



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	11th	October	2016		30th	November	2017

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

Friends of Gledhow Valley Woods

Other names charity is known by

FGVW

Registered charity number (if any)

1169599

Charity's principal address

83, Gledhow Park Avenue, Leeds

Postcode LS7 4JL

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Martin Calvert	Chair		
2	Paul Ellis	Treasurer		
3	Adrian Coltman			
4	Kay McDowell			
5	Naomi Watts-Kitto			
6	Steve Jones-Blackett			
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Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

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Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document <small>(eg. trust deed, constitution)</small>	Constitution
How the charity is constituted <small>(eg. trust, association, company)</small>	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods <small>(eg. appointed by, elected by)</small>	Elected by members at the AGM

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

The Trustees meet every 3 months to review and plan the activities of the Charity.

FGVW holds monthly action mornings and these are organised by the Steering Group, which all the Trustees attend. The Steering Group has Terms of Reference set by the Trustees. The Steering Group plans events, looks at specific projects through small project teams with terms of reference set by the Trustees.

Currently there is a very active Lake Action Group team and a Merchandise team. Terms of reference exist for the Lake Action Group but not the Merchandise team.

The Trustees, Steering Group and project teams liaise with various public bodies, including land owners the Wades Charity and Leeds City Council, through its Parks and Countryside, Forestry, Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management departments. FGVW also consults with Yorkshire Water, the Woodland Trust Heritage Open Days, Gledhow Conservation Area Group, Leeds University Geography Department, Yorkshire Water, the Environment Agency, Ground Work Trust Leeds, Hafren Water (technical hydrology advice), Local ward councillors, Ebsford Environmental (a specialist company improving water environments), Bankside primary school, Gledhow primary school and Hillcrest Academy, Inkwel mental health arts project and Leeds let's get active walks programme.

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

(1) to promote the conservation, protection and enhancement of the physical and natural environment of the area known as Gledhow Valley Woods in north Leeds ("the Woods") for the benefit of the general public, including in particular by:

- (a) protecting the natural beauty of the Woods;
- (b) maintaining and improving facilities within the Woods, such as paths and seating;
- (c) promoting biodiversity in the Woods;
- (d) increasing public awareness of the Woods and their conservation, protection and enhancement, and reflecting the opinions and concerns of the wider community in relation to the Woods;
- (e) acting to prevent development in the Woods where such development may be considered damaging the Woods, its flora and fauna or its value as a community amenity; and
- (f) working with other groups that have an interest in, control over or responsibility for the Woods in furtherance of the objects of FGVW, including relevant public authorities and other local community groups; and

(2) to engage in any activities which in the reasonable opinion of the Trustees are conducive, ancillary or incidental to any of the above.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

(a) FGVW have continued to work with the main landowners, Leeds City Council and the Wades Charity to implement the Management plan and remove litter and fly tips.
The FGVW owned field is being managed to contribute to the beauty of the Woods.

(b) FGVW hold monthly action mornings to create and repair paths, manage the flora and litter pick.

(c) The Management plan is implemented to improve the biodiversity. FGVW manage five wild flower meadows and work to eradicate/control invasive species. A Woodland Trust grant enabled felling and pollarding work on a plantation to continue to improve the biodiversity within.

(d) The FGVW Annual Fun Day promotes and attracts feedback on the work of the Charity. The event is attended by over 1,000 local people whose opinions are sought. The Lake Action Group was formed, partly as a result of concerns from the community.
The Seventeenth Century Bath House is opened each year on the Heritage Open Days weekend.
FGVW attend various local Fairs and Craft Markets to promote the activities of the Charity.
THE FGVW website is the main provider of information about the group and its activities. Contact with FGVW supporters is by regular e mails.

(e) FGVW liaise with the private landowners.

(f) The Trustees, Steering Group and project teams liaise with various public bodies, including, land owners the Wades Charity and Leeds City Council, through its Parks and Countryside, Forestry, Land Drainage and Flood Risk Management departments. FGVW also consults with Yorkshire Water, the Woodland Trust Heritage Open Days, Gledhow Conservation Area Group, Leeds University Geography Department, Yorkshire Water, the Environment Agency, Ground Work Trust Leeds, Hafren Water (technical hydrology advice), Local ward councillors, Ebsford Environmental (a specialist company improving water environments). Bankside primary school, Gledhow primary school and Hillcrest Academy, Inkwel mental health arts project and Leeds let's get active walks programme.

