



WINDSOR HILL WOOD

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT 2018–2019

Charity's name: Windsor Hill Wood

Registration number: 1174810

Address: Rock House, Windsor Hill Lane, Shepton Mallet, BA4 4JE.

Contact details: www.windsorhillwood.co.uk / contact@windsorhillwood.co.uk / 01749 347377

Trustee names and Principal offices:

Renny Gye (Chair)

Rebecca Sutton (Secretary)

George Fox

Jane Hull

Virginia Membrey

Peter Dennis (appointed September 2019)

Auditor / Independent Examiner: Stephen Purbrick

Bankers: Lloyds Bank Plc

WINDSOR HILL WOOD

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT
2018–2019



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The trustees present their report and the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2019. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the relevant SORP and accounting standards. The trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the Trust's aims and objectives in planning future activities.

ABOUT WINDSOR HILL WOOD

Windsor Hill Wood is a family based community, set in a woodland smallholding, that offers Christian hospitality to all, regardless of race, religion or absence of religion, sexual orientation, or gender. It does not discriminate on the grounds of physical or mental ability but guests need to be able to participate fully in the life of the community and some disabilities would make this very difficult due to the nature of the site and of community living. It aims to create a supportive environment for people going through tough or uncertain times, offering them the chance to rediscover peace, silence and acceptance amidst the beauty and simplicity of the woods.

The community is small scale, generally hosting up to five long-term guests at a time. At times, residents are a mix of long-term guests and one or two short-term guests. Chris Thompson, our Volunteer Warden, and his wife Katharine, who acts as Volunteer Assistant Warden, live on-site with their two sons. The Wardens take advice as appropriate from the Trustees and other professional advisers, as well as undertaking regular supervision. They meet the Chair of Trustees twice a year for a formal review.

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

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

The daily husbandry of animals, site management and gardening provides an important focus for Windsor Hill Wood and for the informal rehabilitation of guests. Although very small, Windsor Hill Wood is a traditional working woodland, where the community engages in felling, planting, coppicing and digging. The woodland provides a therapeutic working environment, maintains biodiversity and helps provide a sustainable supply of wood for the biomass boiler. There are chickens, which supply enough eggs for the community to share with neighbours, goats, which are pets, sheep and pigs, reared for meat. The aim is to run the community in a sustainable way, using old-fashioned methods and tools, trying to manage the wood and smallholding in a quiet way. The community grows some of its own fruit and vegetables and shares all its main meals.

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

THE PUBLIC BENEFIT OF WINDSOR HILL WOOD

OUR CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

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

- 
- ▶ **THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED, HARDSHIP AND DISTRESS**
 - ▶ **THE PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL GOOD HEALTH**
 - ▶ **THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION**



HOW WE FULFILLED OUR OBJECTIVES IN 2018-19

► THE RELIEF OF THOSE IN NEED, HARDSHIP AND DISTRESS

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

Many people come to us because of an explicit personal crisis or because they feel depressed or anxious, whilst others may come because they just feel dismayed by modern life and feel the need to reconnect with themselves and others, perhaps for just a week or two.

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



GUESTS SAY:

"THERE IS ALWAYS AN EXTRA PLACE AT THE TABLE FOR YOU. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN INTERESTED IN COMMUNITY LIVING; WE SEEM TO HAVE LOST THAT NOWADAYS. THE PRESSURE OF WORKING TO PAY RENT FOR A FLAT WHERE YOU FEEL ALONE AND CAN'T SEE A FUTURE IS ALL SO FAR REMOVED FROM HERE."

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GUESTS SAY:

**"IT'S THE PLACE WHERE I
FOUND MYSELF AGAIN."**



Some of our guests have addictions and have been through a rehab, coming to us before reconnecting with mainstream living. It is a requirement that guests who have addictions have been through a recovery programme and we keep the entire site alcohol- and drug-free. Long-term guests who have experienced addiction are encouraged to connect with an appropriate counsellor, support group (eg AA or NA) or other therapeutic assistance.

For guests who are ex-offenders, Windsor Hill Wood engages with the probation service to help support their next steps.

While guests do not tend to be in formal employment whilst they are at Windsor Hill Wood, and many receive benefits, the voluntary work undertaken by guests this year has helped them to consider options for work beyond their time at WHW. The voluntary work they do can also help to develop some local contacts, which could lead to future employment or self-employment.



