

05673816 (ENGLAND & WALES)

CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER: 1119592



**DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT AND
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026

THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST
DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026

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THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Company Number: 05673816 (England & Wales)

Registered Charity Number: 1119592

Patron: The Viscount Ashbrook

Directors: Susan Bartlett
Jackie Cawte
Alison Moore
Martin Slack

Registered Office: 26 Sandford Road
Sale
Cheshire
M33 2PS

Bankers: CAF Bank Limited

THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST (CGT)
DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026

The Council of Management presents its report, together with the charity's financial statements for the Year ended 31 January 2026.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Document

The Trust is an incorporated charity and 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 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.

Membership of the Trust is open to everyone.

The Trust is a member of the national body The Gardens Trust.

Appointment of Trustees

Members of the Council of Management serve as both Directors and Trustees. Members of the Council of Management who served during the year are set out on the previous page.

Members of the Council of Management are elected by the members at the AGM. Council may consist of no fewer than four and no more than seven members. A further three co-options may be made.

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.

Achievements and performance

Looking Forward

Council of Management

We have been fortunate to gain two new members to the Council of Management (CoM), and appreciate the attendance and contribution of other members at these meetings. We hope that with approximately - four meetings per year other members will step forward to join us, either regularly or occasionally. In 2026 we will be considering changes to our structure and governance, and forming a strategy group to consider ways to take the Trust forward.

CGT DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026 (continued)

Conservation and Planning

This year has seen a threat to the protection of designed landscapes all over the country in the form of the Government consultation on the removal of the Gardens Trust (GT) as a statutory planning consultee. This concluded in January 2026, and we thank all of you who contributed to this consultation. Should the Government decision favour the removal of the GT's planning role, the activities of the County Trusts will become even more important in the protection of our designed landscapes

Events and Website

We aim to vary the timings and venues for our Events and to refresh our Website and leaflets to reach a more diverse audience, with the intention of attracting more members to actively support the stated aims of our Trust including promoting the understanding and protection of Cheshire's designed landscapes.

Volunteers

Fresh ideas from our members would benefit CGT enormously, so please give serious consideration to offering your assistance and skills. Not everybody wishes to join one of the active groups but occasional involvement can be equally helpful.

- Tell friends about Events and encourage them to join.
- Chat to someone who is alone or new and discover their interests and skills
- Help to check in attendees. Serve tea at a talk.
- Pass on ideas for visits and talks
- Take CGT leaflets to your local library etc and/or deliver them to your neighbours
- Look out for local planning applications that may impact historic parks or gardens.
- Take minutes at a meeting
- Write an article for the newsletter
- Periodically check the links on our website and report if any no longer work
- Drop in at a Group meeting to discover more about their activities and share your ideas. Meeting dates & venues are posted on the website calendar.

To get in touch speak to a group member or email:- info@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Membership Report February 2025 - January 2026

The total membership (excluding gift memberships) increased over the year from 133 at the end of January 2025 to 140 as at the end of January 2026. There were 4 new members over the year and 7 members who "rejoined" after restarting their subscription. This was offset by 3 members who did not renew their membership and 1 who sadly died during the year.

Gift memberships, given as a "thank you" to those hosting garden visits, or giving talks, is 9. Hopefully some will convert to paying members as their complimentary membership expires.

All members receive newsletters and regular emailed news items.

Martin Slack, Membership Secretary

CGT DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026 (continued)

Events Group Report

The Events Team again offered a varied programme of six Parks and Garden Visits and four Winter Talks attracting on average 25 attendees. There was a number restriction for some visits but Emily Chandler's talk on the Winter Garden at Dunham Massey attracted 58 attendees. We were pleased to welcome guests and also members of Staffordshire Gardens Trust and Tatton Garden Society to our events. Details of these events are recorded in the CGT Newsletter:-

<https://www.cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk/?Home>

and on the Website Events Gallery:-

<https://www.cheshiregardentrust.org.uk/?Events>

On behalf of the Council of Management our Team also arranged the CGT Annual General Meeting at Theatre Porto, Whitby Park, Ellesmere Port, a new and interesting venue. We introduced name lanyards for use at events to enable new members to get to know others.

Our Events Team comprised Margaret Blowey (Chair), Jackie Cawte, Gordon Darlington, Janet Horne, and Carolyn Yardley. Julia Whitfield, a conscientious member of the team for many years, stood down in August 2025. We thanked Julia for her generous service.

