



Wheatley Parish Council Meeting Agenda for Monday, December 4, 2023

To: All Members of Wheatley Parish Council

Councillors are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of **Full Parish Council Meeting** to be held at the **Merry Bells, 89 High St, Wheatley** on **Monday, December 4, 2023**, at **19:30** for the purpose of transacting the following business.

Signed M Legg Clerk to the Parish Council, 29 November 2023

Members are reminded to declare an interest for relevant agenda

There will be an OPEN SESSION at approximately 7.35pm, when questions may be taken from the public.

Copies of documentation and meeting links are available from the parish office, clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk or 01865 875615.

AGENDA

#115/2023-24.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

#116/2023-24.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

#117/2023-24.TO RECEIVE MINUTES

From Parish Council meeting on 6th November 2023 – previously circulated

#118/2023-24.TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

From Parish Council meeting on 6th November 2023

#119/2023-24.TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM THE CLERK

And includes

- i. SLCC National Conference notes
- ii. NALC Legal Briefing notes
- iii. WNP public meetings communications delivered and events took place
- iv. Remembrance service - Memorial Garden was given attention ahead of the event, that was attended by Cllr Sercombe and others
- v. Request closure of Parish Office from Saturday 23 Dec until Tuesday 2 Jan 24.
- vi. Celebrating Volunteer Event 2023 - 16th December
- vii. Christmas Fair 2023 -
- viii. SODC Deep Clean
- ix. Interim Internal Audit complete

#120/2023-24.TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR

#121/2023-24.TO RECEIVE A REPORT FROM SODC DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

Notes from SLCC conference

Martyn's Law – Figen Murry

Current proposals will place legal requirements on community venues with capacities of 100 and 800+ (but likely subject to change) to address public safety risks at these venues.

Legislation is likely to start in 2024 and will include a period of 12 months to implement the requirements.

? Will this have an impact on our outdoor events/markets? – unsure but likely.

? If legislation is applied to larger venues (300+) would WPC consider voluntarily complying with legislation.

DLUHC – Lizzie Hawkins

Community Wealth Fund – utilising money languishing in banks and building societies. Consultation on the proposals is currently open.

Local Gov Act – church funding, amendment has been passed, clarifies that local councils can choose to fund maintenance of churches and religious building.

Remote meetings – no updates following call for evidence.

Carers Allowance – still under consideration.

Local democracy – Neighbourhood governance and will update community governance reviews. Remit for parish polls to be updated.

Martyn's Law – report being considered.

Local Government Act – unable to commit to updating more legislation.

UK Parliament Engagement and Education

Q would WPS invite them along as part of Democracy Day?

Q could we engage with both schools on Democracy Day to promote the work of the council? Possibly set up a scenario.

Taunton Town Council - Community Governance Review

Improved community engagement improved local democracy and efficiencies.

Should take 12 months.

Terms of reference and initial consultation (SODC?)

Working groups with reps

Elections in May.

Be aware of judicial review.

Statutory consultees.

Public meetings/events

Would've been more efficient if there were dedicated officers at DC level to support the project.

Check Precept figures for band d, per household and per person.

Continue to report (and remind community to) issues to relevant authorities.

Safety policies for councillors and staff – check and update existing and reference our zero-tolerance policy.

Serious Violence: A joined up approach, James Vaughan

Violent crime on increase, including knife and gun crime.

Costs – victim's family £113k

Justice costs £3.2m

Link is via Community Safety Partnerships (How do we get involved in our local one)

Michelle Legg
Clerk to Wheatley Parish Council

23 November 2023

Dear Michelle

Wheatley Parish Council - Internal Audit 2023-24
Interim Audit

Following the virtual interim audit completed today, I attach my report for consideration by the Council. This was the first of two audits I intend to carry out to support my opinion on the 23-24 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). I covered the following at this visit:

- Review of opening balances and reporting of 22-23 audit opinion
- Follow up previous recommendations
- Testing of expenditure first 6 months of financial year
- Testing of income – first 6 months of financial year
- Salaries and Wages
- Risk management and insurance
- Budget monitoring reports
- Arrangements for inspection of accounts
- Bank reconciliations.

I am pleased to report that overall Council has successfully maintained a strong system of financial control. However, following external audit recommendations, I am not able to sign off the following control objective:

Control Objective	Matter Arising
M- Arrangements for Inspection of Accounts	Inspection announcement same day as meeting when AGAR was approved – contrary to regulations.

The Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 require smaller authorities, each financial year, to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control and prepare an annual governance statement in accordance with proper practices in relation to accounts. The internal audit reports should therefore be made available to all members to support and inform them when they are considering the Authority's approval of the annual governance statement. I am required by Section 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) to review controls in place at the Council against predefined control assertions. These control assertions are set out below, together with the results of testing carried out at the interim audit.

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A. Books of Account

Interim Audit

The Council uses the Sage One Business Cloud accounting system. The Sage system is used to report and record the financial transactions of the Council and a review of the cashbook shows that all data fields are being entered. My audit testing showed that supporting documentation could be readily located from transactions recorded on the accounting system, and all key reconciliations were up to date.

I have agreed the cash balance as recorded on the opening trial balance back to box 8 on the audited 22-23 AGAR. I am satisfied that the opening cash balance on the accounting system is accurate.

I confirmed that the Council has continued to reclaim VAT – The Clerk shared the claim for the period 1 May to 31 July with me. I checked VAT reclaimed back to a summary of transactions extracted from the accounting system. I have also confirmed that the claim for the period to the end of October was submitted on 23.11.23, so the Council is up to date with VAT.

I confirmed that my last report was discussed at Full Council in June (minute 38)

B. Financial Regulations & Payments

Interim Audit

I confirmed that the Council has reviewed key governance documents. Financial Regulations and Standing Orders were reviewed at the Council meeting on 4.9.23 (minute 88). The Council is aware that a redraft of the model financial regulations is being worked on by NALC. This will need to be taken into consideration when the Council next reviews its own regulations.

The Council has a robust process for authorisation of payments to suppliers. The Council approves expenditure via the annual budget process. Invoices are sent to the Office by suppliers, invoices are checked by office staff for receipt of services goods and accuracy. The Clerk then prepares a payment listing, which is sent to authorising councillors, together with all invoices being paid by email. Bank payments are set up by the Clerk or Assistant Clerk on the current account, and these payments are authorised by 2 from the panel of 5 bank signatories. Payment listings are then reported retrospectively to a meeting of the Finance Committee.

I tested a sample of payments selected at random from the sage cashbook for the first 7 months of 23-24. For all payments tested I was able to confirm

- Payment per cash book agreed to invoice
- VAT correctly accounted for
- Expenditure appropriate for this council
- Payment approval by 2 councillors recorded on transfer request document
- Payment reported to Finance Committee meeting

I will review authorisations on the bank account when I visit the Council for the final audit.

I am satisfied that the Council is meeting this control objective.

C. Risk Management & Insurance

Interim Audit

The Council undertakes a full risk assessment annually using the LCRS risk management system. There are a number of risk assessments, these were reviewed at the November 2023 meeting of Full Council, this is recorded in minutes (minute 123 ii). I reviewed the risk assessment summary, This is comprehensive, and there is evidence of update in year.

I have confirmed that the Council has a valid insurance certificate, with an expiry date of 31 May 2024, insurance is held with BHIB. The Council reviews its insurance requirements as part of the renewal process. Fidelity cover is currently set at £250K, this is sufficient, given cash holdings at the Council, and the fact that the Council is holding some of its cash in difficult to access accounts (CCLA). I confirmed that asset cover is consistent with the Council's asset register, assets insured are :

Property Insured	Declared Value	Sum Insured
Buildings	£109,789	£131,746
Contents	£27,500	£33,000
Other Property Insured away from the Premises		
Street Furniture	£92,535	£111,042
Gates and Fences	£47,541	£57,049
Playground Equipment	£147,251	£176,701
CCTV Equipment	Not Insured	£0
War Memorials	£63,804	£76,564
Ground Surfaces	£57,549	£69,058
Mowers and Machinery	£8,131	£9,757
Sports Equipment	£23,895	£28,674

The Clerk has obtained email confirmation from the IT provider that computer back up data is working as anticipated.

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D. Budget, Precept & Reserves

Interim Audit

I confirmed that the 24-25 budget and precept setting process was advanced at the time of the interim audit. The Clerk shared the budget setting timetable with me, and I note that draft budgets were considered at the Full Council meeting in November. Final approval of budget and precept is due at Full Council on 5 December, well in advance of precepting authority deadlines.

The Clerk produces a detailed financial report for review by the Finance Committee. Minutes for the October 23 meeting confirmed the following reports were produced:

- Bank reconciliations – all accounts
- Budget monitoring report
- Reserve balances
- Review of outstanding debtors.

I reviewed the month 6 budget monitoring report produced for this meeting. It is comprehensive, up to date and there was no evidence of significant overspends. Expenditure to date was £68K against a budget for the year of £215K. The Clerk explained that this is due to the timing of certain areas of expenditure, eg tree works.

I will review reserve balances at my year end audit.

E. Income

Interim Audit

The Council has limited non precept income. I selected a small sample of income transactions from the cashbook for the first 7 months of the financial year. For transactions sampled I was able to agree credit per cashbook back to invoice issued by the Council. I also confirmed that the correct fees were invoiced (adverts in newsletter)

The Council has no issues with debts - the sales ledger showed debts outstanding as £175 at the time of my audit.

F. Petty cash

The Council does not use petty cash.

G. Payroll

Interim Audit

The Clerk confirmed that all staff have contracts of employment. Payroll is processed in house by the Clerk, using the HMRC Basics package. All monthly changes to the payroll are input by the Clerk, once timesheets have been received and signed off. A company and individual payslip is produced using the payroll system. Payments are then set up at bank, and payments are authorised by councillors as part of the standard payment system. The payroll journal is loaded on to Sage by the bookkeeper.

I carried out testing of payments made to 2 officers in August 23. I was able to agree gross pay per payroll records to pay award letters, authorised by the Clerk (for other officers) and the Chair(for the Clerk)

I checked the Council's PAYE account with HMRC. There are no overdue payments

I am satisfied that the Council is meeting this control objective.

H. Assets and investments

To be tested at the final audit

I. Bank reconciliations

Interim Audit

The Council has 4 bank accounts. 2 held with Barclays Bank, 2 with Unity Bank. A short term investment is held with CCLA.

I re-performed the September 2023 bank reconciliation. I found no error in the reconciliation and confirmed that the reconciliation is subject to appropriate councillor review, evidenced by signature on the face of both the reconciliation and the bank statements. All balances on the reconciliation were agreed back to sage and to bank statements. Arithmetic was checked. I also confirmed that the detail of bank balances and the reconciliation were reviewed at the October meeting of Full Council (minute 22).

The Council has an investment policy, as required by regulations, This was last reviewed at Council on 5.12.22 . I note that the Council is only obtaining 1.7% interest rate on the Barclays Premium account. It is recommended that a review of deposit accounts is undertaken in the next 6 months to ensure returns are optimised.

J. Year-end accounts

To be tested at the final audit

L: : The Authority publishes information on a free to access website/webpage up to date at the time of the internal audit in accordance with any relevant transparency code requirements

Year end test

M: Arrangements for Inspection of Accounts

Inspection periods for 22-23 were set as follows

Inspection - Key date	22-23 Actual
Accounts approved at Full Council	5 June Full Council
Announcement	5 June
Inspection period begins	6 June
Inspection period ends	17 July
Correct length	Yes

The announcement of the inspection period should be made 1 day after the approval of the AGAR at Full Council. This has been picked up by external audit in their 22-23 certificate:

It was noted on review that the announcement of the Period for Public Rights was the same date as the approval of Section 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return. Regulation 12 – 15 of the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015 set out the order required to be followed when approving, announcing, and publishing the Return and related documents in order to satisfy the Public Rights requirements. The Return must be approved prior to the Notice being published. To be able to demonstrate this, proper practice requires that the Notice is published no sooner than the day following the approval meeting and the Public Rights period commences no sooner than the next working day after that.

Consequently, I am not able to sign off that the Council has met the requirements of this control objective. External audit have also recommended that the Council should mark assertions 4 and 7 on the Annual Governance Statement for 23-24 as “NO”.

N: Publication requirements 22-23 AGAR

Interim Audit

I confirmed that the Council has correctly loaded the audited accounts, annual governance statement and audit certificate for 22-23 on to the Council website. The conclusion of audit certificate has been correctly published, with a date of 28 August, in advance of the 30 September deadline. This is after the date of the audit certificate (14 August) The audit certificate was reported to Council at the September meeting (minute 87).

O. Trusteeship

Interim Audit

The Council is not a trustee

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your assistance with the audit. I attach my invoice for your consideration. I will be in touch in February to make arrangements for the final audit.

Yours sincerely



Mike Platten CPFA

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Points Forward – Action Plan - Interim Audit

Matter Arising	Recommendation	Council Response
I note that the Council is only obtaining 1.7% interest rate on the Barclays Premium account.	It is recommended that a review of deposit accounts is undertaken in the next 6 months to ensure returns are optimised.	
External audit certificates.	External audit have also recommended that the Council should mark assertions 4 and 7 on the Annual Governance Statement for 23-24 as “NO”.	

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NALC Legal Update – Nov 2023

1. Funding of churches
Changes to the 1894 Act come into effect on 26th December 2023 that will provide opportunities for local councils to support parish/community churches. These are discretionary powers not duties.
This applies to England only
2. Building Safety Act 2022 – came into effect 1st October 2023
Safety requirements for domestic and non-domestic buildings.
Need to nominate a person responsible for building matters.
Further advice and guidance from work nest and .gov.uk
3. Subsidy control Act, came into effect Jan 23
Confirmed that s137 or GPC can be applied to a commercial entity if there is evidence of community benefit.
4. Biodiversity Act
From 1st Jan local councils should have a biodiversity statement and shortly after following this with a review and plan. (This is in hand).
5. Recording of council meetings
Recording should start/end at the beginning/end of the formal meeting, not before or after.
Existing legislation applies around recordings of personal conversations.
6. Martyns Law – as covered in SLCC conference notes.

#122/2023-24.TO DISCUSS WHEATLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

- i. Acknowledge result of referendum
- ii. To formally thank WNP committee and key figures
- iii. To discuss next steps
 - a. SODC adoption
 - b. SODC & VoWHDC Joint Local Plan
 - c. Green route map modification
 - d. WPC oversight (planning committee and councillor training)

#123/2023-24.TO RECEIVE A PROPOSAL AND PRESENTATION FROM FRESHWATER HABITATS TRUST

#124/2023-24.TO CONSIDER GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE MAPLE TREE CENTRE FOR 2024.

#125/2023-24.TO APPROVE FEES AND CHARGES FOR 2024-2025

#126/2023-24.TO APPROVE BUDGET FOR 2024-25

#127/2023-24.TO APPROVE PRECEPT REQUEST FOR 2024-25

#128/2023-24.TO CONSIDER RESPONSES TO CURRENT CONSULTATION

- i. [Primary Care Strategy](#)
- ii. Joint Local Plan - Jan 2024 ([draft consultation documents available](#))

#129/2023-24.TO CONSIDER POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

- i. Biodiversity Plan
- ii. Play Area Inspections
- iii. Equalities Policy
- iv. Learning & Development Policy
- v. Lone Working Policy
- vi. Social Media Policy

#130/2023-24.TO APPROVE DISPOSAL OF ANCILLARY ITEMS

- i. SAGE 50 credit note pads
- ii. Staplers for previous photocopier
- iii. Stereo
- iv. Computer screen
- v. Unused storage devices

#131/2023-24.TO RECEIVE UPDATE/MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM:

- i. Finance Committee –
- ii. Open Spaces Committee –
- iii. Planning Committee –
- iv. Staffing Committee –
- v. Communications Working Group –
- vi. Holton Pavilion Project -
- vii. Littleworth Playing Fields Working Group –
- viii. Oxford Brookes Development Working Group -
- ix. Oxford Brookes Residents groups –
- x. Traffic Working Group –



WHEATLEY PARISH COUNCIL PROPOSAL – 04.12.2023 TO MAKE A SMALL NONMATERIAL CHANGE TO WHEATLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN.