GUESTS SAY:

**"AT WINDSOR HILL WOOD, THEY ALWAYS MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO STAY,
WHATEVER BACKGROUND YOU COME FROM AND WHETHER OR NOT YOU CAN MAKE
A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION. YOUR FINANCIAL SITUATION DOESN'T MATTER
BECAUSE THE HARDSHIP FUND IS USED FOR THOSE WHO HAVE NO MONEY."**

WINDSOR HILL WOOD

GUESTS SAY:

**"WINDSOR HILL WOOD IS THE
ONE PLACE I FEEL SAFE."**



► THE PRESERVATION AND PROMOTION OF MENTAL AND PHYSICAL GOOD HEALTH

The physical activity and time spent outdoors in managing Windsor Hill Wood, its grounds and livestock, helps to promote good health of the guests. Menus are also chosen in relation to healthy eating. In regards mental health, work is one of the most healing aspects of Windsor Hill Wood. Long-term guests who have been helped to find counsellors have had their counselling fees subsidised or paid by Windsor Hill Wood. Other guests have attended Alcoholics Anonymous meetings. An Art Therapist was employed to run weekly sessions for the guests over a ten week period, which guests said they found particularly helpful.



GUESTS SAY:

**"THIS IS A FAMILY
THAT OPENS
ITS DOORS TO
STRANGERS AT A
DIFFICULT TIME IN
THEIR LIVES AND
HELPS THEM TO
BE PHYSICALLY
AND MENTALLY
WELL ENOUGH
TO PREPARE FOR
LIFE OUTSIDE THE
REFUGE. YOU ARE
MADE TO FEEL LIKE
A MEMBER OF THE
FAMILY, PART OF
THE HOUSEHOLD."**

► THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

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

TRUSTEES ANNUAL REPORT

DAILY RHYTHM

Every working morning we have a one-minute check-in at 9.00am, when each person expresses how they are feeling, in one word. A few sentences may be read from devotional material and then the working day begins. We have a coffee break together around 10.30 and finish the working morning at 12.30 when there is an opportunity to gather at the chapel. The 15 minute prayer time is mainly in silence and those who don't attend are asked to respect this. Lunch is prepared and eaten together and guests take turns in preparing supper which is also a communal meal.



GUESTS SAY:

"MY MENTAL HEALTH MEANS I FAIRLY REGULARLY STRUGGLE, MAYBE EVERY FEW MONTHS, AND I HATE MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS SERVICES, THEY JUST DON'T WORK FOR ME AT ALL. I THOUGHT IN THOSE TIMES WHW WOULD BE A GOOD PLACE TO GO. I FOUND THE RHYTHM OF THE DAY VERY SUSTAINING. SOMETHING ABOUT MEANINGFUL OCCUPATION THAT DIRECTLY IMPACTED THE PEOPLE AROUND ME, AND QUIET COMPANY THAT MEANT I COULD JUST GET ON AND DO THINGS WHATEVER WAS HAPPENING IN MY HEAD."

WEEKLY RHYTHM

The joint working days are Monday to Thursday. Only Wednesday is a full working day and guests are often joined by local volunteers who come to share their skills and to be part of our community. There is a Community Meeting on Sundays, when practical matters are discussed, and a wellbeing meeting every Thursday morning.

Each week, guests and Wardens take on a responsibility, such as bread baking, feeding the pigs or watering the plants growing in our polytunnels. These tasks are usually done outside the main working hours and need to be done seven days a week.

We normally hold a weekly Bible study, which guests can attend but which is entirely optional, and some guests attend the local church with the Wardens' family. During the year, one long-term guest also joined one of the church's weekly home groups.

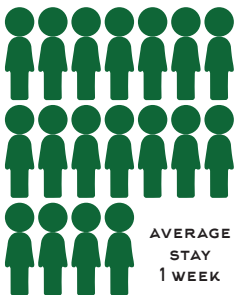
QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF WHAT WE ACHIEVED THIS YEAR

2017-18 LONG-TERM GUESTS

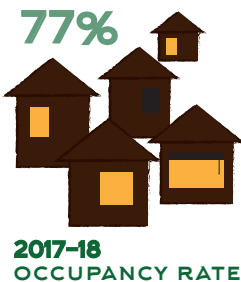


AVERAGE STAY 24 WEEKS

SHORT-TERM GUESTS



AVERAGE
STAY
1 WEEK



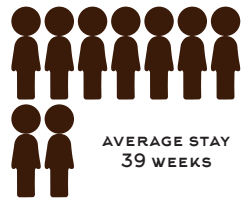
GUEST NUMBERS

Windsor Hill Wood offers hospitality to both long- and short-term guests. The long-term stays are the focus of the work at Windsor Hill Wood, allowing appropriate time for guests to become part of the rhythm of life and community, to have time away from their challenging situations and to have time for a certain level of recovery. However, having short-term guests, if space allows, supports a healthy and fresh dynamic and can also provide an opportunity for those guests to reflect on their next steps.

OCCUPANCY RATE

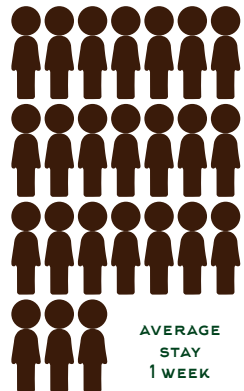
Windsor Hill Wood had an occupancy rate of 77% in 2017/18 and 89% in 2018/19. It is open to a maximum of five guests most nights of the year, with a short closure at Christmas and up to two weeks in the summer.

