initiative which supports local authorities and independent networks to promote, conserve and care for trees, bringing health and wellbeing and new skills to individuals, and an improved environment in their communities.

Tree Warden volunteers gather information about their local trees, engage and help with local issues and organise and take part in tree-related activities, such as seed growing, tree and

hedgerow planting, tree care, woodland walks and providing alerts to pests and diseases. Their role promoting, protecting, planting and celebrating trees is vital to help tackle climate change, meet nationally ambitious planting targets, increase biodiversity, and enhance everyone's health and wellbeing.

Thousands of volunteer Tree Wardens across the country work within local networks which, with our help and support, are set up and managed by public and civil society organisations such as local authorities, parish councils and voluntary groups. The Tree Warden Scheme was launched in 1990 in the aftermath of the Great Storm of 1987.

The Tree Council is enormously grateful to the Tree Wardens for their support. They are capable, committed and inspirational and participate in activities as our representatives, for example, gathering field data, planting and caring for trees, and disseminating information.

As part of the objective to increase communication and cooperation between and with the Tree Wardens, The Tree Council holds annual Tree Warden Forums across the country. Since the pandemic, these have been a mix of online and in person events. The Forums are an opportunity for volunteers to hear key speakers present on locally and nationally important tree related topics and to see and hear about other Tree Wardens' projects.

We are pleased to see the growth in interest from volunteers across the country, including eight newly established Networks, which represents the greatest number of developing Networks since 2005. This growth has been enabled with the kind support of 29th May 1961 Charitable Trust, helping us establish and offer training to new networks.

The national Advisory Group with representatives and deputies from each of our nine regions has continued to meet regularly.

Community: National Tree Week 2021

The Tree Council's year has five focal points: Seed Gathering Season (autumn), National Tree Week (end of November), Trees Love Care (March/April), National Hedgerow Week, and Walk in the Woods (May). The highlight and main focus of activity is National Tree Week. Launched by The Tree Council in 1975, this is the annual event that brings everyone together to celebrate trees and mark the start of the winter tree planting season.

Highlights of the 2021 National Tree Week include:

- Wombles launch photocall – Great Uncle Bulgaria planting with pupils from Green Lane Primary School, Pinner
- Our first corporate planting day, establishing a new 183 metre hedgerow, plus a stretch of riverine trees near Bicester
- Webinar series on topics ranging from tree planting and care, to mistletoe, and photography and music inspired by the Highlands of Scotland
- A national story-writing competition in partnership with The Week Junior: Science & Nature

Community: Network Rail

In August 2021, Network Rail Southern confirmed a £1 million community planting programme over three years, to sit alongside the existing four-year national partnership already in place.

By the end of the planting season in March 2022, the combined programmes had established 75,753 trees (including 11.8 kms of hedgerow), working with 23 community partners and 785 volunteers on sites ranging from Glasgow to Plymouth. The schemes have brought a wide variety of environmental and social benefits, including flood attenuation, ancient woodland restoration, habitat conservation and connectivity, urban improvements, and climate change and air pollution mitigation.

Community: ‘Close the Gap’ Hedgerow Project

Close the Gap, a £1.8 million project to raise awareness of the value of urban and rural hedges and establish bigger, healthier, better-connected hedgerows, was a primary focus for The Tree Council this year.

The 18-month initiative was designed to help tackle climate change, capture carbon, improve biodiversity, increase wellbeing, and inspire younger generations to consider land-based careers. It also exemplifies our motto, ‘working together for the love of trees’ being jointly delivered by The Tree Council, with People’s Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Moor Trees, University of Reading and Hedgelink, (the partnership organisation for those with an interest in hedgerows). The Tree Council was the lead partner guiding the delivery of the programme, supported by a Steering Group with representatives from each organisation.

Achievements of the programme include:

- 51 kms of hedgerows and 2,906 hedgerow trees planted with 142 communities and 2,367 volunteers
- Launch of National Hedgerow week in May 2021 on the quirky theme of ‘Talk to the Hedge’
- ‘Healthy Hedgerows App’ to help landowners assess the condition of their hedges – downloaded more than 2,000 times by Spring 2022
- Series of six green careers podcasts – with more than 5,000 listens by Spring 2022
- New Hedgelink website, a go-to place for hedgerow knowledge and guidance
- ‘The Tree Grower’s Guide’ published on-line and in print – a beautifully illustrated pocket-book to identify trees, grow them from seed and how to create a community tree nursery
- ‘Discovery Day’ at London’s Olympic Park for 200 young apprentices, trainees and schoolchildren to inspire them to consider land-based careers
- Capital works to Moor Trees community nursery in Exmoor, Devon, enabling them to raise their tree-growing capacity from 15,000 pa to 50,000 pa
- ‘Copse in a Box’ kits given to 360 community groups to help them launch their own nursery

We are delighted that, although ‘Close the Gap’ finished officially in March 2022, we heard on 25 March 2022 that our work with hedgerows will continue through a new, £500,000, three-year programme, funded by Defra’s Trees Call to Action Fund, starting in June 2022.

*The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is funded by Defra and is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.

Community: Grants Programme

The Tree Council’s ‘Branching Out’ small grants programme focuses on supporting smaller planting projects, hedges, copses and orchards – establishing the right trees, in the right places, to create greener and healthier local communities, in city and rural locations, for the benefit of the public.

The grants require the involvement of young people and, through the programme, thousands of children have engaged with the wonders of the natural world and started to explore the importance of nature in their everyday lives. They have learnt how to plant and care for trees; increased their knowledge of maths and science; discovered the joy of preparing and eating home-grown produce; and seen the benefits of working together as a team.

Equally importantly, the programme instils an understanding of the importance of trees for the future of our planet and for their own wellbeing – and it nurtures the next generation of active environmentalists.

In 2021/22, our Branching Out grants continued to support small planting schemes with funds from our Jubilee Partners and Animal Friends partnership. More than 19,371 trees were planted with help from young people, usually under the age of 16, in schools and community spaces across the UK. The children were helped by their parents, teachers, the community and The Tree Council’s volunteer Tree Wardens.

Young Learning: National Schools Programme

Learning has underpinned The Tree Council’s work for decades, whether it be skills shared with volunteer Tree Wardens, the learning acquired through science and research, or the knowledge acquired by young people benefiting from the charity’s community tree planting grants.

Our learning programme has become more formal and strategic in nature following the significant receipt of funds from the Daily Mail ‘Be a Tree Angel’ campaign in 2019 and from M&G plc in 2020. We launched our new National Schools Programme in 2020/21 and the programme has continued to thrive and grow in 2021/22, focusing on work with some of the most diverse and deprived communities across the UK.

We have identified four issues that negatively impact children, young people and nature in schools:

1. Growing social anxiety and other related mental health concerns associated with the climate and biodiversity crises (eco-anxiety) and the global pandemic.
2. Gap in understanding the value and role of trees in addressing the crises and in particular a lack of technical horticulture knowledge and skills.
3. Inequality that is prevalent in society with regards to children and young people having a voice and opportunity to influence positive change.
4. Nature poor school grounds and access to nature for the purposes of learning and health and wellbeing.

The schools' team (comprising a National Programme Manager and an Officer), with support from the wider Tree Council team, aims to tackle these issues and is responsible for the three elements of the programme: 'Orchards for Schools' 'Young Tree Champions' and 'Young Tree Champion Ambassadors'.

The programme's call to action is to be a #ForceForNature, with young people working together to connect, learn and share the power of trees and nature to help tackle the climate crisis.

Highlights of 2021/22 include:

Orchards for Schools planted 5,595 fruit trees and 8 kms of fruiting hedgerow in 1,219 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The schools received a package of teacher training and curriculum-linked resources to support them in planning and learning to care for their trees and share their experiences. Online evaluation with participating teachers was very encouraging with 95% of 83 respondents finding the materials and support extremely helpful.

Young Tree Champions continued to be supported by generous three-year funding from M&G plc, working in partnership with Speakers Trust, Learning through Landscapes and Derby University.

Each of the 300 or more Young Tree Champion schools has benefited from a combination of free trees, a tech kit and access to an online hub to network and share activities, as well as a comprehensive package of teacher training, support and resources. Pupils also take part in public speaking workshops to build their confidence and help them find their voice and become ambassadors for trees and nature. In 2021/22, 109 of the schools who had not yet planted, took up the tree offer and planted 515 mixed trees and 270 metres of hedgerow.

Young Tree Champion Ambassadors (15–26 years old) In March 2021, the programme was given an exciting boost with a grant confirmed by The Kusuma Trust. This has enabled us to appoint and provide training to eight Young Ambassadors from a wide range of backgrounds, including musicians, artists, poets and horticulture students. Their role is to inspire young people to become a #ForceForNature and to help create, plan and deliver the annual #ForceForNature Schools Tour

and Festival. In 2021/22, this also included filming a message for the leaders at COP26, with one young ambassador, James Owen Thomas, invited to meet the Prime Minister at 10 Downing Street.

Science & Research: Ash Dieback (ADB) and Oak Processionary Moth (OPM)

The Tree Council partners with Defra, Fera Science, Forest Research, Network Rail and leading universities on a variety of research programmes that help shape national policy and best practice. We aim to increase knowledge and apply science to help establish varied and biodiverse treescapes across Britain, which will be resilient to climate change and pests and diseases.

Our science and action research this year has continued to support government and local authorities in England and Scotland as they tackle threats from ash dieback and Oak Processionary Moth.

- Throughout 2021, we continued our series of workshops with Scottish local authorities, to develop the core resources for a Scottish Ash Dieback Toolkit to complement the England and Wales Toolkits published in 2019. The Toolkit was launched with Scottish Forestry and other agencies in June 2021.
- We also undertook workshops designed to gather a range of perspectives from local authorities and other relevant stakeholders at different stages of their Ash Dieback response. These sessions were in high demand, greatly exceeding the proposed participant numbers; this reflects the scale of challenge and interest in ADB response. In total, 130 individuals attended representing 65 different Local Authorities.
- The findings of these workshops, and additional interviews, have shaped new modules for the Ash Dieback Toolkit, which will expand the content on managing ash dieback around roads and public rights of way.
- In tandem with our work on ash dieback, we have also focused on helping local authorities manage the risks of Oak Processionary Moth. In a series of sessions with local authorities, we finalised the toolkit, testing potential changes to the way the pest is managed, with a more Local Based Risk Approach. The toolkit was published in October 2021 at a joint event with The Tree Council, Defra and the Forestry Commission. We are a key partner in the ongoing research to evaluate the resources and financial support mechanisms for OPM, particularly in light of policy changes and to ensure that oak is protected in the landscape while public health risks are mitigated.

Science & Research: Local Authority Tree Strategies

A strategic approach is one of the most important factors underpinning well-planned and resourced, thriving treescapes – and yet just over one third of local authorities have a tree strategy. A well-written local tree strategy sets out the vision for how a local treescape will be managed now and for the future and acts as go-to reference for a wide range of local stakeholders.

As large and increasing numbers of local authorities are announcing climate emergencies, we have continued our work with Defra and Fera Science to give practical guidance to help local authorities develop tree strategies for themselves.

During the research phase of this project, we held cross-departmental government workshops with representatives from Defra, Forestry Commission, Natural England, Department for Transport, Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. We also engaged with 40 individuals, from 22 local authorities, and 5 non-governmental organisations/consultants, plus separate workshops to elicit perspectives from community volunteer groups involving 30 individuals.