Author:	Chairman – Cllr Sercombe
Strategic Goal:	Goal 1 To continue to support the village so it becomes a vibrant and sustainable community for everyone.
Strategic Aim:	1.2 Identify the needs of young people in the village and work with partners to deliver services.
Summary:	Proposal to make a small nomination change to Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan – Green Route

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Following the positive vote for SODC to use the revised Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan in its planning decisions, it has come to WPC's attention that a map has been included within the document showing a potential green route from Littleworth Road to Station Road.
- 1.2 Subject to SODC vote, which is the last formal step, our Neighbourhood Plan is now 'made' and our document with 'proposed green route' map will show up on any legal searches relating to two properties along the High Street.
- 1.3 One landowner was consulted and refused, and one landowner had not been consulted at all due to a mix-up about who owned the land. The proposed route shown on the map is not feasible and would never be agreed to. There is a better solution for a green route which can be explored with an adjoining landowner.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 To use an available mechanism to remove the map from our document. The text will remain as it is a WPC aspiration and does not specifically apply to any particular property within the desired location. WPC can still work towards providing a green route for the village using a different route after appropriate negotiation and consultation with the landowner.

Flooding in Wheatley: Potential for Natural Flood Management (NFM) in Littleworth

1 Introduction

The centre of Wheatley has a history of flooding with houses having been flooded three times in the last thirty years. The centre of Wheatley straddles a small brook with a catchment area of a few square kilometres. Historically the brook ran down what is now the High Street but was culverted under the High Street in the 19th century. The flooding occurs when the flow from the brook exceeds the capacity of the system and excess water flows down the High Street.

Currently SODC are working on the design of a flood storage scheme on the brook upstream of Wheatley.

2 Proposed location for NFM intervention in Littleworth

Within the catchment of Wheatley Brook there is a disused railway cutting that runs through Littleworth. The construction of the railway cutting disrupted the local land drainage and during flooding events water flows down the railway cutting, see Figure 1.

The lower part of the railway cutting is occupied by allotments but the upper part of the railway cutting is part of the Littleworth Nature Reserve. Most of the flood water in the railway cutting enters from a small brook that drains the area to the north-west of the railway cutting. Though the area of the catchment for this tributary is small, during intense rainfall it can contribute significant amounts of runoff, presumably due to its steep valley sides.



Figure 1: Flow down the railway cutting in Littleworth (during flood of July 2012).



Figure 2: Flood Map for Littleworth showing the brook entering from the Northwest and running down along the cutting.

3 Land ownership & Maintenance

It is understood that the land is owned by Oxfordshire County Council and lies within the parish of Horspath.

The area of the railway cutting upstream of the allotments forms the Littleworth Nature Reserve and is maintained by the Friends of Littleworth Nature Reserve. There are a number of trees within the Nature Reserve which they want to fell to remove shade from a butterfly meadow. It is likely, therefore, that any logs could be sourced locally from within the Nature Reserve to be used for constructing NFM features.

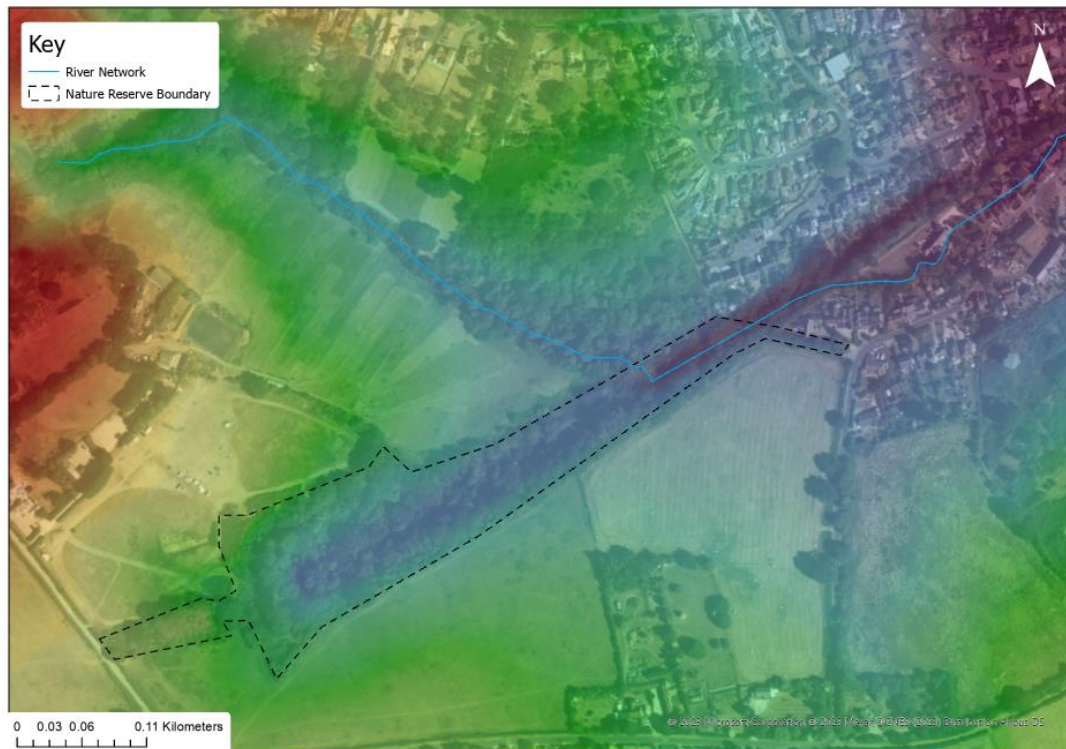


Figure 3: Map of the nature reserve boundary, overlaid onto LIDAR elevation data.

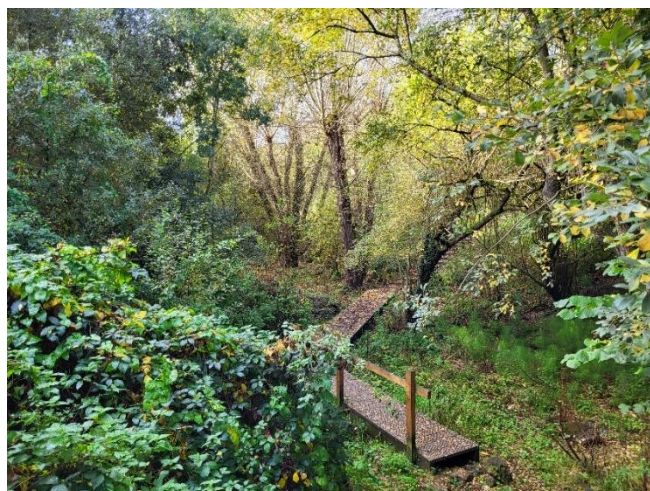


Figure 4: View of the Nature Reserve looking across the railway cutting where the footpath crosses the line. The base of the cutting slopes from left to right.

4 Proposed NFM measures in Littleworth Nature Reserve

We are looking to create a series of NFM features along the railway cutting, to temporarily hold back water during storm events, starting from where the tributary enters the cutting, extending to the beginning of the allotments. Options for features include leaky dams, debris dams made from woody material and banded storage areas (see figure 5 for example photographs). It is envisaged that any NFM interventions would be to complement any flood storage provided further downstream in the catchment rather than an alternative.

We would be developing designs as part of this proposal.




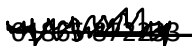


Figure 5: Example photographs of a leaky dam (top left), debris dam (right) and banded storage area (bottom left).

Wheatley Parish Council


Grant Application Form 2024-25

Name of organisation making the application:	The Maple Tree
Short description of the organisation:	<p>Maple Tree Centre is a charity (No. 1174117) offering a range of early learning activities for children aged 0-5 years accompanied by their parents/carers. The Centre serves as a place for parents/carers to meet, play and learn with their children. We aim to give every local child and family the best start in life and to help prepare children for school and nursery. We try to respond to the needs and requests of local families as they arise and resources permit.</p> <p>Our focus is on under-fives and their families, but we run some activities for a wider age-range e.g. holiday and weekend activities, so that siblings are not left out. We also have groups just for parents, such as short courses on family first aid and post-natal support</p> <p>All families face occasional challenges; the support parents receive through taking part helps prevent these challenges from escalating and putting children's futures at risk.</p> <p>The Maple Tree is now in its seventh year as a charity. We provide seven sessions during the week, a monthly Family Fun Session on Saturdays and a weekly outreach session in Forest Hill. During the summer holidays we ran popular outreach sessions in further neighbouring villages. In addition, we have been delivering weekly outreach sessions for Afghan refugees and supported them to attend and be included in sessions at the centre.</p>
Is the organisation a registered charity?	Yes , Charity number: 1174117
Amount of grant requested:	£3,000
<p>A short description of what the grant is for including timelines:</p> <p>Please demonstrate how your project aligns with Wheatley Parish Council's Strategic Plan 2019-2023</p>	<p>We are requesting a grant to help us to maintain and manage a daily programme throughout the year of varied early learning, play and support activities for families within Wheatley and our wider catchment area, by contributing towards our likely annual running costs of over £90,000 in 2024-25.</p> <p>Our programme will continue to give particular focus on these three aspects both within bespoke sessions and the general programme of in person sessions</p> <p>We strongly identify with the following Strategic Goals of the Parish Council and are committed to contributing to them:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involvement in initiatives and improvements that benefit the community and businesses (Strategic Goal 1): Our early years initiative benefits children and families in the community. 2. Support local organisations and voluntary groups and work with them to help deliver this strategy (Strategic Goal 1): We work in close partnership with the local Health Visitor team, much enhanced by their being based at The Maple Tree.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Ensure new homes in the village are attractive to young people and families (Strategic Goal 2): Our programme of activities and support make Wheatley an attractive place for young people and families to live and thrive. 4. Support the delivery of community events in the village (Strategic Goal 2): The Maple Tree supports and takes part in community events in the village e.g. Wheatley Christmas Street market and also initiates its own community events. 5. Ensure we receive our share of Community Infrastructure Levy and £106 monies from developers and use this for the benefit of the community (Strategic Goal 3): Our provision is part of the village infrastructure for young families and is precisely the kind of service that Section 106 is designed to support. 6. Work with OCC, SODC and local organisations to maintain local services and facilities (Strategic Goal 3): The funding from WPC for The Maple tree has enabled our services and facilities to be maintained and has a value in excess of money alone. It is a demonstration to funders of local community support for our work. 7. Share information and advice that will benefit the community (Strategic Goal 3): Part of the support provided by the Maple Tree is to provide information to local families about childcare, readiness for school, vocational training for parents/carers and the many services that help families to deal with special needs, domestic and financial problems. 8. Be innovative in finding external funding for projects (Strategic Goal 4): Each year we attract into the village between £30k and £40k in external grants to support our activities. 			
<p>Who will benefit from the grant?</p> <p>How many beneficiaries are residents of Wheatley?</p>	<p>Currently our main beneficiaries are families with children under 5 in Wheatley and surrounding villages, as well as a significant number of families from adjacent areas such as Thame and East Oxford. 108 Wheatley families were on our register in March this year - an increase of 29% over the previous year. As well as children and parents we have many grandparents that bring children to the Maple Tree. We also provide opportunities for members across the local community to develop volunteering skills, ranging from work experience school attenders to retired members of the community.</p>			
<p>Confirm Number of:</p>	<p>108 families in Wheatley in 2022-23</p>	<p>Trustees: 7 Volunteers: 12</p>	<p>Paid Employees</p>	<p>5 part time (75 hours per week in total)</p>
<p>Name, address, Post code: Role/Title Contact number Email (This will be used for future correspondence)</p>	<p>Person Applying Richard Harding  Trustee  richard@mapletree.org.uk</p>		<p>Treasurer Amanda Smith  Hon Treasurer  amanda@mapletree.org.uk</p>	

Have you received a grant from us within the last 3 years?	<p>Yes</p> <p>Amount received:</p> <p>2021-22 £ 5000</p> <p>2022-23 £ 5000</p> <p>2023-24 £ 3000</p>

<p>If the total cost of the project is more than the grant, how else are you funding the project?</p> <p>Please give details of any other funding bodies you have applied to and the progress of your applications:</p>	<p>We are asking for a contribution towards our full costs. To meet our full costs for the year we have developed a number of funding streams as the most effective way to achieve our goal. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Payment by centre users each time they attend. A voluntary contribution of £2.50 is asked from each family. • Fundraising activities grew substantially. Collection tins in local shops have continued after the removal of lockdown restrictions. Some parents have kindly run their own fundraising events for us. • Income Generation: We normally run a number of after school, weekend and holiday activities that benefit children and families as well as generating an income for the Maple Tree. E.g., family first aid, baby massage and family learning activities. • Friends of The Maple Tree: We launched this scheme just before lockdown. • Parish Councils: Requests to local Parish Councils for financial support continue. • SODC Lottery: The Maple Tree is registered with the SODC's 'SO Charitable' online lottery from which it receives a regular income. • Hiring out the premises: We hire the Centre out when not used for children and families. Recently we have received regular rent from the Health Visiting Service which has hired the small room for local Health Visitors to see clients. • Grant applications: We continue to apply to charitable trusts and foundations for donations to support our work with children and families. • Corporate Social Responsibility: We enjoy a good sponsorship from ASDA and Mid-Counties Coop and have approached many local businesses for regular donations in both cash and kind. • Appeals to local people and organisations e.g. Thame Rotarians and Oxford Isis Rotary Club have been generous in their support as have the congregations of St. Mary's, Wheatley and St. Bartholomew's, Holton. • County and District Council Maple Tree Market: we sell donated clothes toys and equipment asking parents to pay what they can afford. As well as generating income this supports those struggling with the cost of living; we have also been able to provide for a number of refugee families arriving with little or nothing.
If Wheatley Parish Council is unable to grant funding will this project still go ahead?	Every year we seek funds from a wide variety of sources, as described above. Each year some funding ends while new funding begins. Any reduction in funding from any quarter requires us to increase our efforts with other potential funders, although it is becoming increasingly difficult to find new sources of funding at a time when

	increasing numbers of charities are looking for funds to make up for cuts in local authority funds.		
Signature:			
Date:	14 th November 2023		
If you are successful in your application, please provide your bank details so payment can be made promptly	Bank or Building Society Name	Barclays	
	Sort Code	20-65-20	Account No. 83011852
	Account name	The Maple Tree	

Checklist: Please enclose the following documents with your completed application form:

- Annual set of accounts – showing income and expenditure:
 - 2022-23 accounts
- Copy of your written constitution or organisational aims and purpose:
 - See below.

Our Governing Document states that the Objects of the CIO are;

To advance education for young children and their families who live in Wheatley and its surrounding area* and who are in need by reason of age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage by the provision of advice, assistance and other activities as the trustees may decide from time to time. To provide relief for the public benefit of residents of Wheatley and surrounding area who have need by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty or social and economic circumstances by providing facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents.

*The surrounding villages are Beckley, Cuddesdon, Denton, Drayton, Elsfield, Forest Hill, Garsington, Great Haseley, Great Milton, Holton, Horspath, Little Haseley, Little Milton, Littleworth, Marsh Baldon, Milton Common, Nuneham Courtenay, Rycote, Shotover, Stanton St John, Tiddington, Toot Baldon, Woodeaton, Waterperry and Waterstock.

Please return your full application to Wheatley Parish Council, 89 High St, Wheatley OX33 1XP

Constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with voting members other than its charity trustees

Association Model Constitution

Date of constitution (last amended): 3rd August 2017

1. Name

The name of the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (“the CIO”) is The Maple Tree

2. National location of principal office

The principal office of the CIO is in England.

3. Objects

The objects of the CIO are;

- To act as a resource for young children and their families living in Wheatley and the surrounding villages (including Great Milton, Little Milton, Garsington, Cuddesdon, Horspath, The Baldons, Stanton St John, Beckley, Forest Hill, Milton Common and Tiddington), enabling them to be resilient, strong and confident families through the provision of advice and assistance and organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities. Providing such recreational and leisure time activity as the trustees may decide from time to time, in the interests of social welfare for all families and especially those who have need by reason of their age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage. .
- To further or benefit the residents of Wheatley and the surrounding villages, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents.