Looking ahead, the Team is planning the 2026 Programme with one summer visit per month and winter talks located across the county. We always welcomes fresh ideas from Members.

Margaret Blowey on behalf of the Events Team - events@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Research and Recording Group Report 1st February 2025 – 31st January 2026

This year we have held three meetings and one site visit to South Park, Macclesfield in May, with the assistance and hospitality of Gordon Darlington.

While Cheshire Record Office remains closed in preparation for moving to the new premises, we have been unable to access all research resources, nevertheless a further five short reports have been prepared using online sources and issued to Cheshire Historic Environment Record. We continue to use the information on Caldwell Nurseries Website in our research; a valuable resource.

A request for information on Churton Lodge was received and a short report about the lodge sent to the enquirer. We have also had exchanges with a contact in Sandbach concerning Abbeyfields, the subject of one of our earliest reports, where development proposals will have an impact on the historic landscape. Our response has involved additional investigation and utilising information from our body of research on John Webb.

Jackie Cawte, Barbara Moth and Janet Horne represented the Trust at Cheshire Local History Day with an exhibition following the day's theme. "Moving Cheshire". The exhibition attracted considerable interest.

We are grateful for the continued commitment of our small group of research and recorders and would be pleased to welcome others to a meeting or site visit.

Barbara Moth and Jackie Cawte research@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

CGT DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026 (continued)

Planning and Conservation Report February 2025 – January 2026

CGT received and reviewed twenty- six planning issues and to date has commented on twelve. No response was necessary on twelve & two “no comments” were due to lack of volunteers.

<u>Area Breakdown as follows:</u>	<u>Included in these figures are:</u>
Cheshire East – 15 Cheshire West & Chester – 5 Cheshire/Peak District NSIP – 1 Manchester - 1 Stockport – 2 Warrington – 2 Wirral - 0	Neighbourhood Development Plans – 8 Local Development Plans - 1 Registered Parks & Gardens – 12 Locally Significant Landscapes – 3 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) – 1 Government Consultation - 1

A government decision is expected on 12 sites identified for potential new towns. Cheshire East councillors have voted against siting a new town at Adlington but the final decision rests with government.

We are considering our response to consultation on the Peak Cluster, a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), which involves laying a pipeline across Cheshire to transport carbon from the Peak District to the Irish Sea.

We responded to the Government Consultation regarding the removal of the Gardens Trust as a Statutory Planning Consultee. Our response was circulated to members to assist them in making their own responses and is available to view in the News section of our website.

We are keen for members to get in touch if they hear of local consultations or planning applications that fall within our remit, and we are grateful to those members who have contacted us and who have assisted in responses, meetings and site visits.

Barbara Moth and Sue Bartlett planning@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Newsletter - February 2025 - January 2026

The production of the newsletter continued during the period with four editions. I am delighted to say that Alison Moore, CGT member and gardens writer for Cheshire Life Magazine, agreed to become editor of the Newsletter and produced the January 2026 edition. I'm sure she will do extremely well and bring a whole new dimension to the style and production of the newsletter.

I would not have been able to undertake the job of editor without the help of many people. I would particularly like to thank Freyda Taylor, who has loyally proofread and supported both Joy Uings, the previous editor, and me, as well as producing hard copies for those who need them.

I was also supported latterly by the newsletter support group, Patricia Hazlehurst, Liz Roberts, Freyda Taylor, Monica Walker and Isabel Wright. They were instrumental in driving the newsletter forward, consulting members and introducing new formats. And then, thanks to all those who have contributed to the Newsletter over the years, fourteen of them in the last year.

CGT DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026 (continued)

In March 2025, the government announced that it was considering removing the role of statutory consultee from the Gardens Trust. We have covered the latest developments throughout the year, and following the launch of the consultation in November, we included detailed advice on how to respond in the January 2026 edition of the Newsletter.

We reported on the death of Tom Acton, previous Head Gardener at Arley Hall and Gardens and on a very well-deserved MBE for Lord Ashbrook, our Patron, who himself has contributed generously to the Newsletter over the years.

I shall look forward to reading the newsletter over the coming years and hope to contribute an occasional "Postcard from the Lake District".

Good wishes to you all.

