



**WINDSOR HILL WOOD**  
**TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018**



Charity's name: Windsor Hill Wood

Registration number: 1174810

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Trustee names and Principal offices:

Renny Gye (Chair)

Rebecca Sutton (Secretary)

George Fox

Jane Hull

Virginia Membrey

Auditor / Independent Examiner: Stephen Purbrick

Bankers: Lloyds Bank Plc

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The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2018. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the relevant SORP and accounting standards. The trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Trust's aims and objectives in planning future activities.

# ABOUT WINDSOR HILL WOOD

Windsor Hill Wood is a family based community, set in a woodland smallholding, that offers Christian hospitality to all, regardless of race, religion or absence of religion, sexual orientation, or mental or physical ability. It aims to create a supportive environment for people going through tough or uncertain times, offering them the chance to rediscover peace, silence and acceptance amidst the beauty and simplicity of the woods.

The community is small scale, generally hosting up to five long-term guests at a time. At times, residents are a mix of long-term guests and one or two short-term guests. Chris Thompson, our Volunteer Warden, and his wife Katharine, who acts as Volunteer Assistant Warden, live on-site with their family and take care of the day-to-day management of Windsor Hill Wood. The Wardens take advice from the Trustees and other professional advisors, and meet the Chair of Trustees twice a year for a formal review.

Windsor Hill Wood is located in an old quarry. It comprises the old quarry house (Rock House) where the Warden, Assistant Warden and their family live, along with individual accommodation for guests in shepherds' huts. Rock House and the Windsor Hill Wood grounds are rented by the charity from the owners on a 5-year lease.

Windsor Hill Wood is a registered charity and has 5 trustees. This year the trustees have focused on supporting the Wardens and developing 5 key policies:

- ▶ Safeguarding policy
- ▶ Information management policy
- ▶ Hardship Fund policy
- ▶ Lone working policy
- ▶ Reserves policy

See page xx for more information about the structure, governance and management of Windsor Hill Wood.

The aim of the charity is to create a loving environment for people going through difficult times, through a shared rhythm of life and development of community, focusing on hospitality, eating together, manual labour and reflection. All the tasks necessary for Windsor Hill Wood to function are shared by all who live there. These include cooking, cleaning and managing the grounds.