4. Powers

The CIO has power to do anything which is calculated to further its objects or is conducive or incidental to doing so. In particular, the CIO’s powers include power to:

- (1) borrow money and to charge the whole or any part of its property as security for the repayment of the money borrowed. The CIO must comply as appropriate with sections 124 and 125 of the Charities Act 2011 if it wishes to mortgage land;
- (2) buy, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and to maintain and equip it for use;
- (3) sell, lease or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the property belonging to the CIO. In exercising this power, the CIO must comply as appropriate with sections 117 and 119-123 of the Charities Act 2011
- (4) employ and remunerate such staff as are necessary for carrying out the work of the CIO. The CIO may employ or remunerate a charity trustee only to the extent that it is permitted to do so by clause 6 (Benefits and payments to charity trustees and connected persons) and provided it complies with the conditions of those clauses;

- (5) deposit or invest funds, employ a professional fund-manager, and arrange for the investments or other property of the CIO to be held in the name of a nominee, in the same manner and subject to the same conditions as the trustees of a trust are permitted to do by the Trustee Act 2000;

5. Application of income and property

- (1) The income and property of the CIO must be applied solely towards the promotion of the objects.
 - (a) A charity trustee is entitled to be reimbursed from the property of the CIO or may pay out of such property reasonable expenses properly incurred by him or her when acting on behalf of the CIO.
 - (b) A charity trustee may benefit from trustee indemnity insurance cover purchased at the CIO's expense in accordance with, and subject to the conditions in, section 189 of the Charities Act 2011.
- (2) None of the income or property of the CIO may be paid or transferred directly or indirectly by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise by way of profit to any member of the CIO. This does not prevent a member who is not also a charity trustee receiving:
 - (a) a benefit from the CIO as a beneficiary of the CIO;
 - (b) reasonable and proper remuneration for any goods or services supplied to the CIO.
- (3) Nothing in this clause shall prevent a charity trustee or connected person receiving any benefit or payment which is authorised by Clause 6.

6. Benefits and payments to charity trustees and connected persons

- (1) General provisions

No charity trustee or connected person may:

- (a) buy or receive any goods or services from the CIO on terms preferential to those applicable to members of the public;
- (b) sell goods, services, or any interest in land to the CIO;
- (c) be employed by, or receive any remuneration from, the CIO;
- (d) receive any other financial benefit from the CIO;

unless the payment or benefit is permitted by sub-clause (2) of this clause, or authorised by the court or the prior written consent of the Charity Commission ("the Commission") has been obtained. In this clause, a "financial benefit" means a benefit, direct or indirect, which is either money or has a monetary value.

- (2) Scope and powers permitting trustees' or connected persons' benefits
 - (a) A charity trustee or connected person may receive a benefit from the CIO as a beneficiary provided that it is available generally to the beneficiaries of the CIO.
 - (b) A charity trustee or connected person may enter into a contract for the supply of

services, or of goods that are supplied in connection with the provision of services, to the CIO where that is permitted in accordance with, and subject to the conditions in, section 185 to 188 of the Charities Act 2011.

- (c) Subject to sub-clause (3) of this clause a charity trustee or connected person may provide the CIO with goods that are not supplied in connection with services provided to the CIO by the charity trustee or connected person.
 - (d) A charity trustee or connected person may receive interest on money lent to the CIO at a reasonable and proper rate which must be not more than the Bank of England bank rate (also known as the base rate).
 - (e) A charity trustee or connected person may receive rent for premises let by the trustee or connected person to the CIO. The amount of the rent and the other terms of the lease must be reasonable and proper. The charity trustee concerned must withdraw from any meeting at which such a proposal or the rent or other terms of the lease are under discussion.
 - (f) A charity trustee or connected person may take part in the normal trading and fundraising activities of the CIO on the same terms as members of the public.
- (3) Payment for supply of goods only – controls

The CIO and its charity trustees may only rely upon the authority provided by sub-clause (2)(c) of this clause if each of the following conditions is satisfied:

- (a) The amount or maximum amount of the payment for the goods is set out in a written agreement between the CIO and the charity trustee or connected person supplying the goods (“the supplier”).
 - (b) The amount or maximum amount of the payment for the goods does not exceed what is reasonable in the circumstances for the supply of the goods in question.
 - (c) The other charity trustees are satisfied that it is in the best interests of the CIO to contract with the supplier rather than with someone who is not a charity trustee or connected person. In reaching that decision the charity trustees must balance the advantage of contracting with a charity trustee or connected person against the disadvantages of doing so.
 - (d) The supplier is absent from the part of any meeting at which there is discussion of the proposal to enter into a contract or arrangement with him or her or it with regard to the supply of goods to the CIO.
 - (e) The supplier does not vote on any such matter and is not to be counted when calculating whether a quorum of charity trustees is present at the meeting.
 - (f) The reason for their decision is recorded by the charity trustees in the minute book.
 - (g) A majority of the charity trustees then in office are not in receipt of remuneration or payments authorised by clause 6.
- (4) In sub-clauses (2) and (3) of this clause:
- (a) “the CIO” includes any company in which the CIO:

- (i) holds more than 50% of the shares; or
 - (ii) controls more than 50% of the voting rights attached to the shares; or
 - (iii) has the right to appoint one or more directors to the board of the company;
- (b) “connected person” includes any person within the definition set out in clause 30 (Interpretation);

7. Conflicts of interest and conflicts of loyalty

A charity trustee must:

- (c) declare the nature and extent of any interest, direct or indirect, which he or she has in a proposed transaction or arrangement with the CIO or in any transaction or arrangement entered into by the CIO which has not previously been declared; and
- (d) absent himself or herself from any discussions of the charity trustees in which it is possible that a conflict of interest will arise between his or her duty to act solely in the interests of the CIO and any personal interest (including but not limited to any financial interest).

Any charity trustee absenting himself or herself from any discussions in accordance with this clause must not vote or be counted as part of the quorum in any decision of the charity trustees on the matter.

8. Liability of members to contribute to the assets of the CIO if it is wound up

If the CIO is wound up, the members of the CIO have no liability to contribute to its assets and no personal responsibility for settling its debts and liabilities.

9. Membership of the CIO

(1) Admission of new members

(a) Eligibility

Membership of the CIO is open to anyone who is interested in furthering its purposes, and who, by applying for membership, has indicated his, her or its agreement to become a member and acceptance of the duty of members set out in sub-clause (3) of this clause.

A member may be an individual or charitable organisation; corporate bodies and other organisations can be associate members with no voting rights

(b) Admission procedure

The charity trustees:

- (i) may require applications for membership to be made in any reasonable way that they decide;
- (ii) shall, if they approve an application for membership, notify the applicant of their decision within 21 days;

- (iii) may refuse an application for membership if they believe that it is in the best interests of the CIO for them to do so;
- (iv) shall, if they decide to refuse an application for membership, give the applicant their reasons for doing so, within 21 days of the decision being taken, and give the applicant the opportunity to appeal against the refusal; and
- (v) shall give fair consideration to any such appeal, and shall inform the applicant of their decision, but any decision to confirm refusal of the application for membership shall be final.

(2) Transfer of membership

Membership of the CIO cannot be transferred to anyone else.

(3) Duty of members

It is the duty of each member of the CIO to exercise his or her powers as a member of the CIO in the way he or she decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the CIO.

(4) Termination of membership

(a) Membership of the CIO comes to an end if:

- (i) the member dies, or, in the case of an organisation (or the representative of an organisation) that organisation ceases to exist; or
- (ii) the member sends a notice of resignation to the charity trustees; or
- (iii) any sum of money owed by the member to the CIO is not paid in full within six months of its falling due; or
- (iv) the charity trustees decide that it is in the best interests of the CIO that the member in question should be removed from membership, and pass a resolution to that effect.

(b) Before the charity trustees take any decision to remove someone from membership of the CIO they must:

- (i) inform the member of the reasons why it is proposed to remove him, her or it from membership;
- (ii) give the member at least 21 clear days' notice in which to make representations to the charity trustees as to why he, she or it should not be removed from membership;
- (iii) at a duly constituted meeting of the charity trustees, consider whether or not the member should be removed from membership;
- (iv) consider at that meeting any representations which the member makes as to why the member should not be removed; and
- (v) allow the member, or the member's representative, to make those

representations in person at that meeting, if the member so chooses.

(5) Membership fees

The CIO may require members to pay reasonable membership fees to the CIO.

(6) Informal or associate (non-voting) membership

(a) The charity trustees may create associate or other classes of non-voting membership, and may determine the rights and obligations of any such members (including payment of membership fees), and the conditions for admission to, and termination of membership of any such class of members.

(b) Other references in this constitution to “members” and “membership” do not apply to non-voting members, and non-voting members do not qualify as members for any purpose under the Charities Acts, General Regulations or Dissolution Regulations.

10. Members’ decisions

(1) General provisions

Except for those decisions that must be taken in a particular way as indicated in sub-clause (4) of this clause, decisions of the members of the CIO may be taken either by vote at a general meeting as provided in sub-clause (2) of this clause or by written resolution as provided in sub-clause (3) of this clause.

(2) Taking ordinary decisions by vote

Subject to sub-clause (4) of this clause, any decision of the members of the CIO may be taken by means of a resolution at a general meeting. Such a resolution may be passed by a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting [(including votes cast by postal or email ballot, and proxy votes)].

(3) Taking ordinary decisions by written resolution without a general meeting

(a) Subject to sub-clause (4) of this clause, a resolution in writing agreed by a simple majority of all the members who would have been entitled to vote upon it had it been proposed at a general meeting shall be effective, provided that:

(i) a copy of the proposed resolution has been sent to all the members eligible to vote; and

(ii) a simple majority of members has signified its agreement to the resolution in a document or documents which are received at the principal office within the period of 28 days beginning with the circulation date. The document signifying a member’s agreement must be authenticated by their signature (or in the case of an organisation which is a member, by execution according to its usual procedure), by a statement of their identity accompanying the document, or in such other manner as the CIO has specified.

(b) The resolution in writing may comprise several copies to which one or more members has signified their agreement.

(c) Eligibility to vote on the resolution is limited to members who are members of the CIO on the date when the proposal is first circulated in accordance with paragraph (a)

above.

- (d) Not less than 10% of the members of the CIO may request the charity trustees to make a proposal for decision by the members.
 - (e) The charity trustees must within 21 days of receiving such a request comply with it if:
 - (i) The proposal is not frivolous or vexatious, and does not involve the publication of defamatory material;
 - (ii) The proposal is stated with sufficient clarity to enable effect to be given to it if it is agreed by the members; and
 - (iii) Effect can lawfully be given to the proposal if it is so agreed.
 - (f) Sub-clauses (a) to (c) of this clause apply to a proposal made at the request of members.
- (4) Decisions that must be taken in a particular way
- (a) Any decision to remove a trustee must be taken in accordance with clause 15(2).
 - (b) Any decision to amend this constitution must be taken in accordance with clause 28 of this constitution (Amendment of Constitution).
 - (c) Any decision to wind up or dissolve the CIO must be taken in accordance with clause 29 of this constitution (Voluntary winding up or dissolution). Any decision to amalgamate or transfer the undertaking of the CIO to one or more other CIOs must be taken in accordance with the provisions of the Charities Act 2011.

11. General meetings of members

(1) Types of general meeting

There must be an annual general meeting (AGM) of the members of the CIO. The first AGM must be held within 18 months of the registration of the CIO, and subsequent AGMs must be held at intervals of not more than 15 months. The AGM must receive the annual statement of accounts (duly audited or examined where applicable) and the trustees' annual report, and must elect trustees as required under clause 13.

Other general meetings of the members of the CIO may be held at any time.

All general meetings must be held in accordance with the following provisions.

(2) Calling general meetings

(a) The charity trustees:

- (i) must call the annual general meeting of the members of the CIO in accordance with sub-clause (1) of this clause, and identify it as such in the notice of the meeting; and
- (ii) may call any other general meeting of the members at any time.

(b) The charity trustees must, within 21 days, call a general meeting of the members of the

CIO if:

- (i) they receive a request to do so from at least 10% of the members of the CIO; and
 - (ii) the request states the general nature of the business to be dealt with at the meeting, and is authenticated by the member(s) making the request.
- (c) If, at the time of any such request, there has not been any general meeting of the members of the CIO for more than 12 months, then sub-clause (b)(i) of this clause shall have effect as if 5% were substituted for 10%.
- (d) Any such request may include particulars of a resolution that may properly be proposed, and is intended to be proposed, at the meeting.
- (e) A resolution may only properly be proposed if it is lawful, and is not defamatory, frivolous or vexatious.
- (f) Any general meeting called by the charity trustees at the request of the members of the CIO must be held within 28 days from the date on which it is called.
- (g) If the charity trustees fail to comply with this obligation to call a general meeting at the request of its members, then the members who requested the meeting may themselves call a general meeting.
- (h) A general meeting called in this way must be held not more than 3 months after the date when the members first requested the meeting.
- (i) The CIO must reimburse any reasonable expenses incurred by the members calling a general meeting by reason of the failure of the charity trustees to duly call the meeting, but the CIO shall be entitled to be indemnified by the charity trustees who were responsible for such failure
- (3) Notice of general meetings
- (a) The charity trustees, or, as the case may be, the relevant members of the CIO, must give at least 14 clear days' notice of any general meeting to all of the members, and to any charity trustee of the CIO who is not a member.
- (b) If it is agreed by not less than 90% of all members of the CIO, any resolution may be proposed and passed at the meeting even though the requirements of sub-clause (3) (a) of this clause have not been met. This sub-clause does not apply where a specified period of notice is strictly required by another clause in this constitution, by the Charities Act 2011 or by the General Regulations.
- (c) The notice of any general meeting must:
- (i) state the time and date of the meeting;
 - (ii) give the address at which the meeting is to take place;
 - (iii) give particulars of any resolution which is to be moved at the meeting, and of the general nature of any other business to be dealt with at the meeting; and

- (iv) if a proposal to alter the constitution of the CIO is to be considered at the meeting, include the text of the proposed alteration;
 - (v) include, with the notice for the AGM, the annual statement of accounts and trustees' annual report, details of persons standing for election or re- election as trustee, or where allowed under clause 22 (Use of electronic communication), details of where the information may be found on the CIO's website.
- (d) Proof that an envelope containing a notice was properly addressed, prepaid and posted; or that an electronic form of notice was properly addressed and sent, shall be conclusive evidence that the notice was given. Notice shall be deemed to be given 48 hours after it was posted or sent.
- (e) The proceedings of a meeting shall not be invalidated because a member who was entitled to receive notice of the meeting did not receive it because of accidental omission by the CIO

(4) Chairing of general meetings

The person nominated as chair by the charity trustees under clause 19(2) (Chairing of meetings), shall, if present at the general meeting and willing to act, preside as chair of the meeting. Subject to that, the members of the CIO who are present at a general meeting shall elect a chair to preside at the meeting.

(5) Quorum at general meetings

- (a) No business may be transacted at any general meeting of the members of the CIO unless a quorum is present when the meeting starts.
- (b) Subject to the following provisions, the quorum for general meetings shall be 2 trustees as well as three members. An organisation represented by a person present at the meeting in accordance with sub-clause (7) of this clause, is counted as being present in person.
- (c) If the meeting has been called by or at the request of the members and a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the starting time specified in the notice of the meeting, the meeting is closed.
- (d) If the meeting has been called in any other way and a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the starting time specified in the notice of the meeting, the chair must adjourn the meeting. The date, time and place at which the meeting will resume must either be announced by the chair or be notified to the CIO's members at least seven clear days before the date on which it will resume.
- (e) If a quorum is not present within 15 minutes of the start time of the adjourned meeting, the member or members present at the meeting constitute a quorum.
- (f) If at any time during the meeting a quorum ceases to be present, the meeting may discuss issues and make recommendations to the trustees but may not make any decisions. If decisions are required which must be made by a meeting of the members, the meeting must be adjourned.

