ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

England & Wales · Charity number 516925

Details

Other names	ACORN FARM
Status	Registered
Legal form	Charitable company
Company number	01934024
Registered	1986-03-04
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Acorn Venture Urban Farm Depot Road Liverpool L33 3AR
Phone	01515481524
Email	info@acornfarm.co.uk
Website	www.acornfarm.co.uk

Activities

Objects: 1. TO RELIEVE AND ASSIST PERSONS WHO HAVE BEEN DESIGNATED AS HAVING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AS DEFINED IN THE EDUCATION ACT 1996 BY PROVIDING FACILITIES FOR EDUCATION, RE-HABILITATION, TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT OF SUCH PERSONS UNDER SHELTERED CONDITIONS. 2. TO PROVIDE, IN THE INTEREST OF SOCIAL WELFARE, FACILITIES FOR THE RECREATION OF OTHER LEISURE TIME OCCUPATIONS FOR SUCH PERSONS WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THEIR CONDITIONS OF LIFE. 3. TO PROMOTE ANY OTHER CHARITABLE PURPOSE FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE COMMUNITY

Activities: Wide range on animals to stroke and feed, animal petting pavilion, shop-selling home produce free range meat,eggs,ice cream, Cafe, plant sales, woodland walk, play area, horse rides/RDA, birthday party room hire, day care service for people with special needs, special events throughout the year i.e halloween night, xmas grotto.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services
- **What:** Education/training, Disability, Animals, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Children/young People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- **Area of benefit:** THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF KNOWSLEY
- Knowsley

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£1,192,411	£763,582	£3,168,019	35
2023-12-31	£653,010	£471,809	£2,590,359	29
2022-12-31	£706,459	£440,310	£2,511,989	24
2021-12-31	£485,299	£339,377	-	-
2020-12-31	£382,065	£363,689	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
CHRISTOPHER JOHN RODERICK	Chair	2012-01-16
Aiden Daniel Burke		2019-01-17
Andrew Peter Ware		2019-01-17
Fiona Hartshorne		2023-01-12
Raymond Terence Muspratt		2019-04-04
Robert Vivian Rishworth		2014-12-04

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

England & Wales - Charity number 516925

Accounts

Charity Registration No. 516925
Company Registration No. 01934024 (England and Wales)

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY

ANNUAL REPORT AND CONSOLIDATED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Secretary	T J Trumble
Charity number	516925
Company number	01934024
Registered office	Acorn Venture Farm Depot Road Kirkby Knowsley Merseyside L33 3AR
Independent Auditor	JS. Audit Limited James House Stonecross Business Park Yew Tree Way Warrington Cheshire WA3 3JD
Bankers	National Westminster Bank Plc Aintree Black Bull Corner of Longmoor Lane and Cedar Road Aintree Liverpool L9 0EG

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The Trustees have pleasure in presenting their annual report, which also contains the requirements of a directors' report under the Companies Act 2006, and the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 and comply with the Charity's governing document, the Companies Act 2006 and "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 ("FRS102") (effective 1 January 2019). Legal and administrative details are provided on a separate information page at the front of these financial statements.

Objectives and activities
Our Aim
To provide a high quality, affordable and inclusive resource for the local community.

We believe that everyone has a valued social role to play within their community and therefore we provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities and young people to fully participate in the day to day running of the farm.

Public Benefit
We review our aims, objectives, and activities each year. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's Charities and Public Benefit document. All of our charitable activities focus on the provision of skills development and recreational opportunities for persons designated as having special needs and the promotion of other charitable purposes for the benefit of the community.

A recent comment from a visitor which stated, "Will definitely be back. Amazing value... £15 for 2 adults, 2 kids and pet food" suggests that we are succeeding in providing public benefit.

This annual report sums up what we have achieved and the outcomes of our work in the year to 31 December 2024. It looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits which they have brought to those groups of people which we are set up to help.

Achievements & Performance
a) Daytime Support Programme
One of the major ways we fulfil our aims is in the running of our very successful daytime activities programme for people with special needs. We currently provide 100 placements per week to 37 different individuals. This results in us having a maximum of 20 individuals who we support attending the farm each day and ensures that each individual gains maximum benefit from the time that they spend here.

Most individuals now purchase the service through their personal budget. This is either done on their behalf by the local authority via the Internal Service Fund or by the individual themselves via a Direct Payment. However, we still have service level agreements for the provision of community support services with several local authorities.

This service continues to be well attended and has been here for many years. This suggests that they are very happy at Acorn.

The charity is well supported by its board of trustees and is led by a highly experienced and respected management team.

Our daytime activities programme includes:

Horticulture
Horticultural activities range from the production and selling of bedding plants and hanging baskets to maintaining the sensory garden, lawns, and flower beds.

Conservation activities include maintaining the woodland walk, which is widely used by visitors as our overflow car park is accessed through this area and the tree shelterbelt.

Farm Maintenance
Farm Maintenance tasks around the farm site include building animal shelters, repairing benches and picnic tables, flagging, fencing, plumbing and painting.

Animal Care
Activities include collecting and grading the eggs and feeding and mucking out the animals.

During school holidays additional activities include assisting in the small animal petting sessions and giving horse rides to visitors to the farm.

Although we have these three specific daytime support programmes Acorn Farm is a truly inclusive project. Therefore, individuals with disabilities are involved in every aspect of running the farm on a daily basis.

Young People
We continue to enable young people to volunteer at the farm at weekends. Under the supervision of the Weekend Manager, they help to run the farm, carrying out all the tasks from caring for the animals to helping with horse rides and in the small animal petting area.

We have an average of eight young people who help out each day and a waiting list of those who would like to volunteer. Taking on these responsibilities enables them to develop their self-esteem and sense of pride in their community and consequently encourages them to become responsible citizens.

b) Plant Sales
We had another busy plant sales season. The high quality of the plants together with the competitive pricing and outstanding customer service has led to a large number of customers returning year after year. The success of this enterprise is a credit to our Horticultural Unit Manager Mike Taylor and his team.

Although the vast majority of the plants are sold in the spring and summer we do have plants, tubs, baskets, and perennials on sale throughout the year.

This enterprise is run parallel to the horticultural daytime programme.

c) Livestock
The farm's livestock continue to be a major attraction for everyone involved, including our visitors.

During the year 11 lambs were born to our ewes which included 1 set of triplets and 4 sets of twins.

Pearl the pygmy goat gave birth to twins, male and female. They were named Ryder and Ruby after Thomas Ryder (CEO) from Applied Nutrition.

Doris the Gloucester Old Spot sow gave birth to a litter of 12 piglets and Mabel the Duroc cross sow gave birth to a litter of 8 piglets within 3 weeks of each other in June. They were all identical, black and white, the spitting image of dad Billybob who is a Saddleback Boar. Watching them play provided much joy to all who saw them.

Lola and Jimmy, the horses, continue to put plenty of smiles on little faces every weekend and during school holidays when they give horse rides to visiting children.

The meerkat continues to be very popular and she keeps us busy filling in the holes she has dug.

Our four miniature Southdown Sheep have now retired from going out to schools as part of our Animobile project. Annie (Herdwick) and Jasper (Ram) take it in turns now to go out to the schools.

We purchased 2 new calves in July from Market Drayton Market. A competition was held on Facebook to name the calves; the winning names were Boris and Bruce.

All the animals on the farm are cared for during the week by the people who we support and at the weekends by our young volunteers.

The animal sponsorship scheme, which we operate, continues to be popular and helps us to offset the cost of keeping the animals. Sponsors are rewarded with a certificate, a visitor's pass to the farm, a photograph of their animal, birthday and Christmas cards and a mention on the Roll of Honour on our website. We have extended the scheme to enable sponsors to add the cost of a bale of hay or straw or a bag of animal feed onto their sponsorships.

d) Visitor Facilities and Attractions
Horse Rides
This activity is very popular with visitors. We do horse rides every weekend throughout the year as well as during school holidays. Bookings may also be made by groups during term time. During the period we were open the horses have given rides to 8,060 children.

Small Animal Petting Sessions
This attraction continues to be extremely popular with many repeat visitors. Over 21,546 people attended sessions during the period covered by this report. Activities include stroking a rabbit, guinea pig and a pet rat, holding a bantam hen, and feeding Toby, Teddy, and Paddy the pygmy goats. The petting area is open to visitors every weekend and bank holiday and every day during school holidays.

e) Educational services
All the activities below are promoted and delivered by our Education Worker, Marie Moulsdale.

School Visits/Guided Tours
We hosted 1,684 visitors from 48 establishments which include mother and toddler groups, nurseries, and primary schools.

Incubator Hire
We have five incubators available for hire to schools and other registered groups. We supply the whole package including incubator, brooder, fertile eggs and feed. We are able to take the resultant chicks back where the hens join our laying flock producing free range eggs for sale in our shop. The incubators were hired out a total of six times over the 3-month period and 12 dozen eggs were distributed to schools with their own incubator.

Animobile (Mobile Farm Unit)
This is a hugely successful project whereby we take a selection of the farm animals out to groups in the community who would otherwise have difficulty accessing our services. These include children's centres, nursery schools, residential and nursing homes, and community fun days as well as mainstream and special schools.

The selection of animals taken includes a goat, sheep, hen, duck, rabbit, guinea pigs and pet rats. Lambs, goat kids, ducklings and chicks are also taken when available. Over the period covered in this report, the Animobile made 41 visits seeing a total of 2,735 people. Demand for this service always exceeds the number of sessions which we are able to deliver during our peak season.

Animal Handling Workshops
This topic is appropriate for secondary school pupils studying animal-based courses.

Each group of students participates in an animal handling workshop which can include working with the horses, sheep and goats.

The horse workshop entails learning about health and safety around horses before grooming and tacking up Lola and Jimmy and leading them around the arena.

The sheep workshop entails the students safely fitting the harness and lead rope on to the sheep and individually walking them around the field in a controlled manner. They then muck out the sheep shed and, using teamwork, herd the sheep into the shed.

The goat workshop entails looking at the different breeds of goat that we have on the farm. Safe and appropriate ways of handling and restraining them are demonstrated and practised. A foot trimming demonstration is also given.

Each group is given information about the animals they are working with and encouraged to ask questions.

Farm themed Activity Days
We held 7 'Farm Experience Days' and 3 'Horse Days' this year. They were attended by 94 young people who thoroughly enjoyed themselves, as well as learning new skills.

f) Events
Halloween
This year we held our daytime event on the Friday of Halloween. Activities included Halloween themed games; Feed the ghost, Witches Broomsticks, Pin the nose onto the Skeleton, Splat the rat. We also held a fancy dress competition. The lambing shed was converted into a fabulous spooky Haunted House with real live 'ghosts' and ghouls! The event was a huge success with 756 people attending. We were greatly helped on the day by a team of corporate volunteers from Co-op, friends, and family of Acorn Farm's Staff.

Christmas Grotto
This was open for 3 weeks in the lead up to Christmas for pre-booked school visits and also over 2 weekends for visitors to the farm. The lambing shed was transformed into a magical grotto by farm staff and volunteers. The grotto proved popular once again with 260 Children visiting from 7 schools and nurseries during the week. Over the weekends 238 children came to see Father Christmas and receive a gift.

g) Visitors
We had another successful year in terms of visitor numbers. During the twelve-month period covered by this report we received 90,890 visitors.

h) Awards
We have been re-awarded the "Visit Britain" accreditation as a Quality Assured Visitor Attraction; receiving an overall score of 76% which was an increase (up from 73%) from our last inspection.

In the Visit England Annual Trends Report Survey, we were ranked Top 20 most visited paid attraction in the Northwest up with the likes of Knowsley Safari Park and Chester Zoo. We were also ranked 5th in the Go Outdoor survey as one of the most cost effective days out in England.

i) Local Fundraising
Our supporters continue to fundraise for us and Lady Derby who is our Patron continues to support us yearly.

Thomas Ryder (CEO) from Applied Nutrition asked us to make a wish list of what we needed here at the farm. Our dairy floor was in need of refurbishment and ice cream making had to be suspended. Thomas organised his contractor to come and re-lay the floor so that we could start making ice cream again. He also supplied and erected 3 new animal sheds.

9 members of our staff climbed Snowdon in October and raised over £2,000.

j) Trading Company
Acorn Farm Trading Company continues as a thriving operation. The shop and café who trade through this company have both had a busy summer.

However, during busy periods both the kitchen and café area struggle to cope with the volume of customers due to insufficient seating in the café area and lack of workspace in the kitchen. Similarly, the shop can get very congested.

k) Risk Management
The trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. This has led to the implementation of a number of policies including the Reserves Policy, which states that in order to safeguard the future of the farm we will hold in reserve six months of resources expended.

There are a number of other risks which we have identified and are detailed in our Reserves Policy. We also have a Business Continuity Procedure.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of additional policies including Policy and Practice on Payments, Banking and Custody Procedure, Payroll Financial Procedure, Capital Purchases Policy, and Asset Control.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, people we support, volunteers and visitors. These include a comprehensive set of risk assessments. The implementation of safeguarding policies for both Vulnerable Adults and Children ensure that we deal with any safeguarding issues which may arise in a consistent manner. All policies are reviewed on a regular basis by the trustees.

l) Staff Team
Permanent Staff:

Name	**Job title**	**Hours**
Tracy Trumble	Farm Manager	37.5
Rebecca Little	Deputy Manager	37.5
Mike Taylor	Horticultural Unit Manager	37.5
Craig Ellingham	Farm Maintenance Worker	37.5
Marie Moulsdale	Education Worker	28
Heather Dowell	Administrative Assistant	22.5
Jane McKillop	Cafe Manager	37.5
Zaneta Radilova	Weekday Cafe Assistant	15
Lisa Hughes	Shop Worker	30.2
Lisa Gunn	Farm Animal Supervisor	37.5
Philip Dowsett	Farm Assistant/Driver	30
Sue Rowan	Gardener/Support Worker	6.5
Lynn Fitzpatrick	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	7.5
Val Kelly	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	7.5
Marta Silva	Weekend Cafe Team Leader	11
Jo Mountain	Weekend Café Assistant (Job Share)	9
Megan Roberts	Weekend Cafe Assistant (Job Share)	9
Hannah Duddle	Weekend Shop Worker	12
Millie Jordan	Weekend Animal Petting Area Supervisor	12
Val Kelly	Sunday/ School holiday Horse Ride Supervisor	2.5
Jennifer Hardie	Saturday Horse Ride Supervisor	2.5
Erin Rhead	Weekend Horse Ride Helper	4
Amy Martlew	Weekend Horse Ride Helper	4
Suzanne Austin	Farm Assistant	12.5
Donna Tyrer	Weekday Cleaner	10
Chelsea Truesdale	Weekday Cleaner	4

Seasonal staff:

Name	Job title	Hours
Hollie Langley	Weekend Admissions Kiosk	11.5
Vacant	Petting Area (School Holidays)	32.5
Gemma Guepla	Admissions Kiosk (School Holidays)	30
Edwina Johnson	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Billy Halligan	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Holly Fitzpatrick	Horse Rides [School holidays]	10
Josh Tristam	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Sue Rowan	Plant Production Assistant (Weekdays)Seasonal	25
Helen Corrin	Weekend Plant Sales Assistant Seasonal	10.5
Christelle Wintersdroff	Plant Sales Assistant (Weekdays) Seasonal	28.5

Staff Developments
Acorn Farm continues to succeed largely through the high level of commitment shown by the staff team, who are always willing to turn their hand to whatever needs doing.

All staff are encouraged to undertake training relevant to their role.

m) Site Developments

Site Reconfiguration
A great deal has been achieved in terms of our planned site reconfiguration.

We are now undertaking a major fundraising campaign to enable us to achieve our dream of a new community hub.

FUTURE PLANS
Our plans for 2025 include:
- Fundraising for a new purpose built farm hub
- Working with DK Architects on the construction of the farm hub
- Introducing new animals

Site Improvements
We are continually making improvements and doing repairs to the farm site; thus, ensuring that it is safe for the animals who live here and the people who both visit and work here.

n) Conclusions
Acorn Farm continues to provide a highly valued and affordable resource for both the local community and visitors from further afield. We are proud that our facilities are enjoyed by all.

A visitor posted on Tripadvisor:

'From start to finish Acorn Farm was a magical experience for us all. It all started on the car park where we met Roddy, the sheep. From paying the very reasonable admission charges in the well-stocked shop to walking round beautifully maintained animal enclosures, the whole experience was a delight. All around the Farm there were helpers who were a credit to the venue in the way that they greeted us and directed us to different parts of the Farm. To top it all, the cafe offered a sumptuous range of dishes and a spacious seating area. Thank you for a wonderful day out. We will certainly visit again'.

In the coming year we will strive to continue to serve the community to the highest standards.

Financial review
Income from charitable activities and other trading activities increased to £1,192k (2023: £887k). Expenditure for the year increased to £764k (2023: £712k), resulting in a net surplus before investment gains/(losses) of £429k (2023: £175k). Unrealised investment gains of £149k (2023: Losses (£97k)) were achieved in the year.

Reserves Policy
The Acorn Farm Board of Trustees recognises the need to hold reserves to allow for unforeseen circumstances which could result in a substantial drop in income. These could include:

1. A global pandemic.

2. A lack of funding could cause local authorities to terminate the contracts which they have with us for the provision of day services for people with disabilities.

3. A fire, flood or similar incident could result in business interruption whilst repairs are underway.

4. Severe weather could result in damage to the farm buildings making the site unsafe for visitors until repairs are undertaken.

5. Outbreak of animal disease (e.g. Foot and Mouth, e.coli) which could result in the compulsory closure of the farm for a period of time.

6. Outbreak of food poisoning which could result in the closure of the café and/or dairy whilst investigations by the Environmental Health Office are undertaken.

Additionally, the reserves would allow for unforeseen capital works or purchases which may be required to ensure the safety of the farm site (e.g. replacement of unsafe animal housing or to replace faulty tools and equipment).

To cover such eventualities, the trustees believe that Acorn Venture Association needs to hold in reserves 6 months of resources expended and have maintained this position throughout the year.

The actual level of free reserves held is stated in our annual accounts.

Structure, governance and management
The Association is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 26 July 1985 and registered with the Charity Commission on 4 March 1986.

The Association 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.

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to date of signature of the financial statements were:

A D Burke	
F C Hartshorne	
R T Muspratt	
P E Prayle	(Appointed 16 January 2025)
R V Rishworth	
C J Roderick	
A P Ware	

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

All trustees have completed a Declaration of Confidentiality and a Declaration of Commitment and Eligibility to be a trustee having regard to Section 72 of the Charities Act.

Appointment and induction of trustees
We are always keen to welcome new trustees on to the board. Our aim is to recruit trustees who are able to complement the skills and experience of our existing board.

In line with our Memorandum and Articles of Association the trustees may appoint any interested party as a member of the board either to fill a casual vacancy or by way of an addition to the board. Any member so appointed shall retain their office only until the next AGM, but they shall then be eligible for re-election.

Trustee induction and training
At present, new trustees are inducted into the charity in the following way:

Potential new trustees are invited to the premises to attend an initial discussion with the Chair. They are introduced to the staff team and people we support and given a tour of the farm, prior to applying to join the board. Invitation to attend the next trustee meeting, where new members will be elected, then follows. This is also an opportunity to meet other Board members.