This work will culminate in a Trees and Woodland Strategy Toolkit, which we have consulted widely on in 2021/22 and will be launched in 2022/23.

Science & Research: Shared Outcomes

This research project with Defra and Natural England aims to establish new techniques to grow 'Trees outside Woodlands' and is funded through Treasury's 'Shared Outcomes Fund'. The project's vision is to develop new ways of expanding bio-secure tree cover at reduced costs, to meet increased UK tree planting ambitions and reverse trends in tree losses. The Tree Council is co-ordinating five pilot schemes with local authority partners looking at: urban tree establishment, agro-forestry and orchards, community tree nurseries, hedgerow tree management, and subsidised planting.

Science & Research: Sentinel Treescapes

This tree-health monitoring project, in partnership with Newcastle University, Fera Science and our Norfolk Tree Wardens, has installed 'tree talkers' on the trunks of Sentinel Trees and, through the year, has been recording data on their health. Volunteer Tree Wardens have downloaded their observations onto a new App, alongside the data provided by the 'Tree Talkers'. This is the first step towards developing a Regional Tree Health Index, using the Sentinel Trees as signposts for the state of the wider health of the tree population.

Science & Research: UK Treescapes and Connected Treescapes

We are a core part of the 'Connected Treescapes' project funded under the UK Treescapes programme. This 3-year research project with the Universities of York, Derby, Strathclyde, Newcastle, Edinburgh and the James Hutton Institute, aims to understand how we can expand treescapes in a way that is resilient and facilitates connection between people and trees. The Tree Council will produce a tool to help land managers navigate decision-making around tree planting, identifying risks and benefits.

Partnership: Hedgelink

Hedges are Britain's most widespread Priority Habitat – providing connectivity and homes to more than 130 national priority species. They have a high biodiversity and carbon storage value, as well as helping improve air quality in cities.

The Tree Council is Chair of Hedgelink, the partnership that brings everyone interested in hedgerows together, to share knowledge and ideas, to encourage and inspire, and to work with farmers and other land managers to conserve and enhance our hedgerow heritage.

The partnership comprises nearly 30 organisations including, People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), Defra, Woodland Trust, National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH).

This year, in addition to grant giving for hedgerows and hedgerow trees through our community programme, we have worked with partners to develop joint responses to consultations and policy announcements, such as the Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes.

With the ongoing work of 'Talk to the Hedge' hedgerows will remain an important component of The Tree Council's work going forward.

Partnership: National Representation

The Tree Council chairs or serves on more than a dozen, national, high-level, policy, practice and advisory boards to governments in the UK nations and EU on the topics of tree health/disease, tree safety, habitats, biodiversity, climate change, and tree features. In these fora, we represent the views and concerns of our member organisations, enhancing the operating environment and highlighting issues of concern.

Partnership: Membership

The Tree Council began as an informal coalition of tree organisations at the time Dutch elm swept through the UK and it was instituted as a registered charity in 1973.

This model of collaboration between a diverse range of public, not-for-profit and private bodies united by concern for trees is a powerful one and our membership remains the driver for lobbying, joint consultation responses, campaigning and influencing, helping to develop policy with a stronger, unified voice. We speak with the combined weight and expertise of our member organisations behind us and are generally recognised as the trusted voice of the tree sector.

In 2021/22, working with our charity coalition group, we reviewed and fed back to government on Plant Biosecurity and the new Environmental Land Management (ELMs) schemes.

In June 2021, we completed a review of our membership, its purpose, structure and benefits, and introduced a three-tier scheme recognising the differing sizes of our partners. On 31 March 2022, our membership stood at around 100, including not-for-profit organisations with a national remit (full members); local authorities and Tree Warden networks; consultative members; and commercial enterprises that support our objectives (associate members).

Partnership: The Queen's Green Canopy

The Tree Council sits on the Urban Greening Advisory Board of The Queen's Green Canopy, a unique tree planting initiative encouraging people across the UK to 'Plant a tree for the Jubilee' in honour of Her Majesty The Queen's 70 years of service to the nation. The Jubilee planting and tree care takes place over two winter seasons, 21/22 and 22/23.

We have been delighted to welcome a group of corporate Jubilee Partners who collectively, have pledged support to plant 35,000 trees and 7 kms of hedgerow over the two planting seasons. While most of the planting will take place in the 2022/23 season, the first 4,000 trees have already been established in 2021/22 and corporate volunteers have created two new green corridors in Bicester, Oxfordshire. This included planting some rare black poplar trees, only c10,000 of which remain in the UK.

Looking forward to 2022/23 & beyond

Management:

- In 2022/23, Trustees and Team Tree Council will work to develop a new three-year strategy and action plan for The Tree Council 2023 – 2025
- We will review our Finance function to ensure that it continues to be well-resourced as the charity grows and manages increasing numbers of transactions

Community:

- In 2022/23, we will continue to work with the Tree Warden networks to support and develop the Tree Warden Scheme, establishing new networks and supplementing the training programme with new modules relating to hedgerow management.
- We will continue to promote National Hedgerow Week to raise public awareness of the importance and value of hedgerows and we will seek funding to continue our hedgerow work beyond the end of 'Close the Gap'.
- We will develop our community planting partnerships with Network Rail to include more trees in riparian and urban settings, work with groups with special needs and the addition of PhD research into wood pasture landscapes.

Young Learning:

- We will continue the Orchards for Schools programme, establishing orchards and fruiting hedgerows with pupils in around 100 (2020/21: 800) new schools across the UK, and providing teacher training, support and curriculum-related resources.

- We will deepen the impact of the Young Tree Champion programme through delivering a research study of nature connectedness in collaboration with the University of Derby.
- We will launch a new Young Tree Champion Ambassadors programme for c100 young people (7–14 years old) to complement the existing programme for 15 – 26 year olds and continue to support our Young Ambassadors by developing and delivering training and ‘masterclasses’ to schools.
- Our Young Ambassadors will help develop an exhibit at the Big Bang! Schools Fair in Birmingham in June 2022

Science & Research:

- We will publish the Trees and Woodland Strategy Toolkit in autumn 2022 in partnership with Defra and Forestry Commission, and will work with local authorities to establish its value in enabling the development of local trees and woodland Strategies
- We will launch the Oak Processionary Moth Toolkit for local authorities in October/November 2021 in partnership with Defra, Forestry Commission and Forest Research.
- We will work with Forest Research to evaluate the impact of the resources included in the Oak Processionary Moth and Ash Dieback Toolkits and update them periodically
- We will continue our research into biosecurity, working with Fera to identify gaps in training provision and work with Defra and Scottish Forestry on developing new materials and resources for local authorities dealing with Ash Dieback.

Partnership:

- In 2022/23, we aim to develop our fundraising strategy with opportunities for individual, corporate and trust support. This will include new initiatives and events with our Jubilee Partners, pilot campaigns with the Big Green Give and Big Give Christmas Challenge.
- The Tree Council has a heritage of convening cross-sector forums to address challenges relating to the tree sector. We aim to hold three such Forums in 2022/23.

Beneficiaries of our services

The beneficiaries of our services include: our volunteers and members; pupils and teachers participating in our National Schools Programme; communities and landowners receiving grant-funding to establish trees; local authorities supported to help tackle tree pests and diseases and plan future tree strategies; our coalition of conservation charities whom we bring together to comment on consultations and address tree-related challenges; and the UK general public who receive the important social benefits of our tree, hedgerow and orchard planting. In addition, our work helps conserve wildlife and habitats, improves biodiversity and contributes to tackling climate change and safeguarding the future health of our planet. All these are covered in greater detail in the achievements and performance section above.

Financial review

The Tree Council is entirely self-funding with income generated through grants and gifts from major donors, charitable trusts, corporate partnership, membership fees and legacy giving.

In 2021/22, the charity boosted restricted income to £2,157,869. The charity's unrestricted reserves increased by £168,084. Total income for the year was £2,803,166 (compared to £1,294,902 the previous year) and total expenditure was £2,794,169 (compared to £1,177,714 last year).

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year were £447,063 and restricted reserves (mainly tree planting funds) were £642,052. Total reserves were £1,089,115.

Reserves policy and going concern

It is the policy of the Tree Council to maintain unrestricted funds at a level which equates to at least six months core costs. The budgeted core costs for 2022/23 are about £666,000 and so unrestricted reserves at £447,063 are equivalent to 8 months of core costs.

The Trustees continue to keep the risks facing The Tree Council under close review and ensure that costs are carefully controlled. The Trustees continue to keep all the reserves in the form of interest-earning bank accounts and deposits.

The Trustees, as part of their continuous risk assessment, monitor any ongoing implications of the pandemic, the rapid changes in the economy, and their normal activities.

The Tree Council has generated many new grants and contracts over the past two years and is confident of its ability to operate as a going concern.

Risk Assessment

The Board maintains a risk assessment system which is based on a numerical assessment of risk, with an accompanying management commentary. Trustees consider these reports regularly both for the organisation as a whole and for major projects. The aim is to highlight and measure potential risks to the success of an activity or process, assess the impact, and put in place appropriate management action. The system encompasses all areas of our activities, although the continuing increased projects and programmes with corporate partners marks this area out for ongoing development.

Risks are reviewed in depth under six headings: financial, operational, regulatory, reputational, strategic and external.

Our top two key risks identified and their mitigation are:

- Unrestricted reserves falling below the recommended level approved by Trustees (a band equivalent to 6–12 months of core operating costs). The Finance Committee monitors unrestricted reserves levels quarterly and if the level falls below 6 months, the Chairman, Treasurer and CEO keep income/expenditure under monthly review. We stay in close touch with principal funding partners and begin grant renewal or tender processes in good time to

allow alternative funding to be found if necessary. With our supporters' approval, we build a contribution towards core costs into major projects.

- Team retention and succession planning have become ever more important with the move to flexible working, a rapidly changing employment market and The Tree Council's growing programme of activities. We work hard to maintain a strong and positive team ethic and to motivate, support, develop and reward the team, recognising achievements and delivering appraisals in a constructive context. We have brought more employees into the team with formal arboricultural qualifications to ensure adequate cover. Now that the team is more widespread geographically, we are establishing an induction programme for new team members to meet and engage with each other operationally and personally. Succession planning will form part of our next 3–5 year strategy and action plan

Accordingly, we can confirm that the major risks to which the Council is exposed have been reviewed and systems are in place to mitigate those risks.

Fundraising

The charity's fundraising objective was to reach £1m sustainable annual income by 2021, of which c25% to be unrestricted. This has been achieved once again in 2022, which will enable us to develop and, in the longer-term, establish ambitious programmes for public benefit in our four key areas of work: Community Action, Young Learning, Practical Science & Research, and Partnership.

We are incredibly grateful to our partners for their support, which has included funding for core costs on projects, as well as key activities such as comms and marketing. Grants from M&G, National Lottery Heritage Fund, Network Rail and C. Hoare & Co have been greatly appreciated to help us invest in the future successful growth of the charity. These funds have enabled us to achieve significant public benefit with little additional fundraising expenditure.

The current fundraising approach focuses on a mix of corporate partnerships, research applications and philanthropic fundraising. Our fundraising does not include direct marketing or telephone campaigns and we remain mindful at all times of the need to safeguard vulnerable people.

The Tree Council does not use professional fundraisers or agencies and received no complaints in this financial year.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5 December 1979 and registered as a charity on 17 December 1979.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. The Trustees have not claimed any expenses.

