

05673816 (ENGLAND & WALES)

CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER: 1119592



DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST
DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

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LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Company Number: 05673816 (England & Wales)

Registered Charity Number: 1119592

Patron: The Viscount Ashbrook

Directors: E M Bennis
J M Uings
C Wilcox-Baker
S Bartlett
GDarlington
M Blowey
D Cash

Secretary: J M Uings

Registered Office: 26 Sandford Road
Sale
Cheshire
M33 2PS

Bankers: CAF Bank Limited

THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST

DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

The Council of Management presents its report with the financial statements of the charity for the Year ended 31 January 2020.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing document

The charity is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The objects of the Trust are:

- 1 To promote the education of the public in fine arts, crafts, sciences and all other matters connected with designed landscapes; and
- 2 To promote the appropriate action for any or all of the following: the restoration, enhancement, preservation, conservation, protection and understanding of designed landscapes that may exist or have existed in and around the pre-1974 historic county of Cheshire.

The Cheshire Garden Trust Council of Management Trustees has adopted the *Charity Governance Code for smaller charities* and is working towards ensuring that it is fully compliant with its stipulated good practice. It acknowledges, however, that it is not possible to be fully compliant at the present time in relation to the proposed maximum length of service of 9 years. Whilst this is a matter of continual review with steps being taken to ensure a regular turnover of Trustee membership, it is necessary to retain Trustee membership beyond nine years in view of the current Trustees' considerable skills and expertise.

The Trustees have reviewed the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. The activities of the Trust fall mainly within the Charitable Purposes: advancement of education, and advancement of arts, culture and heritage. The activities of the Trust in meeting these public benefits are described in detail below. Membership of the Trust is open to everyone and members of the public do not need to be a member of the Trust to benefit from its activities.

Appointment of trustees

The trustees who served during the year are set out on the charity information page at the front of these accounts.

Trustees are elected by the members at the AGM to serve on the Council of Management for three years. Members of the Council are restricted to two consecutive terms of three years, unless there are fewer candidates for election than places available. Council may consist of no fewer than seven and no more than fifteen members. A further three co-options may be made.

The Council of Management encourages others to stand for election and has created an information pack for new Trustees.

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DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

Organisation

The company is limited by guarantee and was incorporated on 12 January 2006. It was registered as a charity on 11 June 2007. The Trust is a member of the national body The Gardens Trust.

Risk policy

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks. The following are in place:

- An annual budget is set and management accounts reported against budget at intervals through the year.
- Public Liability and Trustee Indemnity Insurance;
- Role descriptions and information packs for Council of Management members;
- Risk assessments are made prior to every event;
- Site visit guidance notes and risk assessments for volunteers undertaking research and recording;
- An information pack for research and recorders which includes guidance to minimise risk;
- Training for researchers;
- A Data Protection Policy has been drafted to ensure the Trust complies with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

The Council of Management also recognises that too much responsibility rests on too few volunteers and will continue to encourage members of the Trust to serve on the Council and to volunteer for the various activities it undertakes.

Membership

Membership levels have fallen, although new members continue to join while others leave. A large number of members are very actively involved in the various activities and many attend the different events, walks and talks. There has been a slight increase in members paying by direct debit. All members receive the quarterly newsletter.

Chairman

Ed Bennis continues to fill the role of Chairman on a temporary basis.

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DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

Activities

The following items were in our plans for 2019/20:

- To continue with our usual activities with a special emphasis on developing skills among the membership to help with the Conservation and Planning demands.
- To incur additional expenditure on the Caldwell website with a view to increasing the interrogation of the data.
- To review and update the CGT website
- To consider and implement recommendations from the Strategic Review

These have only been partially achieved to date. However, the CoM continues to refer to the Strategic Review has reviewed our Strategic Focus.