Potential new trustees are issued with an information pack, upon returning the completed pack they are appointed as a trustee.

Organisation
The Board of Trustees is responsible for the administration of the charity. The day-to-day running of the organisation is delegated to the Secretary.

The full board meets quarterly. The board has one key sub-committee of the Finance Committee, this also meets quarterly. The Personnel Committee meets as and when required.

We have in place a number of policies relevant to the trustees which help to ensure that governance of the charity is performed to the highest standard. These include a Trustee Recruitment Policy, a Conflict of Interest/Loyalty Policy, a Register of Interests and a Trustee Code of Practice.

Disclosure of information to auditor
Each of the trustees has confirmed that there is no information of which they are aware which is relevant to the audit, but of which the auditor is unaware. They have further confirmed that they have taken appropriate steps to identify such relevant information and to establish that the auditors are aware of such information.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Registered office:	Signed by the order of the Trustees
Acorn Venture Farm	
Depot Road	
Kirby	
Knowsley	
Merseyside	C J Roderick
L33 3AR	Trustee

Approved by the Trustees on 31 October 2025

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

The Trustees who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and 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 Charity and the Group and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the net income or expenditure, of the Group for the year. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- 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 proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and the Group and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and the Group and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of Acorn Venture Association for the year ended 31 December 2024 which comprise the consolidated statement of financial activities, the group balance sheet, the company balance sheet, the consolidated statement of cash flows and the notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 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 group's and the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31 December 2024 and of the group's incoming resources and application of resources, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- 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 accounts 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 accounts 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 statement 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 charity'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 Trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. 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.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, 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 audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. 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 our audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Report, which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law, for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees' 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 directors' report included within the Trustees' 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 by the parent charitable company, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the parent charitable company 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 Trustees 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' Report and from the requirement to prepare a Strategic Report.

Responsibilities of the Trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities, the Trustees, who are also the directors of the charity for the purpose 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 charity'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, is detailed below.

Based on our understanding of the charitable company and sector, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to, but were not limited to, the Companies Act 2006, the Charities Act 2011, employment, pension and health and safety legislation and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities' Statement of Recommended Practice.

We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to management bias in accounting estimates and judgements and the risk of fraud in revenue recognition.

Our procedures to respond to risks identified included the following:

- reviewing the financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with provisions of relevant laws and regulations described as having a direct effect on the financial statements;
- enquiring of management about actual and potential litigation and claims, their policies and procedures to prevent and detect fraud as well as whether they have knowledge of any actual, suspected or alleged fraud;
- performing analytical procedures to identify any unusual or unexpected relationships that may indicate risks of material misstatement due to fraud;
- reading minutes of meetings of those charged with governance;
- obtaining an understanding of provisions and holding discussions with management to understand the basis of recognition or non-recognition of provisions; and
- in addressing the risk of fraud through management override of controls: testing the appropriateness of journal entries; assessing whether the accounting estimates, judgements and decisions made by management are indicative of a potential bias; and evaluating the business rationale of any significant transactions that are unusual or outside the normal course of business.

We also communicated relevant identified laws and regulations and potential fraud risks to all engagement team members and remained alert to any indications of fraud or non-compliance with laws and regulations throughout the audit.

There are inherent limitations in our audit procedures described above. The more removed that laws and regulations are from financial transactions, the less likely it is that we would become aware of non-compliance. Auditing standards also limit the audit procedures required to identify non-compliance with laws and regulations to enquiry of the directors and other management and the inspection of regulatory and legal correspondence, if any. Material misstatements that arise due to fraud can be harder to detect than those that arise from error as they may involve deliberate concealment or collusion.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: http://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 auditors' 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.

E. P. Atkinson

Peter Atkinson F.C.A. (Senior Statutory Auditor)
for and on behalf of JS. Audit Limited

Chartered Accountants
Statutory Auditor

31/10/2025

James House
Stonecross Business Park
Yew Tree Way
Warrington
Cheshire
WA3 3JD

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total funds Year to 31 December 2024	Total funds Year to 31 December 2023
		£	£	£	£
Incoming Resources					
Incoming resources from generated funds:					
Donations and legacies	2	13,044	237,509	250,553	6,566
Charitable activities	3	296,278	-	296,278	346,643
Other trading activities	4	602,525	-	602,525	502,709
Investments	5	43,055	-	43,055	30,576
Other income	6	-	-	-	279
Total incoming resources		954,902	237,509	1,192,411	886,773
Expenditure on:					
Costs of generating funds	7	316,381	-	316,381	231,842
Charitable activities	8	434,527	5,552	440,079	473,751
Governance costs	9	7,122	-	7,122	5,991
Total expenditure		758,030	5,552	763,582	711,584
Net incoming resources before gains/(losses) on investments		196,872	231,957	428,829	175,189
Net gains/(losses) on investments		148,697	-	148,697	(96,819)
Net movement in funds		345,569	231,957	577,526	78,370
Fund balances at 31 December 2023		2,339,055	251,438	2,590,493	2,512,123
Fund balances at 31 December 2024		**2,684,624**	**483,395**	**3,168,019**	**2,590,493**

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

GROUP BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Note	31 December 2024 £	31 December 2024 £	31 December 2023 £	31 December 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	**15**		934,878		945,106
Investments	**16**		1,448,318		1,282,018
			2,383,196		2,227,124
Current assets					
Stock		8,877		1,000	
Debtors	**17**	19,594		16,726	
Investments	**18**	415,521		-	
Cash at bank and in hand		385,287		380,661	
		829,279		398,387	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**19**	(44,456)		(35,018)	
Net current assets			784,823		363,369
Net assets			3,168,019		2,590,493
Funds employed					
Restricted funds	**21**		483,395		251,438
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	**21**	1,650,000		1,306,332	
Fixed asset fund	**21**	688,992		693,668	
General funds	**21**	345,632		339,055	
Total unrestricted funds			2,684,624		2,339,055
Total funds			3,168,019		2,590,493

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved for issue on 31 October 2025

C J Roderick
Trustee

Company Registration No. 01934024

COMPANY BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Note		31 December 2024		31 December 2023
		£	£	£	£
Tangible fixed assets	**15**		932,175		942,403
Investments	**16**		1,448,319		1,282,019
			2,380,494		2,224,422
Current assets					
Debtors	**17**	35,053		23,500	
Investments	**18**	415,521		-	
Cash at bank and in hand		368,055		365,349	
		818,629		388,849	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year:	**19**	(31,238)		(22,912)	
Net current assets			787,391		365,937
Net assets			3,167,885		2,590,359
Funds employed					
Restricted funds	**21**		483,395		251,438
Unrestricted funds					
Designated funds	**21**	1,650,000		1,306,332	
Fixed asset fund	**21**	688,992		693,668	
General funds	**21**	345,498		338,921	
Total unrestricted funds			2,684,490		2,338,921
Total funds			3,167,885		2,590,359

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

Approved for issue on 31 October 2025

C J Roderick
Trustee

Company Registration No. 01934024

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS
AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Note	2024 £	2024 £	2023 £	2023 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	**26**		416,528		184,532
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(10,983)		(16,938)	
Proceeds on disposal of fixed assets		-		17,872	
Investment income received		14,602		3,933	
Short term investment		(415,521)		-	
Net cash (outflow)/inflow from investing activities			(411,902)		4,867
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents			4,626		189,399
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			380,661		191,262
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			385,287		380,661
Relating to:					
Cash at bank in hand			385,287		380,661
			385,287		380,661

1. Accounting policies

Charity Information

Acorn Venture Association is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Acorn Venture Farm, Depot Road, Kirkby, Knowsley, Merseyside, L33 3AR.

1.1 Accounting Convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "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)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The accounts are prepared in sterling, which is functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to reflect certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below:

1.2 Going Concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Basis for consolidation

The consolidated financial statements comprise Acorn Venture Association and its trading subsidiary, Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

The summarised Profit and Loss Account for the year ended 31 December 2024 and Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024 for Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd are given in the notes to these accounts.

The charity has availed itself of the provisions of the Companies Act and adapted the Companies Act formats to reflect the special nature of the charity's activities. No separate SOFA has been presented for the charity alone as permitted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and Paragraph 397 of the SORP.

1.4 Charitable Funds

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Fixed asset funds relate to the assets in relation to the construction of the farm building.

Designated unrestricted funds relate to funds that the trustees have designated for a particular project within the objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charity for particular purposes. The cost of raising and administering such funds is charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

All income and expenditure is shown in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA).

Investment income and gains are allocated to the appropriate fund.

1.5 Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included within the SOFA when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Other trading income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts.

1.6 Resources expended

Expenditure, including irrecoverable VAT is recognised on the accruals basis.

In particular, the policy for including items within costs of generating funds is as follows:

Charitable activities comprise those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both the costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the Statement of Financial Activities on bases designed to reflect the uses of particular resources. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly, while others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.

1.7 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset, with the exception of land, over its estimated useful life:

Long leasehold land and buildings	Over the term of the lease
Renovations	20% per annum on a straight line basis
Outbuildings and paddock	10% per annum on a straight line basis
Fixtures and fittings	20% per annum on a straight line basis
Motor vehicles	25% per annum on a straight line basis
Play equipment	Over 15 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.8 Fixed asset investments

Listed investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

Investments in subsidiaries are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost less any accumulated impairment losses. The investments are assessed for impairment at each reporting date and any impairment losses or reversals of impairment losses are recognised immediately in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities.

1.9 Impairment of Fixed Assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.10 Stocks

Stocks are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

1.11 Investments

Current asset investments relate to cash held on deposit and are stated at market value.

1.12 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1.13 Financial Instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ and Section 12 ‘Other Financial Instruments Issues’ of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets
Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Derecognition of financial assets
Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire or are settled, or when the charity transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

Basic financial liabilities
Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. #term18 are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities
Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.14 Employee benefits
The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.15 Retirement benefits
Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted funds	**Total 2024**	Total 2023
	£	£	**£**	£
Donations and legacies	13,044	237,509	250,553	6,566
For the year ended 31 December 2023	6,566	-		6,566

Donations and gifts				
Donations	13,044	-	13,044	6,566
Donations - restricted	-	237,509	237,509	-
	13,044	237,509	250,553	6,566

3 Charitable activities

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Daytime activities programme	245,208	236,937
Product sales	15,533	78,693
Educational income	34,270	29,327
Other income	1,267	1,686
	296,278	346,643

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

4 Other trading activities

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Sponsorship	836	1,322
Admission charges	242,033	204,374
Horse riding charges	20,203	21,185
Petting pavilion charges	35,809	38,402
Room hire	2,859	2,782
Shop sales	74,385	74,900
Café sales	134,865	127,700
Animal feed	27,601	32,044
Plant sales	63,934	-
	602,525	502,709

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

5 Investment income

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Income from listed investments	28,453	26,643
Interest receivable	14,602	3,933
	43,055	30,576

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

6 Other income

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	279
	-	279

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

7 Costs of generating funds

	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£
Fundraising and publicity		
Other fundraising costs	56,112	827
Investment management administration costs	10,850	5,293
Staff costs	114,633	102,502
Costs of generating funds	128,347	117,959
Premises costs	2,170	1,439
General administrative costs	4,269	3,822
	316,381	231,842

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

8 **Charitable activities**	**Total 2024 £**	Total 2023 £
Staff costs	311,704	294,784
Depreciation and impairment	21,211	24,953
Costs of activities in furtherance of the charity's objectives	34,798	55,638
Indirect employee costs	546	1,219
Premises costs	55,155	60,235
General administrative costs	11,767	18,512
Professional fees in support of charitable activities	1,451	15,863
Direct employee costs	3,447	2,547
	440,079	473,751

Analysis by fund

Unrestricted funds	434,527	467,739
Restricted funds	5,552	6,012
	440,079	473,751

9 **Governance costs**	**Total 2024 £**	Total 2023 £
Governance costs	7,122	5,991
	7,122	5,991

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

10 Movement in total funds for the year

This is stated after charging/(crediting):

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Auditors' remuneration	7,000	-
Depreciation	21,211	24,953

11 Staff costs

	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Wages and salaries	397,897	371,667
Social security costs	20,920	19,239
Pension costs	7,520	6,380
	426,337	397,286

The average number of full-time equivalent employees, analysed by function was:

	Total 2024	Total 2023
Charitable activities	35	33
	35	33

There were no employees whose annual emoluments were £60,000 or more.

12 Pension costs

The charity operates a company pension scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the charity in an independently administered fund. The pension cost charge represents contributions payable by the charity to the fund and amounted to £7,520 (2023 - £6,380).

13 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration during the year (2023 - £Nil).

14 Surplus for the financial year

As permitted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006 and Paragraph 397 of the SORP, no separate SOFA has been presented for the Charity alone. Relevant information is as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Charity's gross income	930,445	653,010
Charity's surplus for the financial year	577,526	78,370

15 Tangible fixed assets - Group

	Long leasehold land and buildings	Outbuildings and paddocks	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost at 1 January 2024	1,062,346	582,328	129,975	15,490	1,790,139
Additions	1,548	-	9,435	-	10,983
Disposals	-	-	(250)	-	(250)
Cost at 31 December 2024	1,063,894	582,328	139,160	15,490	1,800,872
Accumulated depreciation at 1 January 2024	123,998	579,982	125,563	15,490	845,033
Charge for the year	19,474	1,086	651	-	21,211
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	(250)	-	(250)
Accumulated depreciation at 31 December 2024	143,472	581,068	125,964	15,490	865,994
Net book value					
At 31 December 2024	920,422	1,260	13,196	-	934,878
At 31 December 2023	938,348	2,346	4,412	-	945,106

Tangible fixed assets - Charity

	Long leasehold land and buildings	Outbuildings and paddocks	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost at 1 January 2024	1,062,346	582,328	116,767	15,490	1,776,931
Additions	1,548	-	9,435	-	10,983
Disposals	-	-	-	-	-
Cost at 31 December 2024	1,063,894	582,328	126,202	15,490	1,787,914
Accumulated depreciation at 1 January 2024	123,998	579,982	115,058	15,490	834,528
Charge for the year	19,474	1,086	651	-	21,211
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	-	-	-
Accumulated depreciation at 31 December 2024	143,472	581,068	115,709	15,490	855,739
Net book value					
At 31 December 2024	920,422	1,260	10,493	-	932,175
At 31 December 2023	938,348	2,346	1,709	-	942,403

16 Fixed asset investments - Group

	Listed investments	Total
	£	£
Cost or valuation at 1 January 2024	1,282,018	1,282,018
Valuation changes	148,697	148,697
Income reinvested	28,453	28,453
Management fees	(10,850)	(10,850)
Cost or valuation at 31 December 2024	1,448,318	1,448,318
Carrying amount		
As at 31 December 2024	1,448,318	1,448,318
As at 31 December 2023	1,282,018	1,282,018

16 Fixed asset investments - Charity

	Listed investments	Other investments	Total
	£	£	£
Cost or valuation at 1 January 2024	1,282,018	1	1,282,019
Valuation changes	148,697	-	148,697
Income reinvested	28,453	-	28,453
Management fees	(10,850)	-	(10,850)
Cost or valuation at 31 December 2024	1,448,318	1	1,448,319
Carrying amount			
As at 31 December 2024	1,448,318	1	1,448,319
As at 31 December 2023	1,282,018	1	1,282,019

	2024	2023
	£	£
Other investments comprise:		
Investments in subsidiaries	1	1

The investments held by the company represent the investment in the subsidiary companies as follows:

Company	Country of incorporation	Shares held	
		Class	%
Subsidiary undertakings			
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	England & Wales	Ordinary	100

The principal activity of this undertaking for the last relevant financial period was as follows:

	Principal activity
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	Cafeteria services and the sale of gifts

17 Debtors

	2024 Group £	2024 Company £	2023 Group £	2023 Company £
Trade debtors	13,518	10,819	13,961	13,961
Prepayments and accrued income	2,772	5,111	2,679	2,679
Balance due from subsidiaries	-	15,819	-	6,860
Other debtors	3,304	3,304	86	-
	19,594	35,053	16,726	23,500

18 Current asset investments

	2024 Group £	2024 Company £	2023 Group £	2023 Company £
Short term investments	415,521	415,521	-	-
	415,521	415,521	-	-

19 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 Group £	2024 Company £	2023 Group £	2023 Company £
Trade creditors	12,131	13,318	8,071	6,801
Taxation and social security	9,004	-	7,459	2,705
Accruals and deferred income	23,115	17,920	19,386	13,406
Other creditors	206	-	102	-
	44,456	31,238	35,018	22,912

20 Taxation

The group is exempt from corporation tax on its charitable activities.

21 Statement of funds – Group

	At 31 December 2023	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses / transfers	At 31 December 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General reserve					
Designated fund	1,306,332	-	-	343,668	1,650,000
Fixed asset fund	693,668	10,983	(15,659)	-	688,992
General funds	339,055	943,919	(742,371)	(194,971)	345,632
	2,339,055	954,902	(758,030)	148,697	2,684,624
Restricted funds					
Restricted funds	357	-	(357)	-	-
Farm building refurbishment	251,081	237,509	(5,195)	-	483,395
	251,438	237,509	(5,552)	-	483,395
	2,590,493	1,192,411	(763,582)	148,697	3,168,019

Statement of funds - Charity

	At 31 December 2023	Income	Expenditure	Gains and losses / transfers	At 31 December 2024
	£	£	£	£	£
General reserve					
Designated fund	1,306,332	-	-	343,668	1,650,000
Fixed asset fund	693,668	10,983	(15,659)	-	688,992
General funds	338,921	681,953	(480,405)	(194,971)	345,498
	2,338,921	692,936	(496,064)	148,697	2,684,490
Restricted funds					
Restricted funds	357	-	(357)	-	-
Farm building refurbishment	251,081	237,509	(5,195)	-	483,395
	251,438	237,509	(5,552)	-	483,395
	2,590,359	930,445	(501,616)	148,697	3,167,885

The designated funds have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for the redevelopment of the farm.

The fixed asset fund relates to the fixed assets that were bought using unrestricted fund income with the annual depreciation charge of these assets being allocated against the brought forward balances.

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used.

The restricted and farm building refurbishment funds relate to fixed assets that were bought using restricted income with the annual depreciation charge of these assets being allocated against the brought forward balances.

22 Analysis of group net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £
Fund balances as at 31 December 2024 are represented by:			
Tangible fixed assets	688,992	245,886	934,878
Investments	1,448,318	-	1,448,318
Current assets	591,770	237,509	829,279
Current liabilities	(44,456)	-	(44,456)
	2,684,624	483,395	3,168,019

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances as at 31 December 2023 are represented by:			
Tangible fixed assets	693,668	251,438	945,106
Investments	1,282,018	-	1,282,018
Current assets	398,387	-	398,387
Current liabilities	(35,018)	-	(35,018)
	2,339,055	251,438	2,590,493

23 Share capital

The charity has no share capital being a company limited by guarantee. Members guarantee to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 each in the event of a winding up situation.

24 Control

The charity is controlled by the trustees.

25 Net income from trading

The company owns 100% of the shares in Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd (AVT), which is incorporated in the United Kingdom and registered in England (Company Registration No: 05381159). The subsidiary is based at Acorn Farm. The shop and café trade through the subsidiary.