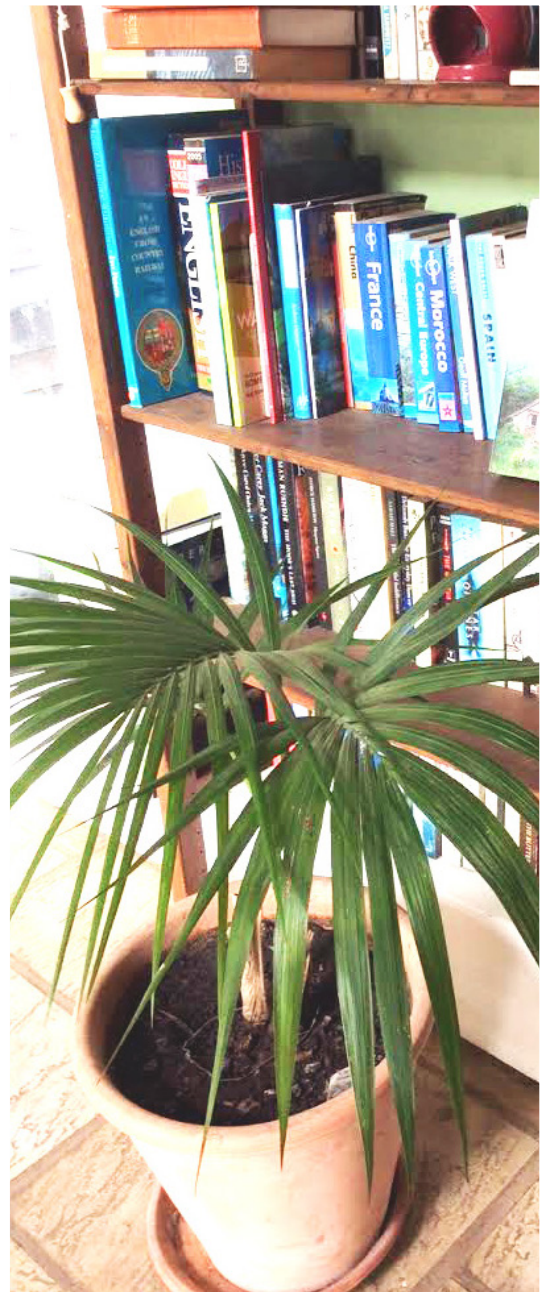
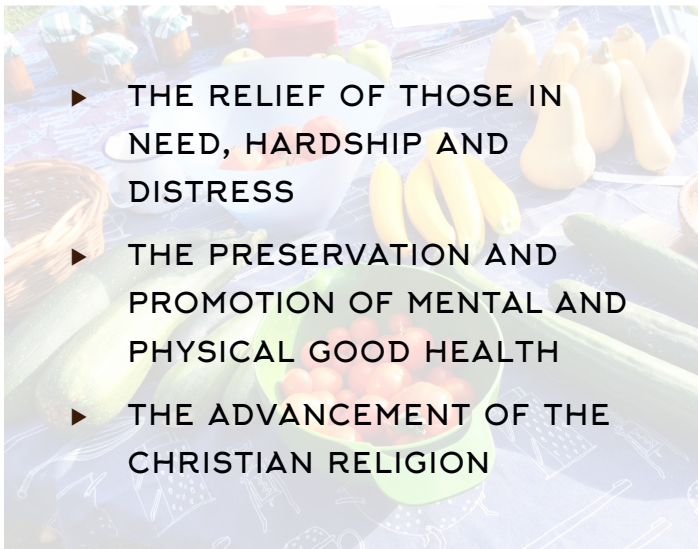
The daily husbandry of animals, site management and gardening provides an important focus for Windsor Hill Wood and for the informal rehabilitation of guests. The livestock include a flock of 11 sheep (which produced 13 lambs in the spring), two goats, chickens (which provide eggs), and pigs reared for meat. There has been some woodland management by the community, with the aim of providing a therapeutic environment, ensuring a sustainable supply of wood for the biomass boiler and maintaining biodiversity. An advisory visit from the Forestry Commission has occurred ahead of preparing the next woodland management plan.

The site is also used by the Holly and Hawthorn Forest School. The Forest School runs weekly 'Mums and Toddlers' sessions during term time plus sessions for older children during the school holidays. This enables younger members of the local community to learn together in an outside environment, with confidence and independence, while ensuring good physical and mental health.

# THE PUBLIC BENEFIT OF WINDSOR HILL WOOD

## OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

Windsor Hill Wood exists to provide temporary accommodation and refuge to those who are in need of it. We are driven by three core charitable objectives:





## HOW WE FULFILLED OUR OBJECTIVES IN 2017-18

### ► THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED, HARDSHIP AND DISTRESS

Some guests apply to come to Windsor Hill Wood themselves, while others are encouraged to do so by friends and family, or are referred by various agencies. In all cases, they come because they are in particular need, hardship or distress. Guests make a weekly contribution towards food and bills; those who cannot pay this can apply to a Hardship Fund for support.

Most people come to Windsor Hill Wood because of an explicit personal crisis - bereavement, recovery from addiction, separation, depression, homelessness and so on – but there are guests that come because they are struggling with life more generally.

Many of the guests have deep, underlying issues, often related to rejection or attachment, and WHW's central principles of acceptance and love help them to work on these. However, it is not a formally therapeutic community and hence the Hardship Fund can allow guests to access expert counselling or therapy.



Windsor Hill Wood accepts ex-offenders and guests who are dealing with drug and alcohol addiction, but only those who have been through recovery programmes. At all times, the entire site is alcohol- and drugs-free. For ex-offenders, Windsor Hill Wood engages with the probation service to help support their next steps.