All the Trustees have regard for the Charity Commissions public benefit guidance. We take it in to account in our decision making. We have not had cause to depart from the guidance.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Our volunteers make us one of the leading Friends groups in Leeds. The average number of volunteers attending Action Mornings is 32 over the period of this report. From October 2016 to Jan 2018, this represents a total of 1135 volunteer hours from the Action Mornings. This is tremendous support and at £11 per hour is worth £12,485.

The Annual Fun Day needs around 50 volunteers to erect and dismantle the marquees, set up the stalls, man the displays and perform the many associated tasks to make a successful day.

There are many others working behind the scenes in FGVW. The website is our main focus, along with Facebook and Twitter. Contact with supporters is via email, Facebook and Twitter. Thanks to Adam and Carol Bull for all their work on the website and Facebook and to Steve Jones-Blackett for managing our Twitter feed.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

FGVW held monthly action mornings. Activities included bulb planting, tree thinning, streamside tree clearance, path maintenance, path creation, Balsam bashing, meadow cutting and clearing, field fence installation, field management and litter picking.

The new field is being managed for wildlife. Along with preventing inappropriate housing development, as confirmed by the decisions of the statutory bodies, the field was purchased with wildlife in mind. Our native wildlife will benefit from this management and it will contribute more to the bio-diversity of the Valley. This will make the Valley a more attractive wildlife haven for the local community. A new fence was installed around the perimeter. Thanks go to Legacy Habitat Management for sponsoring the fence. Our plant ecologist, Kay Woodward has been busy identifying the flora and fauna in the field and leading its management. In January, Legacy planted a hedge along the front of the field, courtesy of funding provided by the Tesco Bags for Life scheme. FGVW received the highest number of customer tokens overall, at 8 Tesco stores in the locality, in the period concerned. Thanks to Tesco for their support. A lot of hard work has gone in to improving the field and its boundaries and the footpath along Gledhow Valley Road. It now looks the best it has looked for many tens of years. We identified the invasive plant Himalayan Balsam in the field and the adjoining Catholic Diocese field. This will need on-going management. We also identified Japanese Knotweed in the other adjoining field and assisted the owner, Mr. Light in engaging a contractor to treat it accordingly. The Knotweed may have spread from the old allotments area beneath the Pasture streets. The Knotweed in there was treated by the contractor, at our expense, in support for Mr. Light. It was also treated by the Leeds City Council Knotweed team. The Knotweed will need our close attention, to prevent its spread.

The Annual Fun Day was a great success, again, attracting over 1,000 local people. It has become a fixture in the Annual list of community events, along with the Chapel Allerton Arts Festival and Carols in the Park. The purpose of the Fun Day is to receive comments and feedback on FGVW projects proposed and current and it fulfils this aim excellently, but it is also a fabulous community get together. This year, the proposed felling and pollarding of 20 trees in a Beech plantation and the management of the new field was the focus of the FGVW display. We receive many kind comments during and after the event. The local population support the event and really enjoy the Community atmosphere and entertainment. Thank you to the band of Fun Day supporters and Fun Day organiser Stephen Johns and his able assistant Claire Standage.

FGVW were awarded a Woodland Trust grant to fell and pollard 20 trees in a Beech plantation, to improve the habitat by moving towards a mixed species/age habitat. This is vital work as identified in the Management Plan carried out by Leeds City Council Woodlands Officer, Justin Williamson. We are improving the habitat for generations to come, through the gradual introduction of a variety of young trees. All the relevant bodies are in favour of this work, as we heard at the public meeting in April 2016. The RSPB, Yorkshire Wildlife Trust, Leeds City Council, The Woodland Trust and The Wades Charity are fully behind the Plantation on Ancient Woodland site (PAWS) in Gledhow. We and the public should start to see the benefits in the next couple of years. This work was carried out in December 2017 and replanting will take place in 2018. We are very pleased with the results and hope to do more such work in the future. Information posters on the site explained the reason for the work and we received much positive feedback with no adverse comments. As part of this grant, we are creating a new, small wildflower meadow opposite the pollarding/felling site. The seeds and plugs for this meadow are funded by this

grant. Thanks to the Woodland Trust for choosing and funding our scheme.

The Lake Action Group continued its work to improve the rapidly silting up Gledhow Lake for wildlife and for the future of the lake itself, holding many meetings with various bodies in order to come up with a robust solution to the silting problems. Progress has been rapid in 2017, with funding and tangible plans evolving. The various stakeholders are all on board with this work. The project should commence in 2018 and will be of great benefit to our native wildlife through the improved habitat and thus of great benefit to the local community. Thanks to David Miles for leading this group, and to Steve Jones-Blackett, Phil Meadley and Kay Woodward for all their ideas, support and attendance at a huge number of meetings.