Planning and Conservation

This year a small number of volunteers have reviewed 55 planning applications affecting historic designed landscapes of which 32 merited a response including Toft Cricket Club, Thornton Manor and Combermere walled garden, where the application was subsequently withdrawn. We objected to a listed building application to demolish glasshouses at Tatton Park and have pursued planning enforcement in two cases, the White Lodge, Tabley and Davenham Hall parkland where the trees are covered by a Tree Preservation Order. We commented on two Neighbourhood Development Plans and Warrington Local Plan (in conjunction with Lancashire Gardens Trust), contributed to a pre application consultation on Royal Chester Rowing Club (adjacent to Grosvenor Park), and have sought the listing of the Cadbury Factory landscape at Moreton, Wirral, by Geoffrey Jellicoe.

These activities are challenging and can be time consuming but are rewarding when we have a positive influence on decision making. Planning officers value our knowledge and contribution. If members care about our heritage of parks and gardens then it is essential that more people volunteer to assist with this activity. Without greater involvement the activity cannot be sustained and our parks and gardens are at serious risk of ill-informed development occurring without comment.

Sue Bartlett or Barbara Moth: please contact us if you would like to know more about what this role involves. planning@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

CGT & Ness Botanic Garden Bursary

The CoM along with Ness have deferred the bursary to 2020/21 due to COVID 19

Research and Recording

Research and Recorders completed and issued a further six site reports. During the summer we had fascinating visits to Dorfold Hall and Crewe Hall, a visit organized by the Welsh Historic Gardens Trust.

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Members participated in Wirral History and Heritage Day, Reaseheath Family Day, Cheshire Local History Association meetings, Warrington Local History Day, Cheshire Local History Day, the Walled Kitchen Garden Network Forum (Dorset), the Garden Trust meet up (Chester), the Repton Case Study Day (Birmingham), the Historic Landscapes Assembly (London), and the Gardens Trust Annual Conference (Oxford).

Barbara Moth research@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Events

The Events Group continued to organise a variety of garden visits during the spring and summer of 2019, ranging from a visit further afield to Birkenhead Park, to Lanes End Cottages, and to the very extensive private garden at Ashton Grange. A visit was also made to Fryers' Garden Centre in Knutsford for a talk on its renowned roses. In the autumn and winter months we started our series of talks by the six week Garden History course delivered by our Chairman, Ed Bennis, the first sessions taking place in October and early November, and the remaining sessions in January and February. In November, Graham Hardman spoke on Japanese Gardens, while in late February the archivist Jonathan Pepler gave a talk on Cheshire estate maps

All our garden visits planned for the spring and summer 2020 have been put on hold at the present time, but we are hopeful of delivering them in 2021. We also wish to thank all those who have helped us at events - taking names, teas and coffees, etc. - and if anyone would like to join the group, they would be most welcome.

Margaret Blowey margaretblowey@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Membership

158 members including 6 Life Memberships
10 Non-Renewals

Note: These figures omit Associated Groups and temporary Free Memberships which included Caldwell Volunteers and Events participants ie. garden owners & lecturers.
(Membership for 2018-19 was approx. 180 without these omissions.)

The CoM have been very concerned that the Trust has not been able to run its normal range of visits and talks for the end of 2019/20 and certainly for part of 2020/21. We discussed refunding membership fees however this would be a major logistical problem (not as bad as Ryan Air!). We have taken the decision to donate a total of one year's membership fee of approximately £1500 to a suitable charity. After considerable research, the CoM has decided to donate this sum the National Garden Scheme (The Yellow Book). As a registered charity it supports or Trust's aims as well as supporting charities related to gardens, gardening and the NHS.

We hope this meets with members support, but we will refund a year's membership fees to any member who requests it.

Crispin Spencer membership@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

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Networking

Our networkers have continued their work, attending open days and conferences and displaying the activities of the Trust. This often provides the Trust with important contacts and information.

Publicity and Communication

The Trust publishes a newsletter and uses flyers, posters and the website to circulate information on its activities. Activities include commenting on planning applications, visits, publications, giving talks and presentations to members and numerous outside groups. While these are successful in demonstrating the Trust's activities, they bring few new members to the Trust. This area has always been, and remains, and subject for coordinated development that requires new volunteers.