All income and expenditure for the above subsidiary has been consolidated on a line by line basis in the SOFA. The total net profit is gifted to the charity.

A summary of the financial position for the year ended 31 December 2024 is given below:

Profit and loss account	**2024 AVT £**	**2023 AVT £**
Turnover	308,492	241,973
Cost of sales	(135,363)	(124,367)
Gross profit	173,129	117,606
Administrative expenses	(134,311)	(116,725)
Operating profit	38,818	881
Other income	-	-
Profit on ordinary activities	38,818	881
Profits donated to Acorn Venture Association	(38,818)	(881)
Retained result for the year	-	-

Balance sheet	**2024 £**	**2023 £**
Tangible assets	2,703	2,703
Current assets	30,800	16,398
Creditors – falling due within one year	(33,368)	(18,966)
Net assets	135	135
Called up share capital and reserves	135	135

The Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd figures as shown above relating to the provision of shop and café sales have been included as income and expenditure in the Statement of Financial Activities and the related notes rather than commercial trading operations, to better reflect the nature of the Charity's activities.

26 Cash generated from operations

	2024 £	2023 £
Surplus for the year	577,526	78,370
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(43,055)	(30,576)
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	(279)
Fair value (gains)/losses on investments	(148,697)	96,819
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	21,211	24,953
Investment management fees deducted from portfolio	10,850	5,293
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase)/decrease in stock	(7,877)	-
(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(2,868)	3,689
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	9,438	6,263
Cash generated from operations	416,528	184,532

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

England & Wales - Charity number 516925

Accounts

Charity registration number 516925

Company registration number 01934024 (England and Wales)

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	A D Burke	
	R T Muspratt	
	R V Rishworth	
	C J Roderick	
	A P Ware	
	F C Hartshorne	(Appointed 12 January 2023)
Secretary	T J Trumble	
Charity number	516925	
Company number	01934024	
Registered office	Acorn Venture Farm Depot Road Kirkby Knowsley Merseyside L33 3AR	
Independent examiner	Peter Atkinson JS. Accountants & Business Advisors Limited James House Stonecross Business Park Yew Tree Way Warrington Cheshire WA3 3JD	
Bankers	National Westminster Bank Plc Aintree Black Bull Corner of Longmoor Lane and Cedar Road Aintree Liverpool L9 0EG	

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

CONTENTS

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "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) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Our Aim

To provide a high quality, affordable and inclusive resource for the local community.

We believe that everyone has a valued social role to play within their community and therefore we provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities and young people to fully participate in the day to day running of the farm.

Public Benefit

We review our aims, objectives, and activities each year. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's Charities and Public Benefit document. All of our charitable activities focus on the provision of skills development and recreational opportunities for persons designated as having special needs and the promotion of other charitable purposes for the benefit of the community.

A recent comment from a visitor which stated “Lovely few hours out and local to us!! Fantastic to feed the animals and very good value for money” suggests that we are succeeding in providing public benefit.

This annual report sums up what we have achieved and the outcomes of our work in the year to 31 December 2023. It looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits which they have brought to those groups of people which we are set up to help.

Achievements & Performance

a) Daytime Support Programme

One of the major ways we fulfil our aims is in the running of our very successful daytime activities programme for people with special needs. We currently provide 100 placements per week to 36 different individuals. This results in us having a maximum of 20 individuals who we support attending the farm each day and ensures that each individual gains maximum benefit from the time that they spend here.

Most individuals now purchase the service through their personal budget. This is either done on their behalf by the local authority via the Internal Service Fund or by the individual themselves via a Direct Payment. However, we still have service level agreements for the provision of community support services with several local authorities.

This service continues to be well attended and has been here for many years. This suggests that they are very happy at Acorn.

The charity is well supported by its board of trustees and is led by a highly experienced and respected management team.

Our daytime activities programme includes:

Horticulture

Horticultural activities range from the production and selling of bedding plants and hanging baskets to maintaining the sensory garden, lawns, and flower beds.

Conservation activities include maintaining the woodland walk, which is widely used by visitors as our overflow car park is accessed through this area and the tree shelterbelt.

Farm Maintenance
Farm Maintenance tasks around the farm site include building animal shelters, repairing benches and picnic tables, flagging, fencing, plumbing, and painting.

Animal Care
Activities include, collecting and grading the eggs and feeding and mucking out the animals.

During school holidays additional activities include assisting in the small animal petting sessions and giving horse rides to visitors to the farm.

Although we have these three specific daytime support programmes Acorn Farm is a truly inclusive project. Therefore, individuals with disabilities are involved in every aspect of running the farm on a daily basis.

Young People
We continue to enable young people to volunteer at the farm at weekends. Under the supervision of the Weekend Manager, they help to run the farm carrying out all the tasks from caring for the animals to helping with horse rides and in the small animal petting area.

We have an average of eight young people who help out each day and a waiting list of those who would like to volunteer. Taking on these responsibilities enables them to develop their self-esteem and sense of pride in their community and consequently encourages them to become responsible citizens.

b) Plant Sales
We had another busy plant sales season. The high quality of the plants together with the competitive pricing and outstanding customer service has led to a large number of customers returning year after year. The success of this enterprise is a credit to our Horticultural Unit Manager, Mike Taylor, and his team.

Although the vast majority of the plants are sold in the spring and summer we do have plants, tubs, baskets, and perennials on sale throughout the year.

This enterprise is run parallel to the horticultural daytime programme.

c) Livestock
The farm's livestock continue to be a major attraction for everyone involved, including our visitors.

During the year eight lambs were born to our ewes which included two sets of triplets and a set of twins.

Pearl the pygmy goat gave birth to twins, male and female. We ran a 'name the kid' competition through our Facebook page and the winner received a family pass to the farm. They are called Benny and Bella.

Kathy the Saddleback sow gave birth to a litter of eight piglets in June. They were a multitude of colours including ginger, black and white in a range of designs including plain, spots and stripes! Watching them play provided much joy to all who saw them.

Lola and Jimmy, the horses, continue to put plenty of smiles on little faces every weekend and during school holidays when they give horse rides to visiting children.

The meerkats continue to be very popular, and they keep us busy filling in the holes they have dug.

Our four miniature Southdown Sheep are back enjoying going out to schools as part of our Animobile project, where we bring the farm to those who don't always get the opportunity to visit.

Our neighbour Stuart Baldwin from Sed Services bought us two Alpacas in February. They are called Elvis and Ernie and are a great addition to the farm. All the visitors love them, and they are real characters!

We bought two Steers from market in June. We ran a 'name the steers' competition through our Facebook page and the winner received a family pass to the farm. They were named Angus and Ferdinand.

We also acquired three Jacob and one Herdwick Sheep to join our breeding flock. Their names are Jasmine, Jesse, Jorgi, and Bea.

All the animals on the farm are cared for during the week by the people who we support and at the weekends by our young volunteers.

The animal sponsorship scheme which we operate continues to be popular and helps us to offset the cost of keeping the animals. Sponsors are rewarded with a certificate, a visitor's pass to the farm, a photograph of their animal, birthday and Christmas cards and a mention on the Roll of Honour on our website. We have extended the scheme to enable sponsors to add the cost of a bale of hay or straw or a bag of animal feed onto their sponsorships.

d)Visitor Facilities and Attractions
Horse Rides
This activity is very popular with visitors. Our horses give rides every weekend afternoon throughout the year as well as every afternoon during school holidays. Bookings may also be made by groups during term time. During the period we were open the horses have given rides to 8,349 children.

Small Animal Petting Sessions
This attraction continues to be extremely popular with many repeat visitors. Over 22,626 people attended sessions during the period covered by this report. Activities include stroking a rabbit, guinea pig and a pet rat, holding a bantam hen and playing with Toby, Teddy, and Paddy the pygmy goats. The petting area is open to visitors every weekend and bank holiday and every day during school holidays.

e) Educational services
All the activities below are promoted and delivered by our Education Worker, Marie Moulsdale.

School Visits/Guided Tours
We hosted 1,847 visitors from 42 establishments which include mother and toddler groups, nurseries, and primary schools.

Incubator Hire
We have five incubators available for hire to schools and other registered groups. We supply the whole package including incubator, brooder, fertile eggs, and feed. We are able to take the resultant chicks back where the hens join our laying flock producing free range eggs for sale in our shop. The incubators were hired out a total of eight times over the four-month period and one dozen eggs were distributed to a childminder with their own incubator.

Animobile (Mobile Farm Unit)
This is a hugely successful project whereby we take a selection of the farm animals out to groups in the community who would otherwise have difficulty accessing our services. These include children's centres, nursery schools, residential and nursing homes, and community fun days as well as mainstream and special schools.

The selection of animals taken includes a goat, sheep, hen, duck, rabbit, guinea pigs and pet rats. Lambs, goat kids, ducklings and chicks are also taken when available. Over the period covered in this report, the Animobile made 42 visits seeing a total of 2,963 people. Demand for this service always exceeds the number of sessions which we are able to deliver during our peak season.

Animal Handling Workshops
This topic is appropriate for secondary school pupils studying animal-based courses.

Each group of students participates in an animal handling workshop which can include working with the horses, sheep, and goats.

The horse workshop entails learning about health and safety around horses before grooming and tacking up Lola and Jimmy and leading them around the arena.

The sheep workshop entails the students safely fitting the harness and lead rope on to the sheep and individually walking them around the field in a controlled manner. They then muck out the sheep shed and using teamwork herd the sheep into the shed.

The goat workshop entails looking at the different breeds of goat that we have on the farm. Safe and appropriate ways of handling and restraining them are demonstrated and practised. A foot trimming demonstration is also given.

Each group is given information about the animals they are working with and encouraged to ask questions.

Farm themed Activity Days
We held six 'Farm Experience Days' and three 'Horse Days' this year. They were attended by 92 young people who thoroughly enjoyed themselves, as well as learning new skills.

f) Events
Halloween
This year we held our daytime event on the Friday of Halloween. Activities included Halloween themed games: Feed the ghost; Witches Broomsticks; Pin the nose onto the Skeleton; and Splat the rat. We also held a fancy dress competition. The lambing shed was converted into a fabulous spooky Haunted House with real live 'ghosts' and ghouls! The event was a huge success with 513 people attending. We were greatly helped on the day by a team of corporate volunteers from Co-op, friends, and family of Acorn Farm's Staff.

Christmas Grotto
This was open for three weeks in the lead up to Christmas for pre-booked school visits and also over a weekend for visitors to the farm. The lambing shed was transformed into a magical grotto by farm staff and volunteers. The grotto proved popular once again with 286 Children visiting from eight schools and nurseries during the week. Over the weekend 207 children came to see Father Christmas and receive a present.

g) Visitors
We had another successful year in terms of visitor numbers. During the twelve-month period covered by this report we welcomed 84,195 visitors to the farm.

h) Awards
We have been re-awarded the "Visit Britain" accreditation as a Quality Assured Visitor Attraction; receiving an overall score of 76% which was an increase (up from 73%) from our last inspection. In 2024 the farm was named the most cost effective farm to visit in England, coming fifth overall.

i) Local Fundraising
Our supporters continue to fundraise for us and Lady Derby who is our Patron continues to support us yearly.

Also, during the year three intrepid members of our staff climbed the Yorkshire three Peaks and raised over £3,000 which was a fantastic achievement!

j) Trading Company
Acorn Farm Trading Company continues as a thriving operation. The shop and café who trade through this company have both had a busy summer.

However, during busy periods both the kitchen and café area struggle to cope with the volume of customers due to insufficient seating in the café area and lack of workspace in the kitchen. Similarly, the shop can get very congested.

k) Risk Management
The trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. This has led to the implementation of a number of policies including the Reserves Policy, which states that in order to safeguard the future of the farm we will hold in reserve six months of resources expended.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of additional policies including Policy and Practice on Payments, Banking and Custody Procedure, Payroll Financial Procedure, Capital Purchases Policy, and Asset Control.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, people we support, volunteers and visitors. These include a comprehensive set of risk assessments. The implementation of safeguarding policies for both Vulnerable Adults and Children ensure that we deal with any safeguarding issues which may arise in a consistent manner. All policies are reviewed on a regular basis by the trustees.

l) Staff Team
Permanent Staff:

Name	Job title	Hours
Tracy Trumble	Farm Manager	37.5
Rebecca Little	Deputy Manager	37.5
Mike Taylor	Horticultural Unit Manager	37.5
Craig Ellingham	Farm Maintenance Worker	37.5
Marie Moulsdale	Education Worker	28
Vacant	Administrative Assistant	37.5
Jane McKillop	Cafe Manager	37.5
Zaneta Radilova	Weekday Cafe Assistant	15
Lisa Hughes	Shop Worker	26.5
Lisa Gunn	Farm Animal Supervisor	37.5
Vacant	Farm Assistant/ Driver	24
Sue Rowan	Gardener/Support Worker	6.5
Lynn Fitzpatrick	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	6
Val Kelly	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	6
Marta Silva	Weekend Cafe Team Leader	11
Jo Mountain	Weekend Café Assistant (Job Share)	9
Megan Roberts	Weekend Cafe Assistant (Job Share)	9
Hannah Duddle	Weekend Shop Worker	12
Hannah Maudsley	Weekend Animal Petting Area Supervisor	9.5
Val Kelly	Sunday/ School holiday Horse Ride Supervisor	2.5
Jennifer Hardie	Saturday Horse Ride Supervisor	2.5
Erin Rhead	Weekend Horse Ride Helper	4
Amy Martlew	Weekend Horse Ride Helper	4
Suzanne Austin	Farm Assistant	12.5
Donna Tyrer	Cleaner (weekdays)	10
Chelsea Trusdale	Cleaner (weekends)	4

Seasonal staff:

Name	Job title	Hours
Hollie Langley	Weekend Admissions Kiosk	11.5
Charlotte Wallwork	Petting Area (School Holidays)	32.5
Emma Walsh	Admissions Kiosk (School Holidays)	30
Edwina Johnson	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Billy Halligan	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Holly Fitzpatrick	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Sue Rowan	Plant Production Assistant (Weekdays)	25
Helen Corrin	Weekend Plant Sales Assistant	15.5
Christelle Wintersdroff	Plant Sales Assistant (Weekdays)	24.25

Staff Developments
Acorn Farm continues to succeed largely through the high level of commitment shown by the staff team, who are always willing to turn their hand to whatever needs doing.

All staff are encouraged to undertake training relevant to their role.

m) Trustees
We are always keen to welcome new trustees on to the board which meets quarterly. Our aim is to recruit trustees who are able to complement the skills and experience of our existing board.

In line with our Memorandum and Articles of Association the trustees may appoint any interested party as a member of the board either to fill a casual vacancy or by way of an addition to the board. Any member so appointed shall retain their office only until the next AGM, but they shall then be eligible for re-election. The current members of the board of trustees are:

Chris Roderick - Chairperson
Andrew Ware - Vice Chairperson
Fiona Hartshorne - Treasurer
Ray Muspratt - Trustee
Pauline Burrows - Trustee - resigned
Bob Rishworth - Trustee
Aiden Burke - Trustee

n) Site Developments
Site Reconfiguration and fundraising
We have exciting plans for the farm which includes the building of an amazing purpose-built farm hub. This will include a new and enlarged café and shop so we can provide high quality food, drink, and products to our visitors in a relaxing atmosphere. Our new building will also include a community hub, a space for the individuals and young people who run our farm and upgraded offices. Our ambition is for it to be a great space to meet, learn, relax, work and play, whilst giving the visitors to our farm a perfect day out and the animals who call it home the best environment we can.

If you visit the farm, you may have already seen the initial work on this project. We have new paddocks and shelters for our animals. However, we cannot do this on our own and are currently undertaking a major fundraising campaign to enable us to realise the hub of our dreams.

Financial review

Income from charitable activities and other trading activities decreased to £653k (2022: £706k). Expenditure for the year increased to £478k (2022: £445k), resulting in a net surplus before investment gains/losses of £175k (2022: £262k). Unrealised investment losses of £97k (2022: £136k) were incurred in the year.

Reserves Policy

The Acorn Farm Board of Trustees recognises the need to hold reserves to allow for unforeseen circumstances which could result in a substantial drop in income. These could include:

1. A global pandemic.

2. A lack of funding could cause local authorities to terminate the contracts which they have with us for the provision of day services for people with disabilities.

3. A fire, flood or similar incident could result in business interruption whilst repairs are underway.

4. Severe weather could result in damage to the farm buildings making the site unsafe for visitors until repairs are undertaken.

5. Outbreak of animal disease (e.g. Foot and Mouth, e.coli) which could result in the compulsory closure of the farm for a period of time.

6. Outbreak of food poisoning which could result in the closure of the café and/or dairy whilst investigations by the Environmental Health Office are undertaken.

Additionally, the reserves would allow for unforeseen capital works or purchases which may be required to ensure the safety of the farm site (e.g. replacement of unsafe animal housing or to replace faulty tools and equipment).

To cover such eventualities, the trustees believe that Acorn Venture Association needs to hold in reserves 6 months of resources expended and have maintained this position throughout the year.

The actual level of free reserves held is stated in our annual accounts.

Structure, governance and management

The Association is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 26 July 1985 and registered with the Charity Commission on 4 March 1986.

The Association 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.

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

A D Burke	
P L Burrows	(Resigned 12 January 2023)
R T Muspratt	
R V Rishworth	
C J Roderick	
A P Ware	
F C Hartshorne	(Appointed 12 January 2023)

We are always keen to welcome new trustees on to the board which meets quarterly. Our aim is to recruit trustees who are able to complement the skills and experience of our existing board.

In line with our Memorandum and Articles of Association the trustees may appoint any interested party as a member of the board either to fill a casual vacancy or by way of an addition to the board. Any member so appointed shall retain their office only until the next AGM, but they shall then be eligible for re-election.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

All trustees have completed a Declaration of Confidentiality and a Declaration of Commitment and Eligibility to be a trustee having regard to Section 72 of the Charities Act.

We have in place a number of policies relevant to the trustees which help to ensure that governance of the charity is performed to the highest standard. These include a Trustee Recruitment Policy, a Conflict of Interest/ Loyalty Policy, a Register of Interests and a Trustee Code of Practice.