Part of the investigative work for the Lake project has involved removing silt from the boon end of the lake and clearing one of the silt traps in the stream. A result of this work was some temporary damage to the surrounding areas, but we hope the habitat can be repaired through seeding and planting with wild flowers and by nature itself. Thanks to James Cockburn at Leeds City Council Flood Risk Management for funding these works. The cleaned out silt trap is truly impressive.

FGVW manage five wildflower meadows. This involves annual scything and removal of the cuttings and is a major part of the Action mornings programme. The meadows all flowered well, attracting many insects and were a great sight. The meadows are a large part of the Management Plan. The benefits they provide for our native insects and birds are invaluable. With 98% of national meadows disappearing over the last 100 years, it is plain to see how valuable they are. The FGVW field Open Day was a success, allowing us to explain its management to the community.

All the activities have costs. FGVW raises funds through the selling of merchandise throughout the year at local fairs and markets and FGVW events. Many thanks to Joan and Mervyn Clayton for organising these events and to Trevor and Diane Kitto and Jenny Page and helpers.

Thanks to Mervyn and his assistant Trevor for their range of wooden merchandise which has proved to be very popular. The local community are keen to purchase products made from local wood and items with photographs taken in the Valley.

Thanks also to Wendy Jones-Blackett Ltd for their generous sponsorship of our Christmas and Greetings cards. It is greatly appreciated.

FGVW also applies for funding from a variety of funders. The Lake Action Group have been particularly successful in attracting grants to fund the initial work of that project. David Miles has worked tirelessly to find funding for the Lake Action Project. Thank you to David.

FGVW are one of two charities being supported by the Co-op in Chapel Allerton in 2018. We can display our work in the Co-op and have collections there, along with receiving monies from the carrier bag scheme and a percentage of certain own brand products.

We look forward to the FGVW CIO continuing to thrive in the coming years. Thank you to all members and supporters for your help.

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The purpose of the Reserves Policy for FGVW is to ensure stability of the ongoing operations of the Charity.

Reserves are intended to provide an internal source of funds for situations such as a sudden increase in expenses, one-time unbudgeted expenses, unanticipated loss in funding, or uninsured losses. The reserves may also be used for one-time, non-recurring expenses that will build long-term capacity, such as investment in infrastructure.

Reserves are not intended to replace a permanent loss of funds or eliminate an ongoing budget gap. It is the intention of FGVW for reserves to be used and replenished within a short period of time. The Reserves Policy will be implemented in concert with other governance and financial policies of FGVW and is intended to support the goals and strategies determined by the Trustees.

The target minimum Operating Reserve has initially been set as £1,000, being equal to one year's insurance premium and likely legal fees to deal with any transfer of the land asset on winding up. At this stage of development, the Charity does not have set or predictable operating expenses and financial commitments which need to be accounted for in the Operating Reserve.

An additional sum will be held as part of the Operating Reserve to account for costs incurred should a major event such as the annual Fun Day be cancelled. This will be calculated as the average costs of the three preceding Fun Days.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

None

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

Principal Sources of Funding

The principal sources of funds for the FGVW CIO are small grants, donations, merchandise sales and annual events such as the Fun Day, Bath House open day and National Meadows day. The Lake Action group is currently raising ring fenced funds to cover the costs involved in finding a solution to the silting up of the lake.

Investment Policy

The Charity seeks to produce the best financial return within an acceptable level of risk. As assets are expected to be spent over twelve months, preservation of capital is of paramount importance.

In pursuit of this, the Operating Reserve will be held in an interest-bearing account subject to the risk considerations set out at section 3 of the policy.

The Charity's assets will be held in cash.

The Charity will place cash only with banks and building societies that are authorised to accept deposits by the Prudential Regulation Authority and the Financial Conduct Authority. Cash held with any institution will not exceed the level of deposits covered by the Financial Services Compensation Scheme, currently £85,000.

Opening or closing of bank and building society accounts must be authorised by the Trustees, a power which is not at the present time delegated.

Cash needed for the day to day running of the Charity will be held in an instant access, current or deposit account.

Section F**Other optional information**

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Section G**Declaration**

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Martin Calvert	Paul Ellis
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	Treasurer
Date	4 March 2018	