While guests do not tend to be in formal employment whilst they are at Windsor Hill Wood, and many receive benefits, the voluntary work undertaken by guests this year has helped them to consider options for work beyond their time at WHW. The voluntary work they do can also help to develop some local contacts, which could lead to future employment or self-employment. One guest was particularly focused on woodworking and was able to secure a promise of grant funding towards tools in order to set up his own workshop.



### **CASE STUDY: DAVE\*, A LONG-TERM GUEST AT WINDSOR HILL WOOD**

Dave arrived at Windsor Hill Wood four weeks after having relapsed back into crack cocaine use, having twice walked out of rehab previously. He quickly began to appreciate the rhythm of working on the land, helping to manage the livestock and sharing meals around the table. He found that though he had things in common with some of the other guests, others were quite different and exhibited behaviours that irritated him. He felt in particular that another guest, Alan\*, misunderstood him, which was frustrating.

When encouraged to be honest and speak about his feelings face to face, he was brave enough to do so with honesty and understanding, and by the end of his stay, his initially difficult relationship with Alan had been transformed. His growing willingness to be open and honest has been an example to us all.

Dave is preparing to move on now and in order to save money for a rent deposit has been doing part time work. But because he understands how important it is that everyone sticks to the work rhythm at WHW, he has organised his shifts to fit around his commitments there. As he has been encouraged to take responsibility, Dave has flourished, and with a year clean now, he plans to live locally when he moves on and continue to be a part of Windsor Hill Wood.

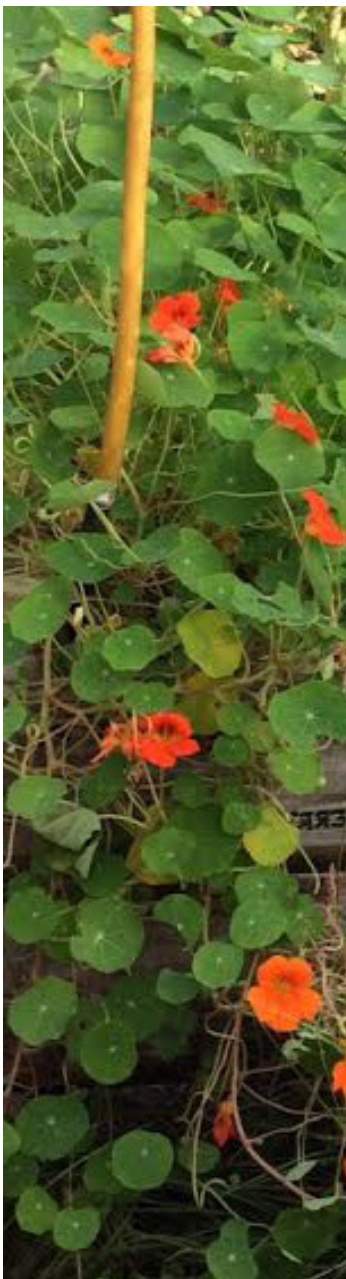
\*Names have been changed to protect anonymity.



### ► THE PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL GOOD HEALTH

One guest was supported to complete level 3 specialist drug and alcohol counselling course online.

The physical activity and time spent outdoors in managing Windsor Hill Wood, its grounds and livestock, helps to promote good health of the guests. Menus are also chosen in relation to healthy eating. In regards mental health, work is one of the most healing aspects of Windsor Hill Wood. A guest this year has also been supported in seeking further professional counselling support, both in terms of making connections and encouragement to attend, as well as with financial support from the Hardship Fund.