Small companies provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

C J Roderick
Trustee
Dated: 4 June 2024

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

The trustees, who are also the directors of Acorn Venture Association for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Acorn Venture Association (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1 accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or

2 the financial statements do not accord with those records; or

3 the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or

4 the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

Peter Atkinson F.C.A E. P. Atkinson

JS. Accountants & Business Advisors Limited
James House
Stonecross Business Park
Yew Tree Way
Warrington
Cheshire
WA3 3JD

Dated: Jun 6, 2024

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	2	7,447	-	7,447	60,767
Charitable activities	3	346,643	-	346,643	309,443
Other trading activities	4	268,065	-	268,065	290,827
Investments	5	30,576	-	30,576	45,422
Other income	6	279	-	279	-
Total income		653,010	-	653,010	706,459
Expenditure on:					
Cost of generating funds	7	6,120	-	6,120	11,195
Charitable activities	8	465,689	6,012	471,701	433,580
Total expenditure		471,809	6,012	477,821	444,775
Net incoming resources before gains/(losses) on investments		181,201	(6,012)	175,189	261,684
Net gains/(losses) on investments	12	(96,819)	-	(96,819)	(136,103)
Net movement in funds		84,382	(6,012)	78,370	125,581
Fund balances at 1 January 2023		2,254,539	257,450	2,511,989	2,386,408
Fund balances at 31 December 2023		2,338,921	251,438	2,590,359	2,511,989

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2023 £	2022 £	2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**14**		942,403		968,826
Investments	**15**		1,282,019		1,357,488
			2,224,422		2,326,314
Current assets					
Debtors	**16**	23,500		32,457	
Cash at bank and in hand		365,349		171,956	
		388,849		204,413	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**17**	(22,912)		(18,738)	
Net current assets			365,937		185,675
Total assets less current liabilities			2,590,359		2,511,989
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds	**18**		251,438		257,450
Unrestricted funds - designated	**19**	2,000,000		1,875,000	
General unrestricted funds		338,921		379,539	
Total unrestricted funds			2,338,921		2,254,539
			2,590,359		2,511,989

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2023

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 December 2023.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 4 June 2024

C J Roderick
Trustee

Company Registration No. 01934024

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

		2023		2022	
	Notes	**£**	**£**	**£**	**£**
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	**24**		187,711		179,915
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(16,123)		(369,340)	
Proceeds from disposal of tangible fixed assets		17,872		-	
Investment income received		3,933		310	
Net cash generated from/(used in) investing activities			5,682		(369,030)
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			193,393		(189,115)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			171,956		361,071
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			365,349		171,956

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Acorn Venture Association is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Acorn Venture Farm, Depot Road, Kirkby, Knowsley, Merseyside, L33 3AR.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 “The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (“FRS 102”) and the Charities SORP "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)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to reflect certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated unrestricted funds relate to funds that the trustees have designated for a particular project within the the objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors or grantors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Other trading income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure, including irrecoverable VAT is recognised on the accrual basis.

In particular, the policy for including items within costs of generating funds is as follows:

Charitable activities comprise those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both the costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the Statement of Financial Activities on bases designed to reflect the uses of particular resources. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly, while others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Long leasehold land and buildings	Over the term of the lease
Renovations	20% per annum straight line basis
Outbuildings and paddocks	10% per annum straight line basis
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	20% per annum straight line basis
Motor vehicles	25% per annum straight line basis
Play equipment	Over 15 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Listed investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

Investments in subsidiaries are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost less any accumulated impairment losses. The investments are assessed for impairment at each reporting date and any impairment losses or reversals of impairment losses are recognised immediately in net income/ (expenditure) for the year.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 ‘Basic Financial Instruments’ and Section 12 ‘Other Financial Instruments Issues’ of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire or are settled, or when the charity transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity’s contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee’s services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.12 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Donations and legacies

	2023	2022
	£	£
Donations, legacies and gifts	7,447	60,767
Donations and gifts		
Gift aid	881	34,441
Donations	6,566	26,326
	7,447	60,767

3 Charitable activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Daytime activities programme	236,937	215,640
Product sales	78,693	62,444
Educational income	29,327	29,439
Other income	1,686	1,920
	346,643	309,443
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	346,643	
For the year ended 31 December 2022		
Unrestricted funds - general		309,443

4 Other trading activities

	2023	2022
	£	£
Sponsorship	1,322	829
Admission charges	204,374	228,380
Horse riding charges	21,185	17,554
Petting pavilion charges	38,402	40,534
Room hire	2,782	3,530
Other trading activities	268,065	290,827

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

5 Investments

	2023	**2022**
	£	£
Income from listed investments	26,643	45,112
Interest receivable	3,933	310
	30,576	45,422

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

6 Other income

	2023	**2022**
	£	£
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	279	-

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

7 Cost of generating funds

	2023	**2022**
	£	**£**
<u>Fundraising and publicity</u>		
Other fundraising costs	827	265
Investment management administration costs	5,293	10,930
	6,120	11,195

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

8 Charitable activities

	2023 £	2022 £
Staff costs	294,784	288,579
Depreciation and impairment	24,953	20,273
Costs of activities in furtherance of the charity's objectives	57,880	65,716
Indirect employee costs	1,219	2,116
Premises costs	52,167	33,869
General administrative costs	18,512	14,081
Professional fees in support of charitable activities	15,863	1,622
Direct employee costs	2,547	3,995
Governance costs	3,776	3,329
	471,701	433,580
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	465,689	
Restricted funds	6,012	
	471,701	
For the year ended 31 December 2022		
Unrestricted funds - general		429,115
Restricted funds		4,465
		433,580

9 Independent examiner remuneration

Fees payable to the independent examiner	2023 £	2022 £
Independent examiner review of the annual accounts	2,100	2,000
Non-audit services		
All other non-independent examiner services	1,395	1,329

10 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits and there were no other transactions with the trustees during the year.

11 Employees

Number of employees

The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Charitable activities	29	24

Employment costs	2023 £	2022 £
Wages and salaries	274,788	263,764
Social security costs	14,658	18,834
Other pension costs	5,338	5,981
	294,784	288,579

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

12 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	2023 £	2022 £
Revaluation of investments	(96,819)	(136,103)

13 Taxation

The charity is exempt from taxation on its activities because all its income is applied for charitable purposes.

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Long leasehold land and buildings	Outbuildings and paddocks	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£
Cost					
At 1 January 2023	1,064,429	582,328	116,433	15,490	1,778,680
Additions	15,489	-	634	-	16,123
Disposals	(17,572)	-	(300)	-	(17,872)
At 31 December 2023	1,062,346	582,328	116,767	15,490	1,776,931
Depreciation and impairment					
At 1 January 2023	104,789	578,417	113,416	13,232	809,854
Depreciation charged in the year	19,443	1,565	1,687	2,258	24,953
Eliminated in respect of disposals	(234)	-	(45)	-	(279)
At 31 December 2023	123,998	579,982	115,058	15,490	834,528
Carrying amount					
At 31 December 2023	938,348	2,346	1,709	-	942,403
At 31 December 2022	959,640	3,911	3,017	2,258	968,826

15 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments	Other investments	Total
	£		£
Cost or valuation			
At 1 January 2023	1,357,487	1	1,357,488
Valuation changes	(96,819)	-	(96,819)
Income	26,643	-	26,643
Management fees	(5,293)	-	(5,293)
At 31 December 2023	1,282,018	1	1,282,019
Carrying amount			
At 31 December 2023	1,282,018	1	1,282,019
At 31 December 2022	1,357,487	1	1,357,488

		2023	2022
Other investments comprise:	**Notes**	£	£
Investments in subsidiaries	**22**	1	1

16 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	**2023** £	**2022** £
Trade debtors	13,961	18,460
Other debtors	6,860	12,042
Prepayments and accrued income	2,679	1,955
	23,500	32,457

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2023 £	**2022** £
Other taxation and social security	2,705	737
Trade creditors	6,801	1,674
Accruals and deferred income	13,406	16,327
	22,912	18,738

18 Restricted funds

The restricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used.

	At 1 January 2023 £	**Resources expended** £	**At 31 December 2023** £
Restricted funds	1,174	(817)	357
Farm building refurbishment	256,276	(5,195)	251,081
	257,450	(6,012)	251,438

Previous year:	**At 1 January 2022** £	**Resources expended** £	**At 31 December 2022** £
Restricted funds	2,176	(1,002)	1,174
Farm building refurbishment	259,739	(3,463)	256,276
	261,915	(4,465)	257,450

The restricted and farm building refurbishment funds relate to fixed assets that were bought using restricted income with the annual depreciation charge of these assets being allocated against the brought forward balance.

19 Unrestricted funds

The unrestricted funds of the charity comprise the unexpended balances of donations and grants which are not subject to specific conditions by donors and grantors as to how they may be used. These include designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes.

	At 1 January 2023	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 31 December 2023
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Farm building refurbishment fund	1,875,000	-	-	125,000	-	2,000,000
General funds	379,539	653,010	(471,809)	(125,000)	(96,819)	338,921
	2,254,539	653,010	(471,809)	-	(96,819)	2,338,921

Previous year:	At 1 January 2022	Incoming resources	Resources expended	Transfers	Gains and losses	At 31 December 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Farm building refurbishment fund	1,750,000	-	-	125,000	-	1,875,000
General funds	374,493	706,459	(440,310)	(125,000)	(136,103)	379,539
	2,124,493	706,459	(440,310)	-	(136,103)	2,254,539

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total 2023 £
Fund balances at 31 December 2023 are represented by:			
Tangible assets	690,965	251,438	942,403
Investments	1,282,019	-	1,282,019
Current assets/(liabilities)	365,937	-	365,937
	2,338,921	251,438	2,590,359

	Unrestricted funds 2022 £	Restricted funds 2022 £	Total 2022 £
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:			
Tangible assets	711,376	257,450	968,826
Investments	1,357,488	-	1,357,488
Current assets/(liabilities)	185,675	-	185,675
	2,254,539	257,450	2,511,989

21 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

	2023 £	2022 £
Aggregate compensation	60,515	84,289

Transactions with related parties
During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Gift Aid 2023 £	2022 £
Entities over which the entity has control, joint control or significant influence	881	34,441
	881	34,441

The following amounts were outstanding at the reporting end date:

	Amounts owed by related parties 2023 Balance £	2022 Balance £
Entities over which the entity has control, joint control or significant influence	6,860	12,042

22 Subsidiaries

These financial statements are separate charity financial statements for Acorn Venture Association. Consolidated financial statements are not prepared as the parent company and its subsidiary is considered a small group.

Details of the charity's subsidiaries at 31 December 2023 are as follows:

Name of undertaking	Registered office	Nature of business	Class of shares held	% Held Direct	% Held Indirect
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	As per parent company	Cafeteria services and the sale of gifts	Ordinary	100.00	

The aggregate capital and reserves and the result for the year of subsidiaries excluded from consolidation was as follows:

Name of undertaking	Profit/(Loss)	Capital and Reserves
	£	£
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	-	135

23 Control

The charity is controlled by the trustees.

24 Cash generated from operations	**2023**	**2022**
	£	**£**
Surplus for the year	78,370	125,581
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(30,576)	(45,422)
Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	(279)	-
Fair value gains and losses on investments	96,819	136,103
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	24,953	20,273
Investment management fees deducted from portfolio	5,293	10,930
Movements in working capital:		
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	8,957	(6,943)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	4,174	(60,607)
Cash generated from operations	187,711	179,915

25 Analysis of changes in net debt

The charity had no material debt during the year.

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

England & Wales - Charity number 516925

Accounts

Charity registration number 516925

Company registration number 01934024 (England and Wales)

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

PAGES FOR FILING WITH REGISTRAR

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	A D Burke R T Muspratt R V Rishworth C J Roderick A P Ware F C Hartshorne	 (Appointed 12 January 2023)
Secretary	T J Trumble	
Charity number	516925	
Company number	01934024	
Registered office	Acorn Venture Farm Depot Road Kirkby Knowsley Merseyside L33 3AR	
Independent examiner	Peter Atkinson Jackson Stephen LLP James House Stonecross Business Park Yew Tree Way Warrington Cheshire WA3 3JD	
Bankers	National Westminster Bank Plc Aintree Black Bull Corner of Longmoor Lane and Cedar Road Aintree Liverpool L9 0EG	
Investment managers	Blankstone Sington Walker House Exchange Flags Liverpool L2 3YL	

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

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ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "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) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Our Aim

To provide a high quality, affordable and inclusive resource for the local community.

We believe that everyone has a valued social role to play within their community and therefore we provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities and young people to fully participate in the day to day running of the farm.

Public Benefit

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's Charities and Public Benefit document. All of our charitable activities focus on the provision of skills development and recreational opportunities for persons designated as having special needs and the promotion of other charitable purposes for the benefit of the community.

A recent comment from a visitor which stated *"Another lovely day, you should be so proud of your lovely farm. Staff are friendly and work very hard. See you again very soon"* suggests that we are succeeding in providing public benefit.

This annual report sums up what we have achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous twelve months. It looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits which they have brought to those groups of people which we are set up to help.

Achievements & Performance

a) Daytime Support Programme

One of the major ways we fulfil our aims is in the running of our very successful daytime activities programme for people with special needs. We currently provide 100 placements per week to 36 different individuals. This results in us having a maximum of 20 individuals who we support attending the farm each day and ensures that each individual gains maximum benefit from the time that they spend here.

Most individuals now purchase the service through their personal budget. This is either done on their behalf by the local authority via the Internal Service Fund or by the individual themselves via a Direct Payment. However, we still have service level agreements for the provision of community support services with several local authorities.

This service continues to be well attended. Although we have been unable to take on any new individuals to support due to one member of staff from the support team still being on long term sick leave, several of our existing service users have requested and been granted additional days. This suggests that they are very happy at Acorn.

The charity is well supported by its board of trustees and is led by a highly experienced and respected management team.

Our daytime activities programme includes:

Horticulture
Horticultural activities range from the production and selling of bedding plants and hanging baskets to maintaining the sensory garden, lawns and flower beds.

Conservation activities include maintaining the woodland walk, which is widely used by visitors as our over flow car park is accessed through this area and the tree shelterbelt.

Farm Maintenance
Farm Maintenance tasks around the farm site include building animal shelters, repairing benches and picnic tables, flagging, fencing, plumbing and painting.

Animal Care
Activities include, collecting and grading the eggs and feeding and mucking out the Animals.

During school holidays additional activities include assisting in the small animal petting sessions and giving horse rides to visitors to the farm.

Although we have these three specific daytime support programmes Acorn Farm is a truly inclusive project. Therefore, individuals with disabilities are involved in every aspect of running the farm on a daily basis.

Young People
We continue to enable young people to volunteer at the farm at weekends. Under the supervision of the Weekend Manager they help to run the farm, carrying out all the tasks from caring for the animals to helping with horse rides and in the small animal petting area.

We have an average of eight young people who help out each day and a waiting list of those who would like to volunteer. Taking on these responsibilities enables them to develop their self-esteem and sense of pride in their community and consequently encourages them to become responsible citizens.

b) Plant Sales
We had another busy plant sales season. The high quality of the plants together with the competitive pricing and outstanding customer service has led to a large number of customers returning year after year. The success of this enterprise is a credit to our Horticultural Unit Manager Mike Taylor and his team.

Although the vast majority of the plants are sold in the spring and summer we do have plants, tubs, baskets and perennials on sale throughout the year.

This enterprise is run in parallel to the horticultural daytime programme.

c) Livestock
The farm's livestock continue to be a major attraction for everyone involved, including our visitors.

During the year 10 lambs were born to our ewes which included 1 orphan (Tiffany) and 1 rejected lamb (Josh) who are very tame and will be a wonderful asset when we visit schools with the Animobile.

Pearl the pygmy goat gave birth to a single kid. We ran a "name the kid" competition through Facebook and the winner received a family pass to the farm. She was named Peggy.

Kathy the Saddleback sow gave birth to 2 litters totalling 16 piglets. They were a multitude of colours including ginger and black and white and in a range of designs including plain, spots and stripes! Watching them play provided much joy to all who saw them.

Rosie and Lola, the horses, continue to put plenty of smiles on little faces every weekend and during school holidays when they give horse rides to visiting children. Sadly, we had to retire Rosie due to old age in October and we acquired another horse on loan from Macclesfield called Jimmy. He is very placid and a character, all the children love him.

The meerkats continue to be very popular and they keep us busy filling in the holes they have dug.

Our four miniature Southdown Sheep are back enjoying going out to schools as part of our Animobile project that started again in February.

All the animals on the farm are cared for during the week by the people who we support and at the weekends by our young volunteers.

The animal sponsorship scheme which we operate continues to be popular and helps us to offset the cost of keeping the animals. Sponsors are rewarded with a certificate, a visitor's pass to the farm, a photograph of their animal, birthday and Christmas cards and a mention on the Roll of Honour on our website. We have extended the scheme to enable sponsors to add the cost of a bale of hay or straw or a bag of animal feed onto their sponsorships.

d) Visitor Facilities and Attractions

Horse Rides

This activity is very popular with visitors. We do horse rides every weekend afternoon throughout the year as well as every afternoon during school holidays. Bookings may also be made by groups during term time. During the period we were open the horses have given rides to 7,120 children.

Small Animal Petting Sessions

This attraction continues to be extremely popular with many repeat visitors. Over 24,707 people attended sessions during the period covered by this report. Activities include stroking a rabbit, guinea pig and a pet rat, holding a bantam hen and playing with Toby, Teddy and Paddy the pygmy goats. The petting area is open to visitors every weekend and bank holiday and every day during school holidays.

e) Educational services

We resumed these services in March and all of our activities below are promoted and delivered by our Education Worker, Marie Moulsdale who joined our team in February.

School Visits/Guided Tours

We hosted 1,149 visitors from 29 establishments which include mother and toddler groups, nurseries and primary schools.

Incubator Hire

We have 5 incubators available for hire to schools and other registered groups. We supply the whole package including incubator, brooder, fertile eggs and feed. We are able to take the resultant chicks back where the hens join our laying flock producing free range eggs for sale in our shop.

The incubators were hired out a total of 10 times over the 6 month period and 1 dozen eggs were distributed to a childminder with their own incubator.

The incubator program was impacted due to the Avian Flu restriction that was put in place in September. Also our fertile egg provider closed his business and we had to source another supplier.

Animobile (Mobile Farm Unit)

This is a hugely successful project whereby we take a selection of the farm animals out to groups in the community who would otherwise have difficulty accessing our services. These include children's centres, nursery schools, residential and nursing homes, and community fun days as well as mainstream and special schools.

The selection of animals taken includes a goat, sheep, hen, duck, rabbit, guinea pigs and pet rats. Lambs, goat kids, ducklings and chicks are also taken when available. Over the period covered in this report, the Animobile made 45 visits seeing a total of 3,602 people. Demand for this service always exceeds the number of sessions which we are able to deliver during our peak season.

Animal Handling Workshops
This topic is appropriate for secondary school pupils studying animal based courses. We hosted 123 children from 2 different high schools.

Each group of students participates in an animal handling workshop which can include working with the horse, sheep and goats.

The horse workshop entails learning about health and safety around horses before grooming and tacking up Rosie and Lola and leading them around the arena.

The sheep workshop entails the students safely fitting the harness and lead rope on to the sheep and individually walking them around the field in a controlled manner. They then muck out the sheep shed and using team work herd the sheep into the shed.

The goat workshop entails looking at the different breeds of goat that we have on the farm. Safe and appropriate ways of handling and restraining them are demonstrated and practised. A foot trimming demonstration is also given.

Each group is given information about the animals they are working with and encouraged to ask questions.

Farm themed Activity Days
We held 5 'Farm Experience Days' and 3 'Horse Days' this year. They were attended by 81 young people who thoroughly enjoyed themselves, as well as learning new skills.

f) Events
Halloween
After a 2 year absence due to Covid-19 our popular daytime event was held on the last Friday in the school holidays. Activities included Halloween themed games: Feed the ghost, Witches Broomsticks, Pin the nose onto the Skeleton, Splat the rat. We also held a fancy dress competition. The lambing shed was converted into a fabulous spooky Haunted House with real live 'ghosts' and ghouls! The event was a huge success with 810 people attending. We were greatly helped on the day by a team of corporate volunteers from Amazon, friends and family of Acorn Farms Staff.