Sue Eldridge Retiring Newsletter Editor 2017 – 2026

Alison Moore – Newsletter Editor 2026 newsletter@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk

Financial review January 2025 – February 2026

In the year ending 31/01/2026, the Trust funds reduced by £2,175 which compares to the increase of £25 reported in the previous year. The total available assets at the end of the year were £14,209, still a very comfortable figure

The principal reason for this marked change was the donation of £2,000 to the Gardens Trust to support its work in responding to the Government consultation on its removal as a statutory planning consultee. In other areas, the regular programme of events – covering visits and talks – generated a small surplus of £336. Subscriptions, at £1,695, plus bank interest of £482, fell short of our overall operating costs of £2,687, by £520.

The detailed figures are shown on pages [11 – 15].

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 11 February 2026.

MARTIN SLACK Trustee

**THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST
BALANCE SHEET**

AT 31 JANUARY 2026

	Note	2026		2025	
		£	£	£	£
Current assets					
Debtors and prepayments	3	0		0	
Bank Accounts		14,445		16,384	
		<u>14,445</u>		<u>16,384</u>	
Creditors					
Amounts falling due within one year	4	237		0	
		<u>237</u>		<u>0</u>	
Net current assets			14,208		16,384
			<u>14,208</u>		<u>16,384</u>
Total assets less current liabilities			14,208		16,384
			<u>14,208</u>		<u>16,384</u>
Net assets			14,208		16,384
			<u>14,208</u>		<u>16,384</u>
Capital funds					
Unrestricted funds			14,208		16,384
			<u>14,208</u>		<u>16,384</u>
Total funds			14,208		16,384
			<u>14,208</u>		<u>16,384</u>

For the year ending 31/01/2026 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 11 February 2026

Martin Slack
Trustee

Susan Bartlett
Trustee

The annexed notes form part of these financial statements

THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026

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

	Unrest'd Funds 2026	Total Funds	<i>Unrest'd Funds 2025</i>	<i>Total Funds</i>
			£	£
Incoming resources				
Incoming Resources from generated funds:				
Voluntary income	2,896	2,896	3,976	3976
Activities for generating funds	1,685	1,685	1,781	1,781
Investment income	482	482	196	196
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total incoming resources	5,063	5,063	5,953	5,953
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Resources expended				
Costs of generating funds	1,053	1,053	862	862
Charitable activities	5,018	5,018	3,801	3800.99
Governance costs	1,166	1,166	1,265	1265
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total resources expended	7,237	7,237	5,928	5,928
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Net movement in funds	-2,175	-2,175	25	25
Total funds brought forward	16,383	16,383	16,358	16,358
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>
Total funds carried forward	14,209	14,209	16,383	16,383
	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>	<u> </u>

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

THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026

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 Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and with the Charities Act 2011.

Cashflow statement

The Company has taken advantage of the exemption from the requirement to produce a cashflow 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 income and expenditure is accounted for on a cash 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

	2026	2025
	£	£
Interest	482	196
	<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>

3. Debtors and prepayments

Amounts falling due within one year:

	2026	2025
	£	£
Prepayments and Accrued Income	-	-
	<u>==</u>	<u>==</u>

THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026 (Continued)

4. Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year:-

	2026	2025
	£	£
Accruals and Deferred Income	237	-
	<u>237</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>237</u>	<u>-</u>

5. Incoming resources

	2026	2026	2025	2025
	£	£	£	£
Voluntary Income				
Income from events and workshops	2,886		3,886	
Donations and Grants	10		90	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		2,896		3,976
Activities for generating funds				
Book and plant sales	0		124	
Membership subscriptions	1,685		1,657	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		1,685		1,781
Investment income				
Interest	482		196	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		482		196
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>
Total incoming resources		5,063		5,953
		<u>5,063</u>		<u>5,953</u>

THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2026 (Continued)

6. Costs of generating funds

	2026	2026	2025	2025
	£	£	£	£
Membership stationery & postage	180		170	
Newsletter stationery and postage	448		537	
Publicity	0		30	
Miscellaneous expenditure	425		125	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		1,053		862
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>

7. Charitable activities

	2026	2026	2025	2025
	£	£	£	£
Research and recording expenses	140		70	
Caldwell Project	328		302	
Conservation and planning expenses	0		0	
Event & workshop expenses	2,000		120	
Miscellaneous Charitable expenditure	2,550		3309	
	0		0	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		5,018		3,801

8. Governance costs

	2026	2026	2025	2025
	£	£	£	£
Returns and Registration Fees	81		99	
Council Meetings	-		-	
TGT Subscription and Insurance	594		579	
AGM	491		587	
	<u> </u>		<u> </u>	
		1,166		1265
		<u> </u>		<u> </u>

9. Related party transactions

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