**The following is an excerpt from a letter sent to us from the wife of a guest whose heroin addiction had put their marriage at risk:**

*My aunt had been following the story of a family in Somerset who ran a refuge where people could go and stay for all manner of reasons, so she suggested it to us. Within 3 weeks his bags were packed and we were on our way to take him there. He had a roof over his head, 3 square meals a day and even animals to look after, to keep him occupied. Being apart for so long has been very strange. Up until now, the longest we've been apart was 5 days, so this was a very long stretch apart. Windsor Hill Wood Refuge was AMAZING!!*

*It was built in 10 acres of land in the middle of an old quarry, with nothing around but farm fields and fresh air. They would have meals in the main house and slept in converted huts, which were just the right size for a single person. They had set routines of meal times and daily duties etc. This was just what he needed to keep him occupied during his recovery. This option of a place for someone to go during their recovery is not heard of much. Many hear of rehabs such as The Priory, or the NHS places. But no one seems to hear of these small yet completely viable and most importantly affordable places such as Windsor Hill Wood. Who can honestly argue with £75 a week service charge, a roof over your head, food on the table and family feel to the place. Not everyone is comfortable going into the clinical settings that you find in the more well known rehabs so somewhere like this is ideal for someone like my husband who is more of an outdoor man than being cooped up inside.*

*He'd go to Frome once a week to attend groups to aid his recovery, covering topics that seemed to freakishly coincide with how he was feeling on that particular week. I really do believe that this chapter would have a very different ending if it wasn't for his move to Somerset.*



## ► THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

Although Windsor Hill Wood is open to all, regardless of religion or absence of religion, the Wardens and Trustees are Christians, and the daily and weekly rhythm of Windsor Hill Wood includes moments for reflection and silence.



### DAILY RHYTHM

Every day we have a one-minute check-in at 9am, during which time each person expresses how they are feeling, in one word. A few sentences may be read from devotional material, and then the working day begins. At 12.30pm people can choose to gather at the chapel for 15 minutes of midday prayer (mainly in silence). Those who do not attend are asked to respect the silence and not to use electronic devices during this time. Lunch and Supper are eaten together.

### WEEKLY RHYTHM

The joint working days are Monday to Thursday. On a Wednesday, guests may be joined by volunteers from the local area. There is a Community Meeting on Sundays, just before the evening meal, and a wellbeing meeting every Thursday.

This year, the longer-term guests also requested a weekly Bible Study, which they took turns to lead. Some also chose to accompany the Volunteer Warden's family to the local church in Shepton Mallet.

# QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF WHAT WE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR

## GUEST NUMBERS

### LONG-TERM GUESTS



AVERAGE STAY 24 WEEKS

### SHORT-TERM GUESTS



AVERAGE STAY 1 WEEK

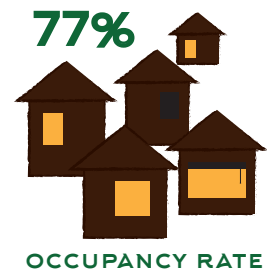
Windsor Hill Wood offers hospitality to long- and short-term guests.

The long-term stays are the focus of the work at Windsor Hill Wood, allowing the time needed for guests to become part of the rhythm of life and community, to have time away from their challenging situations and to have time for some level of recovery. However, having short-term guests, if space allows, supports a healthy and fresh dynamic and can be significant for those guests, giving them time to reflect on their next steps.

In 2017-18, we had seven long-term guests and 18 short-term guests.

## OCCUPANCY RATE

Windsor Hill Wood has been open to guests for 344 nights this year. Hence, with an assumed number of five guests at a time, it offers a potential 1,720 guest nights per year.<sup>1</sup> During 2017-18, Windsor Hill Wood has provided 1,328 guest nights,<sup>2</sup> an occupancy rate of 77%.<sup>3</sup> This has built up through the year: the occupancy rate when WHW re-opened fully in September 2017 was 40%, and it has increased from there.



## VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Windsor Hill Wood welcomes regular and one-off volunteers. There is a regular Wednesday volunteer work party in the woods and grounds. Additionally, there are opportunities for groups to come as volunteers for one-off or irregular visits. For example, this year, the Home community from Oxford came to WHW for a weekend, to help with maintenance tasks, and visitors from Hilfield Friary were also hosted for a day. There were 78 volunteers in total, and 26 volunteering sessions.

<sup>1</sup> A= Number of potential guest nights, i.e. number of nights a year in which WHW is open to guests

<sup>2</sup> B= Number of actual guest nights ie number of nights guests stayed.