(6) Voting at general meetings

- (a) Any decision other than one falling within clause 10(4) (Decisions that must be taken in a particular way) shall be taken by a simple majority of votes cast at the meeting (including proxy and postal votes). Every member has one vote.
 - (b) A resolution put to the vote of a meeting shall be decided on a show of hands, unless (before or on the declaration of the result of the show of hands) a poll is duly demanded. A poll may be demanded by the chair or by at least 10% of the members present in person or by proxy at the meeting.
 - (c) A poll demanded on the election of a person to chair the meeting or on a question of adjournment must be taken immediately. A poll on any other matter shall be taken, and the result of the poll shall be announced, in such manner as the chair of the meeting shall decide, provided that the poll must be taken, and the result of the poll announced, within 30 days of the demand for the poll.
 - (d) A poll may be taken:
 - (i) at the meeting at which it was demanded; or
 - (ii) at some other time and place specified by the chair; or
 - (iii) through the use of postal or electronic communications.
 - (e) In the event of an equality of votes, whether on a show of hands or on a poll, the chair of the meeting shall have a second, or casting vote.
 - (f) Any objection to the qualification of any voter must be raised at the meeting at which the vote is cast and the decision of the chair of the meeting shall be final.
- (7) Proxy voting
- (a) Any member of the CIO may appoint another person as a proxy to exercise all or any of that member's rights to attend, speak and vote at a general meeting of the CIO. Proxies must be appointed by a notice in writing (a "proxy notice") which:
 - (i) states the name and address of the member appointing the proxy;
 - (ii) identifies the person appointed to be that member's proxy and the general meeting in relation to which that person is appointed;
 - (iii) is signed by or on behalf of the member appointing the proxy, or is authenticated in such manner as the CIO may determine; and
 - (iv) is delivered to the CIO in accordance with the constitution and any instructions contained in the notice of the general meeting to which they relate.
 - (b) The CIO may require proxy notices to be delivered in a particular form, and may specify different forms for different purposes.
 - (c) Proxy notices may (but do not have to) specify how the proxy appointed under them is to vote (or that the proxy is to abstain from voting) on one or more resolutions.
 - (d) Unless a proxy notice indicates otherwise, it must be treated as:

- (i) allowing the person appointed under it as a proxy discretion as to how to vote on any ancillary or procedural resolutions put to the meeting; and
 - (ii) appointing that person as a proxy in relation to any adjournment of the general meeting to which it relates as well as the meeting itself.
 - (e) A member who is entitled to attend, speak or vote (either on a show of hands or on a poll) at a general meeting remains so entitled in respect of that meeting or any adjournment of it, even though a valid proxy notice has been delivered to the CIO by or on behalf of that member.
 - (f) An appointment under a proxy notice may be revoked by delivering to the CIO a notice in writing given by or on behalf of the member by whom or on whose behalf the proxy notice was given.
 - (g) A notice revoking a proxy appointment only takes effect if it is delivered before the start of the meeting or adjourned meeting to which it relates.
 - (h) If a proxy notice is not signed or authenticated by the member appointing the proxy, it must be accompanied by written evidence that the person who signed or authenticated it on that member's behalf had authority to do so.
- (8) Postal Voting
- (a) The CIO may, if the charity trustees so decide, allow the members to vote by post or electronic mail ("email") to elect charity trustees or to make a decision on any matter that is being decided at a general meeting of the members.
 - (b) The charity trustees must appoint at least two persons independent of the CIO to serve as scrutineers to supervise the conduct of the postal/email ballot and the counting of votes.
 - (c) If postal and/or email voting is to be allowed on a matter, the CIO must send to members of the CIO not less than 21 days before the deadline for receipt of votes cast in this way:
 - (i) a notice by email, if the member has agreed to receive notices in this way under clause 22 (Use of electronic communications), including an explanation of the purpose of the vote and the voting procedure to be followed by the member, and a voting form capable of being returned by email or post to the CIO, containing details of the resolution being put to a vote, or of the candidates for election, as applicable;
 - (ii) a notice by post to all other members, including a written explanation of the purpose of the postal vote and the voting procedure to be followed by the member; and a postal voting form containing details of the resolution being put to a vote, or of the candidates for election, as applicable
 - (d) The voting procedure must require all forms returned by post to be in an envelope with the member's name and signature, and nothing else, on the outside, inside another envelope addressed to 'The Scrutineers for The Maple Tree', at the CIO's principal office or such other postal address as is specified in the voting procedure.
 - (e) The voting procedure for votes cast by email must require the member's name to be at

the top of the email, and the email must be authenticated in the manner specified in the voting procedure.

- (f) Email votes must be returned to an email address used only for this purpose and must be accessed only by a scrutineer.
 - (g) The voting procedure must specify the closing date and time for receipt of votes, and must state that any votes received after the closing date or not complying with the voting procedure will be invalid and not be counted.
 - (h) The scrutineers must make a list of names of members casting valid votes, and a separate list of members casting votes which were invalid. These lists must be provided to a charity trustee or other person overseeing admission to, and voting at, the general meeting. A member who has cast a valid postal or email vote must not vote at the meeting, and must not be counted in the quorum for any part of the meeting on which he, she or it has already cast a valid vote. A member who has cast an invalid vote by post or email is allowed to vote at the meeting and counts towards the quorum.
 - (i) For postal votes, the scrutineers must retain the internal envelopes (with the member's name and signature). For email votes, the scrutineers must cut off and retain any part of the email that includes the member's name. In each case, a scrutineer must record on this evidence of the member's name that the vote has been counted, or if the vote has been declared invalid, the reason for such declaration.
 - (j) Votes cast by post or email must be counted by all the scrutineers before the meeting at which the vote is to be taken. The scrutineers must provide to the person chairing the meeting written confirmation of the number of valid votes received by post and email and the number of votes received which were invalid.
 - (k) The scrutineers must not disclose the result of the postal/email ballot until after votes taken by hand or by poll at the meeting, or by poll after the meeting, have been counted. Only at this point shall the scrutineers declare the result of the valid votes received, and these votes shall be included in the declaration of the result of the vote.
 - (l) Following the final declaration of the result of the vote, the scrutineers must provide to a charity trustee or other authorised person bundles containing the evidence of members submitting valid postal votes; evidence of members submitting valid email votes; evidence of invalid votes; the valid votes; and the invalid votes.
 - (m) Any dispute about the conduct of a postal or email ballot must be referred initially to a panel set up by the charity trustees, to consist of two trustees and two persons independent of the CIO. If the dispute cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the panel, it must be referred to the Electoral Reform Services.
- (9) Representation of corporate members

An organisation or a corporate body that is a member of the CIO may, in accordance with its usual decision-making process, authorise a person to act as its representative at any general meeting of the CIO.

The representative is entitled to exercise the same powers on behalf of the organisation or corporate body as the organisation or corporate body could exercise as an individual member of the CIO.

(10) Adjournment of meetings

The chair may with the consent of a meeting at which a quorum is present (and shall if so directed by the meeting) adjourn the meeting to another time and/or place. No business may be transacted at an adjourned meeting except business which could properly have been transacted at the original meeting.

12. Charity Trustees

(1) Functions and duties of charity trustees

The charity trustees shall manage the affairs of the CIO and may for that purpose exercise all the powers of the CIO. It is the duty of each charity trustee:

- (a) to exercise his or her powers and to perform his or her functions as a trustee of the CIO in the way he or she decides in good faith would be most likely to further the purposes of the CIO; and
- (b) to exercise, in the performance of those functions, such care and skill as is reasonable in the circumstances having regard in particular to:
 - (i) any special knowledge or experience that he or she has or holds himself or herself out as having; and
 - (ii) if he or she acts as a charity trustee of the CIO in the course of a business or profession, to any special knowledge or experience that it is reasonable to expect of a person acting in the course of that kind of business or profession.

(2) Eligibility for trusteeship

- (a) Every charity trustee must be a natural person.
- (b) No one may be appointed as a charity trustee:
 - (i) if he or she is under the age of 16 years; or
 - (ii) if he or she would automatically cease to hold office under the provisions of clause 15(1)(f).
- (c) No one is entitled to act as a charity trustee whether on appointment or on any re-appointment until he or she has expressly acknowledged, in whatever way the charity trustees decide, his or her acceptance of the office of charity trustee.
- (d) At least one of the trustees of the CIO must be 18 years of age or over. If there is no trustee aged at least 18 years, the remaining trustee or trustees may act only to call a meeting of the charity trustees, or appoint a new charity trustee.

(3) Number of charity trustees

- (a) There must be at least three charity trustees. If the number falls below this minimum, the remaining trustee or trustees may act only to call a meeting of the charity trustees, or appoint a new charity trustee.
- (b) The maximum number of charity trustees is 12. The charity trustees may not appoint any charity trustee if as a result the number of charity trustees would exceed the

maximum.

(4) First charity trustees

The first charity trustees of the CIO are –

Anne Purse
Chris Sewell
Jessica Banks

13. Appointment of charity trustees

- (1) At every annual general meeting of the members of the CIO, one-third of the charity trustees shall retire from office. If the number of charity trustees is not three or a multiple of three, then the number nearest to one-third shall retire from office, but if there is only one charity trustee, he or she shall retire;
- (2) The charity trustees to retire by rotation shall be those who have been longest in office since their last appointment or reappointment. If any trustees were last appointed or reappointed on the same day those to retire shall (unless they otherwise agree among themselves) be determined by lot;
- (3) The vacancies so arising may be filled by the decision of the members at the annual general meeting; any vacancies not filled at the annual general meeting may be filled as provided in sub-clause (5) of this clause;
- (4) The members or the charity trustees may at any time decide to appoint a new charity trustee, whether in place of a charity trustee who has retired or been removed in accordance with clause 15 (Retirement and removal of charity trustees), or as an additional charity trustee, provided that the limit specified in clause 12(3) on the number of charity trustees would not as a result be exceeded;
- (5) A person so appointed by the members of the CIO shall retire in accordance with the provisions of sub-clauses (2) and (3) of this clause. A person so appointed by the charity trustees shall retire at the conclusion of the next annual general meeting after the date of his or her appointment, and shall not be counted for the purpose of determining which of the charity trustees is to retire by rotation at that meeting.

14. Information for new charity trustees

The charity trustees will make available to each new charity trustee, on or before his or her first appointment:

- (a) a copy of this constitution and any amendments made to it; and
- (b) a copy of the CIO's latest trustees' annual report and statement of accounts.

15. Retirement and removal of charity trustees

- (1) A charity trustee ceases to hold office if he or she:
 - (a) retires by notifying the CIO in writing (but only if enough charity trustees will remain in office when the notice of resignation takes effect to form a quorum for meetings);
 - (b) is absent without the permission of the charity trustees from all their meetings held

within a period of six months and the trustees resolve that his or her office be vacated;

- (c) dies;
 - (d) in the written opinion, given to the company, of a registered medical practitioner treating that person, has become physically or mentally incapable of acting as a director and may remain so for more than three months;
 - (e) is removed by the members of the CIO in accordance with sub-clause (2) of this clause; or
 - (f) is disqualified from acting as a charity trustee by virtue of section 178-180 of the Charities Act 2011 (or any statutory re-enactment or modification of that provision).
- (2) A charity trustee shall be removed from office if a resolution to remove that trustee is proposed at a general meeting of the members called for that purpose and properly convened in accordance with clause 11, and the resolution is passed by a two-thirds majority of votes cast at the meeting.
- (3) A resolution to remove a charity trustee in accordance with this clause shall not take effect unless the individual concerned has been given at least 14 clear days' notice in writing that the resolution is to be proposed, specifying the circumstances alleged to justify removal from office, and has been given a reasonable opportunity of making oral and/or written representations to the members of the CIO.

16. Reappointment of charity trustees

Any person who retires as a charity trustee by rotation or by giving notice to the CIO is eligible for reappointment.

17. Taking of decisions by charity trustees

Any decision may be taken either:

- at a meeting of the charity trustees; or
- by resolution in writing or electronic form agreed by a majority of all of the charity trustees, which may comprise either a single document or several documents containing the text of the resolution in like form to which the majority of all of the charity trustees has signified their agreement. Such a resolution shall be effective provided that
 - a copy of the proposed resolution has been sent, at or as near as reasonably practicable to the same time, to all of the charity trustees; and
 - the majority of all of the charity trustees has signified agreement to the resolution in a document or documents which has or have been authenticated by their signature, by a statement of their identity accompanying the document or documents, or in such other manner as the charity trustees have previously resolved, and delivered to the CIO at its principal office or such other place as the trustees may resolve.

18. Delegation by charity trustees

- (1) The charity trustees may delegate any of their powers or functions to a committee or committees, and, if they do, they must determine the terms and conditions on which the delegation is made. The charity trustees may at any time alter those terms and conditions, or

revoke the delegation.

- (2) This power is in addition to the power of delegation in the General Regulations and any other power of delegation available to the charity trustees, but is subject to the following requirements -
 - (a) a committee may consist of two or more persons, but at least one member of each committee must be a charity trustee;
 - (b) the acts and proceedings of any committee must be brought to the attention of the charity trustees as a whole as soon as is reasonably practicable; and
 - (c) the charity trustees shall from time to time review the arrangements which they have made for the delegation of their powers.

19. Meetings and proceedings of charity trustees

(1) Calling meetings

- (a) Any charity trustee may call a meeting of the charity trustees.
- (b) Subject to that, the charity trustees shall decide how their meetings are to be called, and what notice is required.

(2) Chairing of meetings

The charity trustees may appoint one of their number to chair their meetings and may at any time revoke such appointment. If no-one has been so appointed, or if the person appointed is unwilling to preside or is not present within 10 minutes after the time of the meeting, the charity trustees present may appoint one of their number to chair that meeting.

(3) Procedure at meetings

- (a) No decision shall be taken at a meeting unless a quorum is present at the time when the decision is taken. The quorum is two charity trustees. . A charity trustee shall not be counted in the quorum present when any decision is made about a matter upon which he or she is not entitled to vote.
- (b) Questions arising at a meeting shall be decided by a majority of those eligible to vote.
- (c) In the case of an equality of votes, the chair shall have a second or casting vote.

(4) Participation in meetings by electronic means

- (a) A meeting may be held by suitable electronic means agreed by the charity trustees in which each participant may communicate with all the other participants
- (b) Any charity trustee participating at a meeting by suitable electronic means agreed by the charity trustees in which a participant or participants may communicate with all the other participants shall qualify as being present at the meeting.
- (c) Meetings held by electronic means must comply with rules for meetings, including chairing and the taking of minutes.

20. Saving provisions

- (1) Subject to sub-clause (2) of this clause, all decisions of the charity trustees, or of a committee of charity trustees, shall be valid notwithstanding the participation in any vote of a charity trustee;
 - (a) who was disqualified from holding office;
 - (b) who had previously retired or who had been obliged by the constitution to vacate office;
 - (c) who was not entitled to vote on the matter, whether by reason of a conflict of interest or otherwise;

if, without the vote of that charity trustee and that charity trustee being counted in the quorum, the decision has been made by a majority of the charity trustees at a quorate meeting.

- (2) Sub-clause (1) of this clause does not permit a charity trustee to keep any benefit that may be conferred upon him or her by a resolution of the charity trustees or of a committee of charity trustees if, but for clause (1), the resolution would have been void, or if the charity trustee has not complied with clause 7 (Conflicts of Interest).

21. Execution of documents

- (1) The CIO shall execute documents either by signature or by affixing its seal (if it has one)
- (2) A document is validly executed by signature if it is signed by at least two of the charity trustees
- (3) If the CIO has a seal:
 - (a) It must comply with the provisions of the General Regulations; and
 - (b) It must only be used by the authority of the charity trustees or of a committee of charity trustees duly authorised by the charity trustees. The charity trustees may determine who shall sign any document to which the seal is affixed and unless otherwise determined it shall be signed by two charity trustees.

22. Use of electronic communications

- (1) General

The CIO will comply with the requirements of the Communications Provisions in the General Regulations and in particular:

- (a) the requirement to provide within 21 days to any member on request a hard copy of any document or information sent to the member otherwise than in hard copy form;
 - (b) any requirements to provide information to the Commission in a particular form or manner.
- (2) To the CIO

Any member or charity trustee of the CIO may communicate electronically with the CIO to an address specified by the CIO for the purpose, so long as the communication is authenticated

in a manner which is satisfactory to the CIO.

(3) By the CIO

- (a) Any member or charity trustee of the CIO, by providing the CIO with his or her email address or similar, is taken to have agreed to receive communications from the CIO in electronic form at that address, unless the member has indicated to the CIO his or her unwillingness to receive such communications in that form.
- (b) The charity trustees may, subject to compliance with any legal requirements, by means of publication on its website –
 - (i) provide the members with the notice referred to in clause 11(3) (Notice of general meetings);
 - (ii) give charity trustees notice of their meetings in accordance with clause 19(1) (Calling meetings); and
 - (iii) submit any proposal to the members or charity trustees for decision by written resolution or postal vote in accordance with the CIO's powers under clause 10 (Members' decisions), 10(3) (Decisions taken by resolution in writing), or the provisions for postal voting 11(8) (Postal Voting).
- (c) The charity trustees must:
 - (i) take reasonable steps to ensure that members and charity trustees are promptly notified of the publication of any such notice or proposal;
 - (ii) send any such notice or proposal in hard copy form to any member or charity trustee who has not consented to receive communications in electronic form.

23. Keeping of Registers

The CIO must comply with its obligations under the General Regulations in relation to the keeping of, and provision of access to, registers of its members and charity trustees.