Christmas Grotto
This was open for 2 weeks in the lead up the Christmas for pre-booked school visits and also over a weekend for visitors to the farm. The lambing shed was transformed into a magical grotto by farm staff and volunteers. The grotto proved popular once again with 247 children visiting from 5 schools and nurseries during the week. Over the weekend 193 children came to see Father Christmas and received a present.

g) Visitors
This was by far our busiest year to date at Acorn Farm. We had a record number of visitors, during the twelve month period covered by this report totalling 94,633 visitors.

h) Local Fundraising
Our supporters continue to fundraise for us and several local companies have made donations. These include a very generous donation of £12,500 from Amazon and Standard Fuel continued with the generous donation of 12 months' supply of heating oil.

i) Trading Company
Acorn Farm Trading Company continues as a thriving operation. The shop and café who trade through this company have both had a busy summer.

However, during busy periods both the kitchen and café area struggle to cope with the volume of customers due to insufficient seating in the café area and lack of work space in the kitchen. Similarly, the shop can get very congested.

j) Risk Management
The trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. This has led to the implementation of a number of policies including the Reserves Policy, which states that in order to safeguard the future of the farm we will hold in reserve six months of resources expended.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of additional policies including Policy and Practice on Payments, Banking and Custody Procedure, Payroll Financial Procedure, Capital Purchases Policy and Asset Control.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, people we support, volunteers and visitors. These include a comprehensive set of risk assessments. The implementation of safeguarding policies for both Vulnerable Adults and Children ensure that we deal with any safeguarding issues which may arise in a consistent manner. All policies are reviewed on a regular basis by the trustees.

k) Staff Team
Permanent Staff:

Name	Job title	Hours
Fiona Smith	Farm Manager	35
Tracy Trumble	Deputy Manager/Finance Officer	37.5
Mike Taylor	Horticultural Unit Manager	37.5
Kris Griffiths	Farm Maintenance Worker	37.5
Marie Moulsdale	Education Worker	28
Becky Little	Project Administrator	37.5
Jane McKillop	Cafe Manager	37.5
Zaneta Radilova	Weekday Cafe Assistant	15
Lisa Hughes	Shop Worker	26.5
Lisa Gunn	Farm Animal Supervisor	37.5
Vacant	Farm Assistant/ Driver	24
Sue Rowan	Gardener/Support Worker	6.5
Lynn Fitzpatrick	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	6
Val Kelly	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	6
Marta Silva	Weekend Cafe Team Leader	11
Rhianna Murphy	Weekend Café Assistant (Job Share)	9
Emilie Moore	Weekend Cafe Assistant (Job Share)	9
Alysha Ibbotson	Weekend Shop Worker	12
Hannah Maudsley	Weekend Animal Petting Area Supervisor	9.5
Val Kelly	Sunday/ School holiday Horse Ride Supervisor	2.5
Jennifer Hardie	Saturday Horse Ride Supervisor	2.5
Lily Case	Weekend Horse Ride Helper	4
Eve Loftus	Weekend Horse Ride Helper/Farm Assistant	10
Suzanne Austin	Farm Assistant (Job Share)	2
Sarah Tomlinson	Cleaner (weekdays)	10
Chelsea Trusdale	Cleaner (weekends)	4

Seasonal staff:

Name	Job title	Hours
Hollie Langley	Weekend Admissions Kiosk	11.5
Amy Leigh	Petting Area (School Holidays)	32.5
Emma Walsh	Admissions Kiosk (School Holidays)	30
Erin Rhead	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Phoebe Vedmore	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Amy Martlew	Horse Rides [School holidays]	10
Hannah Duddle	Horse Rides (School Holidays)	10
Sue Rowan	Plant Production Assistant (Weekdays)	25
Helen Corrin	Weekend Plant Sales Assistant	10
Vacant	Plant Sales Assistant (Weekdays)	16.25

l) Site Developments

Site Reconfiguration

A great deal has been achieved in terms of our planned site reconfiguration.

Phase 1A which included the construction of the bridge to link our current site to the new site together with the erection of new animal shelters, water installation, fencing (both security and stock proof fencing) and the laying of pathways was completed in July 2021. This was largely funded by KMBC.

Phase 1B which includes the new Access Road and Visitor Car park began in November 2021 and was completed in April 2022.

Phase 2 is the construction of the new farm hub. In 2023 we hope to undertake a major fundraising campaign to enable us to achieve this.

FUTURE PLANS

Our plans for 2023 include:

- Moving the animals on to our new paddocks
- Opening the new entrance and car park for our visitors
- Fundraising for a new purpose build farm hub
- Working with DK Architects on the construction of the farm hub
- Introducing new animals

Site Improvements

We are continually making improvements and doing repairs to the farm site; thus ensuring that it is safe for the animals to liver here and the people who both visit and work here.

Our maintenance worker was on long term sick and finished due to ill health in July 2022. All site improvements and repairs were taken on by our Horticultural Manager in conjunction with his own work up until we employed a new member of staff in September.

m) Conclusions

Acorn Farm continues to provide a highly valued and affordable resource for both the local community and visitors from further afield. We are proud that our facilities are enjoyed by all.

A visitor posted on our social media:

"Acom farm is a brilliant day to have with the kids, not too big that they get tired but just enough to keep them entertained. It is reasonably priced and activities are priced separately so you don't have to do it all. There is a picnic area and a great park for the kids. The café is nice and the staff lovely."

In the coming year we will strive to continue to serve the community to the highest standards.

Financial review
Following the reopening of the farm to visitors, income from charitable activities and other trading activities increased, however, due to a sizeable donation in the previous year total income decreased to £706k (2021: £745k). Expenditure for the year increased to £445k (2021: £340k), resulting in a net surplus before investment gains/losses of £261k (2021: £405k). Unrealised investment losses of £136k (2021: gain of £124k) were incurred in the year.

Reserves Policy
The Acorn Farm Board of Trustees recognises the need to hold reserves to allow for unforeseen circumstances which could result in a substantial drop in income. These could include:

1. A global pandemic.

2. A lack of funding could cause local authorities to terminate the contracts which they have with us for the provision of day services for people with disabilities.

3. A fire, flood or similar incident could result in business interruption whilst repairs are underway.

4. Severe weather could result in damage to the farm buildings making the site unsafe for visitors until repairs are undertaken.

5. Outbreak of animal disease (e.g. Foot and Mouth, e.coli) which could result in the compulsory closure of the farm for a period of time.

6. Outbreak of food poisoning which could result in the closure of the café and/or dairy whilst investigations by the Environmental Health Office are undertaken.

Additionally, the reserves would allow for unforeseen capital works or purchases which may be required to ensure the safety of the farm site (e.g. replacement of unsafe animal housing or to replace faulty tools and equipment).

To cover such eventualities, the trustees believe that Acorn Venture Association needs to hold in reserves 6 months of resources expended and have maintained this position throughout the year.

The actual level of free reserves held is stated in our annual accounts.

Structure, governance and management
The Association is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 26 July 1985 and registered with the Charity Commission on 4 March 1986.

The Association 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.

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

TRUSTEES REPORT (CONTINUED)(INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

A D Burke	
P L Burrows	(Resigned 12 January 2023)
K Evans	(Resigned 14 September 2022)
M V Johnson	(Resigned 25 August 2022)
R T Muspratt	
R V Rishworth	
C J Roderick	
A P Ware	
F C Hartshorne	(Appointed 12 January 2023)

We are always keen to welcome new trustees on to the board which meets quarterly. Our aim is to recruit trustees who are able to complement the skills and experience of our existing board.

In line with our Memorandum and Articles of Association the trustees may appoint any interested party as a member of the board either to fill a casual vacancy or by way of an addition to the board. Any member so appointed shall retain their office only until the next AGM, but they shall then be eligible for re-election.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

All trustees have completed a Declaration of Confidentiality and a Declaration of Commitment and Eligibility to be a trustee having regard to Section 72 of the Charities Act.

We have in place a number of policies relevant to the trustees which help to ensure that governance of the charity is performed to the highest standard. These include a Trustee Recruitment Policy, a Conflict of Interest/ Loyalty Policy, a Register of Interests and a Trustee Code of Practice.

Notwithstanding that Fiona Smith, the manager at Acorn Farm since 1987, retired in January 2023, it would be remiss not to mention her in this report. Fiona informed the Board in August 2022 of her intention to retire in December 2022. During her long service she has overseen the development of Acorn Farm in becoming a recognised, highly praised visitor attraction in North West England. It is only right therefore that this report recognises the hard work, dedication and leadership that Fiona has given during her tenure. The thanks of the Board is extended to her in recognition of her commitment and loyalty.

Small companies provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

C J Roderick
Trustee
Dated: 11 September 2023

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

The trustees, who are also the directors of Acorn Venture Association for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Acorn Venture Association (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report
As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement
Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

E. P. Atkinson

Peter Atkinson F.C.A

Jackson Stephen LLP
James House
Stonecross Business Park
Yew Tree Way
Warrington
Cheshire
WA3 3JD

Dated: Sep 15, 2023

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<u>Income from:</u>					
Donations and legacies	3	60,767	-	60,767	306,322
Charitable activities	4	309,443	-	309,443	258,011
Other trading activities	5	290,827	-	290,827	137,868
Investments	6	45,422	-	45,422	39,200
Other income	7	-	-	-	3,636
Total income		706,459	-	706,459	745,037
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Cost of generating funds	8	11,195	-	11,195	12,315
Charitable activities	9	429,115	4,465	433,580	328,064
Total expenditure		440,310	4,465	444,775	340,379
Net incoming resources before gains/(losses) on investments		266,149	(4,465)	261,684	404,658
Net gains/(losses) on investments	13	(136,103)	-	(136,103)	124,225
Net movement in funds		130,046	(4,465)	125,581	528,883
Fund balances at 1 January 2022		2,124,493	261,915	2,386,408	1,857,525
Fund balances at 31 December 2022		2,254,539	257,450	2,511,989	2,386,408

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**14**		968,826		619,759
Investments	**15**		1,357,488		1,459,409
			2,326,314		2,079,168
Current assets					
Debtors	**16**	32,457		25,514	
Cash at bank and in hand		171,956		361,071	
		204,413		386,585	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**17**	(18,738)		(79,345)	
Net current assets			185,675		307,240
Total assets less current liabilities			2,511,989		2,386,408
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds	**18**		257,450		261,915
Unrestricted funds - designated	**19**	1,875,000		1,750,000	
General unrestricted funds		379,539		380,222	
Total unrestricted funds			2,254,539		2,130,222
			2,511,989		2,386,408

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 December 2022.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

These financial statements have been prepared and delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 11 September 2023

C J Roderick
Trustee

Company Registration No. 01934024

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2022 £	2021 £	2021 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	**24**		179,915		436,810
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(369,340)		(560,790)	
Proceeds from disposal of investments		-		300,000	
Investment income received		310		39	
Net cash used in investing activities			(369,030)		(260,751)
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents			(189,115)		176,059
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			361,071		185,012
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			171,956		361,071

1 **Accounting policies**

Charity information

Acorn Venture Association is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Acorn Venture Farm, Depot Road, Kirkby, Knowsley, Merseyside, L33 3AR.

1.1 **Accounting convention**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "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)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to reflect certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 **Going concern**

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 **Charitable funds**

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated unrestricted funds relate to funds that the trustees have designated for a particular project within the the objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 **Income**

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Other trading income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure, including irrecoverable VAT is recognised on the accrual basis.

In particular, the policy for including items within costs of generating funds is as follows:

Charitable activities comprise those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both the costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the Statement of Financial Activities on bases designed to reflect the uses of particular resources. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly, while others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Long leasehold land and buildings	Over the term of the lease
Renovations	20% per annum straight line basis
Outbuildings and paddocks	10% per annum straight line basis
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	20% per annum straight line basis
Motor vehicles	25% per annum straight line basis
Play equipment	Over 15 years

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Listed investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

Investments in subsidiaries are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost less any accumulated impairment losses. The investments are assessed for impairment at each reporting date and any impairment losses or reversals of impairment losses are recognised immediately in net income/ (expenditure) for the year.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire or are settled, or when the charity transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.12 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods. The key accounting estimates made by the trustees in preparing these financial statements is in respect of depreciation as detailed in the accounting policies.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds general	Restricted funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£
Donations, legacies and gifts	60,767	-	60,767	306,322
For the year ended 31 December 2021	46,583	259,739		306,322
Donations and gifts				
Gift aid	34,441	-	34,441	36,625
Donations	26,326	-	26,326	269,697
	60,767	-	60,767	306,322

4 Charitable activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Daytime activities programme	215,640	210,782
Product sales	62,444	45,634
Educational income	29,439	233
Other income	1,920	1,362
	309,443	258,011
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	309,443	
For the year ended 31 December 2021		
Unrestricted funds - general		258,011

5 Other trading activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Sponsorship	829	763
Admission charges	228,380	107,632
Horse riding charges	17,554	13,032
Petting pavilion charges	40,534	15,503
Room hire	3,530	938
Other trading activities	290,827	137,868

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

6 Investments

	2022	2021
	£	£
Income from listed investments	45,112	39,161
Interest receivable	310	39
	45,422	39,200

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

7 Other income

	2022	2021
	£	£
Furlough grants received	-	3,636

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

8 Cost of generating funds

	2022	2021
	£	£
Fundraising and publicity		
Other fundraising costs	265	1,055
Investment management administration costs	10,930	11,260
	11,195	12,315

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

9 Charitable activities

	2022	2021
	£	£
Staff costs	288,579	214,897
Depreciation and impairment	20,273	13,176
Costs of activities in furtherance of the charity's objectives	65,716	43,930
Indirect employee costs	2,116	953
Premises costs	33,869	37,526
General administrative costs	14,081	7,202
Professional fees in support of charitable activities	1,622	1,086
Direct employee costs	3,995	2,971
Governance costs	3,329	6,323
	433,580	328,064
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	429,115	
Restricted funds	4,465	
	433,580	
For the year ended 31 December 2021		
Unrestricted funds - general		327,062
Restricted funds		1,002
		328,064

10 Independent examiner remuneration

Fees payable to the independent examiner	2022 £	2021 £
Independent examiner review of the annual accounts	2,000	2,105
Non-audit services		
All other non-independent examiner services	1,329	3,518

11 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits and there were no other transactions with the trustees during the year.

12 Employees

Number of employees
The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2022 Number	2021 Number
Charitable activities	24	18

Employment costs	2022 £	2021 £
Wages and salaries	263,764	199,119
Social security costs	18,834	14,273
Other pension costs	5,981	1,505
	288,579	214,897

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

13 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	2022 £	2021 £
Revaluation of investments	(136,103)	124,225

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Long leasehold land and buildings	Assets under construction	Outbuildings and paddocks	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cost						
At 1 January 2022	118,049	578,314	582,328	115,159	15,490	1,409,340
Additions	-	368,066	-	1,274	-	369,340
Reclassifications	946,380	(946,380)	-	-	-	-
At 31 December 2022	1,064,429	-	582,328	116,433	15,490	1,778,680
Depreciation and impairment						
At 1 January 2022	92,075	-	576,281	111,866	9,359	789,581
Depreciation charged in the year	12,714	-	2,136	1,550	3,873	20,273
At 31 December 2022	104,789	-	578,417	113,416	13,232	809,854
Carrying amount						
At 31 December 2022	959,640	-	3,911	3,017	2,258	968,826
At 31 December 2021	25,974	578,314	6,047	3,293	6,131	619,759

15 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments	Other investments	Total
	£		£
Cost or valuation			
At 1 January 2022	1,459,408	1	1,459,409
Valuation changes	(136,103)	-	(136,103)
Income	45,112	-	45,112
Management fees	(10,930)	-	(10,930)
At 31 December 2022	1,357,487	1	1,357,488
Carrying amount			
At 31 December 2022	1,357,487	1	1,357,488
At 31 December 2021	1,459,408	1	1,459,409

Other investments comprise:	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Investments in subsidiaries	22	1	1

16 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2022 £	2021 £
Trade debtors	18,460	8,525
Other debtors	12,042	14,993
Prepayments and accrued income	1,955	1,996
	32,457	25,514

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 £	2021 £
Other taxation and social security	737	196
Trade creditors	1,674	66,489
Accruals and deferred income	16,327	12,660
	18,738	79,345

18 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

		Movement in funds				
	Balance at 1 January 2021	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 1 January 2022	Expenditure	Balance at 31 December 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	3,178	-	(1,002)	2,176	(1,002)	1,174
Farm building refurbishment	-	259,739	-	259,739	(3,463)	256,276
	3,178	259,739	(1,002)	261,915	(4,465)	257,450

The restricted and farm building refurbishment funds relate to fixed assets that were bought using restricted income with the annual depreciation charge of these assets being allocated against the brought forward balance.

19 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 January 2021	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 1 January 2022	Transfers	Balance at 31 December 2022
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Farm building refurbishment fund	1,550,000	(299,297)	499,297	1,750,000	125,000	1,875,000
	1,550,000	(299,297)	499,297	1,750,000	125,000	1,875,000

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted 2022	Restricted 2022	Total 2022	Unrestricted 2021	Restricted 2021	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2022 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	711,376	257,450	968,826	357,844	261,915	619,759
Investments	1,357,488	-	1,357,488	1,459,409	-	1,459,409
Current assets/(liabilities)	185,675	-	185,675	307,240	-	307,240
	2,254,539	257,450	2,511,989	2,124,493	261,915	2,386,408

21 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

	2022	2021
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	84,289	83,309

Transactions with related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Gift Aid	
	2022	2021
	£	£
Entities over which the entity has control, joint control or significant influence	34,441	36,625
	34,441	36,625

The following amounts were outstanding at the reporting end date:

	Amounts owed by related parties	
	2022 Balance	2021 Balance
	£	£
Entities over which the entity has control, joint control or significant influence	12,042	14,993

22 Subsidiaries

These financial statements are separate charity financial statements for Acorn Venture Association. Consolidated financial statements are not prepared as the parent company and its subsidiary is considered a small group.

Details of the charity's subsidiaries at 31 December 2022 are as follows:

Name of undertaking	Registered office	Nature of business	Class of shares held	% Held Direct	% Held Indirect
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	As per parent company	Cafeteria services and the sale of gifts	Ordinary	100.00	

The aggregate capital and reserves and the result for the year of subsidiaries excluded from consolidation was as follows:

Name of undertaking	Profit/(Loss)	Capital and Reserves
	£	£
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	(129)	135

23 Control

The charity is controlled by the trustees.

24 Cash generated from operations

	2022	2021
	£	£
Surplus for the year	125,581	528,883
Adjustments for:		
Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(45,422)	(39,200)
Fair value gains and losses on investments	136,103	(124,225)
Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	20,273	13,176
Investment management fees deducted from portfolio	10,930	11,260
Movements in working capital:		
(Increase) in debtors	(6,943)	(12,387)
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(60,607)	59,303
Cash generated from operations	179,915	436,810

25 Analysis of changes in net debt

The charity had no debt during the year.