The website is currently undergoing a major revision.

Ed Bennis edbennis@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Newsletter

The newsletter continues to be an important document, giving those unable to attend particular events a taste of what they missed and providing other fascinating and/or useful items. Many thanks to all those who have contributed to the newsletter over the past year and particularly to Sue Eldridge, the editor and Freyda Taylor who provides printed copies where necessary and also makes sure that copies are available at networking events.

Sue Eldridge newsletter@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Volunteers

Maintaining our activities requires the input of our many volunteers. However, we are very aware that some have been undertaking their roles for more than a decade and unfortunately that means we are getting older! It is important that the Trust is refreshed by the different ideas and experiences of younger members. Everyone can help, whether occasionally or for longer periods. Please allow our older volunteers to take a step backward. We will still be around to offer support.

We need volunteers in the following areas: Research & Recording, Planning & Conservation, and Events. The Chairman has been infilling as an acting chair for several years, and Joy Uings wishes to step down from her role as company secretary and treasurer.

Thoughts for the future

The following points were submitted to the CoM by Barbara Moth. We felt that these were relevant and timely so they have been included as part of the Annual Report.

- Not only CGT events but many of the other events that we have previously participated in won't take place this year. These events can be informative, stimulating and encouraging. We will miss them.
- R&R researchers will be limited by lack of access to libraries and record offices, as well as their own vulnerability. At the moment we can't request access to sites for recording purposes.
- New resources have come online, e.g. talks from FOLAR (Friends of the Landscape Archive at Reading) www.folar.uk/events
- Planning applications and consultations have slowed, but there are always those ready to exploit the current paralysis so we need to be watchful when we do venture out

- Historic Houses and their gardens are facing financial crisis along with the National Garden Scheme (NGS/Yellow Book). We need to support them where we can. The crisis might lead to a rash of applications in designed landscapes as owners seek to develop in order to derive income to sustain heritage assets.
- There already appears to have been a massive increase in gardening and interest therein, topping interest in baking etc. or any other activity that people have taken up during the lockdown. (A member has reported increased enquiries for garden design. Several friends and family have reported the interest and involvement of children in gardening as more time is spent outside. A new professional Landscape architecture programme has started in Lancashire). It will be interesting to see the success or failure of broadcasting past RHS Chelsea Flower Shows on TV. How can we build on this interest?
- The pandemic has seen a resurgence in the appreciation of public parks and green space. Hopefully this will feed through to the realisation that we have beautiful spaces on our doorstep that we can visit without air travel. Another opportunity for investment and renewal linked to well-being in so many ways. Should we be campaigning more about this, linking with Friends of Parks groups, working with Local Authorities and professional bodies?

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DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT (Continued)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

Financial review

The year ended in a healthy financial position. However, income was slightly lower, expenditure was also lower with a surplus for the year of £938 as against last year's £721

Reserves policy

It is the policy of the charity to maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level which equates to approximately six months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to meet operational costs and to fund the next two events of the Trust. Unrestricted funds were maintained above this level throughout the year.

Plans for future periods

We will resume our normal activities as allowed according to Government advice.. In addition, we will continue to follow up the ideas that came out of the Strategic Review.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity at the end of the financial Year and of its surplus or deficit for the financial Year. In doing so the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in existence.

The trustees (Council of Management) are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and

enables 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.

This report was approved by the Council of Management on 1 May 2019.

Ed Bennis

Edward Bennis, Trustee

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BALANCE SHEET

AT 31 JANUARY 2020

	Note	2020		2019	
		£	£	£	£
Current assets					
Debtors and prepayments	3	130		422	
Bank Accounts		19,421		17,861	
		<u>19,551</u>		<u>18,283</u>	
Creditors					
Amounts falling due within one year	4	760		430	
		<u>760</u>		<u>430</u>	
Net current assets			18,791		17,853
			<u>18,791</u>		<u>17,853</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			18,791		17,853
			<u>18,791</u>		<u>17,853</u>
Net assets			18,791		17,853
			<u>18,791</u>		<u>17,853</u>
Capital funds					
Unrestricted funds			18,791		17,853
			<u>18,791</u>		<u>17,853</u>
Total funds			18,791		17,853
			<u>18,791</u>		<u>17,853</u>

For the year ending 31/01/2020 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The Members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

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

Approved by the trustees on

Ed Bennis

Edward Bennis
Trustee

David Cash

David Cash
Trustee

The annexed notes form part of these financial statements.