24. Minutes

The charity trustees must keep minutes of all:

- (1) appointments of officers made by the charity trustees;
- (2) proceedings at general meetings of the CIO;
- (3) meetings of the charity trustees and committees of charity trustees including:
 - the names of the trustees present at the meeting;
 - the decisions made at the meetings; and
 - where appropriate the reasons for the decisions;
- (4) decisions made by the charity trustees otherwise than in meetings.

25. Accounting records, accounts, annual reports and returns, register maintenance

- (1) The charity trustees must comply with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 with regard to the keeping of accounting records, to the preparation and scrutiny of statements of accounts, and to the preparation of annual reports and returns. The statements of accounts, reports and returns must be sent to the Charity Commission, regardless of the income of the CIO, within 10 months of the financial year end.
- (2) The charity trustees must comply with their obligation to inform the Commission within 28 days of any change in the particulars of the CIO entered on the Central Register of Charities.

26. Rules

The charity trustees may from time to time make such reasonable and proper rules or bye laws as they may deem necessary or expedient for the proper conduct and management of the CIO, but such rules or bye laws must not be inconsistent with any provision of this constitution.

Copies of any such rules or bye laws currently in force must be made available to any member of the CIO on request.

27. Disputes

If a dispute arises between members of the CIO about the validity or propriety of anything done by the members under this constitution, and the dispute cannot be resolved by agreement, the parties to the dispute must first try in good faith to settle the dispute by mediation before resorting to litigation.

28. Amendment of constitution

As provided by clauses 224-227 of the Charities Act 2011:

- (1) This constitution can only be amended:
 - (a) by resolution agreed in writing by all members of the CIO; or
 - (b) by a resolution passed by a 75% majority of votes cast at a general meeting of the members of the CIO.
- (2) Any alteration of clause 3 (Objects), clause 29 (Voluntary winding up or dissolution), this clause, or of any provision where the alteration would provide authorization for any benefit to be obtained by charity trustees or members of the CIO or persons connected with them, requires the prior written consent of the Charity Commission.
- (3) No amendment that is inconsistent with the provisions of the Charities Act 2011 or the General Regulations shall be valid.
- (4) A copy of any resolution altering the constitution, together with a copy of the CIO's constitution as amended, must be sent to the Commission within 15 days from the date on which the resolution is passed. The amendment does not take effect until it has been recorded in the Register of Charities

29. Voluntary winding up or dissolution

- (1) As provided by the Dissolution Regulations, the CIO may be dissolved by resolution of its members. Any decision by the members to wind up or dissolve the CIO can only be made:
 - (a) at a general meeting of the members of the CIO called in accordance with clause [11]

(Meetings of Members), of which not less than 14 days' notice has been given to those eligible to attend and vote:

- (i) by a resolution passed by a 75% majority of those voting, or
 - (ii) by a resolution passed by decision taken without a vote and without any expression of dissent in response to the question put to the general meeting; or
- (b) by a resolution agreed in writing by all members of the CIO.
- (2) Subject to the payment of all the CIO's debts:
- (a) Any resolution for the winding up of the CIO, or for the dissolution of the CIO without winding up, may contain a provision directing how any remaining assets of the CIO shall be applied.
 - (b) If the resolution does not contain such a provision, the charity trustees must decide how any remaining assets of the CIO shall be applied.
 - (c) In either case the remaining assets must be applied for charitable purposes the same as or similar to those of the CIO.
- (3) The CIO must observe the requirements of the Dissolution Regulations in applying to the Commission for the CIO to be removed from the Register of Charities, and in particular:
- (a) the charity trustees must send with their application to the Commission:
 - (i) a copy of the resolution passed by the members of the CIO;
 - (ii) a declaration by the charity trustees that any debts and other liabilities of the CIO have been settled or otherwise provided for in full; and
 - (iii) a statement by the charity trustees setting out the way in which any property of the CIO has been or is to be applied prior to its dissolution in accordance with this constitution;
 - (b) the charity trustees must ensure that a copy of the application is sent within seven days to every member and employee of the CIO, and to any charity trustee of the CIO who was not privy to the application.
- (4) If the CIO is to be wound up or dissolved in any other circumstances, the provisions of the Dissolution Regulations must be followed.

30. Interpretation

In this constitution:

“**connected person**” means:

- (a) a child, parent, grandchild, grandparent, brother or sister of the charity trustee;
- (b) the spouse or civil partner of the charity trustee or of any person falling within sub-clause (a) above;
- (c) a person carrying on business in partnership with the charity trustee or with any person

falling within sub- clause (a) or (b) above;

- (d) an institution which is controlled –
 - (i) by the charity trustee or any connected person falling within sub-clause (a), (b), or (c) above; or
 - (ii) by two or more persons falling within sub-clause (d)(i), when taken together
- (e) a body corporate in which –
 - (i) the charity trustee or any connected person falling within sub-clauses (a) to (c) has a substantial interest; or
 - (ii) two or more persons falling within sub-clause (e)(i) who, when taken together, have a substantial interest.

Section 118 of the Charities Act 2011 apply for the purposes of interpreting the terms used in this constitution.

“General Regulations” means the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012.

“Dissolution Regulations” means the Charitable Incorporated Organisations (Insolvency and Dissolution) Regulations 2012.

The **“Communications Provisions”** means the Communications Provisions in [Part 10, Chapter 4] of the General Regulations.

“charity trustee” means a charity trustee of the CIO.

A **“poll”** means a counted vote or ballot, usually (but not necessarily) in writing

Signed



Anne Purse, Chair



Chris Sewell, Vice Chair



**Trustees Report and Accounts
1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023**

A great place to grow



Chair's introduction

I am delighted to be looking back on another very successful year for The Maple Tree. The centre is busy and lively on a daily basis and we have created a programme that is more varied, but also tailored to early childhood development. For example, we introduced a focus on language and communication skills, in response to a perceived need following the pandemic, and our baby and twins groups are thriving (we have 24 sets of twins registered!). We are proud of the way that we supported many Afghan refugee families and we witnessed a huge improvement in their confidence and ability to communicate.

We achieved significant fundraising success last year. Highlights were our largest fundraising event to date, *An Evening with Gaz Coombes and Friends*, which was supported by local school bands and raised over £14,000, and our annual Shotover House Daffodil Day, in partnership with St Nicholas' Church. Despite it being a rather damp and chilly day in March, visitors turned out in force again.

As a result, we exceeded our budget targets for the year. Looking ahead, fundraising to keep The Maple Tree open remains a major challenge, against the backdrop of the current economic conditions and high competition for grant funding. The trustees are constantly exploring new avenues and looking for more fundraising opportunities.

Despite changes to the team, our staff and volunteers have delivered our programme with enthusiasm and dedication and have also helped with our fundraising efforts, and I am very grateful to all of them for their contribution. Gabby Tomczyk, Kirsty Blackwell and Sasha Reed all decided to move on and I wish them well in their new ventures. During the year, we welcomed Carole Diering as our administrator and Sarah Lukonyomoi-Otunnu and Susie Parker as Family Support Workers, who, with existing staff members, Laura Spencer and Karina Williamson have formed a strong and able team. We were also delighted to welcome Georgina Glenny, who has strengthened the trustee board with her experience and expertise in education.

I would like to give a special mention to Anne Purse, one of our original trustees, who decided to stand down from the board this year. Anne was instrumental in campaigning against the closure of local children's centres and in the launch and growth of The Maple Tree as a charity. On behalf of the entire team, thank you to Anne for her contribution over the years and her dedication to supporting young families in our community.

Beyond The Maple Tree team, there are many individuals, local Parish Councils, businesses and organisations who have been generous in their financial support, as well as giving of their time. To everyone who has supported The Maple Tree this year, I would like to say a big thank you.

Jane Lightfoot, Chair of Trustees

Annual Report of The Maple Tree

The Maple Tree Centre continued to grow during 2022-23 as we carried on with our recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. We started to offer more drop-in sessions and extended our programme to offer sessions for refugees and families who have twins. Our activities continue to grow in popularity and we have sessions each weekday as well as monthly family fun sessions on the third Saturday of each month. By the end of the year all our sessions were offered as drop-in sessions. Our fundraising activities were particularly successful over the year both in terms of funds raised and the enjoyment of those participating.



Our charitable objectives

- To act as a resource for young children and their families living in Wheatley and the surrounding villages (including Great Milton, Little Milton, Garsington, Cuddesdon, Horspath, The Baldons, Stanton St John, Beckley, Forest Hill, Milton Common and Tiddington), enabling them to be resilient, strong and confident families through the provision of advice and assistance and organising programmes of physical, educational and other activities. Providing such recreational and leisure time activity as the trustees may decide from time to time, in the interests of social welfare for all families and especially those who have need by reason of their age, ill health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage.

- To further or benefit the residents of Wheatley and the surrounding villages, without distinction of sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents.

Strategic plan

We started a new three-year strategic plan in April 2022, developed through consultation with staff, parents and other stakeholders. Our strategic plan helps us focus on our charitable objectives and is organised under three specific aims:

- A sustainable and stable organisation
- Engage and support families with young children in our reach area
- Ensure and enhance the quality and scope of our services.

What we have achieved in 2022 – 23

We were very ambitious in our plans for the year. We realise that moving forward we need to continue to be ambitious but more realistic about what trustees and The Maple Tree staff can achieve. We have reduced our expectation for 2023-24 to focus on fewer main aims. Nevertheless, we have had some remarkable successes during 2022-23.

We also reviewed our charitable aims following feedback from parents and are taking forward the following changed wording with the Charity Commission:

- To offer opportunities and activities to support young children’s learning and development for all families in the areas we serve and, with the trustees’ discretion, any family who wishes to attend our centre or access our online services
- To provide support, services, information and guidance for any family with young children who would benefit from these living in the areas we serve and, with the trustees’ discretion, any family who needs our help.



A sustainable and stable organization

- During the year we ran a very full programme of fundraising events and activities, raising a significant proportion of our income for the year (see Finance section). Some of these were jointly organised and run by our parents including a 'sponsored toddle', and sponsored participation in the Thame 10k run. Other events attracted a wider range of participants including the very successful *Evening with Gaz Coombes and Friends*, our largest fundraising event so far and Daffodil Day at Shotover House organized jointly with Forest Hill Church.
- We are becoming a more sustainable organisation, using Fairtrade products wherever possible and looking for sustainable solutions in our purchase of resources.
- We have improved our health and safety procedures and have begun initial discussions with OCC about the continuation and terms of our lease.
- We have dedicated administration time to market our services and grow the number of families registered with us. This has increased to 482 families, a rise of 38%.
- We have continued to promote our organisation to funders and potential funders through newsletters, distributing the Annual Report and advertising our events. This has not resulted in a significant growth of investors but income has remained reasonably consistent.
- We have successfully recruited three new staff members: Sarah Lukonyomoi Otunnu on a fixed term contract to cover maternity leave; Susie Parker to replace Kirsty Blackwell who took up employment elsewhere; and Carole Diering who replaced Gabby Tomczyk as our administrator. We have also increased the number of volunteers at sessions. This has enabled us to broaden our offer so we are now open for at least one session every weekday.
- As with previous years we have struggled to recruit more trustees. We have recruited one more trustee, Georgina Glenny and have had some interest shown by other people. However, we have also lost the regular engagement of another trustee. The small number of actively engaged trustees impacts on our future sustainability especially financially as it reduces our capacity to fundraise, engage with potential funding partners or write grant applications.

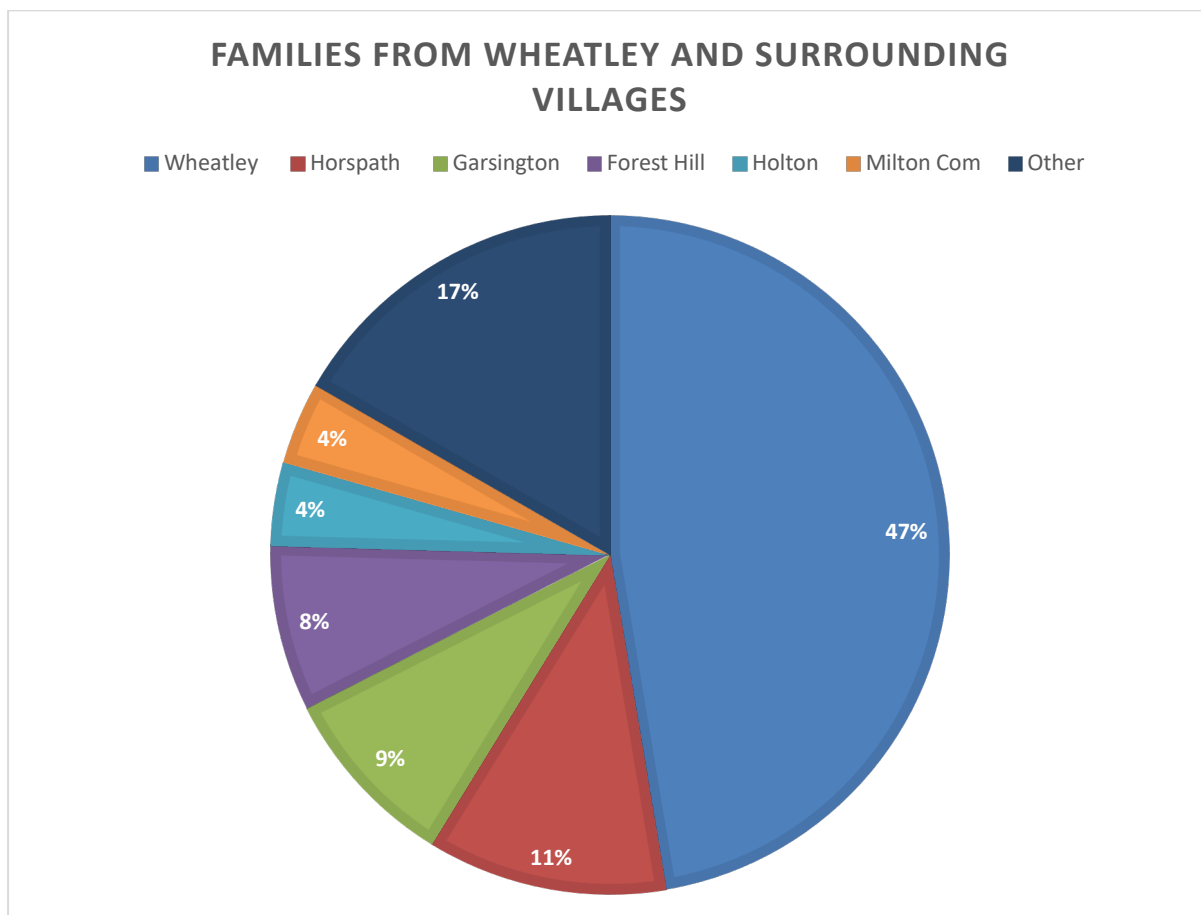
Next steps

- We need to consider alternative structures and processes to make the trustees' role more manageable and attractive to new trustees. This may mean re-considering our charitable status and aims as well as looking at other ways to help sustainability such as partnerships with other organisations.
- We need to liaise further with Oxfordshire County Council. We have been grateful for the rent holiday in 2022-23 but need to have surety about plans for renewing our lease and future payment of rent.

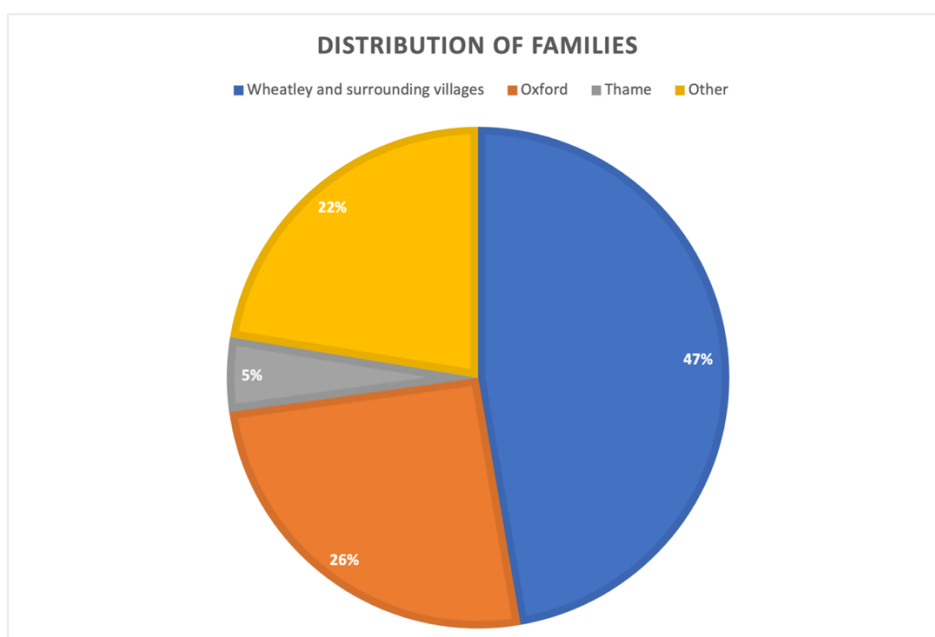
Engage and support families with young children in our reach area

- We have been successful in promoting The Maple Tree at different community events. These include delivering summer activities at four villages - Holton, Forest Hill, Great Milton and Little Milton. We have also run stalls at Horspath Community Hub, Wheatley Christmas Fair and children's activities at the Holton Platinum Jubilee

event. The result has been increasing the geographical diversity of those attending from our reach area outside Wheatley.