2018-19 LONG-TERM GUESTS

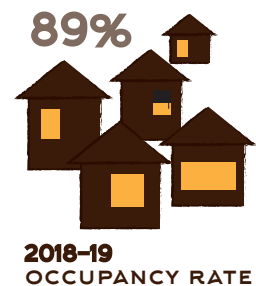


AVERAGE STAY
39 WEEKS

SHORT-TERM GUESTS



AVERAGE
STAY
1 WEEK



NEXT STEPS FOR GUESTS

There is no formal requirement for Windsor Hill Wood to keep in contact with its guests once they move on. However, the Wardens continue to provide significant ongoing support to some former guests via phone calls, invitations to meals and other aspects of community life at WHW.

Over the year, around 35% of guests have moved on to their own housing and work, 15% left to live with their family, about 30% have left without firm plans of where they would be living and 20% had long-term housing without work.



VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

Windsor Hill Wood welcomes volunteers, both regular and one-off volunteers. There is a regular Wednesday volunteer work party in the woods and grounds, attended by around six to eight people each week.

In all around thirty people volunteered on Wednesdays in 2018/19. On top of that there are opportunities for groups to come as volunteers for a one-off or irregular visits. Volunteers have also helped look after the site and the animals during annual closures.



ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WIDER COMMUNITY BY THE CHARITY AND ITS GUESTS

Part of the rehabilitation of the guests is through informal engagement with the wider community. Windsor Hill Wood has engagement in the local community as a charity, but also through individuals living and staying at Windsor Hill Wood being part of other local activities.

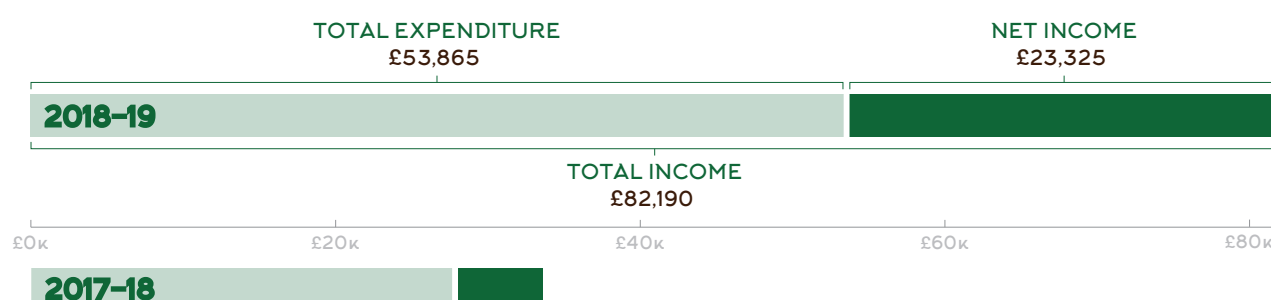
Local community organisation	How WHW and its guests have engaged	Scale
Fareshare	WHW benefits from receiving food	Weekly
St Peter and St Paul's Church, Shepton Mallet	Wardens attend this church and a number of guests have also been part of this community whilst staying.	Weekly
Holly and Hawthorn Forest School	Run weekly and holiday forest school sessions	Weekly
Mendip Mental Health Connections	Refer clients who would benefit from going to WHW on volunteer Wednesdays.	Weekly
Elim Connect Centre	WHW offers accommodation to some people who have been supported by Elim Connect Centre	As needed
Crisis Ministries Bristol	Refers clients to WHW and occasionally takes groups down for visits / volunteering days	Occasionally
Somerset Skills & Learning	Provide funding to enable Windsor Hill Wood to provide learning opportunities to their service users and the wider public	Monthly

This table demonstrates new significant relationships developed over the year: Mendip Mental Health Connections, Elim Connect Centre, Crisis Ministries Centre and Somerset Skills and Learning.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

Quarterly management accounts have been submitted to meetings of the Trustees and the annual accounts were reviewed and approved by the Trustees at the Annual General Meeting. These accounts represented the first full year of accounts for the CIO and Registered Charity; the figures for 2017-18 represent a seven-month period.

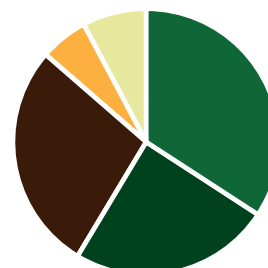
Total income for the year ending 31st March 2019 was £82,190 and total expenditure was £53,865. For the seven-month period of 2017-18 these figures were £33,719 and £27,956 respectively.