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

	Unrest'd Funds	Total Funds 2020	<i>Unrest'd Funds £</i>	<i>Total Funds 2019 £</i>
Incoming resources				
Incoming Resources from generated funds:				
Voluntary income	4,352	4,352	4,580	4,580
Activities for generating funds	1,907	1,907	2,070	2,070
Investment income	11	11	4	4
Total incoming resources	<u>6,270</u>	<u>6,270</u>	<u>6,654</u>	<u>6,654</u>
Resources expended				
Costs of generating funds	899	899	906	906
Charitable activities	3,462	3,462	4,242	4,242
Governance costs	971	971	785	785
Total resources expended	<u>5,332</u>	<u>5,332</u>	<u>5,933</u>	<u>5,933</u>
Net movement in funds	938	938	721	721
Total funds brought forward	<u>17,853</u>	<u>17,853</u>	<u>17,132</u>	<u>17,132</u>
Total funds carried forward	<u><u>18,791</u></u>	<u><u>18,791</u></u>	<u><u>17,853</u></u>	<u><u>17,853</u></u>

Details of Incoming resources and resources used are given in the notes to the financial statements.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

1. Accounting policies

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention (as modified by the revaluation of certain assets) and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (Effective January 2005). The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2005) issued in March 2005.

Cashflow statement

The Company has taken advantage of the exemption in Financial Reporting Standard No.1 from the requirement to produce a cash flow statement on the grounds that it is a small company.

Incoming resources

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

Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources.

2. Investment Income

	2020	2019
	£	£
Interest	11	4
	=	=

3. Debtors and prepayments

Amounts falling due within one year:

	2020	2019
	£	£
Prepayments and Accrued Income	30	422
	=	=

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

4. Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year:-

	2020	2019
	£	£
Accruals and Deferred Income	760	430
	<u>430</u>	<u>430</u>
	<u><u>430</u></u>	<u><u>430</u></u>

5. Incoming resources

	2020	2020	2019	2019
	£	£	£	£
Voluntary Income				
Income from events and workshops	3,547		4,201	
Donations and Grants	805		379	
	<u>4,352</u>		<u>4,580</u>	
		4,352		4,580
Activities for generating funds				
Book and plant sales	127		178	
Membership subscriptions	1,780		1,892	
	<u>1,907</u>		<u>2,070</u>	
		1,907		2,070
Investment income				
Interest	11		4	
	<u>11</u>		<u>4</u>	
		11		4
Total incoming resources		<u><u>6,270</u></u>		<u><u>6,654</u></u>

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (Continued)

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2020

6. Costs of generating funds	2020	2020	2019	2019
	£	£	£	£
Membership stationery & postage	79		81	
Newsletter stationery and postage	378		365	
Publicity	362		305	
Miscellaneous expenditure	80		155	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		899		906
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
7. Charitable activities	2020	2020	2019	2019
	£	£	£	£
Research and recording expenses	286		341	
Caldwell Project	294		709	
Conservation and planning expenses	52		0	
Event & workshop expenses	2,630		2,895	
Miscellaneous Charitable expenditure	300		297	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		3,562		4,242
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
8. Governance costs	2020	2020	2019	2019
	£	£	£	£
Returns and Registration Fees	48		48	
Council Meetings	50		0	
TGT Subscription and Insurance	644		637	
AGM	229		100	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		971		785
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
9. Related party transactions				

All directors are volunteers and receive no remuneration or other financial reward from the Trust.

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