The members of the Board of Trustees meet regularly to review its affairs, review the charity's aims, objectives and activities, as well as report on the benefits for the public good. The Board has a Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, to oversee the charity's financial affairs, to report to the Board and make recommendations as appropriate at each meeting.

The Chief Executive, Sara Lom, together with the Senior Team comprising the Director of Trees, Science & Research, the Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Comms and the Director of Finance manage the day-to-day administration of the charity.

The Tree Council moved offices this year upon expiry of its current lease. The team has grown over recent years but since the pandemic, more team members are based across the UK and people continue to work flexibly with some days from home. A new lease for 14 Dock Offices, a slightly smaller space in the same building, was therefore signed by all parties on 2 March 2022, including a Deed of Surrender for 4 Dock Offices, together with a notice relating to the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954. British Land will pay £18,000 to The Tree Council following the Surrender.

I would like to thank our outgoing Deputy Chair, Elizabeth Hiester and Jeremy Simons, for their outstanding support over more than half a decade and my fellow Trustees for their wonderful commitment and shared expertise.

We have appointed new team members through the year. We offer a warm welcome to them and huge thanks to the existing team, who manage to juggle daily deadlines and a wide range of national programmes and projects – always with enthusiasm, professionalism and smiles on their faces.

Appointment of Trustees

The Tree Council subscribes to the seven principles of the Nolan Rules in appointing trustees. These are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In addition, the Tree Council looks for the following qualities, skills and experience:

- An appreciation of the importance of trees and the environment
- A willingness to make the time commitment to attend Board meetings, strategic review meetings and other related meetings and activities, including familiarisation with the work of the Council
- An ability to think strategically, formulate direction for the organisation and support management
- An ability to contribute to board discussions, seek advice, exercise sound judgement and contribute to good governance
- A willingness to use their networks on behalf of The Tree Council, in advocacy, fundraising (including pro bono contributions), public affairs and communications

The number of Trustees is required to be no less than three, with no maximum number. One third of Trustees retire at each annual meeting and are eligible for reappointment, subject to the provision in the Articles that Trustees shall normally serve for no more than six years.

The Board is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate succession strategy is adopted for the replacement of Trustees. The Chair and Chief Executive take responsibility for informing the Board when new Trustees need to be appointed.

In order to identify Trustees, when a vacancy is about to occur, the Chair and Chief Executive review the balance of skills, attributes and experience on the current Board relative to the future needs of the organisation. Trustees are appointed to ensure the positive evolution of the charity. Prior to appointment, new Trustees meet formally with at least two current Trustees and usually attend at least one Board Meeting as an observer.

Induction for new Trustees is carried out by the Chief Executive and includes familiarisation with people, activities and events over a number of months.

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

The Tree Council's Remunerations Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, comprises 3 appropriately experienced Trustees, reviews the remuneration of all employees, based on market data and performance.

Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Tree Council for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law 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 period. 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
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Members of the charity guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The total number of such guarantees at 31 March 2022 was 14 (2021: 14). The Trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditor

Sayer Vincent LLP was appointed as the charitable company's auditor during the year and has expressed its willingness to continue in that capacity.

The Trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The Trustees' annual report has been approved by the Trustees on 18 October 2022 and signed on their behalf by

Joel Cadbury
Chairman

Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Tree Council (the ‘charitable company’) for the year ended 31 March 2022 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company’s affairs as at 31 March 2022 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC’s Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees’ use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on The Tree Council’s ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of Trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of

Independent auditor`s report

To the members of

The Tree Council

company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
- Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
- Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
- The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.

Independent auditor`s report

To the members of

The Tree Council

- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Fleur Holden (Senior statutory auditor)

11 November 2022

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

Invicta House, 108-114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

The Tree Council

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2022

		Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £
	Note						
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	163,890	37,500	201,390	39,504	-	39,504
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting		10,000	1,955,869	1,965,869	-	712,868	712,868
Science and Research		441,097	-	441,097	396,708		396,708
Education and community engagement	3	10,990	164,500	175,490	-	142,800	142,800
Investments	4	174		174	392	-	392
Other		19,146	-	19,146	2,629	-	2,629
Total income		645,297	2,157,869	2,803,166	439,234	855,668	1,294,902
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	147,837	54,000	201,837	139,540	19,838	159,378
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting	5	86,428	2,129,743	2,216,171	17,723	741,228	758,951
Science and Research	5	59,111	-	59,111	38,543		38,543
Education and community engagement	5	183,838	133,212	317,050	220,842	-	220,842
Total expenditure		477,213	2,316,955	2,794,169	416,648	761,066	1,177,714
Net income / (expenditure)		168,084	(159,086)	8,998	22,586	94,602	117,187
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		168,084	(159,086)	8,998	22,586	94,602	117,187
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		278,979	801,138	1,080,117	256,393	706,536	962,930
Total funds carried forward		447,063	642,052	1,089,115	278,979	801,138	1,080,117

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 17a to the financial statements."

The Tree Council

Balance sheet

Company no. 01459056

As at 31 March 2022

	Note	£	2022 £	£	2021 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	12		25,254		3,859
			25,254		3,859
Current assets:					
Debtors	13	515,781		153,620	
Cash at bank and in hand		1,098,453		1,149,210	
		1,614,234		1,302,831	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	(550,374)		(226,574)	
Net current assets			1,063,859		1,076,257
Total assets less current liabilities			1,089,114		1,080,117
Total net assets			1,089,115		1,080,117
The funds of the charity:	17a				
Restricted income funds			642,052		801,138
Unrestricted income funds:					
General funds		447,063		278,979	
Total unrestricted funds			447,063		278,979
Total charity funds			1,089,115		1,080,117

Approved by the trustees on 18 October 2022 and signed on their behalf by:

Joel Cadbury
Chairman

Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

The Tree Council

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2022

	Note	2022 £	£	2021 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net (expenditure)/income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		8,998		117,187	
Depreciation charges		5,730		4,941	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		(362,161)		30,603	
Increase in creditors		323,801		165,413	
Net cash provided by operating activities		(23,632)			318,144
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of fixed assets		(27,125)		(1,854)	
Net cash used in investing activities		(27,125)			(1,854)
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(50,757)			316,289
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,149,210			832,921
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		1,098,453			1,149,210
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents					
				At 31 March 2022	
	At 1 April 2021	Cash flows	Other non- cash changes		
	£	£	£		£
Cash at bank and in hand	1,149,210	(50,757)	-		1,098,453
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,149,210	(50,757)	-		1,098,453

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

The Tree Council is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales.

The registered office address is 4 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, LONDON, SE16 2XU

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) - (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The trustees have considered the covid-19 pandemic, inflation, the uncertain economic climate and their normal activities and confirm that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. In particular they have reviewed the future cash flows and commitments and have ascertained that there are sufficient unrestricted reserves and future cash flows to confirm that the charity is a going concern.

Key judgements that the charity has made which have a significant effect on the accounts include estimating the liability for multi-year grant commitments.

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

e) Income

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

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

g) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, exhibitions and other educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

j) Grants payable

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects. Single or multi-year grants are accounted for when either the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and the trustees have agreed to pay the grant without condition, or the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and that any condition attaching to the grant is outside of the control of the charity.

Provisions for grants are made when the intention to make a grant has been communicated to the recipient but there is uncertainty about either the timing of the grant or the amount of grant payable.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

k) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of salary time by each activity each year. For this year the percentages are

●	Tree and hedge planting	75%
●	Education and community activities	9%
●	Science & Research	2%
●	Fundraising	6%
●	Support costs	6%
●	Governance costs	2%

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

●	Tree and hedge planting	79%
●	Education and community activities	11%
●	Science & Research	2%
●	Fundraising	7%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

l) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

m) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. Fixtures & Fittings and Office & Computer Equipment are depreciated over 3 years.

n) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

o) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

p) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

1 Accounting policies (continued)

q) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £
Donations and legacies	91,685	4,000	95,685	10,440	-	10,440
Jubilee Partners Fund	25,000	33,500	58,500	-	-	-
Friends of the Tree Council	29,310	-	29,310	23,034	-	23,034
Subscriptions	17,896	-	17,896	6,030	-	6,030
	<u>163,890</u>	<u>37,500</u>	<u>201,390</u>	<u>39,504</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>39,504</u>

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £
Tree and hedge planting						
Network Rail Community Planting	-	682,000	682,000	-	395,000	395,000
Close the Gap	-	1,226,545	1,226,545	-	250,000	250,000
Tree planting grants	-	7,324	7,324	-	58,268	58,268
Animal Friends	10,000	40,000	50,000	-	-	-
Science & Research	441,097	-	441,097	396,708	-	396,708
Education and community engagement						
M & G	10,990	164,500	175,490	-	142,800	142,800
Kusuma Trust	-	-	-	-	9,600	9,600
Total income from charitable activities	<u>462,087</u>	<u>2,120,369</u>	<u>2,582,457</u>	<u>396,708</u>	<u>855,668</u>	<u>1,252,376</u>

4 Income from investments

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2022 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £
Income from cash deposits	498	-	498	392	-	392
	<u>498</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>498</u>	<u>392</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>392</u>

5a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities							
	Raising funds	Tree and	Education and	Science &	Governance	Support costs	2022	2021
	£	hedge planting	community	Research	costs	£	Total	Total
		£	engagement	£	£		£	£
Staff costs (Note 8)	115,467	240,055	238,001	32,826	50,251	56,954	733,553	530,185
Tree Warden Scheme	-	-	7,857	-	-	-	7,857	7,611
Office and Facility costs	-	-	-	-	-	56,546	56,546	25,843
Grants Payable (Note 6)	-	1,847,087	-	-	-	-	1,847,087	503,884
Audit and other governance costs	-	-	-	-	8,100	-	8,100	9,291
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	-	3,624	-	-	-	15,746	19,370	42,531
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	-	-	-	-	-	31,203	31,203	21,483
Marketing and Brand costs	63,917	-	-	-	-	-	63,917	27,962
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	5,730	5,730	4,941
Travel costs	-	13,140	3,833	3,833	-	-	20,806	3,983
	179,384	2,103,906	249,691	36,659	58,351	166,178	2,794,169	1,177,714
Support costs	16,618	83,089	49,853	16,618	-	(166,178)	-	-
Governance costs	5,835	29,175	17,505	5,835	(58,351)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2022	201,837	2,216,171	317,050	59,111	-	-	2,794,169	
Total expenditure 2021	159,378	758,952	220,842	-	-	-		1,177,714

5b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

	Charitable activities						
	Raising funds	Tree and	Education and	Science &	Governance	Support costs	2021
	£	hedge planting	community	Research	costs	£	Total
		£	engagement		£		£
			£	£	£	£	
Staff costs (Note 8)	90,899	153,129	165,538	38,543	37,749	44,328	530,186
Tree Warden Scheme	-	-	7,611	-	-	-	7,611
Office and Facility costs	-	-	-	-	-	25,843	25,843
Grants Payable (Note 6)	-	503,884	-	-	-	-	503,884
Audit and other governance costs	-	600	-	-	8,691	-	9,291
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	-	24,921	-	-	-	17,610	42,531
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	-	-	-	-	-	21,483	21,483
Marketing and Brand costs	27,962	-	-	-	-	-	27,962
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	4,941	4,941
Travel costs	258	2,343	993	-	-	388	3,982
	119,120	684,877	174,142	38,543	46,440	114,593	1,177,714
Support costs	28,648	52,713	33,232	-	-	(114,593)	-
Governance costs	11,610	21,362	13,467	-	(46,440)	-	-
Total expenditure 2021	159,378	758,952	220,841	38,543	-	-	1,177,714

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

6a Grant making (current year)

	Grants to institutions £	Support costs £	2022 £
Cost			
Network Rail	262,724	-	262,724
M & G	38,857	-	38,857
Schools & community groups	1,545,506	-	1,545,506
At the end of the year	<u>1,847,087</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,847,087</u>

During 2022 and 2021 the Tree Council used an internal committee to assess grant applications as well as having a joint committee with Network Rail for the grants made from their restricted funds. The most significant individual grants were to Moor Trees for capital works and trainee programme of a community tree nursery in Devon £423,876, the University of Reading for work to deliver an online Hedgerow Hub on best practise management of hedgerows £31,000, PTES for development of Hedgerow App and volunteer training £74,860 and FWAG for hedgerow planting £385,000 (2021: Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West £32,987, Harting Parish Council £32,179 & Another Way Cumbria £31,229).