Jackson Stephen LLP
James House
Stonecross Business Park
Yew Tree Way
Warrington
Cheshire
WA3 3JD

12 September 2023

Dear Sirs

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2022

We confirm to the best of our knowledge and belief that we have made appropriate enquiries of management and staff with relevant knowledge and experience and, where necessary, have inspected supporting documentation sufficient to satisfy ourselves that we can properly make each of the following representations to you in connection with your audit of the financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2022.

General

1 We have fulfilled our responsibilities as directors set out in the terms of your engagement letter under the Companies Act 2006 for preparing financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view and for making accurate representations to you. All the accounting records have been made available to you for the purpose of your audit and all the transactions undertaken by the charity have been properly reflected and recorded in the accounting records. All other records and related information, including minutes of management meetings, have been made available to you.

2 The financial statements are free of material misstatements, including omissions.

Internal control and fraud

3 We acknowledge our responsibility for the design, implementation and maintenance of internal control systems to prevent and detect fraud and error. We have disclosed to you the results of our risk assessment that the financial statements may be misstated as a result of fraud. We have disclosed to you all instances of known or suspected fraud affecting the entity involving management, employees who have a significant role in internal control or others that could have a material effect on the financial statements. We have also disclosed to you all information in relation to allegations of fraud or suspected fraud affecting the entity's financial statements communicated by current or former employees, analysis, regulators or others.

Assets and liabilities

4 The charity has satisfactory title to all assets and there are no liens or encumbrances on the charity's assets, except for those that are disclosed in the notes to the financial statements.

5 We have recorded or disclosed, as appropriate, all liabilities, both actual and contingent, and have disclosed in the notes to the financial statements all guarantees that we have given to third parties.

6 We have no plans or intentions that may materially alter the carrying value and where relevant the fair value measurements or classification of assets and liabilities reflected in the financial statements.

Accounting estimates

7 Significant assumptions used by us in making accounting estimates, including those measured at fair value, are reasonable.

Loans and arrangements

8 The charity has not granted any advances or credits to, or made guarantees on behalf of, directors other than those disclosed in the financial statements.

Legal claims

9 We have disclosed to you all claims in connection with litigation that have been, or are expected to be, received and such matters, as appropriate, have been properly accounted for, and disclosed in, the financial statements.

Law and regulations

10 We have disclosed to you all known instances of non-compliance or suspected non-compliance with laws and regulations whose affects should be considered when preparing the financial statements.

Related parties

11 Related party relationships and transactions have been appropriately accounted for and disclosed in the financial statements. We have disclosed to you all relevant information concerning such relationships and transactions and are not aware of any other matters which require disclosure in order to comply with legislative and accounting standards requirements.

Subsequent events

12 All events subsequent to the date of the financial statements which require adjustment or disclosure have been properly accounted for and disclosed.

Going concern

13 We believe that the charity's financial statements should be prepared on a going concern basis on the grounds that current and future sources of funding or support will be more than adequate for the charity's needs. We have considered a period of twelve months from the date of approval of the financial statements. We believe that no further disclosures relating to the charity's ability to continue as a going concern need to be made in the financial statements.

Grants and donations

14 All grants, donations and other income, the receipt of which is subject to specific terms or conditions, have been notified to you. There have been no breaches of terms or conditions in the application of such income.

We acknowledge our legal responsibilities regarding disclosure of information to you as auditors and confirm that so far as we are aware, there is no relevant audit information needed by you in connection with preparing your audit report of which you are unaware. Each director has taken all the steps that he ought to have taken as a director in order to make himself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that you are aware of that information.

Yours faithfully

Sep 14, 2023

....

Signed on behalf of the board of directors   Date

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

England & Wales - Charity number 516925

Accounts

Charity Registration No. 516925

Company Registration No. 01934024 (England and Wales)

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	A D Burke P L Burrows R T Muspratt R V Rishworth C J Roderick A P Ware
Secretary	T J Trumble
Charity number	516925
Company number	01934024
Registered office	Acorn Venture Farm Depot Road Kirkby Knowsley Merseyside L33 3AR
Independent examiner	Peter Atkinson Jackson Stephen LLP James House Stonecross Business Park Yew Tree Way Warrington Cheshire WA3 3JD
Bankers	National Westminster Bank Plc Aintree Black Bull Corner of Longmoor Lane and Cedar Road Aintree Liverpool L9 0EG
Investment managers	Brankstone Sington Walker House Exchange Flags Liverpool L2 3YL

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

CONTENTS

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

TRUSTEES REPORT (INCLUDING DIRECTORS' REPORT)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

The trustees present their annual report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2021.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "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) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Our Aim

To provide a high quality, affordable and inclusive resource for the local community.

We believe that everyone has a valued social role to play within their community and therefore we provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities and young people to fully participate in the day to day running of the farm.

Public Benefit

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's Charities and Public Benefit. All of our charitable activities focus on the provision of skills development and recreational opportunities for persons designated as having special needs and the promotion of other charitable purposes for the benefit of the community.

A recent comment from a visitor which stated *"This is an amazing place, I can't rate it highly enough"* suggests that we are succeeding in providing public benefit.

This annual report sums up what we have achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous twelve months. It looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits which they have brought to those groups of people which we are set up to help.

Achievements and performance

a) Daytime Support Programme

One of the major ways we fulfil our aims is in the running of our very successful daytime activities programme for people with special needs. We currently provide 100 placements per week to 35 different individuals. This results in us having a maximum of 20 individuals who we support attending the farm each day and ensures that each individual gains maximum benefit from the time that they spend here.

Most individuals now purchase the service through their personal budget. This is either done on their behalf by the local authority via the Internal Service Fund or by the individual themselves via a Direct Payment. However we still have service level agreements for the provision of community support services with several local authorities.

In December we held our first ever long service award ceremony for the people we support. Three individuals who have clocked up more than 75 years between them helping on the farm received a shield and certificate to mark their incredible contribution. Farm staff and volunteers, together with friends and relatives, joined in the celebration and enjoyed a buffet lunch.

Our daytime activities programme includes:

Horticulture
Horticultural activities range from the production and selling of bedding plants and hanging baskets to maintaining the sensory garden, lawns and flower beds.

Conservation activities include maintaining the woodland walk, which is widely used by visitors as our overflow car park and is accessed through this area and maintaining the tree shelterbelt.

Farm Maintenance
Farm Maintenance tasks around the farm site include building animal shelters, making benches and picnic tables, flagging, fencing, plumbing and painting.

Animal Care
Activities include collecting and grading the eggs and feeding and mucking out the animals. During school holidays additional activities include assisting in the small animal petting sessions and giving horse rides to visitors to the farm. Although we have these three specific daytime support programmes Acorn Farm is a truly inclusive project. Therefore, individuals with disabilities are involved in every aspect of running the farm on a daily basis.

Young People
We continue to enable young people to volunteer at the farm at weekends. Under the supervision of the Weekend Manager they help to run the farm carrying out all the tasks from caring for the animals to helping with horse rides and in the small animal petting area.

We have an average of eight young people who help out each day and a waiting list of those who would like to volunteer. Taking on these responsibilities enables them to develop their self-esteem and sense of pride in their community and consequently encourages them to become responsible citizens.

b) Plant Sales
Although we were not able to open the farm to visitors until July, the plant sales area was open from April. We had another busy plant sales season. The high quality of the plants together with the competitive pricing and outstanding customer service has led to a large number of customers returning year after year. The success of this enterprise is a credit to our Horticultural Unit Manager, Mike Taylor, and his team. Although the vast majority of the plants are sold in the spring and summer, we do have plants, tubs and baskets on sale throughout the year.

c) Livestock

The farm's livestock continue to be a major attraction for everyone involved, including our visitors.

During the year 13 lambs were born to our ewes, which included two set of triplets and three sets of twins and 1 single.

Pearl the pygmy goat gave birth to twins. They were named Harry and Hermione.

Kathy the Saddleback sow gave birth to a litter of 11 piglets. They were a multitude of colours including ginger, black and white in a range of designs including plain, spots and stripes! Watching them play provided much joy to all who saw them.

Rosie and Lola the horses were delighted to start giving horse rides again every weekend and every day during school holidays once we opened again to visitors in July.

The meerkats continue to be very popular and they keep us busy filling in the holes they have dug.

All the animals on the farm are cared for during the week by the people who we support and at the weekends by our young volunteers.

The animal sponsorship scheme, that we operate, continues to be popular and helps us to offset the cost of keeping the animals. Sponsors are rewarded with a certificate, a visitor's pass to the farm, a photograph of their animal, birthday and Christmas cards and a mention on the Roll of Honour on our website. We have continued to extend the scheme to enable sponsors to add the cost of a bale of hay or straw or a bag of animal feed onto their sponsorships.

d) Visitor Facilities and Attractions

Horse Rides

This activity is very popular with visitors. We do horse rides every weekend afternoon throughout the year as well as every afternoon during school holidays. Bookings may also be made by groups during term time. During the period we were open the horses have given rides to 5,419 children.

Small Animal Petting Sessions

This attraction continues to be extremely popular with many repeat visitors. Over 10,600 people attended sessions during the period July-December. Activities include stroking a rabbit, guinea pig and a pet rat, holding a bantam hen and playing with Toby, Teddy and Paddy the pygmy goats. The petting area is open to visitors every weekend and bank holiday and every day during school holidays.

e) Educational Services

Unfortunately these have been suspended since the start of Lockdown but normally include

- School Visits/Guided Tours
- Incubator Hire
- Animobile [Mobile Farm Unit]
- Animal Handling workshops
- Farm themed Activity Days

f) Events

These usually include

- Halloween Fun Day
- Christmas Grotto

Both of which did not take place due to the uncertainty caused by Covid.

g) Visitors

We reopened to visitors on 19 July 2021 having been closed since 23 March 2020. We had our busiest summer holiday period ever welcoming over 21,000 visitors in August alone. From reopening on 19 July until 31 December we received 46,017 visitors.

We also received a visit from Mr Nigel Lanceley, the High Sheriff of Merseyside and Lesley Martin Wright the Chief Executive of Knowsley Chamber/Head of Business Growth and Inward Investment in Knowsley. They were both impressed with the work we do with and for the community.

h) Fundraising

Our supporters continue to fundraise for us and several local companies have made donations. These include a very generous donation by Standard Fuel who have donated 12 months supply of heating oil.

i) Trading Company

Acorn Farm Trading Company has been back in business since the farm reopened in July. The café and the shop who trade through this company have both had a very busy summer. However, during busy periods both the kitchen and café area struggled to cope with the volume of customers due to insufficient seating in the café area and lack of work space in the kitchen. Similarly the shop can get very congested.

j) Risk Management

The trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. This has led to the implementation of a number of policies including the Reserves Policy, which states that in order to safeguard the future of the farm we will hold in reserve six months of resources expended.

There are a number of other risks which we have identified and are detailed in our Reserves Policy which can be found in the Appendix of this report. We also have a Business Continuity Procedure.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of additional policies including Policy and Practice on Payments, Banking and Custody Procedure, Payroll Financial Procedure, Capital Purchases Policy and Asset Control.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, people we support, volunteers and visitors. These include a comprehensive set of risk assessments. The implementation of safeguarding policies for both Vulnerable Adults and Children ensure that we deal with any safeguarding issues which may arise in a consistent manner. All policies are reviewed on a regular basis by the trustees.

k) Staff Team

Permanent Staff:

Name	Job title	Hours
Fiona Smith	Farm Manager	35
Tracy Trumble	Deputy Manager/Finance Officer	37.5
Mike Taylor	Horticultural Unit Manager	37.5
Brian Carroll	Farm Maintenance Worker	37.5
Vacant	Education Worker	28
Becky Little	Project Administrator	37.5
Jane McKillop	Cafe Manager	37.5
Zaneta Radilova	Weekday Cafe Assistant	15
Lisa Hughes	Shop Worker	26.5
Lisa Gunn	Farm Animal Supervisor	37.5
Catherine Brailsford	Farm Assistant/ Driver	24
Sue Rowan	Gardener/Support Worker	6.5
Lynn Fitzpatrick	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	6
Val Kelly	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	6
Vacant	Weekend Cafe Team Leader	11
Marta Silva	Weekend Cafe Assistant (Job Share)	9
Rhianna Murphy	Weekend Cafe Assistant (Job Share)	9
Lyndsey Corrin	Weekend Shop Worker	12
Stephanie Oldham	Weekend Animal Petting Area Supervisor	9.5
Val Kelly	Sunday/ School holiday Horse Ride Supervisor	2.5
Darci Clarkson	Saturday Horse Ride Supervisor	2.5
Lily Case	Weekend Horse Ride Helper	4
Eve Loftus	Weekend Horse Ride Helper/Farm Assistant	10
Danielle Stepney	Cleaner (weekdays)	10
Lauren Bell	Cleaner (weekends)	4

Acorn Farm continues to succeed largely through the high level of commitment shown by the staff team, who are always willing to turn their hand to whatever needs doing.

All staff are encouraged to undertake training relevant to their role.

I) Site Developments

Site Reconfiguration

A great deal has been achieved in terms of our planned site reconfiguration. Phase 1A which included the construction of the bridge to link our current site to the new site together with the erection of new animal shelters, water installation, fencing (both security and stock proof fencing) and the laying of pathways was completed in July 2021. This was largely funded by KMBC.

Phase 1B which includes the new Access Road and Visitor Car park began in November 2021 and is due to be completed in February 2022.

Phase 2 is the construction of the new farm hub. In 2022 we hope to undertake a major fundraising campaign to enable us to achieve this ..

Site Improvements

One of the very few benefits of Lockdown and being closed to visitors was that we were able to press ahead with some major improvements to the farm site. These included taking down the old redundant palisade security fencing in the centre of the farm. This was installed over 30 years ago to provide a secure compound for the animals over night when we had no perimeter security fencing. We retained the steel upright posts and attached stock proof fencing to make a paddock. These metal posts will never need replacing.

We removed an old leaky shipping container which enabled us to make an additional pathway around part of the farm. This has not only opened up that part of the farm to our visitors but has also eliminated 2 dead ends. Should there be a further pandemic and a requirement to socially distance it will enable us to make a one-way route around the farm. The concreting of the pathway was a great team project which everyone worked on together - particularly when the bulk order of ready mix concrete arrived.

Painting of the admissions kiosk, animal housing, pig wall, fencing, benches and picnic tables.

Financial review

Following the reopening of the farm to visitors income for the year increased to £745k (2020: £382k). Expenditure for the year decreased to £340k (2020: £365k), resulting in a net gain before investments of £405k (2020: £17k). Unrealised investment gains of £124k (2020: £26k) were achieved in the year.

Reserves Policy
The Acorn Farm Board of Trustees recognises the need to hold reserves to allow for unforeseen circumstances which could result in a substantial drop in income. These could include:

1. A global pandemic.

2. A lack of funding could cause local authorities to terminate the contracts which they have with us for the provision of day services for people with disabilities.

3. A fire, flood or similar incident could result in business interruption whilst repairs are underway.

4. Severe weather could result in damage to the farm buildings making the site unsafe for visitors until repairs are undertaken.

5. Outbreak of animal disease (e.g. Foot and Mouth, e.coli) which could result in the compulsory closure of the farm for a period of time.

6. Outbreak of food poisoning which could result in the closure of the café and/or dairy whilst investigations by the Environmental Health Office are undertaken.

Additionally, the reserves would allow for unforeseen capital works or purchases which may be required to ensure the safety of the farm site (e.g. replacement of unsafe animal housing or to replace faulty tools and equipment).

To cover such eventualities, the trustees believe that Acorn Venture Association needs to hold in reserves 6 months of resources expended and have maintained this position throughout the year.

The actual level of free reserves held is stated in our annual accounts.

Future plans
Our plans for 2022 include:

- Moving the animals on to our new paddocks
- Opening the new entrance and car park for our visitors
- Fundraising for a new purpose built farm hub
- Working with DK Architects on the construction of the farm hub

Conclusion
Acorn Farm continues to provide a highly valued and affordable resource for both the local community and visitors from further afield. We are delighted to be back open again for our visitors and the people we support. We are proud that our facilities are enjoyed by all.

In the coming year we will strive to continue to serve the community to the highest standards.

Structure, governance and management
The Association is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 26 July 1985 and registered with the Charity Commission on 4 March 1986.

The Association 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.

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:

A D Burke
P L Burrows
K Evans (Resigned 16 September 2022)
M V Johnson (Resigned 25 August 2022)
R T Muspratt
R V Rishworth
C J Roderick
A P Ware

We are always keen to welcome new trustees on to the board which meets quarterly. Our aim is to recruit trustees who are able to complement the skills and experience of our existing board.

In line with our Memorandum and Articles of Association the trustees may appoint any interested party as a member of the board either to fill a casual vacancy or by way of an addition to the board. Any member so appointed shall retain their office only until the next AGM, but they shall then be eligible for re-election.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

All trustees have completed a Declaration of Confidentiality and a Declaration of Commitment and Eligibility to be a trustee having regard to Section 72 of the Charities Act.

We have in place a number of policies relevant to the trustees which help to ensure that governance of the charity is performed to the highest standard. These include a Trustee Recruitment Policy, a Conflict of Interest/ Loyalty Policy, a Register of Interests and a Trustee Code of Practice.

Small companies provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

C J Roderick
Trustee
Dated: 6 October 2022

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

The trustees, who are also the directors of Acorn Venture Association for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Acorn Venture Association (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

E.P. Atkinson

Peter Atkinson F.C.A.

Jackson Stephen LLP
James House
Stonecross Business Park
Yew Tree Way
Warrington
Cheshire
WA3 3JD

Dated: 6/10/22

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Income from:					
Donations and legacies	3	46,583	259,739	306,322	10,492
Charitable activities	4	258,011	-	258,011	250,174
Other trading activities	5	137,868	-	137,868	30,322
Investments	6	39,200	-	39,200	40,974
Other income	7	3,636	-	3,636	50,103
Total income		485,298	259,739	745,037	382,065
Expenditure on:					
Cost of generating funds	8	12,315	-	12,315	12,059
Charitable activities	9	327,062	1,002	328,064	352,632
Total expenditure		339,377	1,002	340,379	364,691
Net incoming resources before gains/(losses) on investments		145,921	258,737	404,658	17,374
Net gains/(losses) on investments	13	124,225	-	124,225	26,375
Net movement in funds		270,146	258,737	528,883	43,749
Fund balances at 1 January 2021		1,854,347	3,178	1,857,525	1,813,776
Fund balances at 31 December 2021		2,124,493	261,915	2,386,408	1,857,525

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	14		619,759		72,145
Investments	15		1,459,409		1,607,283
			2,079,168		1,679,428
Current assets					
Debtors	16	25,514		13,127	
Cash at bank and in hand		361,071		185,012	
		386,585		198,139	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	17	(79,345)		(20,042)	
Net current assets			307,240		178,097
Total assets less current liabilities			2,386,408		1,857,525
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds	18		261,915		3,178
Unrestricted funds - designated	19	1,750,000		1,550,000	
General unrestricted funds		374,493		304,347	
Total unrestricted funds			2,124,493		1,854,347
			2,386,408		1,857,525

BALANCE SHEET (CONTINUED)

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2021

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 December 2021.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

These financial statements have been prepared and delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 6 October 2022

C J Roderick
Trustee

Company Registration No. 01934024

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2021

	Notes	2021 £	2021 £	2020 £	2020 £
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations	24		436,810		13,629
Investing activities					
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(560,790)		(19,632)	
Proceeds on disposal of tangible fixed assets		-		4,800	
Proceeds on disposal of investments		300,000		-	
Investment income received		39		179	
Net cash used in investing activities			(260,751)		(14,653)
Net cash used in financing activities			-		-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents			176,059		(1,024)
Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year			185,012		186,036
Cash and cash equivalents at end of year			361,071		185,012

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Acorn Venture Association is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Acorn Venture Farm, Depot Road, Kirkby, Knowsley, Merseyside, L33 3AR.

