



# *Peace Oak Association*

*(Charity No 117221)*

*Registered Office: 74 Acre End Street, Eynsham, OX29 4PD*

## *Annual Report 2023*

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### **The Management Committee and Trustees**

The Trustees set the strategic direction of the Charity and are elected for three year terms. They are assisted in the day to day management of the Peace Oak by other members of the Association in the Management Committee.

#### **Trustees in 2023**

	David Knight	
Treasurer	Hywel Edwards	
	James Bird	Resigned Jan 23
Secretary	Kate Shaw	
	Phil Snelling	
Chair	Sue Raikes	

#### **Other members of the Management Committee**

Adrienne Beavis	From October 23
Ian Middleton	
Sarah Couch	

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

There has been much activity at the Peace Oak this year with regular working parties on Saturday mornings, four events for members and non – members and the return of the very popular Craft Club.

Field Days have gone well, though more people would be welcome - there is always work to do to care for the site but it's not all hard physical work and contributions to the food and jollity are very welcome.

On the land we have completed the work on the large trees identified in the survey last year and with the help of Duke of Edinburgh volunteers we are getting on top of the scrub and the ivy on the east side of the field.

The fruitful hedge increasingly reflects its name and produces raspberries, strawberries plums and more for all to share.

We followed a more relaxed mowing regime during 2023 to encourage wildflowers and to maintain the look and feel of a natural meadow. Mowing and the removal of cuttings is a significant task, and scheduling is often complicated by our unpredictable weather. The machinery rental makes this one of our larger expenses. The wildflower meadow by the gate benefits from our new mowing regime which allows the seeds to fall and take root. The result is an increasing diversity of flowers and insects.

Some of our first planted vines achieved sufficient maturity to produce our first grapes in 2023. Black Hamburg, Muscat Blu and Ortega varieties are currently the most successful. Hopefully the majority will survive the winter and grape juicing will become a significant part of future Apple Days.

The drought last year took its toll on the apple trees – we lost two of the Wastie trees in the avenue which will be replaced this winter. Grafting new trees is a touch of magic in the orchard. Grafting with more than one variety continues – and we will have a few “family trees” in a year or so for members to buy. Our priority now is to graft with Eynsham varieties hoping these will be popular with our members and others of the community.

We have subdivided some of the larger plots in the allotment area so we can offer space to more emerging growers. We now have seventeen plotholders.

One highlight of the year was the return of the Craft Club with seven sessions on activities such as willow weaving, belt making and wood carving. In addition to people attending the sessions others also came to enjoy the fire, to finish projects, or to demonstrate other crafts. The Craft Club has become a key part of our summer – numbers are limited and some sessions are oversubscribed so keep a look out for the launch next year. We would welcome more crafters who could extend what we offer.

The Craft Club has prompted ideas about improving the spaces we have for activities and events. We are investigating replacing the stable building at some point in the next five years and are looking at involving our members and the Eynsham community in that process - more about this at the AGM

The real highlight of the year was the Apple Festival – with our local expert from Waterperry in great demand identifying apples. As ever the juicing was very popular and we had a great display of many local varieties. Green TEA ran a Plant Based Food stall and competition, the Nature Recovery Network were busy explaining their successful meadows, bird surveys. Water surveys and recruiting more active helpers. Children's games were popular and involved exploring the woodland areas. We

estimate 150 visitors which we think is a record – and included many new people who we hope will now be inspired to join us.

Attached to the “Gables” is a covenant over the Peace Oak land and prior to its sale we agreed with the Ferriers an amendment to its terms to ensure we had the right to replace and hopefully enhance the shed. The new owners of the “Gables”, the Shorts, have already shown their interest in and support of our work.

### **The Committee**

The Trustees and committee have met quarterly for formal meetings but a lot of work also goes on between meetings. We are very grateful to all for their hard work but particularly to Kate Shaw, our Secretary, who will be resigning at AGM.

### **Finances**

Our income of £2,602 compares favourably with that of 2022 with the primary difference being due to the increase in membership fees. We now have 75 household members and 41 individual members. The Craft Club generated £196 net income and compensated for a drop in donations. We continue to be grateful to CAG Oxfordshire for their support towards the cost of our insurance. Of our expenditure of £2,055 the major elements were plants/ tree work and mowing. The former includes £1,128 spent on safety work with the pollarding of a poplar and the trimming of an acacia. Mowing is an increased expense as we are now less reliant on the generosity of Jonathan Ferrier and are having to hire some of the equipment required. The surplus generated, £547, is split between our general funds and our contingency reserves.

*Sue Raikes, January 2024*

Accounts for the period 01/01/23 to 31/12/23

	From 01/01/2023 To 31/12/2023	01/01/2022 31/12/2022
<b>Income</b>		
Donations	224	454
Sales/Events	30	90
Net receipts Craft Club	196	
Subscriptions (ending 2022)	-	1,034
Subscriptions (ending 2023)	1,525	10
Subscriptions (ending 2024)	70	-
Allotments	84	84
CAG Grant	100	100
Gift Aid	372	360
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,602</b>	<b>2,131</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Construction	-	8
Equipment	65	-
Plants/Tree work	1,259	695
Material	16	44
Mowing	313	83
Room hire/Meeting expenses	56	-
Events	50	84
Miscellaneous	54	300
Insurance	242	229
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,055</b>	<b>1,443</b>
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>547</b>	<b>688</b>
Surplus brought forward	3,012	2,324
<b>Surplus carried forward</b>	<b>3,559</b>	<b>3,012</b>
Balance sheet		
Cash	61	172
Bank	3,498	2,840
<b>Total reserves</b>	<b>3,559</b>	<b>3,012</b>
General reserves	2,059	1,762
Contingency reserves	1,500	1,250