6b Grant making (prior year)

	Grants to institutions £	Support costs £	2021 £
Cost			
Schools, community groups and Good Gifts Guide	503,884	-	503,884
At the end of the year	<u>503,884</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>503,884</u>

7 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging / (crediting):

	2022 £	2021 £
Depreciation	5,730	4,941
Operating lease	30,546	-
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	<u>8,100</u>	<u>7,750</u>

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2022

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2022 £	2021 £
Salaries and wages	628,587	456,642
National insurance	62,671	44,389
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	42,294	29,154
	<u>733,553</u>	<u>530,185</u>

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2022 No.	2021 No.
£60,000 - £69,999	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £276,399 (2021: £236,125).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2021: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2021: £nil).

There were no payments to trustees for expenses (2021: nil).

9 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 15.2 (2021: 12.2).

Staff are split across the activities of the charity as follows (full time equivalent basis):

	2022 No.	2021 No.
Tree and hedge planting	4.5	3.5
Science & Research	1.5	1.0
Education and community engagement	6.9	2.8
Support, Fundraising and marketing	2.0	3.9
Governance	0.3	0.6
	<u>15.2</u>	<u>11.8</u>

10 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2022 (2021: none).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and furniture £	Office and computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At the start of the year	2,838	40,267	43,105
Additions in year	-	27,125	27,125
At the end of the year	2,838	67,392	70,230
Depreciation			
At the start of the year	2,838	36,408	39,246
Charge for the year	-	5,730	5,730
At the end of the year	2,838	42,138	44,976
Net book value			
At the end of the year	-	25,254	25,254
At the start of the year	-	3,859	3,859

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

13 Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Grants and sponsorship receivable	256,339	112,923
Prepayments and other debtors	3,836	11,368
Accrued income	255,605	59,932
	515,781	184,223

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade creditors	235,564	6,626
Taxation and social security	84,536	38,708
Accruals	230,275	15,827
	550,374	61,161

15 Pension scheme

The company pays 7% to nest for its employees, and the employee contributes 1% in compliance with the rules of auto enrolment.

16a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	25,254	-	-	25,254
Net current assets	421,809	-	642,052	1,063,861
Net assets at 31 March 2022	447,063	-	642,052	1,089,115

16b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	3,859	-	-	3,859
Net current assets	275,120	-	801,138	1,076,258
Net assets at 31 March 2021	278,979	-	801,138	1,080,117

17a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2021 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2022 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	109,263	2,500	(8,693)	-	103,070
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	81,650	180	(2,133)	-	79,697
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	-	-	-	10,411
Tree Angel Planting Funds	52,349	-	(167)	-	52,183
Orchards for Schools	292,043	144	(169,528)	-	122,659
Special Assignment Fund	628	-	-	-	628
Network Rail Fund	1,807	408,000	(374,725)	-	35,082
M & G Fund	29,439	164,500	(133,212)	-	60,727
Siemens Fund	19,790	-	(16,000)	-	3,790
Close the Gap Fund	195,118	1,226,545	(1,397,008)	-	24,655
Kusuma Trust Fund	8,640	-	(5,500)	-	3,140
Southern Network Rail	-	274,000	(160,114)	-	113,886
Jubilee Partner Fund	-	33,500	(14,449)	-	19,051
Animal Friends Fund	-	40,000	(33,926)	-	6,074
Shoosmiths	-	1,500	(1,500)	-	-
29 May Charitable Trust	-	7,000	-	-	7,000
Total restricted funds	801,138	2,157,869	(2,316,955)	-	642,052
General funds	278,979	645,297	(477,213)	-	447,063
Total unrestricted funds	278,979	645,297	(477,213)	-	447,063
Total funds	1,080,117	2,803,166	(2,794,169)	-	1,089,115

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

17b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	141,195	18,970	(50,902)	-	109,263
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	110,237	-	(28,587)	-	81,650
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	-	-	-	10,411
Tree Angel Planting Funds	39,821	14,098	(1,570)	-	52,349
Orchards for Schools	404,244	-	(112,201)	-	292,043
Special Assignment Fund	628	-	-	-	628
Network Rail Fund	-	395,000	(393,193)	-	1,807
M & G Fund	-	142,800	(113,361)	-	29,439
Siemens Fund	-	25,200	(5,410)	-	19,790
Close the Gap Fund	-	250,000	(54,882)	-	195,118
Kusuma Trust Fund	-	9,600	(960)	-	8,640
Total restricted funds	706,536	855,668	(761,066)	-	801,138
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	256,393	439,234	(416,648)	-	278,979
Total unrestricted funds	256,393	439,234	(416,648)	-	278,979
Total funds	962,929	1,294,902	(1,177,714)	-	1,080,117

Purposes of restricted funds

The Branching Out 1 Tree Planting Funds are for planting with schools and community groups. The majority of the funds have been donated by an anonymous donor's Charitable Trust.

The Vernon Hill Branching Out 2 Tree Planting Funds are for planting projects for schools and community groups. The Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Vernon Hill to the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Good Gifts Catalogue makes grants to the Tree Council for the planting of oak saplings, bluebell woods and meadows of flowers.

Tree Angel Funds are dedicated to a variety of tree planting and have been funded by public and corporate gifts to the 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Orchards for Schools Funds are to fund orchards and fruiting hedgerows planting in schools. The fund was created following generous gifts from Lord Sugar, Richard Caring and Sir Jony Ive plus an anonymous donor following the Daily Mail campaign.

The Special Assignment Fund is to carry out specific tree research projects in overseas countries.

The Network Rail Fund is a four-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in cities and the countryside, mainly in England.

M&G Fund is a three-year programme dedicated to inspiring young people in schools across the UK to become Young Tree Champions and to gain the skills to become a #ForceForNature

The Welsh Trees Siemens fund is dedicated to a tree planting project with the local community at Wolf's Castle in Pembrokeshire

The Green Recovery Fund supports an 18-month programme, 'Close the Gap', to establish bigger, healthier, better connected hedgerows and hedgerow trees in England, working with Defra, National Lottery Heritage Fund and five charity partners.

17b Movements in funds

Purposes of restricted funds (continued)

The Kasuma Trust funds The Tree Council's Young Ambassadors programme.

The Southern Network Rail fund is a four-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in the Southern Network Rail region.

The Jubilee Partner Fund is a two-year programme in partnership with the Queen's Green Canopy to plant trees in celebration of Her Majesty's 70 years on the throne.

Animal Friends Fund is a programme focussed on tree and hedgerow planting projects that prioritise wildlife and biodiversity benefits.

Shoosmiths was a fund to plant trees at Cold Ashby in Northants.

29 May Charitable Trust is a fund to support volunteer Tree Warden networks, especially new networks, with training and other materials.

18 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Land and buildings	
	2022	2021
	£	£
Within one year	17,600	-
Within one to two years	35,200	-
	<u>52,800</u>	<u>-</u>

19 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.

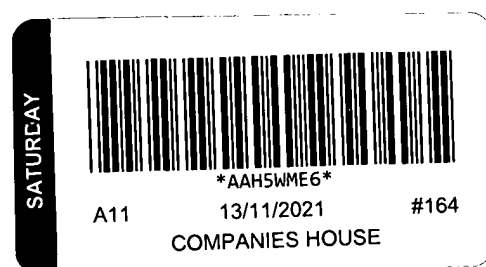
Accounts

Company number: 1459056

Charity number: 279000

The Tree Council

Report and financial statements
For the year ended 31 March 2021



S A Y E R | V I N C E N T

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The Tree Council

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The Tree Council

Reference and administrative information

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Company number 1459056
Country of incorporation United Kingdom

Charity number 279000
Country of registration England & Wales

Registered office and operational address 4 Dock Offices
Surrey Quays Road
LONDON
SE16 2XU

Trustees Trustees, who are also directors under company law, who served during the year and up to the date of this report were as follows:

Joel Cadbury	Chair
Elizabeth Hiester	Deputy Chair
Jeremy Simons	
Andrew Fenwick	Treasurer
Margaret Holland-Prior	(to 13 October 2020)
Tariq Ahmed	

Key management personnel	Sara Lom	Chief Executive & Company Secretary
	Jon Stokes	Director of Trees, Science & Research
	Clare Bowen	Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Communications
	Ken Sleat	Director of Finance

Bankers CAF Bank Ltd
25 King's Hill Avenue
West Malling
ME19 4JQ

Solicitors Macfarlanes LLP
20 Cursitor Street
London EC4A 1LT

Auditor Sayer Vincent LLP
Chartered Accountants and Statutory Auditor
Invicta House
108-114 Golden Lane
LONDON
EC1Y 0TL

The Tree Council

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

The Trustees present their report and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021.

Reference and administrative information set out on page 1 forms part of this report. The financial statements comply with current statutory requirements, the memorandum and articles of association, the requirements of a directors' report as required under company law, and the Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities: SORP applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102.

Objectives and activities

Purposes and aims

The Tree Council was established in 1973 when Dutch elm disease swept across the land and urgent action was required to restore precious British treescapes. In response to the loss of millions of elms, The Tree Council, a national charity, brought everyone together to plant and care for trees across the UK.

Today, nearly fifty years later, The Tree Council continues to bring people together with a shared mission to care for trees and our planet's future. We inspire and empower organisations, government, communities and individuals, providing knowledge and tools to create positive, lasting change at a national and local level.

Our work has never been more important than it is now, as we face a global climate crisis. We and our volunteers and partners are playing a key role in helping shape policy, find practical solutions, raise awareness, and deliver tree planting and tree care to help achieve the government target of carbon net zero by 2050.

We focus our work on wider treescapes rather than forests – working with partners to protect and establish copses and spinneys, hedgerows and orchards, parkland and wood pasture trees, as well as life-enhancing street trees, urban avenues, roof gardens and city playground plantations.

Our strapline, **'Working Together for the Love of Trees'** emphasises the common thread of collaboration that runs through our history. It is the truth most often echoed back to us by our partners and stakeholders, that we bring people together for the benefit of trees. It reflects our desire for partnership and our quest for practical solutions. It expresses our deep-rooted, emotional response to trees. These two things, collaboration to find practical solutions and a love for trees, combined with good care and a great sense of fun, summarise our team and its core values today.