INCOME

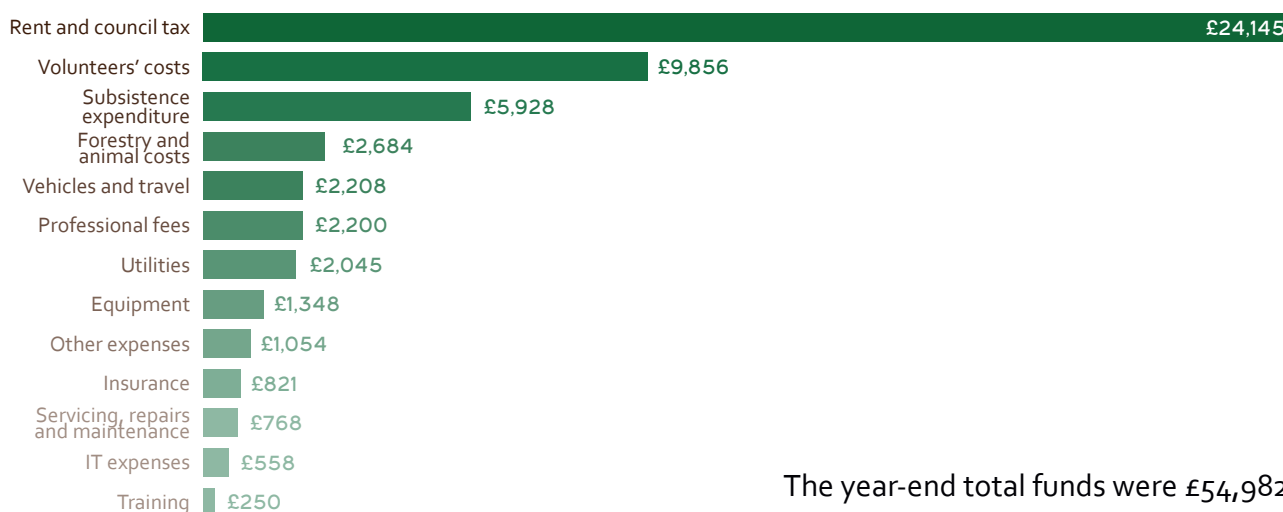
All income received was unrestricted and came from the following sources:

Donations: £28,234	Feed-in Tariff: £4,787
Legacy: £20,000	Other Income: £6,233
Residents' contributions: £22,937	



EXPENDITURE

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



The year-end total funds were £54,982.

RESERVES POLICY

Reserves are held to meet the day to day cash flow requirements and any unforeseen eventuality, as Windsor Hill Wood has obligations both to long-term volunteers and to guests. The reserves policy states that the reserves fund should be held at a minimum level of six months' normal expenditure. Reserves can currently be used to cover any shortfall in funding the organisation's costs.

At the end of the reporting period, the fund balance was £53,495, equivalent to almost one full year's expenditure. This higher level of reserves than in the previous year is partly accounted for by a substantial legacy. The Trustees are satisfied this level is sufficient for their purposes.



SUPPORTERS

Windsor Hill Wood has a small number of faithful supporters who contribute financially, by giving in kind, by donating their time and through prayer. At present, funds primarily come from individual donations, specific funding contracts and guest contributions. Regular monthly giving from individuals has continued to increase during the year and was boosted by a large legacy and the continued support of a generous individual donor who funded over half of the cost of the rent for the site.

Open Afternoons were held in September 2018 and 2019, hosted by guests, Wardens and Trustees. These gave an opportunity for the local community and regular supporters to visit, explore the grounds, purchase some of WHW's produce and share refreshments. Over fifty people, including many families with children, came in 2019 and enjoyed a very sunny afternoon.

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT OF WINDSOR HILL WOOD

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

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

Windsor Hill Wood was constituted as a Registered Charity and CIO during 2017-18, so this year (2018-19) was the first full year of operation. Having developed key policies last year, the Trustees added to the policies in order to ensure the smooth running of the community in line with appropriate health and safety, risk and safeguarding standards. During the year, the Trustees supported the Wardens in developing activities on the site, building local partnerships and relationships, supporting guests and managing the woodland and smallholding. A key feature of this is to learn from experience and to adapt operating procedures and policies accordingly.

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

RISK MANAGEMENT

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

The Trustees review the major risks the charity faces on a regular basis, and any adjustments needed to risk management actions, at Trustees meetings. The Trustees receive regular reports on health and safety matters from the Warden and Assistant Warden. One complaint was received from a guest who stayed during 2018-19. This was reviewed by all Trustees and the Wardens and a number of "lessons learned" were implemented. The Chair of Trustees kept the former guest fully informed.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

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

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements the trustees are required to:

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

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the charity's trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the trustees on 1st December 2019

and signed on their behalf by Renny Gye, Chair of Trustees.



REPORT DESIGNED
BY ALICE HALE