- We have also been very successful at attracting families from beyond our reach area, notably from Oxford City. For the first time families attending from Oxford outnumbered those from Wheatley. It is very heartening to know that people will travel some distance to attend our centre and increases parental donations for sessions. However, it also creates difficulties as we do not receive any funding from Oxford City Council and this impacts on the additional funding we need to raise.



- We have engaged with Asylum Welcome and Oxfordshire County Council to support refugees from Afghanistan. This includes delivering bespoke sessions at the Belfry Hotel where they are staying and arranging for families to attend stay and play sessions at The Maple Tree to encourage parents' involvement with play and to support integration with local families.
- We have continued with our plans to upgrade our outdoor area, although progress has been frustratingly slow. We have drawn up plans and sought advice from landscaping professionals. We are currently awaiting a decision from Oxfordshire County Council about alternative disabled access arrangements. This will help us extend the level play area to provide more all-year round access.
- We liaised regularly with health visitors who have continued to hire our Garden Room for meetings with parents. We are grateful for this continued link as it helps promote complementary working to support families.
- We have been less successful at re-establishing links with other organisations such as midwives, other children's centres, local schools and nurseries. There is an 'in principle' commitment to work together but currently all organisations appear to be struggling with finance and time problems making it difficult to support joint endeavours.
- We continued to collect information about issues and concerns affecting our families but have had little capacity to expand our services further. We have recently received some external support in evaluating family learning to help us plan for the future.

Next steps

- Over the next year we hope to continue our evaluation of parental support and engagement with their children's learning and expand our offer. We hope to do this by continuing to try and liaise with midwives, health visitors and local schools about local need; applying for funding for outreach work and/or targeted sessions; working with Wheatley Nursery School to offer parent support and training.
- Complete the first phase of the garden project which is to extend and upgrade the flat area adjoining The Maple Tree premises to provide all-year round access to outdoor play.

Ensure and enhance the quality and scope of our services

- We have provided services all year including through the school holidays. We closed for public holidays and two additional days at Christmas/New Year. During the school holidays we continued to provide our Wednesday baby group as this has been identified as a main ongoing need. On other days we offered a slightly different programme during the holidays including activities that attracted older children.
- Most of our sessions are open to all families with young children and the chart below shows the range of areas our families come from. We offer one session aimed at families with twins so parents can share experiences and gain mutual support. Our Saturday family fun days are very popular and are open to all families whatever their make-up, including families with older children.
- We regularly offered sessions at Forest Hill where we now have a well-established Thursday group, and more lately at the Belfry Hotel for refugee families.

- We provide bespoke guidance and information for families where they identify issues and concerns. Over the course of the year there have been almost 6000 recorded instances of providing guidance and information across all our regular groups. Help with children's development was the most common request, although other areas for help included family relationships, returning to work, financial concerns and support for refugees. The baby café had the largest number of requests for help at almost 1300. This is not surprising as many of those attending are first-time parents.
- We have provided three free pediatric first aid training for families thanks to a donation from a local family. However, we have not yet moved forward with a more extensive offer including other types of training, website, online and written information.
- All of our sessions offer a range of opportunities for play and learning that may not be available at home, such as messy play, play with sand and water and outdoor play. This helps children develop skills they may find more difficult at home including gross and fine motor skills and exploring the properties of different materials such as paint and playdough. We hope that parents will recognize these benefits and feel confident to try some of these activities at home.
- The trustees received regular reports of session evaluations, safeguarding incidents, topics arising from conversations with parents and numbers of families using our services to help us provide outcomes for grant funders and plan for the future.

Next steps

- We need to be more pro-active at consulting parents on the activities and services they access and those they would like us to provide, as well as providing more information on the purpose of the activities we provide.
- We have started to review our data collection and session evaluations and hope to find smarter ways to collect information and assess outcomes for the families and children who attend our centre.



Gaz Coombes and Friends Concert to raise funds for The Maple Tree



Financial review April 2022 - March 2023

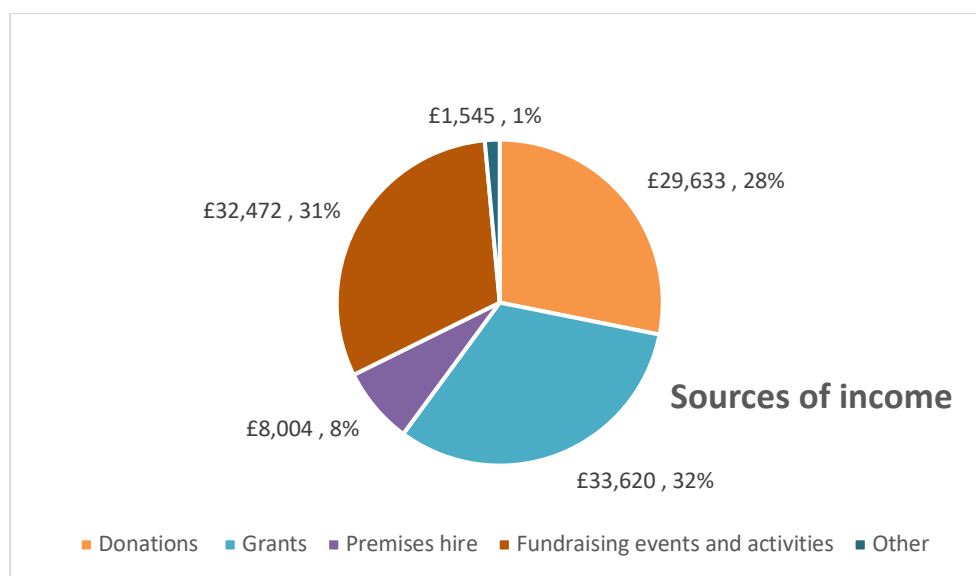
The Maple Tree's financial position at 31 March 2023 is set out in the Statement of Financial Activities and Balance sheet on the following pages.

This was the fifth full year of operation for The Maple Tree and this is the sixth set of accounts.

Before the beginning of each financial year the trustees agree the budget that they calculate will be needed to run The Maple Tree for the year ahead and how they will try to raise the funds required. Post- pandemic we were able to identify some new fundraising opportunities, revive previously successful events, and engage the active support of a group of parents in income generating activities. As the year unfolded it became clear that we would be able to add to the equity of the charity, enabling us to allocate funds to support the budget in 2023-24.

Income

Our income for the year was **£105,275**. This was nearly £30,000 more than our income for the previous year.



Overall, our lettings income increased, largely because of regular room hire by health visitors, our income from session donations increased as we were able to welcome more families to sessions, and we benefitted from several large fundraising events and activities.

During the year we received grants totalling £6,600 from local parish councils and £16,365 from South Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, with the remainder as grants of between £500 and £4,235 coming from different organisations to support particular costs or aspects of our work. For example, we were able to secure a grant of £1,850 to pay our share of the costs towards replacing the centre's central heating boiler.

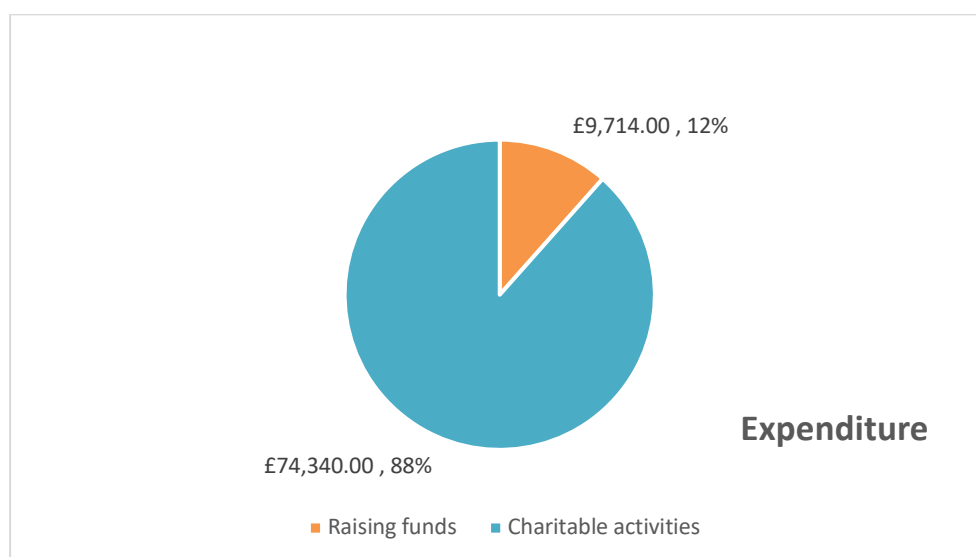
We gather donations in a number of different ways, and where possible collect gift aid. In 2021-22 we raised £6,806 in session donations; in 2022-3 this increased to £10,988.

Monthly receipts through the 'Friends of The Maple Tree' regular donation scheme continued at £155 a month and we were also grateful to receive £10,953 in one off donations from people and organisations in the local communities that we serve. We were able to claim £3,246 in gift aid on donations in 22-23.

During the year we ran a very full programme of fundraising events and activities to achieve an income of £30,765. Additionally we raised money from collection tins, shopping cashback schemes, the SODC lottery and by selling donated clothes, toys and equipment in the centre and online through the 'Maple Tree Market' initiative. We were also fortunate to receive a generous donation from a local family to enable us to offer free first aid training to parents.

Expenditure

Our expenditure for the year was **£84,054**. This was just under £7,000 more than our expenditure for the previous year and largely due to increases in the costs of staffing, the costs of generating income, and premises repairs.



Approximately 87% of The Maple Tree expenditure was spent on directly delivering services to the local community. This is less than last year because of a number of significant costs associated with fundraising events.

Overall, staffing continued to be the most significant part of the expenditure with employee costs of over £50,000, plus payments for payroll and book-keeping services. The Maple Tree wages track the Local Authority 'green book' scheme which delivered a significant increase in wages in 22-23 (well deserved by our staff) which has implications for the budget in following years. Other significant costs included premises maintenance (£5,193) and cleaning (£7,902).

At the end of the financial year the funds of the charity were £65,935, an increase of £21,220 from March 2022.

Building reserves

In accordance with Charity Commission guidance The Maple Tree has a reserves policy that is reviewed annually. In March 2022 trustees reviewed the reserve figure and agreed that this should be £35,000 for the financial year 2022-23, however in November 2022 following pay increases for staff and inflated costs trustees agreed to increase the reserve requirement to £40,000.

Trustee remuneration

The trustees did not receive any remuneration for carrying out their trustee responsibilities.

Statement of financial activities and balance sheet for the year ended 31 March 2023

A. Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 31 March 2023				
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total last year
Donations and grants	£ 40,687	£ 22,566	£ 63,253	£ 57,260
Charitable activities: Room hire	£ 8,003.75	£ -	£ 8,003.75	£ 4,233
Fundraising activities	£ 32,472	£ -	£ 32,472	£ 14,193
Other	£ 1,545	£ -	£ 1,545	£ 4
Total incoming resources	£ 82,708	£ 22,566	£ 105,275	£ 75,690
Resources expended				
Raising funds	£ 9,714	£ -	£ 9,714	£ 5,262
Charitable activities	£ 51,774	£ 22,566	£ 74,340	£ 72,082
Total resources expended	£ 61,488	£ 22,566	£ 84,054	£ 77,344
Net movement in funds	£ 21,220	£ -	£ 21,220	£ 1,654
Total funds brought forward	£ 44,715	£ -	£ 44,715	£ 46,369
Total funds carried forward	£ 65,935		£ 65,935	£ 44,715
B. Balance sheet for the year ended 31 March 2023				
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Total last year
Fixed assets				
Total fixed assets	£ 1,173		£ 1,173	£ 1,467
Current assets				
Debtors and prepayments	£ 4,527		£ 4,527	£ 952
Unrecovered SMP				£ 1,210
Cash at bank and in hand	£ 28,751		£ 28,751	£ 9,513

Reserve account	£ 35,077		£ 35,077	£ 35,001
Total current assets	£ 68,355	£ -	£ 68,355	£ 46,676
Liabilities				
Creditors	£ 29	£ -	£ 29	£ 44
Deferred income and accruals	£ 3,137	£ -	£ 3,137	£ 2,961
PAYE to HMRC	£ -	£ -	£ -	£ 200
Pension	£ 428	£ -	£ 428	£ 223
Total current liabilities	£ 3,593	£ -	£ 3,593	£ 3,428
Net current assets	£ 65,935	£ -	£ 65,935	£ 44,715
Funds of the charity	£ 65,935	£ -	£ 65,935	£ 44,715

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Charity information

The Maple Tree is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales (reg no 1174117). The principal address is 20 Littleworth Road, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1NW.

Notes on Accounting Policies

2. Accounting policies

The accounting period is from 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the FRSA applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)' (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS102.

The charity has taken advantage of the provisions of the SORP for charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 1 not to prepare a Statement of Cash Flows

These accounts have been prepared in sterling which is the functional currency of the charity and monetary amounts published in these financial statements have been rounded to the nearest £.

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historic cost and the principal accounting policies adopted are set out below.

These accounts for the year ending 31st March 2023 are the sixth set of accounts prepared in accordance with 'Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the FRSA applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)' (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016). The first set of accounts covered the period from the incorporation of the charity on 3rd August 2017. There are no prior year adjustments. There is no change in the accounting policies.

3. Going concern

At the time of writing the accounts 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 accounts.

4. Charitable funds

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of their charitable objectives unless the funds have been designated for other purposes.

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 accounts.

5. Incoming resources

Income is recognised when the charity is legally entitled to it after any performance conditions have been met, the amounts can be measured reliably and it is probable that the income will be received.

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 donation.

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

Donated goods and services are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified and is material. Value of services provided by volunteers has not been included but is described in the trustees' annual report.

Income from charitable activities is measured at the fair value of the consideration received or receivable and represents amounts receivable for services provided in the normal course of business.

6. Resources expended

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constitutional obligation to make payment to a third party, it is probable that the settlement will be required and the amount of obligation can be measured reliably.

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs of trading for fundraising purposes and associated licences and insurances required.

Charitable expenditure comprises 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 Activity on a basis designed to reflect the use of the resource. Costs relating to a particular activity are allocated directly others are apportioned on an appropriate basis.

7. Fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are stated at cost and subsequently measured at cost less accumulated depreciation or impairment loss. The costs of assets below £1,000 are not capitalised. Depreciation is calculated so as to write off the cost of an asset, less its estimated residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset.

8. Basic financial assets

Basic financial assets, which include debtors and cash and bank balances, are initially measured at transaction price including transaction costs and 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 market rate of interest. Financial assets classified as receivable within one year are not amortised.

9. Basic financial liabilities

Basic financial liabilities, which include 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 classed as payable within one year are not amortised.

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.

10. 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 of to provide termination benefits.

11. 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.

Analysis of information contained in the Statement of Financial Activity and Balance Sheet

12. Grants and donations receivable

		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		£	£	£
Donations		29,633	0	29,633
Grants	Oxfordshire & South Oxon Councils	374	14,765	16,365
	Parish Councils	6,600	0	6,600
	Other	2,854	7,801	10,655
Total		40,687	22,566	63,253

13. Expenditure: Raising funds

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Employee wages	2,451	0	2,451
Fundraising events	6,048	0	6,048
Marketing and communications	609	0	609
Licences and insurance	606	0	606
Total	9,714	0	9,714

14. Expenditure: Charitable activities

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	£	£	£
Staff costs	36,768	17,038	53,806
Session supplies	1,544	1,462	3,006
Property costs	11,527	4,066	15,593
Administrative costs	1,935	0	1,935
Total	51,774	22,566	74,340

15. Employees

The average number of full-time equivalent employees for the year	
Core programme	1.5

Administration	0.5
Total	2

A book keeper was contracted to supply part time book-keeping services and an accountant to provide payroll services. Additionally, garden maintenance and cleaning services were purchased.