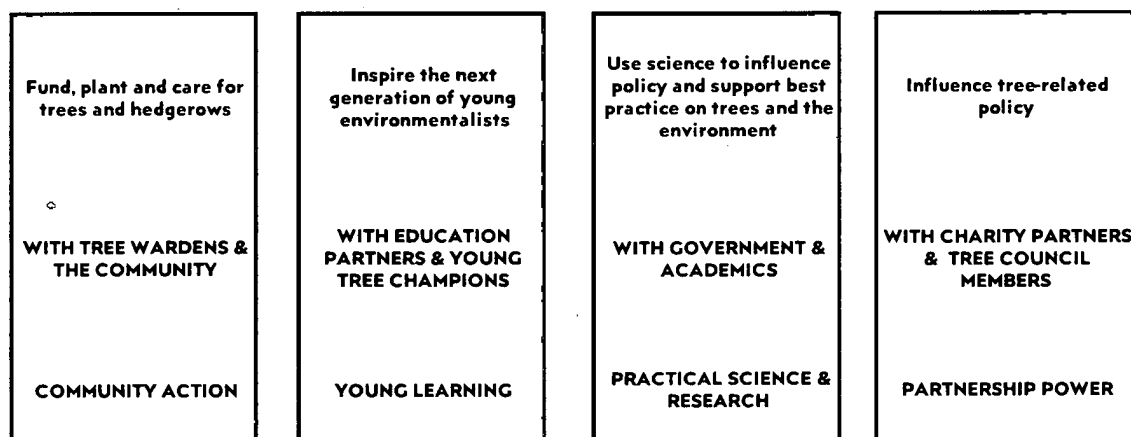
We are supported in our work by circa 6,000 amazing volunteer Tree Wardens, plus a growing force of Young Tree Champions.

We have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on Public Benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives and in planning our future activities. In particular, the Trustees consider how planned activities will contribute to the aims and objectives they have set. In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have also considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'.

Achievements & Performance

The work of The Tree Council has four branches – Community Action, Young Learning, Practical Science & Research, and Partnership. This year has seen renewal, growth and achievement in all four areas.

Working together to...



Community: The Tree Warden Scheme

The Tree Council's Tree Warden Scheme is a national initiative which supports local authorities and independent networks to promote, conserve and care for trees, bringing health and wellbeing and new skills to individuals, and an improved environment in their communities.

Tree Warden volunteers gather information about their local trees, engage and help with local issues and organise and take part in tree-related activities, such as seed growing, tree planting, tree care, woodland walks and providing alerts to pests and diseases. Their role promoting, protecting, planting and celebrating trees is vital to help tackle climate change, meet nationally ambitious planting targets, increase biodiversity, and enhance everyone's health and wellbeing.

The Tree Council

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Tree Wardens work within local networks which, with our help and support, are set up and managed by public and civil society organisations such as local authorities, parish councils and voluntary groups. The Tree Warden Scheme was launched in 1990 in the aftermath of the Great Storm of 1987. Today there are circa 6,000 Tree Wardens helping plant and conserve trees in towns, cities and the countryside.

The Tree Council is enormously grateful to the Tree Wardens for their support. They are capable, committed and inspirational and participate in activities as our representatives, for example, gathering field data, planting and caring for trees, and disseminating information.

As part of the objective to increase communication and cooperation between and with the Tree Wardens, The Tree Council holds annual Tree Warden Forums across the country. These have been organised online since the onset of the pandemic in March 2020. The Forums are an opportunity for volunteers to hear key speakers present on locally and nationally important tree related topics and to see and hear about other Tree Wardens' projects.

In April 2020, we appointed a National Tree Warden Scheme Coordinator to support existing networks and help establish new ones. We are pleased to see the growth in interest from volunteers in Scotland and Wales, as well as across England.

The national Advisory Group with representatives and deputies from each of our nine regions is now well-established and we are delighted that, despite pandemic restrictions, we have made steady progress with the first two priorities identified by the group: training and communications.

- Thanks to an award from Postcode Community Trust, a grant-giving charity funded entirely by players of People's Postcode Lottery, we have developed an Induction programme and three training modules on Trees & The Law, Tree Biology and Tree Threats & Challenges. The training is available either for individual download as a pdf or in powerpoint for group presentations. Four further modules will be launched in 2021.
- Regular, supportive communication with the Tree Wardens has been vital throughout lockdown via monthly newsletters, a new Facebook group, webinars, and guidance notes on 'Tree planting with Covid-19 restrictions in place'.

The highlight of the year was the Tree Warden's 30th anniversary conference in September 2020 with a message from our Royal Patron, HRH The Duke of Kent and a specially commissioned celebration video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXKlogVXeb4>

As part of their 30th anniversary activities, the Tree Wardens planted 30 disease-resistant elms across the UK, including an elm tree for our Director of Trees, Science & Research, Jon Stokes, in recognition of his dedicated 30-year service with The Tree Council.

The Tree Council

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Community: National Tree Week 2020

The Tree Council's year has four focal points: Seed Gathering (autumn), National Tree Week (end of November), Trees Love Care (March/April), and Walk in the Woods (May). The highlight and main focus of activity is National Tree Week. Launched by The Tree Council in 1975, this is the annual event that brings everyone together to mark the start of the winter tree planting season.

This year, because of Covid-19, National Tree Week took a different form. Some tree-planting was possible, but the focus in 2020 was an online festival, celebrating trees through writing, music, cookery, art, photography and more. Highlights included:

- Leaf biscuit decoration with Great British Bake Off's Rowan Williams
- 'At home' with James Rebanks, the Herdy Shepherd
- Literary discussions with Tracy Chevalier, William Boyd, Jonathan Drori and Victoria Schwab
- Songs from the Tree Tops with Sam Lee
- Animation by The Wombles

Community: Network Rail

This year was the first in our £1 million, four-year, community planting partnership with Network Rail. Having appointed a Project Manager in July 2020, we achieved our first target to plant 20,000 trees in England by Christmas 2020.

By the end of the planting season in March 2021, despite the difficulties of lockdown, we had established 91,673 trees and 19kms of hedgerow, with 14 community partners from Cornwall to Cumbria. The schemes brought a wide variety of environmental and social benefits, including flood attenuation, ancient woodland restoration, habitat conservation and connectivity (dormice, grass snakes, slow worms), urban improvements, and climate change and air pollution mitigation.

Community: 'Close the Gap' Hedgerow Project

In December 2020, The Tree Council and Partners received confirmation that their joint £1.8m bid to the Green Recovery Challenge Fund* had been successful. The 18-month programme, called Close the Gap, aims to raise awareness of the value of hedges and establish bigger, healthier, better-connected hedgerows to help tackle climate change, capture carbon, improve biodiversity, increase wellbeing, and inspire younger generations to consider land-based careers.

Close the Gap is jointly delivered by The Tree Council, with People's Trust for Endangered Species, Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group, Moor Trees, University of Reading and Hedgelink, (the partnership organisation for those with an interest in hedgerows). The Tree Council is the lead partner guiding the delivery of the programme, supported by a Steering Group with representatives from each organisation.

*The Green Recovery Challenge Fund is funded by Defra and is being delivered by The National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with Natural England and the Environment Agency.

Community: Grants Programme

The Tree Council's 'Branching Out' small grants programme focuses on supporting smaller planting projects, hedges, copses and orchards – establishing the right trees, in the right places, to create greener and healthier local communities, in city and rural locations, for the benefit of the public.

The grants require the involvement of young people and, through the programme, thousands of children have engaged with the wonders of the natural world and started to explore the importance of nature in their everyday lives. They have learnt how to plant and care for trees; increased their knowledge of maths and science; discovered the joy of preparing and eating home-grown produce; and seen the benefits of working together as a team.

Equally importantly, the programme instils an understanding of the importance of trees for the future of our planet and for their own wellbeing – and it nurtures the next generation of active environmentalists.

In 2020/21, we continued to support small planting schemes with existing funds. More than 15,500 trees and hedgerow whips were funded with Branching Out grants and planted with children under the age of 16, in schools and community spaces across the UK. The young people were helped by their parents, teachers and The Tree Council's volunteer Tree Wardens.

Young Learning: National Schools Programme

Learning has underpinned The Tree Council's work for decades, whether it be skills shared with volunteer Tree Wardens, the learning acquired through science and research, or the knowledge acquired by young people benefiting from the charity's community tree planting grants.

Our learning programme has become more formal and strategic in nature following the significant receipt of funds from the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign in 2019. These funds began to be disbursed in 2020/21 as we launched our new National Schools Programme. In June 2020, we appointed a new National Schools Programme Manager and in February 2021, a Programme Officer. The team is responsible for the two programme which include: 'Orchards for Schools' and 'Young Tree Champions'. The National Schools Programme's call to action is to be a #ForceForNature, with young people working together to connect, learn and share the power of trees and nature to help tackle the climate crisis.

Orchards for Schools has already planted 33,000 fruit trees and hedges in nearly 800 schools across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The schools have received a package of teacher training and curriculum-linked resources to support them in planning and learning to care for their trees and share their experiences. A further 1,100 schools have registered to plant with us next season. Online evaluation with participating teachers was very encouraging with 95% of 83 respondents finding the materials and support extremely helpful.

Young Tree Champions secured generous three-year funding from M&G plc and the programme launched in December 2020, in partnership with Speakers Trust, Learning through Landscapes and Derby University. Nearly 100 schools registered for the pilot year including primary, secondary and special schools. The aim of the programme is to inspire teachers and pupils to be a Force for Nature and tackle the climate and nature crisis. Each school benefited from free trees, a tech kit, access to an online hub to network and share activities as well as a comprehensive package of teacher training, support and resources. Pupils also took part in public speaking workshops to build their confidence and help them find their voice and become ambassadors for trees and nature.

In March 2021, the programme was given another wonderful boost with support confirmed by The Kusuma Trust (see 'Looking Forward to 2021/22 & beyond')

Science & Research: Ash Dieback and Oak Processionary Moth

The Tree Council partners with Defra, Fera Science, Forest Research, Network Rail and leading universities on a variety of research programmes that help shape national policy and best practice. We aim to increase knowledge and apply science to establish varied and biodiverse treescapes across Britain, which will be resilient to climate change and pests and diseases.

Our science and action research this year has continued to support government and local authorities in England and Scotland as they tackle threats from ash dieback and Oak Processionary Moth.

- Throughout 2020, we ran a series of workshops with Scottish local authorities, to develop the core resources for a Scottish Ash Dieback Toolkit to complement the England and Wales Toolkits published in 2019. The first draft was completed for Scottish Forestry in March 2021, for publication in June 2021.
- In tandem with our work on ash dieback, we have also focused on helping local authorities manage the risks of Oak Processionary Moth. In a series of sessions with local authorities, we have developed a draft toolkit and tested potential changes to the way the pest is managed, with a more Local Based Risk Approach. The toolkit is due for publication in October 2021.

Science & Research: Local Authority Tree Strategies

A strategic approach is one of the most important factors underpinning well-planned and resourced, thriving treescapes – and yet fewer than one third of local authorities have a tree strategy. This lack of local Tree Strategies has a negative impact on our volunteer Tree Warden networks, who are guided by and work in close cooperation with local Tree Officers.

As large and increasing numbers of local authorities are announcing climate emergencies, we are working with Defra and Fera Science to give practical guidance to help local authorities develop tree strategies for themselves. This work will culminate in a Tree Strategy Toolkit in 2021/22.