<sup>3</sup> Occupancy rate = B/A x100.



## ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY BY THE CHARITY AND ITS GUESTS

Part of the rehabilitation of the guests is through informal engagement with the wider community. As a charity, Windsor Hill Wood has some formal engagement with the local community, but in addition to this, individuals that are living and staying at Windsor Hill Wood also engage with the local community by taking part in local activities.

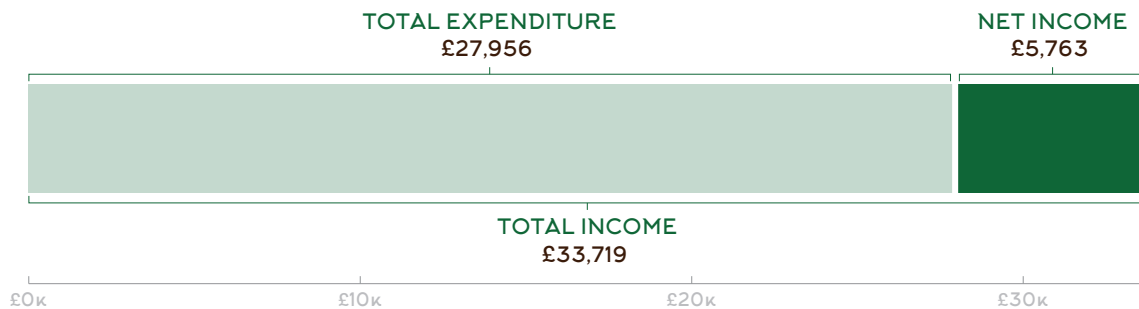
Local community organisation	How WHW and its guests have engaged	Scale
Fareshare	Benefits from receiving food	Weekly
Local church, Shepton Mallet	One guest is part of the music group and another helps with serving tea and coffee after the service	Weekly
The Dairy House, Connect Centre, Wells	One guest has started to volunteer doing woodwork	One morning per week
Shepton Mallet Community Woodland	Guests have helped with litter picking in the neighbouring community woodland	One morning per quarter
Neighbouring business	Guests have carried out one-off tasks for a neighbouring car redevelopment business	Monthly



# FINANCIAL REVIEW

Quarterly finance reports have been submitted to meetings of the Trustees.

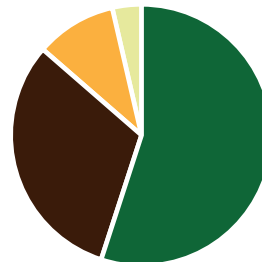
Total income for the seven months from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2017 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 (the end of the CIO's accounting year) was £33,719 and total expenditure was £27,956, giving a net income for the year of £5,763.



## INCOME

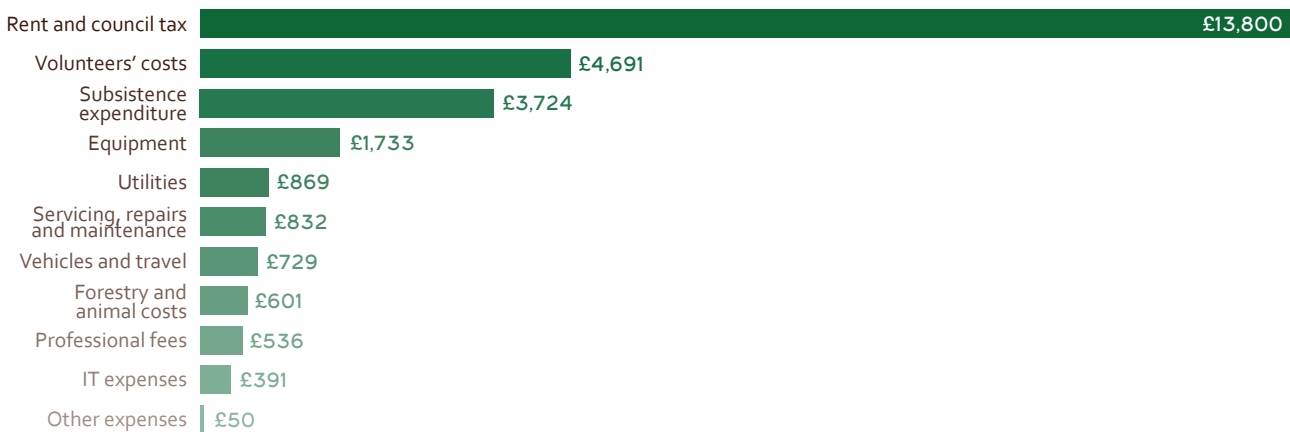
All income received was unrestricted and came from the following sources:

