



# *PEACE OAK ASSOCIATION*

*(Charity No 1172221)*

*Annual Report 2021*

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## **Report from the Chair of the Board of Trustees**

Our committee has met five times this year and we are delighted to welcome David Knight as a new committee member. There are two vacancies for trustees to be elected at the AGM – we would prefer to have any nominations in advance.

Despite a difficult year and the constraints of Covid 19 the Peace Oak Association has flourished with much progress on the land and popular new activities for members. We have encouraged members to visit and enjoy the field and participate in social and purposeful events when the restrictions allowed. We postponed the AGM for 2020 until April in the hope that we could meet in person – but in the end the AGM was held on Zoom.

We completed the well thanks to the generosity of members and a grant from TOE (Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment) and now have a continuous supply of water pumped into the storage tank with a solar powered pump. We have planted more trees along the beech hedge, replaced a number of vines and extended the area of the edible hedge – which is intended as gentle grazing of the fruit in season for members. We have recently allocated four shared plots within the existing boundary.

One of our objectives is to increase the biodiversity on the land and this has involved changes to the mowing regime, wildflower surveys in conjunction with the Nature Recovery Network and the expansion of wildflower areas. Slow worms continue to thrive and the pond is a haven for dragon fly larvae, water boatmen and newts. Several members participated in the NRN's very successful series of Tiny Talks.

A highly successful new initiative is the Craft Club which met fortnightly through the summer providing an opportunity for members to share skills and enjoy each other's company outdoors with a focus on green woodworking and willow weaving – thanks to David Knight, Andy Goodwin, Charlotte Holmes and Paul Turner. The Willow Cathedral initially made for Artweeks has become a permanent feature – and the exhibition From The Ground Up, put on in Oxford, generated more artistic creations in willow and a concertina book of the Peace Oak Centenary Poems illustrated with printed leaves. Weaving and stitching, working with clay, pole lathing, children's science experiments, yoga and meditation were part of the Great Big Green Week activities and the Peace Oak field was open to all for eight days on the GBGW trail.

The Craft Club highlighted the need for some shelter on the field. We decided that activities should focus around the shed and fire area, leaving the wood area on the eastern boundary for birds and other wildlife. A clear out of the shed revealed the need for temporary repair which has now been done, but we are aware that serious structural work or better, a replacement, is needed in the long term. Since then we have been given a useful large gazebo.

The field is also used by the Scouts and Guides on a regular basis through the summer and on occasions for other community groups including art classes.

When Covid regulations allowed gatherings of 30 outside we held three events aimed at encouraging our members to explore the field, picnic etc. The Fungi Foray in October was a huge success alongside our annual apple juicing. We do hope we will be able to have more regular events this year.

We are very grateful to about a dozen active members who have come to the monthly maintenance parties developing and looking after the land – working in pairs or groups of six as regulations allowed. Thanks also to others who have pruned apple trees, planted vines, potted wildflowers and scattered wildflower seeds.

We are very keen to involve our members in the various activities and in helping with particular events and activities. At present we rely on a handful of people who undertake maintenance of the field but we would like our monthly Saturdays to be more social and have wider appeal – maybe with food and drinks at the end. We recognise that attending weekend working parties is not everyone's cup of tea and there are lots of tasks that don't involve heavy digging and can be done at more flexible times. We have experimented with other times to see if that suits more people.

We don't want to make helping out a condition of membership and it may be that some members who don't have time might help with fundraising or add a bit to their membership fee? We would like to discuss this at the AGM – meanwhile there is a list of ways in which you can contribute attached.

Thanks to all for another great year!

*Sue Raikes, January 2022*

Accounts for the period 1/1/21 to 31/12/21

	From 01/01/2021 To 31/12/2021	01/01/2020 31/12/2020
<b>Income</b>		
Donations	382	311
Well Grant/fund	267	685
Events	5	380
Subscriptions (ending 2020)	-	634
Subscriptions (ending 2021)	1,006	40
Subscriptions (ending 2022)	64	
Allotments	93	187
CAG Grant	100	100
Gift Aid	244	456
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,161</b>	<b>2,793</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Construction	48	555
Equipment	169	-
Plants	111	326
Material	30	96
Fuel	125	125
Room hire	20	-
Events	-	301
Miscellaneous	12	100
Well	644	419
Insurance	217	208
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,376</b>	<b>2,130</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>663</b>
Surplus brought forward	1,539	876
<b>Surplus carried forward</b>	<b>2,324</b>	<b>1,539</b>
<b>Balance sheet</b>		
Cash	262	135
Bank	2,062	1,404
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>2,324</b>	<b>1,539</b>
General reserves	1,324	352
Well (including gift aid)	-	437
Contingency reserves	1,000	750

## **Ways to contribute or get involved**

All the work of the Association is carried out by volunteers and our aim is that members should feel involved in some way. Here are some ideas... by no means exhaustive!

- Come along to one of our monthly maintenance meetings (aka working parties) and be part of a small group working in the field – clearing, planting, pruning, composting... it's not all heavy work.
- Join a sub group tending to a specific aspect of the field – eg vines, the pond, apple growing. If you are interested in a particular area and would like to join or even manage a small group of volunteers we would love to hear from you.
- Share your expertise – insects, animals, trees, pond life – it's great to do surveys and have people to show others round on open days.
- Help with labelling and record keeping – especially of the orchard.
- Help with running a survey or monitoring to promote biodiversity.
- Help with planning or running events.
- Help with publicity – are you a keen social media user?
- Help with writing funding applications or running fundraising stalls.
- Bring along a cake or biscuits to share at an event, or even a working party.
- We realise that for some people contributing time is difficult, so as an alternative you could add a donation to your subscription on renewal – all funds go towards the maintenance and improvement of the orchard and towards events and the running of the Association.