Science & Research: Shared Outcomes

This research project with Defra and Natural England aims to establish new techniques to grow 'Trees outside Woodlands' and is funded through Treasury's 'Shared Outcomes Fund'. The project's vision is to develop new ways of expanding bio-secure tree cover at reduced costs, to meet increased UK tree planting ambitions and reverse trends in tree losses. The Tree Council is co-ordinating five pilot schemes with local authority partners looking at: urban tree establishment, agro-forestry and orchards, community tree nurseries, hedgerow tree management, and subsidised planting.

Science & Research: Sentinel Treescapes

This tree-health monitoring project, in partnership with Newcastle University, Fera Science and our Norfolk Tree Wardens, will install 'tree talkers' on the trunks of Sentinel Trees and record data on their health. This year, we have identified the Sentinel Tree sites and started work on an App which will enable the Tree Wardens to download their observations alongside the data provided by the 'Tree Talkers'. This is the first step towards developing a Regional Tree Health Index, using the Sentinel Trees as signposts for the state of the wider health of the tree population.

Partnership: Hedgelink

Hedges are Britain's most widespread Priority Habitat – providing connectivity and homes to more than 130 national priority species. They have a high biodiversity and carbon storage value, as well as helping improve air quality in cities.

The Tree Council is Chair of Hedgelink, the partnership that brings everyone interested in hedgerows together, to share knowledge and ideas, to encourage and inspire, and to work with farmers and other land managers to conserve and enhance our hedgerow heritage.

The partnership comprises nearly 30 organisations including, People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES), Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG), Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), Defra, Woodland Trust, National Farmers Union (NFU) and the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH).

This year, in addition to grant giving for hedgerows and hedgerow trees through our community programme, we have worked with partners to develop joint responses to consultations and policy announcements, such as the England Trees Action Plan and Environmental Land Management (ELM) schemes.

With the launch of 'Close the Gap', hedgerows will become an even more important component of The Tree Council's work going forward.

Partnership: National Representation

The Tree Council chairs or serves on more than a dozen, national, high-level, policy, practice and advisory boards to governments in the UK nations and EU on the topics of tree health/disease, tree safety, habitats, biodiversity, climate change, and tree features. In these fora, we represent the views and concerns of our member organisations, enhancing the operating environment and highlighting issues of concern.

Partnership: Membership

The Tree Council began as an informal coalition of tree organisations at the time Dutch elm swept through the UK and it was instituted as a registered charity in 1973.

This model of collaboration between a diverse range of public, not-for-profit and private bodies united by concern for trees is a powerful one and our membership remains the driver for lobbying, joint consultation responses, campaigning and influencing, helping to develop policy with a stronger, unified voice. We speak with the combined weight and expertise of our member organisations behind us and are generally recognised as the trusted voice of the tree sector.

In 2020/21, working with our charity coalition group, we reviewed and fed back to government on the new England Trees Action Plan (ETAP). Going forward, The Tree Council now sits on the ETAP Delivery Advisory Group. We also organised a cross-sector working group with British Land and MHCLG looking at the impact of planning reforms on urban tree planting.

On 31 March 2021, our membership stood at around 100, including not-for-profit organisations with a national remit (full members); local authorities and Tree Warden networks; consultative members; and commercial enterprises that support our objectives (associate members).

Partnership: The Queen's Green Canopy

In March 2020, The Tree Council was invited to sit on the Urban Greening Advisory Board of The Queen's Green Canopy, a unique tree planting initiative encouraging people across the UK to 'Plant a tree for the Jubilee' in honour of The Queen's 70 years of service to the nation. The Jubilee planting and tree care will take place over two winter seasons, 21/22 and 22/23.

Looking forward to 2021/22 & beyond

Community:

- In 2021, we will continue to work with the Tree Warden Advisory Group and networks of volunteer Tree Wardens to support and develop the Tree Warden Scheme, establishing new networks and supplementing the training programme with new modules relating to hedgerow management.
- We will launch a new National Hedgerow Week in May 2021 to raise public awareness of the importance and value of hedgerows and work with our partners to fulfil the other targets of 'Close the Gap'.

- We will develop our community planting partnership with Network Rail to include more trees in riparian and urban settings and work with groups with special needs.

Young Learning:

- We will continue to roll out the Orchards for Schools programme, establishing orchards and fruiting hedgerows with pupils in around 800 new schools across the UK, and providing teacher training, support and curriculum-related resources.
- Funded by Kusuma Trust, we will appoint and provide training to eight Young Ambassadors as part of our Young Tree Champions programme. The Ambassadors' role will be to inspire young people to become a #ForceForNature
- Our Young Ambassadors will also help develop an online 'Festival for Schools' in July 2021 as an extension of the Young Tree Champions programme, generously supported by M&G

Science & Research:

- We will publish the Ash Dieback Action Plan Toolkit for Scotland in June 2021 in partnership with Forestry Scotland
- We will launch the Oak Processionary Moth Toolkit for local authorities in October/November 2021 in partnership with Defra, Forestry Commission and Forest Research.
- We will launch a toolkit to support local authorities to develop local tree strategies in early 2022 in partnership with Defra, Fera Science and Forestry Commission.

Partnership:

- In 2021, we aim to develop our fundraising strategy with opportunities for individual, corporate and membership support. This will include launching a new Platinum Jubilee Membership to mark the 70th Anniversary of the reign of HM The Queen in partnership with The Queen's Green Canopy.
- The Tree Council has a heritage of convening cross-sector forums to address challenges relating to the tree sector. We aim to hold three such Forums in 2021/22.

Beneficiaries of our services

The beneficiaries of our services include: our volunteers and members; pupils and teachers participating in our National Schools Programme; communities and landowners receiving grant-funding to establish trees; local authorities supported to help tackle tree pests and diseases and plan future tree strategies; our coalition of conservation charities whom we bring together to comment on consultations and address tree-related challenges; and the UK general public who receive the important social benefits of our tree, hedgerow and orchard planting. In addition, our work helps conserve wildlife and habitats, improves biodiversity and contributes to tackling climate change and safeguarding the future health of our planet. All these are covered in greater detail in the achievements and performance section above

Financial review

The Tree Council is entirely self-funding with income generated through grants and gifts from major donors, charitable trusts, corporate partnership, membership fees and legacy giving.

In 2020/21, the charity achieved the most successful financial year in its history, mainly due to grants from Network Rail, Close the Gap and M&G plc which boosted restricted income to £855,668. Restricted expenditure increased by £727,029 to £761,066 so restricted reserves increased by £94,602.

The charity's unrestricted reserves increased by £22,586. Total income for the year was £1,294,902 (compared to £1,063,358 the previous year) and total expenditure was £1,177,714 (compared to £510,660 last year).

Unrestricted reserves at the end of the financial year were £278,979 and restricted reserves (mainly tree planting funds) were £801,138. Total reserves were £1,080,117.

The 'Tree Angel' campaign had a long-term beneficial effect on The Tree Council's financial stability, as did the multi-year partnerships agreed with Network Rail and M&G, combined with other corporate support.

Reserves policy and going concern

It is the policy of the Tree Council to maintain unrestricted funds at a level which equates to at least six months core costs. The budgeted core costs for 2020/21 are about £470,000 and so unrestricted reserves at £278,979 are currently equivalent to over seven months of core costs.

The Trustees continue to keep the risks facing The Tree Council under close review and ensure that costs are carefully controlled. The Trustees continue to keep all the reserves in the form of interest-earning bank accounts and deposits.

The Trustees, as part of their continuous risk assessment, monitor the implications of the current Covid-19 pandemic and their normal activities. The Tree Council has generated many new contracts during the pandemic and is confident of its ability to operate as a going concern. Specifically, the Trustees reviewed the charity's profitability and cash flows in September 2021 and confirm that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

Risk Assessment

The Board maintains a risk assessment system which is based on a numerical assessment of risk, with an accompanying management commentary. Trustees consider these reports regularly both for the organisation as a whole and for major projects. The aim is to highlight and measure potential risks to the success of an activity or process, assess the impact, and put in place appropriate management action. The system encompasses all areas of our activities, although the

continuing increased projects and programmes with corporate partners marks this area out for ongoing development.

Accordingly, we can confirm that the major risks to which the Council is exposed have been reviewed and systems are in place to mitigate those risks.

Fundraising

The charity's fundraising objective was to reach £1m sustainable annual income by 2021, of which c25% to be unrestricted. This has been achieved and will enable us to develop and, in the longer-term, establish ambitious programmes for public benefit in our four key areas of work: Community Action, Young Learning, Practical Science & Research, and Partnership. After achieving £1m income for the first-time last year, we increased income by over 20% this year (with little significant additional fundraising expenditure) and are working towards higher income for the next two years, although there is still much work to be done to ensure ongoing and vital unrestricted funds.

The current approach focuses on a mix of corporate partnerships, research applications and philanthropic fundraising. Our fundraising does not include direct marketing or telephone campaigns and we remain mindful at all times of the need to safeguard vulnerable people.

The Tree Council does not use professional fundraisers or agencies and received no complaints in this financial year.

Structure, governance and management

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5 December 1979 and registered as a charity on 17 December 1979.

The company was established under a memorandum of association which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its articles of association.

All Trustees give their time voluntarily and receive no benefits from the charity. The Trustees have not claimed any expenses.

The members of the Board of Trustees meet regularly to review its affairs, review the charity's aims, objectives and activities, as well as report on the benefits for the public good. In early 2020, the Board established a Finance Committee, chaired by the Treasurer, to oversee the charity's financial affairs, to report to the Board and make recommendations as appropriate at each meeting.

The Chief Executive, Sara Lom, together with the Senior Team comprising the Director of Trees, Science & Research, the Director of Programmes, Partnerships & Comms and the Director of Finance manage the day-to-day administration of the charity.

I would like to thank our outgoing Trustee, Margaret Holland-Prior, for her outstanding support and my fellow Trustees for their wonderful commitment and shared expertise.

We have continued the increase in core staff & have welcomed Sam Village, Richard Pollard, Lewis Morrison, Gemma Woodfall, Louise Bowe, Dominic Quinn and Juliette Colaco, during the year. Many thanks to the ongoing team, Sara Lom, Jon Stokes, Clare Bowen, Holly Chetan-Welsh, Harriet Rix & Geraldine Creaven who juggle daily deadlines and a wide range of national projects and programmes – always with enthusiasm, professionalism and smiles on their faces.

Appointment of Trustees

The Tree Council subscribes to the seven principles of the Nolan Rules in appointing trustees. These are: selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. In addition, the Tree Council looks for the following qualities, skills and experience:

- An appreciation of the importance of trees and the environment
- A willingness to make the time commitment to attend Board meetings, strategic review meetings and other related meetings and activities, including familiarisation with the work of the Council
- An ability to think strategically, formulate direction for the organisation and support management
- An ability to contribute to board discussions, seek advice, exercise sound judgement and contribute to good governance
- A willingness to use their networks on behalf of the Council, in advocacy, fund-raising (including pro bono contributions), public affairs and communications

The number of Trustees is required to be no less than three, with no maximum number. One third of Trustees retire at each annual meeting and are eligible for reappointment, subject to the provision in the Articles that Trustees shall normally serve for no more than six years.

The Board is responsible for ensuring that an appropriate succession strategy is adopted for the replacement of Trustees. The Chair and Chief Executive take responsibility for informing the Board when new Trustees need to be appointed.