Employee costs	2022-23	2021-22
	£	£
Salaries and wages	49,028	45,668
Pension costs	1,129	993
Statutory maternity pay	627	-2,751
Staff training and DBS checks	880	318
Recruitment costs	203	0
Mileage claims	323	0
Total	52,190	44,228

No other employee benefits were paid or ex-gratia payments made.

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000.

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme through SMART PENSION LIMITED incorporated and registered in England and Wales with company number 09026697 whose registered office is at 20 Eastbourne Terrace, London, W2 6LG.

16. Debtors and Prepayments

	2022-23	2021-22
		£
Debtors	3,991	440
Prepayments	534	512
Total	4,525	952

17. Cash at bank and in hand

	2022-23			2020-21
	Unrestrict ed	Restricted	Total	Total
Short term deposit (£)	35,077	0	35,077	33,001
Cash at bank & in hand (£)	28,751	0	28,751	9,513
Total	63,828	0	63,828	44,514

18. Creditors and accruals

	2022-23	2021-22
Creditors	29	44
Accruals	596	533
NI and pension	428	423
Total	1053,	1,000

The Maple Tree received £2,541 in deferred income in 2022-23

19. Movement in deferred income

	This year	Last year
Balance at the start of the reporting period	2,428	0
Amounts added in current period	2,540	2,428
Amounts released to income from previous period	2,428	0
Balance at the end of the reporting period	2,540	2,428

20. Fees

No fee was paid for the examination of the accounts.

21. Events after the end of the accounting period

There are no events to report after the end of the accounting period.

22. Transactions with trustees and related parties

None of the trustees have been paid any remuneration or received any other benefits from an employment with The Maple Tree or a related entity.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year.

No trustee expenses have been incurred

Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of The Maple Tree

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023 which are set out on pages 10 to 19 of this Annual Report.

Respective roles of the trustees and examiner

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to

- Examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- Follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- State whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records.

It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all of the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- i. to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- ii. to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act have not been met, or to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Frances Axford, ACA

Member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales
24, Waterperry, Oxford, OX33 1LB

Date: 23 October 2023

Acknowledgements

The Maple Tree Board of Trustees are grateful to our parents and carers for their financial contributions when attending sessions, to the Friends of The Maple Tree, and to some very generous local individuals for their financial support. We thank the following organisations for financial support in 2022-23:

Forest Hill and Shotover Parish Council	Oxfordshire Community Foundation
Great Milton Parish Council	Oxfordshire County Council
Holton Parish Council	South Oxfordshire District Council
Isis Cricket Club	Stanton St John Parish Council
Janet and Bryan Moore Charitable Trust	Waterperry with Thomley Parish Council
Local Giving	Wheatley Parish Council
Mazars	

Thank you to the following organisations that have supported our fundraising:

Asda	Sandy Lane Farm, Tiddington
Bruin Cafe	St Bartholomew's Church, Holton
Cinnamons Restaurant	St Mary's Church, Wheatley
Cornfield Bakery	St Nicholas Church, Forest Hill
Cricks Butchers, Wheatley	The Fox and Goat, Tiddington
Costcutter, Wheatley	The King and Queen, Wheatley
Country Collections	The New Club, Wheatley
Farmer Gow's	The Post Office at the Old Bank
Identity Hair	The Queen's Head, Horspath
Jangeus	The Shotover Estate
Mill View Garden Centre and Cafe	Waterperry Gardens
Milletts Farm Centre	Waterwood Contracts
	Wheatley Farm Shop

Reference and administration details

Charity Information:

The Maple Tree: Charity Reg. No. 1174117.

Address: 20 Littleworth Road, Wheatley, Oxford OX33 1NW

Bankers: Barclays Bank, Oxford

Structure, governance and management

The Maple Tree is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), governed according to the Constitution dated 3rd August 2017. It is an independent charity and not part of any 'umbrella' body.

Our constitution allows up to 12 trustees. The trustees serving on the Board between April 2022 and end March 2023 were:

Liz Elsom, appointed September 2018

Georgina Glenny, appointed February 2023

Jane Lightfoot (Chair) appointed July 2019

Anne Purse, appointed August 2017

Chris Sewell (Vice-chair) appointed August 2017

Amanda Smith (Treasurer) appointed September 2018

Ex-officio member, Laura Spencer (Centre Manager)

Sub-groups

There are no formal sub-committees. The trustees appoint working groups to carry out specific tasks as delegated by the Board. During the year these were: Finance, Staffing, Fundraising and Premises.

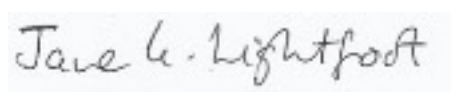
Our catchment area

We serve the villages of Beckley, Cuddesdon, Denton, Forest Hill, Garsington, Great Haseley, Great Milton, Holton, Horspath, Little Haseley, Little Milton, Littleworth, Marsh Baldon, Milton Common, Stanton St John, Tiddington, Toot Baldon, Waterperry, Waterstock and Wheatley.

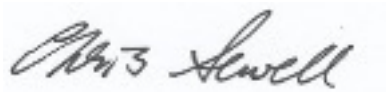
Status of this report

This report complies with the Charities Act 2011, the charity's constitution and the 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 2015) (as amended for accounting periods commencing from 1 January 2016).

Signed as a record of our activity from 1 April 2022 – 31 March 2023



Jane Lightfoot, Chair of Trustees



Chris Sewell, Vice-chair of Trustees



WHEATLEY PARISH COUNCIL REPORT – 04.12.2023

FEES AND CHARGES 2024-25

Author: Clerk – Michelle Legg
Strategic Goal: Goal 2& 3 - Support our community to become a vibrant, sustainable, and safe place.
Strategic Aim: Actively promote businesses in our village, support community events. Develop channels of communication to reach the wider community.
Summary: A review of fees and charges for 2024-25.

1. Introduction

1.1 As part of the council's budget consideration for the next financial year, the council should regularly review its fees and charges.

2. Current/proposed fees and charges

Item	2023-24 exc VAT	2023-24 inc VAT	2024-25 exc VAT	2024-25 inc VAT	Notes
Newsletter advertising					
Full Page	£50.42	£60.50	£55.46	£63.55	5% increase on previous year.
Half page	£32.08	£38.50	£35.29	£42.35	Continue 10% discount if paid in full, in advance.
Quarter page	£22.92	£27.50	£25.21	£30.25	
Village fundraising Quarter page	Free	Free	Free	Free	Continues offer from 2023-24
Village fundraising half/full page	50%	50%	50%	50%	Continues offer from 2023-24
Inserts	£50	£60	£50	£60	By agreement only
Allotments					
Allotment plot - standard	£16.50	-	£19.80	-	20% increase (standard plot) no vat applicable
Community events					
Market stalls	£30	£36	£33	£39.60	10% increase
Communications					
Photocopying/Publication scheme	10p/20p	-	10p/20p	-	Per page b&w/colour

3. Further details

3.1 Following an increase of 10% for newsletter advertising in 2023-24, it is recommended that a 5% increase is implemented, to address ongoing editorial and printing costs.

Whilst any price increases may cause the council to lose some business, there continues to be a healthy waiting list of prospective businesses interested in advertising within the newsletter.

3.2 On occasions officers are asked about inserts, which would be considered on a case, by case basis, but to reflect the time involved a charge of £50 would be incurred.

3.3 The allotment fees do not cover the actual running costs of the site, so an annual increase helps to cover some of the costs. A 20% increase has been suggested but will not be implemented until 2025-26 due to best practice.

4. Recommendation

4.1 To approve fees and charges as detailed in this report.

0 Expenditure		Agreed Budget 2020-21	Agreed Budget 2021-22	Agreed Budget 2022-23	Total Spend 2022-23	Agreed Budget 2023-24	DRAFT BUDGET	Comments	
Code	General Administration	68,250.00	81,753.75	93,380.03	74,976.03	96,620.75	105,520.75	0.00	0.00
	Staff costs								
7000	Employee costs	41,000.00	48,000.00	52,000.00	49,051.56	55,120.00	61,000.00	NB Pay reviews pending may need to increase	
7006	Employer NI	1,000.00	2,500.00	3,500.00	2,509.31	3,500.00	3,800.00		
7007	Employer's Pension Contributions	1,000.00	2,300.00	3,000.00	2,478.82	3,000.00	3,300.00		
	Pension Deficit Payments		1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	1,200.00		
	Utilities								
7102	Water Rates	50.00	51.25	52.53	27.07	52.53	52.53		
7200	Gas & Electricity	600.00	615.00	630.00	272.14	1,200.00	1,200.00		
	Meeting and office costs								
7500/7	Office costs	9,000.00	9,225.00	10,000.00	7,112.29	10,000.00	10,200.00		
	Meeting costs	2,000.00	2,050.00	2,050.00	780.10	2,050.00	2,050.00		
7503	IT Costs	3,000.00	2,000.00	4,500.00	2,482.53	4,500.00	4,500.00		
7300	Motor Expenses	600.00	615.00	1,000.00	851.44	1,000.00	1,100.00		
7502	Post & Telephone	500.00	560.00	560.00	414.02	900.00	1,000.00		
	Professional fees and charges								
7600	Legal & Professional Fees	1,500.00	1,537.50	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,500.00		
7610	Insurance	2,500.00	2,500.00	2,500.00	1,349.17	1,500.00	2,000.00		
7601	Audit & Accountancy fees	3,500.00	3,500.00	3,587.50	2,349.50	3,618.22	3,618.22		
8201	Subscriptions	400.00	2,000.00	1,800.00	1,600.91	1,980.00	2,000.00		
8203	Learning & Development	1,500.00	3,000.00	5,000.00	2,497.17	5,000.00	6,000.00		
	Open Space Maintenance	67,500.00	46,512.50	56,500.00	22,442.37	51,080.00	96,300.00	0.00	0.00
5005	Tree Maintenance	7,000.00	9,000.00	9,000.00	4,180.00	9,000.00	10,000.00		
5010/7	Repair & Maintenance	14,500.00	18,000.00	18,000.00	12,175.27	1,980.00	18,900.00		
5011	Grass Cutting (contract)	7,500.00	6,000.00	6,000.00	5,001.11	6,600.00	6,600.00		
	Waste removal	500.00	512.50	1,500.00	1,085.99	1,500.00	1,800.00		
	Traveller incursions		10,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	0.00	Moved to reserves	
	St Mary's Churchyard			7,000.00	0.00	7,000.00	5,000.00		
	Open Space Projects								
	Church Rd Rec Improvements	15,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	0.00	20,000.00	20,000.00	Second site to be refurbished	
	<i>Cadet Hut</i>				0.00	0.00	14,000.00	New project	
	Littleworth Playing Fields	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00	% allocation for Community Fund	
	Community	51,500.00	54,200.00	48,000.00	41,380.68	64,235.00	42,400.00	0.00	0.00
7015	Neighbourhood Plan	3,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	6,524.41	0.00	0.00	Referendum for revised plan	
3019	Holton Pavillions	6,000.00	6,000.00	3,000.00	9,175.00	3,000.00	3,000.00		
	New Pavilion			1,000.00	475.00	17,855.00	10,000.00		
5015	Highways, Footpaths & Street Furniture	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	0.00	7,500.00	5,000.00	28355.00	
	Grants								
5301	Grants S137	0.00	0.00		2,250.00				
5302	Community Grants	6,000.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	2,950.00	7,000.00	7,000.00		
5303	Maple Tree Children's Centre	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00		
	Commucation & engagement								
5000	Newsletter expenditure	14,000.00	13,000.00	14,000.00	12,366.14	14,000.00	1,500.00		
	<i>Wheatley Info Brochure</i>	<i>1,500.00</i>	<i>1,500.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>	<i>0.00</i>				
	Community events		2,000.00	2,800.00	1,625.94	3,080.00	4,000.00		
	Celebrating Volunteers Event			700.00	0.00	800.00	800.00		
6200	Publicity	1,500.00	1,200.00	1,000.00	1,014.19	1,000.00	1,100.00		
	Youth Support	2,000.00	5,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	7,000.00	7,000.00	25880.00	
	Other expenditure	4,550.00	4,420.00	620.00	199.54	4,012.50	1,562.50	0.00	0.00
7901	Bank Charges	250.00	100.00	0.00	199.54	200.00	250.00		
	General Expenses	300.00	307.50	307.50	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00		
2300	Loans (repayments and interest)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		
8100	Bad debts	500.00	512.50	312.50	0.00	312.50	312.50		
	Election costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2,500.00	0.00		
	Total	191,800.00	186,886.25	198,500.03	138,998.62	215,948.25	245,783.25	0.00	0.00

Income		Agreed Budget 2020-21	Draft Budget 2021-22	Actual Budget 2022-23	Total Spend 2022-23	Budget setting 2023-24	DRAFT BUDGET	Comments	
Income		172,545.00	197,116.47	246,582.47	160,310.25	215,948.25	245,784.65	0.00	0.00
	Newsletter								
4000	Newsletter Advertising	16,000.00	14,500.00	14,500.00	8,827.05	13,550.03	14,227.5	5% increase proposed	
4001	Newsletter Subscriptions	40.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	30.00		
	Open Spaces								
4002	Allotments	142.00	102.00	168.00	153.00	185.00	185.00		
4003	OCC recharge for verges	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,479.18	1,500.00	1,479.18		
	Grants and precept								
4004	Precept	129,263.00	138,954.47	138,954.47	138,954.00	149,733.22	160,962.97		
4005	Section 106 Contribution	15,000.00	30,000.00	35,000.00	0.00	0.00	15,000.00		
4006	Community Infrastructure Levy	0.00	1,500.00	1,000.00	1,044.41	0.00	TBC		
4101	Neighbourhood Plan	0.00	0.00	5,000.00	7,700.00	0.00	0.00		
	Pavilion Project Grants	0.00	0.00	TBC	0.00	0.00	TBC		
	Grants received	10,000.00	10,000.00	50,000.00	0.00	50,000.00	50,000.00		
	Other income								
4901	Interest	500.00	400.00	300.00	1,974.61	900.00	2,000.00		
4007	Donations	0.00	0.00	0.00	50.00		0.00		
4906	Publication scheme & Photocopying	0.00	20.00	20.00	28.00	30.00	100.00		
4102	Community Events						1,800.00		
4900	Other Income	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	10.00	0.00		
	Total	172,545.00	197,116.47	246,582.47	160,310.25	215,948.25	245,784.65	0.00	0.00

2024-25 Precept Options with % increase on Band D

Column1	2023-24	0% increase	1% increase	2% increase	2.5% increase	3% increase	4% increase	5% increase	6% increase	7% increase	7.5% increase	8% increase	8.5% increase	9% increase	9.5% increase	10% increase
Precept	£149,733.00	£ 149,733.00	£151,230.55	£152,727.66	£ 153,476.32	£154,224.99	£155,722.32	£157,219.65	£158,716.98	£160,214.31	£ 160,962.97	£161,711.64	£162,460.30	£163,208.97	£163,957.63	£164,706.30
Increase from 2022-23		0	£1,497.55	£2,994.66	£3,743.32	£4,491.99	£5,989.32	£7,486.65	£ 8,983.98	£ 10,481.31	£ 11,229.97	£11,978.64	£12,727.30	£13,475.97	£14,224.63	£14,973.30
Band D	£83.72	£ 82.98	£83.81	£ 84.64	£85.06	£ 85.47	£86.30	£ 87.13	£87.96	£ 88.79	£89.21	£ 89.62	£90.04	£ 90.45	£90.87	£ 91.28
Variance from 2023-24	-	-£ 0.74	£0.09	£0.92	£1.34	£1.75	£2.58	£3.41	£4.24	£5.07	£5.49	£6.64	£7.05	£7.47	£7.88	£8.30
Tax base	1788.5	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4	1804.4
Tax base +/-		15.9 0.9% change														
Notes	7.5% increased agreed for 2022-23	Precept figures to be rounded to the nearest £														



Wheatley Parish Council's Biodiversity Policy

Draft: 03.07.2023 Approved: (TBC)

1. Introduction

In accordance with the Environment Act 2021, Wheatley Parish Council (WPC) has a duty to consider ¹what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity in England.