■ Donations:	£18,566
■ Residents' contributions:	£10,638
■ Feed-in Tariff:	£3,315
■ Other Income:	£1,200



## EXPENDITURE

All expenditure was on the charitable activities of the CIO. Expenditure was as follows:



The year-end total funds were £25,169.



## RESERVES POLICY

Reserves are held to meet the day to day cash flow requirements and any unforeseen eventuality, as Windsor Hill Wood has obligations, both to long-term volunteers and to guests.

The reserves policy states that the reserves fund should be held at a level equivalent to approximately 6 months' normal expenditure. Reserves can currently be used to cover any shortfall in funding the organisation's costs.

At the end of the reporting period, the fund balance was £25,169, equivalent to approximately seven months' expenditure. The trustees are satisfied this level is sufficient for their purposes.



## SUPPORTERS

Windsor Hill Wood has a small number of faithful supporters who contribute financially, by giving in kind, by donating their time and through prayer. At present, funds primarily come from individual donations, specific funding contracts and guest contributions. Regular monthly giving from individuals has increased during the year.

Around 258 people are on the supporters mailing list and receive the periodic newsletter. Windsor Hill Wood's contact database was updated this year in line with new GDPR regulations.

An Open Afternoon was held in September 2018 for regular supporters and the local community to visit and explore the grounds. 30 visitors attended, hosted by the guests, Wardens and Trustees. A treasure hunt was held for children.

# GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT OF WINDSOR HILL WOOD

Windsor Hill Wood is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, registered 25/09/2017. It is run according to its Constitution, which was adopted in March 2017.

The Trustees consist of five people. These Trustees were recruited to provide a range of skills required including prior experience of charity management and governance, woodland management and support of those with life issues faced by guests at Windsor Hill Wood. The Trustees will serve a minimum term of three years. They are appointed by the existing Trustees. The Trustees meet at least four times each year to determine policy, review performance, and to make key decisions.

As 2018 was the first year in which Windsor Hill Wood was constituted as a Charity and CIO, a strong focus of the Trustees has been to support the Volunteer Warden and Assistant Warden in ensuring that key governance and management policies have been developed in a manner appropriate to the scale and nature of Windsor Hill Wood. The key policies that have been developed and agreed by the Trustees are:

- ▶ Safeguarding policy
- ▶ Information management policy
- ▶ Hardship Fund policy
- ▶ Lone working policy
- ▶ Reserves policy

The Wardens take advice as appropriate from the Trustees and occasional professional advisers, as well as undertaking regular supervision. They have a six monthly review meeting with the Chair of Trustees.

## RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees have identified and assessed risks, captured in a risk register. The key risks are in the areas of management of unpredictable behaviour, medical issues, treatment of guest information, damage to property and working with tools. Identified high-risk areas have agreed risk management actions in place to ensure safety and relevant legal compliance.

The Trustees review the major risks the charity faces on a regular basis, and any adjustments needed to risk management actions, at Trustees meetings. A full review of the Risk Register has been undertaken and is monitored on an ongoing basis. The Trustees receive regular reports on health and safety matters from the Warden and Assistant Warden.



## RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Trustees Report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales 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 of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

- ~ select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently
- ~ observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP
- ~ make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- ~ state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed; subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- ~ prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue to operate on that basis.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper 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 Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the charity's trust deed. 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.

Approved by the trustees on

and signed on their behalf by