1.1 Accounting convention

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "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)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions in the SORP for charities not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to reflect certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated unrestricted funds relate to funds that the trustees have designated for a particular project within the the objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Grant income in the year of £3,636 is in relation to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, all conditions attached to the grant have been met.

Other trading income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure, including irrecoverable VAT is recognised on the accrual basis.

In particular, the policy for including items within costs of generating funds is as follows:

Charitable activities comprise those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both the costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the Statement of Financial Activities on bases designed to reflect the uses of particular resources. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly, while others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Long leasehold land and buildings	Over the term of the lease
Renovations	20% per annum straight line basis
Outbuildings and paddocks	10% per annum straight line basis
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	25% per annum straight line basis
Motor vehicles	25% per annum straight line basis
Play equipment	10% per annum straight line basis

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in the statement of financial activities.

1.7 Fixed asset Investments

Listed investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

Investments in subsidiaries are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost less any accumulated impairment losses. The investments are assessed for impairment at each reporting date and any impairment losses or reversals of impairment losses are recognised immediately in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire or are settled, or when the charity transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.12 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods. The key accounting estimates made by the trustees in preparing these financial statements is in respect of depreciation as detailed in the accounting policies.

3 Donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds general	Restricted funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£
Donations, legacies and gifts	46,583	259,739	306,322	10,492
For the year ended 31 December 2020	10,492	-		10,492
Donations and gifts				
Gift aid	36,625	-	36,625	54
Legacies	-	-	-	1,000
Donations	9,958	259,739	269,697	9,438
	46,583	259,739	306,322	10,492

4 Charitable activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Daytime activities programme	210,782	211,485
Product sales	45,634	34,783
Educational income	233	3,075
Other income	1,362	831
	258,011	250,174
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	258,011	
For the year ended 31 December 2020		
Unrestricted funds - general		250,174

5 Other trading activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Fundraising activities	-	619
Sponsorship	763	679
Admission charges	107,632	21,733
Guided tours	-	1,070
Horse riding charges	13,032	2,104
Petting pavilion charges	15,503	3,410
Room hire	938	707
Other trading activities	137,868	30,322

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

6 Investments

	2021	2020
	£	£
Income from listed investments	39,161	40,795
Interest receivable	39	179
	39,200	40,974

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

7 Other income

	2021	2020
	£	£
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	4,800
Furlough grants received	3,636	45,303
	3,636	50,103

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

8 Cost of generating funds

	2021	2020
	£	£
Fundraising and publicity:		
Other fundraising costs	1,055	916
Investment management administration costs	11,260	11,143
	12,315	12,059

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

9 Charitable activities

	2021	2020
	£	£
Staff costs	214,897	246,883
Depreciation and impairment	13,176	17,114
Costs of activities in furtherance of the charity's objectives	43,930	37,790
Indirect employee costs	953	1,374
Premises costs	37,526	30,473
General administrative costs	7,202	6,512
Professional fees in support of charitable activities	1,086	905
Direct employee costs	2,971	2,698
Governance costs	6,323	6,883
	328,064	352,632
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	327,062	
Restricted funds	1,002	
	328,064	
For the year ended 31 December 2020		
Unrestricted funds - general		351,630
Restricted funds		1,002
		352,632

10 Independent examiner remuneration

Fees payable to the independent examiner	2021	2020
	£	£
Independent examiner review of the annual accounts	2,105	2,065
Non-audit services		
All other non-independent examiner services	3,518	4,818

11 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits and there were no other transactions with the trustees during the year.

12 Employees

Number of employees
The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2021	2020
	Number	Number
Charitable activities	18	18

Employment costs	2021	2020
	£	£
Wages and salaries	199,119	226,323
Social security costs	14,273	12,632
Other pension costs	1,505	9,928
	214,897	248,883

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

13 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	2021	2020
	£	£
Revaluation of investments	124,225	26,375

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Long leasehold land and buildings	Assets under construction	Outbuildings and paddocks	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cost						
At 1 January 2021	118,049	19,278	582,328	113,405	15,490	848,550
Additions	-	559,036	-	1,754	-	560,790
At 31 December 2021	118,049	578,314	582,328	115,159	15,490	1,409,340
Depreciation and impairment						
At 1 January 2021	91,522	-	569,525	109,871	5,487	776,405
Depreciation charged in the year	553	-	6,756	1,995	3,872	13,176
At 31 December 2021	92,075	-	576,281	111,866	9,359	789,581
Carrying amount						
At 31 December 2021	25,974	578,314	6,047	3,293	6,131	619,759
At 31 December 2020	26,527	19,278	12,803	3,534	10,003	72,145

15 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments	Other investments	Total
	£		£
Cost or valuation			
At 1 January 2021	1,607,282	1	1,607,283
Valuation changes	124,225	-	124,225
Income	39,161	-	39,161
Management fees	(11,260)	-	(11,260)
Disposals	(300,000)	-	(300,000)
At 31 December 2021	1,459,408	1	1,459,409
Carrying amount			
At 31 December 2021	1,459,408	1	1,459,409
At 31 December 2020	1,607,282	1	1,607,283

Other investments comprise:	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Investments in subsidiaries	22	1	1

16 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2021 £	2020 £
Trade debtors	8,625	2,208
Other debtors	14,893	8,806
Prepayments and accrued income	1,996	2,113
	25,514	13,127

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2021 £	2020 £
Other taxation and social security	196	-
Trade creditors	66,489	6,498
Accruals and deferred income	12,660	13,546
	79,345	20,042

18 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 January 2020	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 1 January 2021	Income	Expenditure	Balance at 31 December 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	9,909	(1,002)	(5,729)	3,178	-	(1,002)	2,176
Farm building refurbishment	-	-	-	-	259,739	-	259,739
	9,909	(1,002)	(5,729)	3,178	259,739	(1,002)	261,915

The restricted fund relates to fixed assets that were bought using restricted income with the annual depreciation charge of these assets being allocated against the brought forward balance.

The farm building refurbishment fund relates to fixed assets that were bought using restricted income. This asset is still under construction and once completed, the annual depreciation charge of these assets will be allocated against the balance.

19 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 January 2020	Transfers	Balance at 1 January 2021	Resources expended	Transfers	Balance at 31 December 2021
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Farm building refurbishment fund	1,525,000	25,000	1,550,000	(299,297)	499,297	1,750,000
	1,525,000	25,000	1,550,000	(299,297)	499,297	1,750,000

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted 2021	Restricted 2021	Total 2021	Unrestricted 2020	Restricted 2020	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fund balances at 31 December 2021 are represented by:						
Tangible assets	357,844	261,915	619,759	68,967	3,178	72,145
Investments	1,459,409	-	1,459,409	1,607,283	-	1,607,283
Current assets/(liabilities)	307,240	-	307,240	178,097	-	178,097
	2,124,493	261,915	2,386,408	1,854,347	3,178	1,857,525

21 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

	2021	2020
	£	£
Aggregate compensation	83,309	78,831

Transactions with related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Gift Aid 2021	2020
	£	£
Entities over which the entity has control, joint control or significant influence	36,625	54
	36,625	54

21 Related party transactions **(Continued)**

The following amounts were outstanding at the reporting end date:

	Amounts owed by related parties	
	2021 Balance	2020 Balance
	£	£
Entities over which the entity has control, joint control or significant influence	14,993	3,951

22 Subsidiaries

These financial statements are separate charity financial statements for Acorn Venture Association. Consolidated financial statements are not prepared as the parent company and its subsidiary is considered a small group.

Details of the charity's subsidiaries at 31 December 2021 are as follows:

Name of undertaking	Registered office	Nature of business	Class of shares held	% Held Direct	Indirect
Acorn Venture Trading Co Ltd	As per parent company	Cafeteria services and the sale of gifts.	Ordinary	100.00	

The aggregate capital and reserves and the result for the year of subsidiaries excluded from consolidation was as follows:

Name of undertaking	Profit/(Loss)	Capital and Reserves
	£	£
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	-	264

23 Control

The charity is controlled by the trustees.

		2021	2020
24	**Cash generated from operations**	£	£
	Surplus for the year	528,883	43,749
	Adjustments for:		
	Investment income recognised in statement of financial activities	(39,200)	(40,974)
	Gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	-	(4,800)
	Fair value gains and losses on investments	(124,225)	(26,375)
	Depreciation and impairment of tangible fixed assets	13,176	17,114
	Investment management fees deducted from portfolio	11,260	11,143
	Movements in working capital:		
	(Increase)/decrease in debtors	(12,387)	14,822
	Increase/(decrease) in creditors	59,303	(11,050)
	Cash generated from operations	436,810	13,629

25 Analysis of changes in net funds

The charity had no debt during the year.

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

England & Wales - Charity number 516925

Accounts

Charity Registration No. 516925

Company Registration No. 01934024 (England and Wales)

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Trustees	A D Burke P L Burrows K Evans M V Johnson R T Muspratt R V Rishworth C J Roderick A P Ware
Secretary	T J Trumble
Charity number	516925
Company number	01934024
Registered office	Acorn Venture Farm Depot Road Kirkby Knowsley Merseyside L33 3AR
Independent examiner	Peter Atkinson Jackson Stephen LLP James House Stonecross Business Park Yew Tree Way Warrington Cheshire WA3 3JD
Bankers	National Westminster Bank Plc Aintree Black Bull Corner of Longmoor Lane and Cedar Road Aintree Liverpool L9 0EG
Investment managers	Blankstone Sington Walker House Exchange Flags Liverpool L2 3YL

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

CONTENTS

The trustees present their report and financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2020.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in note 1 to the financial statements and comply with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "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) (effective 1 January 2019)".

Objectives and activities

Our Aim

To provide a high quality, affordable and inclusive resource for the local community.

We believe that everyone has a valued social role to play within their community and therefore we provide opportunities for individuals with disabilities and young people to fully participate in the day to day running of the farm.

Public Benefit

We review our aims, objectives and activities each year. We have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission’s Charities and Public Benefit document. All our charitable activities focus on the provision of skills development and recreational opportunities for persons designated as having special needs and the promotion of other charitable purposes for the benefit of the community.

This annual report sums up what we have achieved and the outcomes of our work in the previous twelve months. It looks at the success of each key activity and the benefits which they have brought to those groups of people which we are set up to help.

The Covid-19 Pandemic had a serious impact on Acorn Farm. We were required to close both the Visitor Attraction and Day Service when the first national Lockdown was declared on 23 March 2020. We were subsequently able to begin opening the Day Service from August. However, we were unable to open as a Visitor Attraction for the remainder of 2020. The small size and existing layout of the farm site, together with limited facilities in the farm building, meant that our visitors would be unable to follow social distancing guidelines and therefore we would not have been Covid compliant.

Achievements and performance

a) Daytime Support Programme

One of the major ways we fulfil our aims is in the running of our very successful daytime activities programme for people with special needs. We currently provide 100 placements per week to 39 different individuals. This results in us having a maximum of 20 individuals who we support attending the farm each day and ensures that each individual gains maximum benefit from the time that they spend here.

Most individuals now purchase the service through their personal budget. This is either done on their behalf by the local authority via the Internal Service Fund or by the individual themselves via a Direct Payment. However, we still have service level agreements for the provision of community support services with several local authorities. However, we had to temporarily close the Support Programme in March when the first Lockdown was imposed. The people who we support really missed the farm and the opportunities which it offers to them to socialise with their peer group and learn new skills. Many individuals kept in regular contact throughout Lockdown, constantly asking when they would be able to return and also I suspect checking up that we were looking after the animals properly!

At the beginning of July, the first of the Local Authorities with whom we work granted permission for the service users whom they fund to return to Acorn Farm and by the end of August all Local Authorities had given permission. However, a number of vulnerable individuals who had been shielding during Lockdown still have not returned, although they hope to do so as soon as the vaccine roll out makes them less vulnerable.

Our daytime activities programme includes:

Horticulture
Horticultural activities range from the production and selling of bedding plants and hanging baskets to maintaining the sensory garden, lawns and flower beds.

Conservation activities include maintaining the woodland walk, which is widely used by visitors as our overflow car park is accessed through this area and maintaining the tree shelterbelt.

Farm Maintenance
Farm Maintenance tasks around the farm site include building animal shelters, making benches and picnic tables, flagging, fencing, plumbing and painting.

Animal Care
Activities include, collecting and grading the eggs and feeding and mucking out the animals. Unfortunately, since we have not been able to open to visitors since March, the people we support have not had the opportunity to help with the additional activities which we run for visitors during school holidays which include small animal petting sessions and horse rides. However, they have continued to handle the small animals [rabbits, guinea pigs and Smokey Joe and Cocobean the pet rats] to ensure that they remain tame. They have also participated in horse riding sessions where they have had the opportunity to both lead and ride Rosie and Lola, the horses.

Although we have these three specific daytime support programmes Acorn Farm is a truly inclusive project. Therefore, individuals with disabilities are involved in every aspect of running the farm on a daily basis.

Young People
Unfortunately, we had to suspend our volunteering programme for Young People at Lockdown. This is a very popular programme where, under the supervision of the Weekend Manager the young people help to run the farm, carrying out all the tasks from caring for the animals to helping with horse rides and in the small animal petting area.

Under normal circumstances we usually have an average of eight young people who help each day and a waiting list of those who would like to volunteer. Taking on these responsibilities enables young people to develop their self-esteem and sense of pride in their community and consequently encourages them to become responsible citizens.

We will reinstate this programme as soon as it is safe to do so.

b) Plant Sales
This year despite Lockdown we had another very busy plant sales season. The high quality of the plants together with the competitive pricing and high standards of customer service has led to many customers returning year after year. This year, despite the pandemic we did not want to let them down.

Mike Taylor the Horticultural Unit Manager and Tracy Trumble the Farm’s Deputy Manager created, from scratch, a very efficient Ordering and Click and Collect system. They also organised a delivery service for vulnerable people who were shielding during Lockdown as we recognised the importance of gardening for people’s wellbeing during this difficult and lonely time. Mike and Tracy worked 7 days a week on this at the peak of the bedding plant season and as a result we had many very happy customers. We are very grateful to them for their dedication and hard work.

c) Livestock

The farm’s livestock have missed our visitors.

Before Lockdown 17 lambs were born to our ewes, including one set of triplets and seven sets of twins.

Gertie the pygmy goat gave birth to Toby in June.

Kathy the Saddleback sow gave birth to two litters during the year totalling 19 piglets. They were a multitude of colours including ginger, black and white in a range of designs including plain, spots and stripes!

Our four miniature Southdown sheep named Rose, Dorothy, Blanche and Sophia are also missing going out to schools as part of our Animobile project.

Sadly, William our elderly horse passed away in May. However, we were delighted to welcome Lola to keep Rosie company. We hope that she will enjoy giving rides to visitors as much as Rosie does.

We also welcomed 2 new meerkats Villanelle and Eve.

The animal sponsorship scheme continues to be popular and has been particularly helpful during Lockdown in helping us to offset the cost of keeping the animals. Sponsors are rewarded with a certificate, a visitor's pass to the farm, a photograph of their animal, birthday and Christmas cards and a mention on the Roll of Honour on our website. We have extended the scheme to enable sponsors to add the cost of a bale of hay or straw or a bag of animal feed onto their sponsorships.

d) Visitor Facilities and Attractions
Horse Rides
This activity is usually very popular with visitors. When we are open to visitors we do horse rides every weekend afternoon throughout the year as well as every afternoon during school holidays. Bookings may also be made by groups during term time.

Small Animal Petting Sessions
This is another popular attraction with many repeat visitors when we are open. Activities include stroking a rabbit, grooming a guinea pig, holding a newly hatched chick and playing with Daisy and Lottie the pygmy goats, and Smokey Joe and Cocobean the pet rats. It is usually open to visitors every weekend and bank holiday and every day during school holidays.

e) Educational Services
Unfortunately these had to be suspended at the start of Lockdown but normally include:

- School Visits/Guided Tours
- Incubator Hire
- Animobile [Mobile Farm Unit]
- Animal Handling workshops
- Farm themed Activity Days

f) Events
These usually include

- Halloween Fun Day
- Christmas Grotto

Both of which were unable to take place due to social distance requirements.

g) Visitors
We closed to visitors on 23 March 2020 and were unable to open again for the remainder of the year due to Covid-19.

We were very touched that so many local people fundraised for us whilst we were closed to visitors during Lockdown. The ideas were varied and all donations were very gratefully received.

h) Fundraising
The events held and sums raised were as follows:

- Sponsored silence [Sophia and Zachary Alloua] £250
- Raffle of pictures [Flash Interiors] £180
- Climbing Snowdon in fancy dress [Kirkby Mascot] £1,250
- Sponsored head shave [Debbie and Sarah] £400

We were also extremely grateful to a good friend of Acorn Farm Helen Alloua who sold over 12,000 of our eggs to friends, family and colleagues. No one had told the hens that we were in Lockdown so they just kept on laying!

i) Trading Company
Acorn Farm Trading Company has been particularly badly hit by the enforced closure of the farm due to Covid-19. The café and shop who trade through this company have both been closed since March.

j) Risk Management
The trustees have conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. This has led to the implementation of a number of policies including the Reserves Policy, which states that in order to safeguard the future of the farm we will hold in reserve six months of resources expended. We have been particularly glad of this policy this year as the Visitor Attraction was closed for 9 months of the year.

We also have a Business Continuity Plan.

Internal risks are minimised by the implementation of additional policies including Policy and Practice on Payments, Banking and Custody Procedure, Payroll Financial Procedure, Capital Purchases Policy and Asset Control.

Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, people we support, volunteers and visitors. These include a comprehensive set of risk assessments. The implementation of our Safeguarding Policies for both Vulnerable Adults and Children ensure that we deal with any safeguarding issues which may arise in a consistent manner. All policies are reviewed on a regular basis by the trustees.

k) Staff Team
Permanent Staff:

Name	Job title	Hours
Fiona Smith	Farm Manager	35
Tracy Trumble	Deputy Manager/Finance Officer	37.5
Mike Taylor	Horticultural Unit Manager	37.5
Vacant	Day Services Manager	30
Brian Carroll	Farm Maintenance Worker	37.5
Jane McKillop	Cafe Manager	37.5
Lisa Gunn	Farm Animal Supervisor	37.5
Catherine Brailsford	Farm Assistant/ Driver	30
Sue Rowan	Gardener/Support Worker	6.5
Lynn Fitzpatrick	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	6
Val Kelly	Weekend Manager (Job Share)	6

Although we were able to furlough some members of staff through the government's Job Retention Scheme, unfortunately we had to terminate the contracts of other staff members.

l) Site Developments - Farm Site
We are continually making improvements and doing repairs to the farm site; thus ensuring that it is safe for the animals who live here and the people who both visit and work here.