In order to identify Trustees, when a vacancy is about to occur, the Chair and Chief Executive review the balance of skills, attributes and experience on the current Board relative to the future needs of the organisation. Trustees are appointed to ensure the positive evolution of the charity. Prior to appointment, new Trustees meet formally with at least two current Trustees and usually attend at least one Board Meeting as an observer.

Induction for new Trustees is carried out by the Chief Executive and includes familiarisation with people, activities and events over a number of months.

Remuneration policy for key management personnel

The Tree Council formed a Remunerations Committee, consisting of 3 appropriately experienced Trustees, during the year, to review the remuneration of all employees, based on market data and performance.

Statement of responsibilities of the Trustees

The Trustees (who are also directors of The Tree Council for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' annual report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law 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 period. 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
- State whether applicable UK Accounting Standards and statements of recommended practice 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 charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

In so far as the Trustees are aware:

- There is no relevant audit information of which the charitable company's auditor is unaware
- The Trustees have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditor is aware of that information

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The Tree Council

Trustees' annual report

For the year ended 31 March 2021

Our 14 (2020 14) Constitutional Members guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £10 to the assets of the charity in the event of winding up. The Trustees are members of the charity but this entitles them only to voting rights. The Trustees have no beneficial interest in the charity.

Auditor

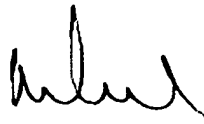
Sayer Vincent LLP was appointed as the charitable company's auditor during the year and has expressed its willingness to continue in that capacity.

The Trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

The Trustees' annual report has been approved by the Trustees on 12 October 2021 and signed on their behalf by



Joel Cadbury
Chairman



Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

The Tree Council

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Tree Council (the 'charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2021 which comprise the statement of financial activities, balance sheet, statement of cash flows and notes to the financial statements, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including FRS 102 *The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland* (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- Give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2021 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended
- Have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice
- Have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on The Tree Council's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

The Tree Council

Other Information

The other information comprises the information included in the trustees' annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinions on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- The information given in the trustees' annual report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- The trustees' annual report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the trustees' annual report. We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- Adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- The financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- Certain disclosures of trustees' remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- We have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- The directors were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies regime and take advantage of the small companies' exemptions in preparing the trustees' annual report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the statement of trustees' responsibilities set out in the trustees' annual report, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

The Tree Council

company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud are set out below.

Capability of the audit in detecting irregularities

In identifying and assessing risks of material misstatement in respect of irregularities, including fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations, our procedures included the following:

- We enquired of management, which included obtaining and reviewing supporting documentation, concerning the charity's policies and procedures relating to:
 - Identifying, evaluating, and complying with laws and regulations and whether they were aware of any instances of non-compliance;
 - Detecting and responding to the risks of fraud and whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected, or alleged fraud;
 - The internal controls established to mitigate risks related to fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations.
- We inspected the minutes of meetings of those charged with governance.
- We obtained an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework that the charity operates in, focusing on those laws and regulations that had a material effect on the financial statements or that had a fundamental effect on the operations of the charity from our professional and sector experience.

Independent auditor's report

To the members of

The Tree Council

- We communicated applicable laws and regulations throughout the audit team and remained alert to any indications of non-compliance throughout the audit.
- We reviewed any reports made to regulators.
- We reviewed the financial statement disclosures and tested these to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations.
- We performed analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud.
- In addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls, we tested the appropriateness of journal entries and other adjustments, assessed whether the judgements made in making accounting estimates are indicative of a potential bias and tested significant transactions that are unusual or those outside the normal course of business.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities is available on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor's report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's members as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's members those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and the charitable company's members as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Fleur Holden (Senior statutory auditor)

10 November 2021

for and on behalf of Sayer Vincent LLP, Statutory Auditor

Invicta House, 108–114 Golden Lane, LONDON, EC1Y 0TL

The Tree Council

Statement of financial activities (incorporating an income and expenditure account)

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
Income from:							
Donations and legacies	2	39,504	-	39,504	56,829	-	56,829
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting		-	712,868	712,868	-	668,260	668,260
Science, education and community	3	396,708	142,800	539,508	331,148	-	331,148
Investments	4	392	-	392	589	-	589
Other		2,629	-	2,629	6,532	-	6,532
Total income		439,234	855,668	1,294,902	395,098	668,260	1,063,358
Expenditure on:							
Raising funds	5	139,540	19,838	159,378	100,548	-	100,548
Charitable activities							
Tree and hedge planting	5	56,266	741,228	797,495	138,372	34,037	172,409
Science, education and community	5	220,842	-	220,842	237,703	-	237,703
Total expenditure		416,648	761,066	1,177,714	476,623	34,037	510,660
Net income / (expenditure)		22,586	94,602	117,187	(81,525)	634,223	552,698
Transfer between funds		-	-	-	72,880	(72,880)	-
Net movement in funds		22,586	94,602	117,187	(8,645)	561,343	552,698
Reconciliation of funds:							
Total funds brought forward		256,393	706,536	962,930	265,038	145,193	410,231
Total funds carried forward		278,979	801,138	1,080,117	256,393	706,536	962,929

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 18a to the financial statements."

The Tree Council

Balance sheet

Company no. 01459056

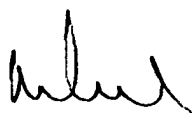
As at 31 March 2021

	Note	£	2021 £	£	2020 £
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	12		<u>3,859</u>		<u>6,946</u>
			3,859		6,946
Current assets:					
Debtors	13	153,620		184,223	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>1,149,210</u>		<u>832,921</u>	
		1,302,831		1,017,144	
Liabilities:					
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	14	<u>(226,574)</u>		<u>(61,161)</u>	
Net current assets			<u>1,076,257</u>		<u>955,983</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			<u>1,080,117</u>		<u>962,929</u>
Total net assets			<u><u>1,080,117</u></u>		<u><u>962,929</u></u>
The funds of the charity:	17a				
Restricted income funds			801,138		706,536
Unrestricted income funds:					
General funds		<u>278,979</u>		<u>256,393</u>	
Total unrestricted funds			<u>278,979</u>		<u>256,393</u>
Total charity funds			<u><u>1,080,117</u></u>		<u><u>962,929</u></u>

Approved by the trustees on 12 October 2021 and signed on their behalf by:



Joel Cadbury
Chairman



Andrew Fenwick
Treasurer

The Tree Council

Statement of cash flows

For the year ended 31 March 2021

	Note	2021 £	£	2020 £	£
Cash flows from operating activities					
Net income for the reporting period (as per the statement of financial activities)		117,187		552,698	
Depreciation charges		4,941		4,112	
(Increase)/decrease in debtors		30,603		(99,603)	
Increase/(decrease) in creditors		165,413		18,776	
Net cash provided by operating activities		318,144		475,983	
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of fixed assets		(1,854)		(1,798)	
Net cash used in investing activities		(1,854)		(1,798)	
Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year		316,289		474,185	
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		832,921		358,736	
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year		1,149,210		832,921	
Analysis of cash and cash equivalents					
	At 1 April 2020 £	Cash flows £	Other non- cash changes £	At 31 March 2021 £	
Cash at bank and in hand	832,921	316,289	-	1,149,210	
Total cash and cash equivalents	832,921	316,289	-	1,149,210	

1 Accounting policies

a) Statutory information

The Tree Council is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is incorporated in England and Wales.

The registered office address is 4 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, LONDON, SE16 2XU

b) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) – (Charities SORP FRS 102), The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy or note.

In applying the financial reporting framework, the trustees have made a number of subjective judgements, for example in respect of significant accounting estimates. Estimates and judgements are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances. The nature of the estimation means the actual outcomes could differ from those estimates. Any significant estimates and judgements affecting these financial statements are detailed within the relevant accounting policy below.

c) Public benefit entity

The charity meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102.

d) Going concern

The trustees have considered the current covid-19 pandemic and their normal activities and confirm that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. In particular they have reviewed the future cash flows and commitments and have ascertained that there are sufficient unrestricted reserves and future cash flows to confirm that the charity is a going concern.

Key judgements that the charity has made which have a significant effect on the accounts include estimating the liability for multi-year grant commitments

The trustees do not consider that there are any sources of estimation uncertainty at the reporting date that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next reporting period.

e) Income

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

Income from government and other grants, whether 'capital' grants or 'revenue' grants, is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the grants have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably and is not deferred.

For legacies, entitlement is taken as the earlier of the date on which either: the charity is aware that probate has been granted, the estate has been finalised and notification has been made by the executor(s) to the charity that a distribution will be made, or when a distribution is received from the estate. Receipt of a legacy, in whole or in part, is only considered probable when the amount can be measured reliably and the charity has been notified of the executor's intention to make a distribution. Where legacies have been notified to the charity, or the charity is aware of the granting of probate, and the criteria for income recognition have not been met, then the legacy is treated as a contingent asset and disclosed if material.

Income received in advance of the provision of a specified service is deferred until the criteria for income recognition are met.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

f) Donations of gifts, services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item or received the service, any conditions associated with the donation have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity of the item is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102), volunteer time is not recognised so refer to the trustees' annual report for more information about their contribution.

On receipt, donated gifts, professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charity which is the amount the charity would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

g) Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charity; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the bank.

h) Fund accounting

Restricted funds are to be used for specific purposes as laid down by the donor. Expenditure which meets these criteria is charged to the fund.

Unrestricted funds are donations and other incoming resources received or generated for the charitable purposes.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

i) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following activity headings:

- Costs of raising funds relate to the costs incurred by the charity in inducing third parties to make voluntary contributions to it, as well as the cost of any activities with a fundraising purpose
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of delivering services, exhibitions and other educational activities undertaken to further the purposes of the charity and their associated support costs
- Other expenditure represents those items not falling into any other heading

Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

j) Grants payable

Grants payable are made to third parties in furtherance of the charity's objects. Single or multi-year grants are accounted for when either the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and the trustees have agreed to pay the grant without condition, or the recipient has a reasonable expectation that they will receive a grant and that any condition attaching to the grant is outside of the control of the charity.

Provisions for grants are made when the intention to make a grant has been communicated to the recipient but there is uncertainty about either the timing of the grant or the amount of grant payable.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

k) Allocation of support costs

Resources expended are allocated to the particular activity where the cost relates directly to that activity. However, the cost of overall direction and administration of each activity, comprising the salary and overhead costs of the central function, is apportioned on the following basis which are an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity.

Where information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is provided to potential beneficiaries, the costs associated with this publicity are allocated to charitable expenditure.

Where such information about the aims, objectives and projects of the charity is also provided to potential donors, activity costs are apportioned between fundraising and charitable activities on the basis of salary time by each activity each year. For this year the percentages are

● Tree and hedge planting	38%
● Education and community activities	24%
● Fundraising	21%
● Support costs	12%
● Governance costs	5%

Support and governance costs are re-allocated to each of the activities on the following basis which is an estimate, based on staff time, of the amount attributable to each activity

● Tree and hedge planting	46%
● Education and community activities	29%
● Fundraising	25%

Governance costs are the costs associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. These costs are associated with constitutional and statutory requirements and include any costs associated with the strategic management of the charity's activities.

l) Operating leases

Rental charges are charged on a straight line basis over the term of the lease.

m) Tangible fixed assets

Items of equipment are capitalised where the purchase price exceeds £500. Depreciation costs are allocated to activities on the basis of the use of the related assets in those activities. Assets are reviewed for impairment if circumstances indicate their carrying value may exceed their net realisable value and value in use.