Within its [Strategic Plan 2023-2027](#), WPC has already committed to action against climate change to protect the environment (Goal 1).

This document sets out the details of WPC's initial considerations.

2. Scope of document

This document will detail how WPC will seek to improve biodiversity on its own land, land that it manages on behalf of others, how it will seek to work with others to support biodiversity within Wheatley and the surrounding area.

3. External Strategies

WPC will be expected to identify any strategies that are relevant to WPC or how it can contribute. These strategies include:

- Local nature recovery strategies
- Species conservation strategies
- Protected site strategies.

4. National goals and targets

The Environmental Improvement Plan was published by the government in 2023 and sets out its plans including:

By 2030, the government has committed to:

- halt the decline in species abundance.
- protect 30% of UK land.

By 2042, the government has committed to:

- increase species abundance by at least 10% from 2030, surpassing 2022 levels.
- restore or create at least 500,000 ha of a range of wildlife rich habitats.
- reduce the risk of species extinction.
- restore 75% of our one million hectares of terrestrial and freshwater protected sites to favourable condition, securing their wildlife value for the long term.

¹ There is no legal duty to report on our activities, although WPC may choose to do this.

5. Supporting biodiversity in Wheatley

The following information lays out WPCs initial plans to improve and support biodiversity in the village. Further information will be provided within the next twelve months:

General areas

- Work with the community, local organisations, and businesses to raise awareness of issues and to work in partnership to support improved biodiversity in Wheatley.
- WPC to consider the impact on biodiversity in the decisions made through the Parish Council, especially when commenting on planning applications.
- WPC to ensure WNP policies and objectives are implemented.

WPC land

- To undertake ecological surveys of council owned land, to understand what flora and fauna are utilising the land.
- Seek advice on wildflower, shrub, bulb, and tree planting to identify suitable areas, species, and planting schemes.
- WPC to reduce the use of pesticides and herbicides on WPC owned land.
- Where possible, leave fallen wood, leaf litter and dead vegetation to support habitats.
- Investigate installation of new insect hotels, bat/bird boxes
- Review cutting regimes and identify areas that can be rewilded.

Future projects

- WPC hope that plans to reestablish community use of Littleworth Field will enable habitats to be improved and created, including improved wetland, grass land and managed tree stocks.
- Work with ecological groups to reestablish natural dams in Littleworth Allotments
- Investigate potential nature site on land between Wheatley Playing Fields and A40.

Communications

- WPC will promote its activities and those of volunteers, community groups and businesses through its communication channels.

6. Timescales

WPC must meet its requirements from 1st Jan 2024, with implementation taking place over the next five years.

- WPC to approve this document – Nov/Dec2023
- Develop and adopt biodiversity action plan – Jan-Dec 2024
- Implementation – from Jan 2024 onwards
- Monitoring –Jul & Dec 2024 onwards (twice yearly)

Date of policy: 19.10.2023
Approving committee: Full Council
Reviewing Committee: Open Spaces Committee
Date of committee meeting: N/A
Policy version reference: N/A
Supersedes: N/A
Policy effective from: TBC
Date for next review: 2024.

Wheatley Parish Council Play Area Inspection Guidance

Drafted October 2020, Reviewed February 2023 & Nov 2023



Wheatley Parish Council has a legal responsibility to routinely inspect its play areas and equipment.

Routine, weekly inspections are to be carried out, internally by council staff or councillors. Quarterly inspections (if required) can either be carried out internally or by using external contractors.

Annual inspections must be carried out by an independent, competent assessor.

Carrying out the inspections

The council has three play areas of varying size, shape and contents. The order in which they are inspected does not matter, similarly the route in which each one is inspected does not matter, but a consistent route should be established, to avoid missing anything.

A check list is available for weekly inspections, to aid this and for record keeping. The check list covers all items within the play area/site and includes ancillary items too.

Start your observations and checks as you approach the site, look for issues with fences, walls, gates, paving, are there any items protruding onto paths that could cause an issue.

When checking equipment, it is best to use all your senses. Look at, listen to and use the equipment. Some issues or problems that are difficult to be seen can be identified by a change in sound. Do not put your hands in areas that you have not visually checked beforehand, avoiding sharp objects.

Be hands on, with equipment and use it where possible.

Use a 'hands on' approach on all equipment and use it where possible.

With spring items, try giving them a hard push to make them rock violently. Listen and you will find that if there is anything loose you will hear it.

Roundabouts should move noiselessly so use your hearing to check for any issues, standing on the edges can identify any movement that may indicate wear to bearings.

With slide units stand at the top and look down the slide. Check the steps are secure and the chute is free from obstructions. Try standing on the slide run out to see if there is any movement. The run of shoots and drop also needs to be checked.

With swing units check seats for damage (replace when you have cuts more than 80mm wide exposing bare metal).

With toddler cradle seats, check that the centre strap (that goes between legs) is firmly fixed. Turn the seats over and check that there are no projecting bolts underneath. Separate the links on chains (where the chains meet the seats and where the diagonals meet) to check for wear. Replace chains at 30%-40% wear. Throw the swing seat vertically up in the air and watch closely the shackle pin for movement. If the pin moves sideways only, there is unlikely to be bush or shackle wear. If however, there is a rocking motion, this can indicate that the shackles or bushes are worn.

From time to time sit on the swing seat and gently swing, looking upwards to the top bar. This should not move. If it turns at all then the head bar is loose in its fixings.

Your physical weight can help in checking stability of items. Pull on ropes, chain or other fixings to ensure they are secure and in good condition.

Ropes should be tight and not able to create a loop.

For any equipment, a change in colour on panels or around fixings can indicate a missing item or cover.

Play equipment can include metal features. As well as the external condition, the condition of the inner can be checked for rust. Tap with a rubber mallet to check for the sound of rust flakes dropping down, this may sound like rain falling.

Tubes can also be prone to changing shape, due to water/frost damage. This can lead to the metal splitting.

Quarterly and Annual Inspections

These are currently carried out by separate council appointed contractors.

Reporting and Record keeping

Council staff should complete inspection sheets each week for each site, noting any issues and action taken.

These should be returned to the Parish for any further action to be taken and for record keeping, in line with the council's retention and disposal policy.

Reports from external bodies (quarterly/annual inspections) should also be received, actioned, and filed. **Actions are allocated according to the nature and complexity of repairs.**

These records may need to be provided to insurance companies.

Date of policy: 14/11/2023
Approving committee: Full Council
Reviewing Committee: Open Spaces Committee
Date of committee meeting: 20.11.2023
Policy version reference: N/A
Supersedes: N/A
Policy effective from: 06.10.2020
Date for next review: 2025



Wheatley Parish Council's Equality Policy

Approved 06.01.2020, reviewed 06.09.2021, 04.12.2023.

1. Purpose

Wheatley Parish Council is *committed to treating all people equally and with respect irrespective of their age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation*".

Wheatley Parish Council will ensure that equality and diversity is reflected in every aspect of council business. – Employment, decision-making and policies, service delivery and partnership working - and that it recognises its statutory duties.

This policy covers employees, councillors (elected or co-opted) partners, volunteers and residents.

2. Legislation

It is unlawful to discriminate against an individual on the following grounds:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender assignment
- Marriage or civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion of belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

Under the Equality Act 2010 these are known as "protected characteristics".

Wheatley Parish Council opposes all forms of unlawful and unfair discrimination whether it be direct or indirect discrimination, harassment, or victimisation on the grounds of the protected characteristics defined above and under the Equality Act 2010.

3. Scope and commitment

All Wheatley Parish Council employees and councillors will be expected to adhere to and comply with this policy.

The council will seek to renew this policy and address any future legislation annually. All employees and councillors will receive their own copy of the approved policy. Copies will be available from www.wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk or from the parish office.

4. Employment

All employees will be treated fairly and equally (regardless of their employment, type or length). Selection for employment, promotion, training, remuneration and any other benefit will be on the basis of ability and aptitude.

Annual appraisals will support and encourage all employees to undertake and participate in personal development and given opportunities to fulfil their potential.

Every employee is entitled to a working environment free of bullying, harassment, intimidation or victimisation. Any such behaviour will not be tolerated.

Should an employee wish to make a complaint regarding bullying, harassment, intimidation or victimisation, this should be made following the Disciplinary or Grievance procedure as detailed in their employment contract.

5. Policy and decision making

The council will ensure that they give due consideration to equal opportunity implications of all decisions they take.

This policy will reflect the strategic aims of the council in line with its Strategic Plan which is monitored regularly and reviewed annually.

6. Service delivery and partnership working

Whilst Wheatley Parish Council provides some services directly to the community, some services are provided by external bodies and partners. Information will only be shared with external partners in line with our Data Protection policies and related legislation.

Date of policy: 06.01.2020

Approving committee: Full Council

Reviewing Committee: Staffing Committee

Date of committee meeting: N/A

Policy version reference: N/A

Supersedes: N/A

Policy effective from: 06.01.2020, reviewed 06.09.2021, 06.12.2023 (only formatting changes)

Date for next review: 2025



Wheatley Parish Council's Learning & Development Policy

Approved 04.11.2019, reviewed 06.12.21, 04.12.2023

1. Purpose

Wheatley Parish Council (WPC) are committed to developing and supporting its councillors and employees to enable them to fulfil their duties and responsibilities.

2. Councillors

All new councillors will receive an induction and induction pack from the Clerk. They should attend basic councillors training within 12 months of taking office.

Councillors who take on specific roles or require specialist skills/knowledge (e.g., planning committee, or role of chair) should seek to attend training within 12 months of taking on the role. Requests should be made to the Chair of the Council or to the Clerk.

3. Employees

Employees will be offered training to enable them to carry out their duties and responsibilities efficiently and effectively or for their personal development.

Opportunities may occur in a variety of ways throughout the year, however the council endeavours to capture these opportunities during the annual appraisal process.

Other requests should be made to the Clerk or the Staffing Committee.

4. Training delivery

Training can take place in a variety of formats:

- on-the-role/shadowing
- peer/colleague discussion
- seminar/workshop
- webinars
- recognised qualification (iLCA, CiLCA, Community Governance)
- OALC/external training session
- reading of publications, presentations

5. Financial

A learning and development budget is approved each year as part of the council's budget setting process.

All requests will be considered against the benefit to the council and the resources available. Payments for training should be made by the Clerk/Assistant Clerk. Any transport costs should be presented for reimbursement at the earliest opportunity.

6. Evaluation and training record

The council welcomes feedback on all training that has been undertaken. This enables new information to be shared, recommendations to be made and for improvements to be suggested.

Records of all training undertaken will be recorded and kept on file in line with the council's GDPR policies.

Date of policy: 06.12.2021
Approving committee: Full Council
Reviewing Committee: Staffing Committee
Date of committee meeting: TBC
Policy version reference: N/A
Supersedes: N/A
Policy effective from: 04.11.2019
Date for next review: 2025



Wheatley Parish Council's Biodiversity Policy

Approved 04.11.2019, reviewed 06.12.21, 04.12.2023

1. Purpose

Wheatley Parish Council (WPC) are committed to developing and supporting its councillors and employees to enable them to fulfil their duties and responsibilities.

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Date of policy: 06.12.2021
Approving committee: Full Council
Reviewing Committee: Staffing Committee
Date of committee meeting: TBC
Policy version reference: N/A
Supersedes: N/A
Policy effective from: 04.11.2019
Date for next review: 2025



Wheatley Parish Council's Social Media Policy

Adopted 05.02.18, reviewed 04.10.2021, 04.12.2023

1. Purpose of this policy

The aim of this policy is to establish a set of guidelines for Wheatley Parish councillors and employees who engage in the use of social media. Although we are as individuals, all bound by the same legal duties, the consequences for Wheatley Parish Council may be far greater.

2. What is social media?

Social media is defined as websites and applications e.g., Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, blogging, vlogging, that enables users to create and share content or to participate in social networking. This policy covers all forms of social media.

3. Why should Wheatley Parish Council engage in social media?

Used effectively social media can improve communication with residents and the wider population and increase awareness of issues and projects that the parish council are involved with.

Under the Transparency Code, we are expected to use and maintain a website to share and display information to our parishioners. Following consultation with the community, the council has reviewed its Social Media presence and will have their own Social Media accounts.

Accounts will be managed and monitored by the Clerk/Assistant Clerk with assistance from the Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Social media is not the only communication tool used by the council. It still uses and actively promotes the use of noticeboards, newsletters, and face to face communication.

4. What we may use social media for:

- Distribute parish council agendas, minutes, and dates of meetings.
- Advertise parish council events and activities.
- Announce new information.
- Promote links with village/community organisations.
- Advertise parish council vacancies.
- Share information and links from local, district, county, or national agencies.
- Post or share information from neighbouring parishes.
- Provide contact for parish related issues.
- Sharing images of Wheatley and the surrounding area

5. Roles of councillors and employees

When using social media both parish councillors and parish employees must be mindful of the information they post. The views of individual parish councillors posted in any capacity in advance of matters to be debated by the parish council at a council meeting, constitute pre-disposition, pre-determination or bias and may require the individual to

declare an interest at the meeting. It must be clear that any individual's comments are their own and not those of the parish council.

Employees must refrain from posting about their employers, including forthcoming parish council business, contractors, business, or other sensitive information.

No confidential information about the council, its councillors or employees should be shared on social media.

Any content should be accurate, objective, balanced and informative, complying with the parish council's own Code of Conduct.

Anyone who has concerns regarding social media content should initially report this to the Parish Clerk or their absence or unavailability the Chair of Parish Council.

Councillors and employees must not:

- Hide their identity using false names or pseudonyms.
- Present personal opinions as that of the parish council
- Present themselves in a way that might cause embarrassment to the parish council.
- Post content that is contrary to the democratic decisions of the parish council
- Publish photographs or videos of minors without parental permission.
- Publish personal information without permission that breaches Data Protection legislation.
- Post any information that infringes copyright.
- Post any information that may be deemed libelous.
- Use council equipment/accounts excessively or engage in any communication that may be construed as bullying or harassment.

The misuse of social media content or equipment that is contrary to this policy could result in disciplinary or criminal action being taken.

As an employer, the council reserves the right to monitor the use of the internet by employees from time to time and to retain records of information identified during a search.

The Clerk and Assistant Clerk have the responsibility of maintaining and updating the parish website.

6. Legislation

There are numerous legal aspects relating to individuals and the council everyone involved should consider the following:

- Data Protection Act 1998/General Data Protection Regulations 2018
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1998 – Article 8
- Defamation Act 2013
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
- Transparency Code 2015

Date of policy: 05.02.18,
Approving committee: Full Council
Reviewing Committee: Open Spaces Committee
Date of committee meeting: N/A
Policy version reference: N/A
Supersedes: N/A
Policy effective from: 05.02.18 reviewed 04.10.2021, 04.12.2023
Date for next review: 2025.

- xi. Youth Club –
- xii. Youth Council -

#132/2023-24.TO RECEIVE UPDATES/REPORTS FROM:

- i. Community Larder –
- ii. Good Neighbour Scheme -
- iii. Howe Trust –
- iv. Maple Tree Centre – update and events information
- v. Merry Bells Management Committee
- vi. Oxford Brookes Residents Association
- vii. Thames Valley Police
- viii. Wheatley Charities –
- ix. Wheatley Playing Field Trust –
- x. Wheatley Refugee Support Group
- xi. Wheatley Windmill Preservation Trust

#133/2023-24.CORRESPONDENCE AND ANY URGENT ITEMS REQUIRING ATTENTION

- i. SODC - various project funding, updates and briefings
- ii. Thames Valley Police - call for witnesses, incidents
- iii. Citizens Advice - newsletter
- iv. OALC/OCC - Monthly update
- v. Community First Oxford - AGM, events
- vi. OCC - Unauthorised encampments. road closures
- vii. NALC - Chief Executives update, newsletters, webinars and events
- viii. Healthwatch Oxfordshire - updates

#134/2023-24.ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

#135/2023-24.DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 8th January 2024

#136/2023-24.REPORTS PACK

CIRCULATION

Clerk, Alison Sercombe, Toby Newman, Richard Street, Richard Barrett, Andrew Cooper, Paul Gregory, Paul Willmott, Anthony Shepherd, Lizzie Tully, Peter Ramsdale