We are members of the following organisations:

- National Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens
- Knowsley Chamber of Commerce
- Knowsley Visitor Economy Network
- Knowsley Business Watch
- National Association of Farms for Schools

Accreditations:

- VAQAS (Visitor Attraction Quality Assurance Scheme)
- CEVAS (Countryside Educational Visits Accreditation Scheme)
- LOtC (Learning Outside the Classroom)

Financial review

Due to Covid-19 income for the year decreased to £382k (2019: £604k). Expenditure for the year also decreased to £365k (2019: £608k), resulting in a net gain before investments of £17k (2019: £4k net loss). Unrealised investment gains of £26k (2019: £131k gain) were achieved in the year.

Reserves Policy

The Acorn Farm Board of Trustees recognises the need to hold reserves to allow for unforeseen circumstances which could result in a substantial drop in income. These could include:

1: A global pandemic.

2. A lack of funding could cause local authorities to terminate the contracts which they have with us for the provision of day services for people with disabilities.

3. A fire, flood or similar incident could result in business interruption whilst repairs are underway.

4. Severe weather could result in damage to the farm buildings making the site unsafe for visitors until repairs are undertaken.

5. Outbreak of animal disease (e.g. Foot and Mouth, e.coli) which could result in the compulsory closure of the farm for a period of time.

6. Outbreak of food poisoning which could result in the closure of the café and/or dairy whilst investigations by the Environmental Health Office are undertaken.

Additionally, the reserves would allow for unforeseen capital works or purchases which may be required to ensure the safety of the farm site (e.g. replacement of unsafe animal housing or to replace faulty tools and equipment).

To cover such eventualities, the trustees believe that Acorn Venture Association needs to hold in reserves 6 months of resources expended.

The actual level of free reserves held is stated in our annual accounts.

Future plans
Our plans for 2021 include:

- Relocating the Moses paddocks on to our new site
- Working with DK-Architects on the construction of a new purpose built farm hub
- Fundraising for the above

Conclusion
2020 has been the most challenging year in our 35 year history. However, we have come through it united and strong. We are still full of plans, hopes and dreams for Acorn Farm's future.

2021 promises to be an exciting year with work starting on the planned reconfiguration of the farm site.

We are confident that once we are able to reopen, we will continue to provide a highly valued and affordable resource for both the local community and visitors from further afield.

Structure, governance and management
The Association is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 26 July 1985 and registered with the Charity Commission on 4 March 1986.

The Association 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.

The charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

The trustees, who are also the directors for the purpose of company law, and who served during the year and up to the date of signature of the financial statements were:
A D Burke
P L Burrows
K Evans
M V Johnson
R T Muspratt
R V Rishworth
C J Roderick
A P Ware

We are always keen to welcome new trustees on to the board which meets quarterly. Our aim is to recruit trustees who are able to complement the skills and experience of our existing board.

In line with our Memorandum and Articles of Association the trustees may appoint any interested party as a member of the board either to fill a casual vacancy or by way of an addition to the board. Any member so appointed shall retain their office only until the next AGM, but they shall then be eligible for re-election.

None of the trustees has any beneficial interest in the company. All of the trustees are members of the company and guarantee to contribute £1 in the event of a winding up.

All trustees have completed a Declaration of Confidentiality and a Declaration of Commitment and Eligibility to be a trustee having regard to Section 72 of the Charities Act.

We have in place a number of policies relevant to the trustees which help to ensure that governance of the charity is performed to the highest standard. These include a Trustee Recruitment Policy, a Conflict of Interest/ Loyalty Policy, a Register of Interests and a Trustee's Code of Practice.

Small companies provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to small companies within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The trustees report was approved by the Board of Trustees.

C J Roderick

Trustee

Dated: 14 September 2021

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES RESPONSIBILITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

The trustees, who are also the directors of Acorn Venture Association for the purpose of company law, are responsible for preparing the Trustees Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

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 charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that year.

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

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;

- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;

- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and

- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

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

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

TO THE TRUSTEES OF ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

I report to the trustees on my examination of the financial statements of Acorn Venture Association (the charity) for the year ended 31 December 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

Since the charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the ICAEW, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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

Jackson Stephen LLP

Peter Atkinson F.C.A

Jackson Stephen LLP
James House
Stonecross Business Park
Yew Tree Way
Warrington
Cheshire
WA3 3JD

Dated: 17 September 2021

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
INCLUDING INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Notes	Unrestricted funds general £	Unrestricted funds designated £	Restricted funds £	Total 2020 £	Total 2019 £
Income from:						
Donations and legacies	**3**	10,492	-	-	10,492	44,937
Charitable activities	**4**	250,174	-	-	250,174	295,645
Other trading activities	**5**	30,322	-	-	30,322	219,709
Investments	**6**	40,974	-	-	40,974	43,442
Other income	**7**	50,103	-	-	50,103	-
Total income		382,065	-	-	382,065	603,733
Expenditure on:						
Cost of generating funds	**8**	12,059	-	-	12,059	13,181
Charitable activities	**9**	351,630	-	1,002	352,632	594,717
Total expenditure		363,689	-	1,002	364,691	607,898
Net incoming resources before gains/(losses) on investments		18,376	-	(1,002)	17,374	(4,165)
Net gains/(losses) on investments	**13**	26,375	-	-	26,375	131,153
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources before transfers		44,751	-	(1,002)	43,749	126,988
Gross transfers between funds		(19,271)	25,000	(5,729)	-	-
Net movement in funds		25,480	25,000	(6,731)	43,749	126,988
Fund balances at 1 January 2020		278,867	1,525,000	9,909	1,813,776	1,686,788
Fund balances at 31 December 2020		304,347	1,550,000	3,178	1,857,525	1,813,776

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The statement of financial activities also complies with the requirements for an income and expenditure account under the Companies Act 2006.

ACORN VENTURE ASSOCIATION

BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020

	Notes	2020 £	2020 £	2019 £	2019 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	**14**		72,145		69,627
Investments	**15**		1,607,283		1,551,256
			1,679,428		1,620,883
Current assets					
Debtors	**16**	13,127		27,949	
Cash at bank and in hand		185,012		186,036	
		198,139		213,985	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**17**	(20,042)		(21,092)	
Net current assets			178,097		192,893
Total assets less current liabilities			1,857,525		1,813,776
Funds of the charity					
Restricted funds	**18**		3,178		9,909
Unrestricted funds - designated	**19**		1,550,000		1,525,000
General unrestricted funds			304,347		278,867
			1,857,525		1,813,776

The company is entitled to the exemption from the audit requirement contained in section 477 of the Companies Act 2006, for the year ended 31 December 2020.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for ensuring that the charity keeps accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act and for preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of sections 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 14 September 2021

C J Roderick
Trustee

Company Registration No. 01934024

1 Accounting policies

Charity information

Acorn Venture Association is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is Acorn Venture Farm, Depot Road, Kirkby, Knowsley, Merseyside, L33 3AR.

1.1 Accounting convention

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's Memorandum and Articles of Association, the Companies Act 2006 and "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)" (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity. Monetary amounts in these financial statements are rounded to the nearest £.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, modified to reflect certain financial instruments at fair value. The principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

1.2 Going concern

At the time of approving the financial statements, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charity has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. Thus the trustees continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in preparing the financial statements.

1.3 Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives.

Designated unrestricted funds relate to funds that the trustees have designated for a particular project within the the objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subject to specific conditions by donors as to how they may be used. The purposes and uses of the restricted funds are set out in the notes to the financial statements.

1.4 Income

Cash donations are recognised on receipt. Other donations are recognised once the charity has been notified of the donation, unless performance conditions require deferral of the amount. Income tax recoverable in relation to donations received under Gift Aid or deeds of covenant is recognised at the time of the donation.

Legacies are recognised on receipt or otherwise if the charity has been notified of an impending distribution, the amount is known, and receipt is expected. If the amount is not known, the legacy is treated as a contingent asset.

Grant income in the year of £45,303 is in relation to the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme, all conditions attached to the grant have been met.

Other trading income is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for goods and services provided in the normal course of business, net of discounts.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.5 Expenditure

Expenditure, including irrecoverable VAT is recognised on the accrual basis.

In particular, the policy for including items within costs of generating funds is as follows:

Charitable activities comprise those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both the costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

All costs are allocated between the expenditure categories of the Statement of Financial Activities on bases designed to reflect the uses of particular resources. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly, while others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.

1.6 Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are initially measured at cost and subsequently measured at cost, net of depreciation and any impairment losses.

Depreciation is recognised so as to write off the cost of assets less their residual values over their useful lives on the following bases:

Long leasehold land and buildings	Over the term of the lease
Renovations	20% per annum straight line basis
Outbuildings and paddocks	10% per annum straight line basis
Fixtures, fittings and equipment	25% per annum straight line basis
Motor vehicles	25% per annum straight line basis
Play equipment	10% per annum straight line basis

The gain or loss arising on the disposal of an asset is determined as the difference between the sale proceeds and the carrying value of the asset, and is recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year.

1.7 Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are initially measured at transaction price excluding transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value at each reporting date. Changes in fair value are recognised in net income/(expenditure) for the year. Transaction costs are expensed as incurred.

A subsidiary is an entity controlled by the charity. Control is the power to govern the financial and operating policies of the entity so as to obtain benefits from its activities.

1.8 Impairment of fixed assets

At each reporting end date, the charity reviews the carrying amounts of its tangible assets to determine whether there is any indication that those assets have suffered an impairment loss. If any such indication exists, the recoverable amount of the asset is estimated in order to determine the extent of the impairment loss (if any).

1.9 Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents include cash in hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short-term liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less, and bank overdrafts. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

1 Accounting policies **(Continued)**

1.10 Financial instruments

The charity has elected to apply the provisions of Section 11 'Basic Financial Instruments' and Section 12 'Other Financial Instruments Issues' of FRS 102 to all of its financial instruments.

Financial instruments are recognised in the charity's balance sheet when the charity becomes party to the contractual provisions of the instrument.

Financial assets and liabilities are offset, with the net amounts presented in the financial statements, when there is a legally enforceable right to set off the recognised amounts and there is an intention to settle on a net basis or to realise the asset and settle the liability simultaneously.

Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and are subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest method unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the transaction is measured at the present value of the future receipts discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

Derecognition of financial assets

Financial assets are derecognised only when the contractual rights to the cash flows from the asset expire or are settled, or when the charity transfers the financial asset and substantially all the risks and rewards of ownership to another entity, or if some significant risks and rewards of ownership are retained but control of the asset has transferred to another party that is able to sell the asset in its entirety to an unrelated third party.

Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, including creditors and bank loans are initially recognised at transaction price unless the arrangement constitutes a financing transaction, where the debt instrument is measured at the present value of the future payments discounted at a market rate of interest. Financial liabilities classified as payable within one year are not amortised.

Debt instruments are subsequently carried at amortised cost, using the effective interest rate method.

Trade creditors are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Amounts payable are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities. Trade creditors are recognised initially at transaction price and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Derecognition of financial liabilities

Financial liabilities are derecognised when the charity's contractual obligations expire or are discharged or cancelled.

1.11 Employee benefits

The cost of any unused holiday entitlement is recognised in the period in which the employee's services are received.

Termination benefits are recognised immediately as an expense when the charity is demonstrably committed to terminate the employment of an employee or to provide termination benefits.

1.12 Retirement benefits

Payments to defined contribution retirement benefit schemes are charged as an expense as they fall due.

2 Critical accounting estimates and judgements

In the application of the charity's accounting policies, the trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amount of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates.

The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised where the revision affects only that period, or in the period of the revision and future periods where the revision affects both current and future periods. The key accounting estimates made by the trustees in preparing these financial statements is in respect of depreciation as detailed in the accounting policies.

3 Donations and legacies

	2020	2019
	£	£
Donations, legacies and gifts	10,492	44,937

Donations and gifts		
Gift aid	54	9,601
Legacies	1,000	23,997
Donations	9,438	11,339
	10,492	44,937

All income for both years relates to unrestricted funds.

4 Charitable activities

	2020	2019
	£	£
Daytime activities programme	211,485	210,802
Product sales	34,783	64,068
Educational income	3,075	18,689
Other income	831	2,086
	250,174	295,645
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	250,174	
For the year ended 31 December 2019		
Unrestricted funds - general		295,645

5 Other trading activities

	2020	2019
	£	£
Fundraising activities	619	5,567
Sponsorship	679	1,015
Admission charges	21,733	156,914
Guided tours	1,070	8,819
Horse riding charges	2,104	17,430
Petting pavilion charges	3,410	27,547
Room hire	707	2,417
Other trading activities	30,322	219,709

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

6 Investments

	2020	2019
	£	£
Income from listed investments	40,795	43,254
Interest receivable	179	188
	40,974	43,442

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

7 Other income

	2020	2019
	£	£
Net gain on disposal of tangible fixed assets	4,800	-
Furlough grants received	45,303	-
	50,103	-

All income for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

8 Cost of generating funds

	2020	2019
	£	£
Fundraising and publicity		
Other fundraising costs	916	1,891
Investment management administration costs	11,143	11,290
	12,059	13,181

All costs for both years relate to unrestricted general funds.

9 Charitable activities

	2020	2019
	£	£
Staff costs	248,883	270,338
Depreciation and impairment	17,114	15,248
Costs of activities in furtherance of the charity's objectives	37,790	58,958
Indirect employee costs	1,374	583
Premises costs	30,473	44,368
General administrative costs	6,512	11,173
Professional fees in support of charitable activities	905	396
Exceptional VAT costs	-	183,452
Direct employee costs	2,698	6,876
Governance costs	6,883	3,325
	352,632	594,717
Analysis by fund		
Unrestricted funds - general	351,630	
Restricted funds	1,002	
	352,632	
For the year ended 31 December 2019		
Unrestricted funds - general		593,715
Restricted funds		1,002
		594,717

10 Independent examiner remuneration

Fees payable to the independent examiner	**2020** £	**2019** £
Independent examiner review of the annual accounts	2,065	2,025
Non-audit services		
All other non-independent examiner services	4,818	3,020

11 Trustees

None of the trustees (or any persons connected with them) received any remuneration or benefits and there were no other transactions with the trustees during the year.

12 Employees

Number of employees
The average monthly number of employees during the year was:

	2020 Number	**2019 Number**
Charitable activities	18	29

Employment costs	**2020** £	**2019** £
Wages and salaries	226,323	243,599
Social security costs	12,632	17,105
Other pension costs	9,928	9,634
	248,883	270,338

There were no employees whose annual remuneration was £60,000 or more.

13 Net gains/(losses) on investments

	2020 £	**2019** £
Revaluation of investments	26,375	131,153

14 Tangible fixed assets

	Long leasehold land and buildings	Assets under construction	Outbuildings and paddocks	Fixtures, fittings and equipment	Motor vehicles	Total
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cost						
At 1 January 2020	118,049	-	582,328	113,051	36,568	849,996
Additions	-	19,278	-	354	-	19,632
Disposals	-	-	-	-	(21,078)	(21,078)
At 31 December 2020	118,049	19,278	582,328	113,405	15,490	848,550
Depreciation and impairment						
At 1 January 2020	90,812	-	559,057	107,808	22,692	780,369
Depreciation charged in the year	710	-	10,468	2,063	3,873	17,114
Eliminated in respect of disposals	-	-	-	-	(21,078)	(21,078)
At 31 December 2020	91,522	-	569,525	109,871	5,487	776,405
Carrying amount						
At 31 December 2020	26,527	19,278	12,803	3,534	10,003	72,145
At 31 December 2019	27,237	-	23,271	5,243	13,876	69,627

15 Fixed asset investments

	Listed investments £	Other investments	Total £
Cost or valuation			
At 1 January 2020	1,551,255	1	1,551,256
Valuation changes	26,375	-	26,375
Income	40,795	-	40,795
Management fees	(11,143)	-	(11,143)
At 31 December 2020	1,607,282	1	1,607,283
Carrying amount			
At 31 December 2020	1,607,282	1	1,607,283
At 31 December 2019	1,551,255	1	1,551,256

Other investments comprise:	Notes	2020 £	2019 £
Investments in subsidiaries	22	1	1

16 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:	2020 £	2019 £
Trade debtors	2,208	21,964
Other debtors	8,806	3,905
Prepayments and accrued income	2,113	2,080
	13,127	27,949

17 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2020 £	2019 £
Other taxation and social security	-	1,900
Trade creditors	6,496	2,739
Accruals and deferred income	13,546	16,453
	20,042	21,092

18 Restricted funds

The income funds of the charity include restricted funds comprising the following unexpended balances of donations and grants held on trust for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 January 2019	Expenditure	Balance at 1 January 2020	Expenditure	Transfers	Balance at 31 December 2020
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	10,911	(1,002)	9,909	(1,002)	(5,729)	3,178

The restricted fund relates to fixed asset that were bought using restricted income with the annual depreciation charge of these assets being allocated against the brought forward balance.

19 Designated funds

The income funds of the charity include the following designated funds which have been set aside out of unrestricted funds by the trustees for specific purposes:

	Balance at 1 January 2019	Transfers	Balance at 1 January 2020	Transfers	Balance at 31 December 2020
	£	£	£	£	£
Farm building refurbishment fund	1,400,000	125,000	1,525,000	25,000	1,550,000
	1,400,000	125,000	1,525,000	25,000	1,550,000

Designated funds have been set aside to fund the farm building refurbishment.

20 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted 2020 £	**Designated 2020 £**	**Restricted 2020 £**	**Total 2020 £**	Unrestricted 2019 £	Designated 2019 £	Restricted 2019 £	Total 2019 £
Fund balances at 31 December 2020 are represented by:								
Tangible assets	68,967	-	3,178	72,145	65,447	-	4,180	69,627
Investments	57,283	1,550,000	-	1,607,283	26,256	1,525,000	-	1,551,256
Current assets/(liabilities)	178,097	-	-	178,097	187,164	-	5,729	192,893
	304,347	1,550,000	3,178	1,857,525	278,867	1,525,000	9,909	1,813,776

21 Related party transactions

Remuneration of key management personnel

	2020 £	2019 £
Aggregate compensation	78,831	77,522

Transactions with related parties

During the year the charity entered into the following transactions with related parties:

	Gift Aid 2020 £	2019 £
Entities over which the entity has control, joint control or significant influence	54	9,601
	54	9,601

The following amounts were outstanding at the reporting end date:

	2020 Balance £	2019 Balance £
Entities over which the entity has control, joint control or significant influence	3,951	3,897

22 Subsidiaries

These financial statements are separate charity financial statements for Acorn Venture Association. Consolidated financial statements are not prepared as the parent company and its subsidiary is considered a small group.

Details of the charity's subsidiaries at 31 December 2020 are as follows:

Name of undertaking	Registered office	Nature of business	Class of shares held	% Held Direct	% Held Indirect
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	As per parent company	Cafeteria services and the sale of gifts	Ordinary	100.00	

22 Subsidiaries **(Continued)**

The aggregate capital and reserves and the result for the year of subsidiaries excluded from consolidation was as follows:

Name of undertaking	Profit/(Loss)	Capital and Reserves
	£	£
Acorn Venture Trading Co. Ltd	-	263

23 Control

The charity is controlled by the trustees.