Where fixed assets have been revalued, any excess between the revalued amount and the historic cost of the asset will be shown as a revaluation reserve in the balance sheet.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write down the cost of each asset to its estimated residual value over its expected useful life. Fixtures & Fittings and Office & Computer Equipment are depreciated over 3 years.

n) Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

o) Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and cash in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

p) Creditors and provisions

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

1 Accounting policies (continued)

q) Financial instruments

The charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value

2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
Donations and legacies	10,440	-	10,440	26,088	-	26,088
Friends of the Tree Council	23,034	-	23,034	13,401	-	13,401
Subscriptions	6,030	-	6,030	17,340	-	17,340
	<u>39,504</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>39,504</u>	<u>56,829</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>56,829</u>

3 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
Tree and hedge planting						
Network Rail	-	395,000	395,000	-	-	-
Close the Gap	-	250,000	250,000	-	-	-
Tree planting grants	-	58,268	58,268	20,000	668,260	688,260
Science, education and community						
M & G	-	142,800	142,800	-	-	-
Kusuma Trust	-	9,600	9,600	-	-	-
Consultancy	396,708	-	396,708	311,148	-	311,148
Total income from charitable activities	<u>396,708</u>	<u>855,668</u>	<u>1,252,376</u>	<u>331,148</u>	<u>668,260</u>	<u>999,408</u>

4 Income from investments

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2021 Total £	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2020 Total £
Income from cash deposits	392	-	392	589	-	589
	<u>392</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>392</u>	<u>589</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>589</u>

The Tree Council

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

5a Analysis of expenditure (current year)

	Charitable activities					2021 Total £	2020 Total £
	Raising funds £	Tree and hedge planting £	Science, Education and community involvement £	Governance costs £	Support costs £		
Staff costs (Note 8)	90,899	191,672	165,538	37,749	44,328	530,185	355,921
Tree Warden Scheme	-	-	7,611	-	-	7,611	12,844
Office and Facility costs	-	-	-	-	25,843	25,843	48,234
Grants Payable (Note 6)	-	503,884	-	-	-	503,884	33,617
Audit and other governance costs	-	600	-	8,691	-	9,291	8,690
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	-	24,921	-	-	17,610	42,531	2,336
Website, IT, data management & telephone costs	-	-	-	-	21,483	21,483	13,507
Marketing and Brand costs	27,962	-	-	-	-	27,962	9,841
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	4,941	4,941	4,112
Travel costs	258	2,343	993	-	388	3,983	21,559
	119,120	723,420	174,142	46,440	114,593	1,177,714	510,660
Support costs	28,648	52,713	33,232	-	(114,593)	-	-
Governance costs	11,610	21,362	13,467	(46,440)	-	-	-
Total expenditure 2021	159,378	797,495	220,842	-	-	1,177,714	
Total expenditure 2020	100,548	100,548	237,703	-	-		510,660

The Tree Council

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

5b Analysis of expenditure (prior year)

		Charitable activities				
	Raising funds £	Tree and hedge planting £	Science, Education and community involvement £	Governance costs £	Support costs £	2020 Total £
Staff costs (Note 8)	42,663	92,371	158,885	21,277	40,725	355,921
Tree Warden Scheme	-	-	12,844	-	-	12,844
Office and Facility costs	-	-	-	-	48,234	48,234
Grants Payable (Note 6)	-	33,617	-	-	-	33,617
Audit and other governance costs	-	-	-	8,690	-	8,690
Recruitment, Training & Consultancy	-	-	-	-	2,336	2,336
Website, IT,data management & telephone costs	-	-	-	-	13,507	13,507
Marketing and Brand costs	9,841	-	-	-	-	9,841
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	4,112	4,112
Travel costs	2,596	11,235	-	-	7,728	21,559
	55,100	137,223	171,729	29,967	116,642	510,660
Support costs	36,159	27,994	52,489	-	(116,642)	-
Governance costs	9,290	7,192	13,485	(29,967)	-	-
Total expenditure 2020	100,548	172,409	237,703	-	-	510,660

The Tree Council

Notes to the financial statements

For the year ended 31 March 2021

6a Grant making (current year)

	Grants to institutions £	Support costs £	2021 £
Cost			
Network Rail	277,257	-	277,257
M & G	43,194	-	43,194
Schools & community groups	183,433	-	183,433
At the end of the year	503,884	-	503,884

During 2021 and 2020 the Tree Council used an internal committee to assess grant applications as well as having a joint committee with Network Rail for the grants made from their restricted funds. The most significant individual grants were Farming and Wildlife Advosory Group South West £32,987, Harting Parish Council £32,179 & Another Way Cumbria £31,229.

6b Grant making (prior year)

	Grants to institutions £	Support costs £	2020 £
Cost			
Schools, community groups and Good Gifts Guide	33,617	420	34,037
At the end of the year	33,617	420	34,037

7 Net income for the year

This is stated after charging / (crediting):

	2021 £	2020 £
Depreciation	4,941	4,112
Auditor's remuneration (excluding VAT):		
Audit	7,750	7,600

8 Analysis of staff costs, trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

Staff costs were as follows:

	2021 £	2020 £
Salaries and wages	456,642	306,212
National insurance	44,389	29,427
Employer's contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	29,154	20,282
	<u>530,185</u>	<u>355,921</u>

The following number of employees received employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs and employer's national insurance) during the year between:

	2021 No.	2020 No.
£60,000 – £69,999	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>

The total employee benefits (including pension contributions and employer's national insurance) of the key management personnel were £236,125 (2020: £221,025).

The charity trustees were neither paid nor received any other benefits from employment with the charity in the year (2020: £nil). No charity trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2020: £nil).

There were no payments to trustees for expenses (2020: nil).

9 Staff numbers

The average number of employees (head count based on number of staff employed) during the year was 12.2 (2020: 7.6).

Staff are split across the activities of the charity as follows (full time equivalent basis):

	2021 No.	2020 No.
Education and Community	2.8	2.4
Fundraising and publicity	2.5	1.6
Tree planting	4.5	1.2
Support	1.4	1.1
Governance	0.6	0.3
	<u>11.7</u>	<u>6.6</u>

10 Related party transactions

There are no related party transactions to disclose for 2021 (2020: none).

There are no donations from related parties which are outside the normal course of business and no restricted donations from related parties.

11 Taxation

The charity is exempt from corporation tax as all its income is charitable and is applied for charitable purposes.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and furniture £	Office and computer equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At the start of the year	2,838	38,413	41,251
Additions in year	-	1,854	1,854
At the end of the year	2,838	40,267	43,105
Depreciation			
At the start of the year	2,838	31,467	34,305
Charge for the year	-	4,941	4,941
At the end of the year	2,838	36,408	39,246
Net book value			
At the end of the year	-	3,859	3,859
At the start of the year	-	6,946	6,946

All of the above assets are used for charitable purposes.

13 Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Grants and sponsorship receivable	140,249	112,923
Prepayments and other debtors	11,832	11,368
Accrued income	1,539	59,932
	153,620	184,223

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade creditors	134,033	6,626
Taxation and social security	66,372	38,708
Accruals	26,169	15,827
	226,574	61,161

15 Pension scheme

The company pays 7% to nest for its employees, and the employee contributes 1% in compliance with the rules of auto enrolment.

16a Analysis of net assets between funds (current year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	3,859	-	-	3,859
Net current assets	275,120		801,138	1,076,258
Net assets at 31 December 2021	278,979	-	801,138	1,080,117

16b Analysis of net assets between funds (prior year)

	General unrestricted £	Designated £	Restricted £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	6,946	-	-	6,946
Net current assets	249,447		706,536	955,983
Net assets at 31 December 2020	256,393	-	706,536	962,929

17a Movements in funds (current year)

	At 1 April 2020 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2021 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	141,195	18,970	(50,902)	-	109,263
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	110,237	-	(28,587)	-	81,650
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	-	-	-	10,411
Tree Angel Planting Funds	39,821	14,098	(1,570)	-	52,349
Orchards for Schools	404,244	-	(112,201)	-	292,043
Special Assignment Fund	628	-	-	-	628
Network Rail Fund	-	395,000	(393,193)	-	1,807
M & G Fund	-	142,800	(113,361)	-	29,439
Siemens Fund	-	25,200	(5,410)	-	19,790
Close the Gap Fund	-	250,000	(54,882)	-	195,118
Kusuma Trust Fund	-	9,600	(960)	-	8,640
Total restricted funds	706,536	855,668	(761,066)	-	801,138
General funds	256,393	439,234	(416,648)	-	278,979
Total unrestricted funds	256,393	439,234	(416,648)	-	278,979
Total funds	962,929	1,294,902	(1,177,714)	-	1,080,117

The narrative to explain the purpose of each fund is given at the foot of the note below.

17b Movements in funds (prior year)

	At 2 April 2019 £	Income & gains £	Expenditure & losses £	Transfers £	At 31 March 2020 £
Restricted funds:					
Branching Out 1	134,154	46,676	(30,300)	(9,335)	141,195
Vernon Hill Branching Out 2	-	125,000	(2,263)	(12,500)	110,237
Good Gifts Guide	10,411	-	-	-	10,411
Special Assignment Fund	628	-	-	-	628
Tree Angel Planting Funds	-	46,584	(718)	(6,045)	39,821
Orchards for Schools	-	450,000	(756)	(45,000)	404,244
Total restricted funds	145,193	668,260	(34,037)	(72,880)	706,536
Unrestricted funds:					
General funds	265,038	395,098	(476,623)	72,880	256,393
Total unrestricted funds	265,038	395,098	(476,623)	72,880	256,393
Total funds	410,231	1,063,358	(510,660)	-	962,929

Purposes of restricted funds

The Branching Out 1 Tree Planting Funds are for planting with schools and community groups. The majority of the funds have been donated by an anonymous donor's Charitable Trust.

The Vernon Hill Branching Out 2 Tree Planting Funds are for planting projects for schools and community groups. The Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Vernon Hill to the Daily Mail 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Good Gifts Catalogue makes grants to the Tree Council for the planting of oak saplings, bluebell woods and meadows of flowers.

The Special Assignment Fund is to carry out specific tree research projects in overseas countries.

Tree Angel Funds are dedicated to a variety of tree planting and have been funded by public and corporate gifts to the 'Be a Tree Angel' campaign.

The Orchards for Schools Funds are to fund orchards and fruiting hedgerows planting in schools. The fund was created following generous gifts from Lord Sugar, Richard Caring and Sir Jony Ive plus an anonymous donor following the Daily Mail campaign.

The Network Rail Fund is a four-year programme of community tree and hedgerow planting in cities and the countryside, mainly in England.

M&G Fund is a three-year programme dedicated to inspiring young people in schools across the UK to become Young Tree Champions and to gain the skills to become a #ForceForNature

The Green Recovery Fund supports an 18-month programme, 'Close the Gap', to establish bigger, healthier, better connected hedgerows and hedgerow trees in England, working with Defra, National Lottery Heritage Fund and five charity partners

The Welsh Trees Siemens fund is dedicated to a tree planting project with the local community at Wolf's Castle in Pembrokeshire

The Kusuma Trust funds The Tree Council's Young Ambassadors programme

18 Operating lease commitments payable as a lessee

The charity's total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases is as follows for each of the following periods

	Land and buildings	
	2021	2020
	£	£
Within one year	-	22,200
	-	22,200

19 Legal status of the charity

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. The liability of each member in the event of winding up is limited to £10.