

The Magog Trust

Annual Review 2017

Development, activities and achievements this year

Managing a piece of land with mixed use is not always straightforward. We are often at the vagaries of the weather and contractors, and so it proved this year. The meadow on North Down was cut late into the year in 2016 although, on the plus side, this did benefit some flora and insects. During the year, our contracting arrangements were reviewed. New contractors were appointed with effect from April 2017 and initial results are encouraging.

Butterfly, bird and surveys of flora continue, to which we hope to add small mammals and invertebrae. Guelder rose and wayfaring tree form important habitats for Orange-tailed Clearwing and *Synanthedon andrenaeformis*, both of which have been recorded on the Down and care is taken in any management scheme to retain habitats of the many birds, flowers, insects and invertebrates for which this is home.



The chalky slope of Little Trees Hill towards Jane's Piece now gives uninterrupted views of Stapleford after the boundary hedge, which had become smothered in ivy, was removed. A boardwalk from recycled material has been laid along a short stretch. This is an expensive, but long lasting solution, so we can only cover a small section at a time. It has been decided to extend this at a further cost of around £10,000. A sponsorship drive has been launched to raise funds so that we can continue the project and our thanks go to those who have already contributed.



Jon Gibbs, contracted by The Magog Trust as our Conservation Ranger, has been a welcome presence on the Down throughout the year. In addition to interacting with the public, he carried out many conservation tasks as well as working



with our Wednesday volunteer group. He has carried out much coppicing, in the woods and along the hedgerows. This type of management is of huge importance to the health and wellbeing of birds, insects and small mammals, as well as the woods and hedgerows themselves. Additionally, a continuing task is to cut back encroaching shrub growth, which, if not controlled, would envelop the grassland. Sadly we are to lose Jon's services in the Autumn: his has been an enormous contribution and we are pleased that he will continue as a Governor for another year. We hope that his hours as Conservation Ranger will be taken up by his former colleagues, Nick and Claire Beale, who know the Down well.



We continue to strive for visitors to support the work of the Trust by enrolling as Friends. Many have done so over the past year but, sadly, only a small proportion of visitors make this commitment. The Down is very popular with dog walkers and the provision of appropriate facilities is a significant expense for the Trust. We have begun an exercise to ascertain the proportion of our subscribers who would regard themselves as "dog persons". So far approximately one third of Friends and Members have responded and, in the results to date, close to 40% have answered "Yes" or "Formerly" to this question.

Future Developments

Under the City Deal, there is the prospect of a bus lane on the A1307 adjacent to the site along our boundary and the perimeter path. We are working with other bodies, including Cambridge Past, Present & Future, to try to minimise its impact, should the plans be carried through.

Currently, much effort is going into the preparation of Countryside Stewardship grant application, to be submitted in 2018, in advance of existing schemes ending in October 2018. This requires a Woodland Management Plan as well as botanical surveys and, possibly, a further biodiversity scheme. This is demanding much input from our Land Team working with our administrative assistant. This grant is awarded on a competitive basis and there is no guarantee that we will be successful. This, in conjunction with the current uncertainties regarding the future of farm funding, has strengthened our

resolve to pursue car parking charges as an alternative income stream. Friends and Members will be made fully aware of plans for such an introduction, though they may anticipate an increase in subscription fees to reflect these changes.



Cambridge is renowned for its heritage of learning and beautiful college buildings. The countryside around it, particularly the swathe around the southern boundaries, equals these buildings in terms of heritage and importance within an environment of huge expansion of housing, hospital and research campuses. It is vital that we cherish and maintain the land in our care. The support of Governors, volunteers, Members and Friends makes this possible.

Directors and trustees

Lucy Evans has resigned as it is her intention to move away from the area. She has been a Governor since 2005 and a long-term supporter of the Trust who has given much practical advice and devoted many hours in her work on The Down. Chris Bow has joined us as a Governor and Honorary Treasurer. He fills the position left vacant following the resignation of David Barrass who has moved to Norfolk. We thank David for the time he gave to The Magog Trust during his term of office and welcome Chris, another Stapleford resident, to the Board. Since the year-end, we are fortunate in having two new Governors join us. Iain Webb is a former Stapleford resident and is currently working for the Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire & Northamptonshire Wildlife Trusts. Sara Sayer is a solicitor and is another Stapleford resident.



Financial information

The full report and accounts for the year to March 2017 have passed independent examination and will be available online after the AGM. Excluding gains/(losses) on investments, the surplus from normal activities was £3,115 compared to £8,257 last year. Income increased by 7%, however costs increased by a larger margin of 15%.

In order to help our supporters to have a better understanding of the different sources of income, and areas of expenditure, we have provided further details in the table below.

SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

INCOMING RESOURCES	2016/17	2015/16
	£	£
Land Income, comprising:		
<i>Farming: sale of crops</i>	41,453	29,830
<i>Farming: BPS payment</i>	11,942	9,834
<i>Grants: HLS/ELS schemes</i>	-	8,155
<i>Grants: Forestry Commission</i>	2,174	2,174
Land Income Total	55,568	49,879
Investment Income	20,622	21,948
Member/Friend subscriptions	8,565	7,379
Donations and Gifts	2,886	2,590
TOTAL INCOME	87,640	81,910
RESOURCES EXPENDED	2016/17	2015/16
	£	£
Charitable Activities:		
Farming costs	31,281	24,548
Ranger & other services	20,316	19,424
Administration	12,105	9,842
Repairs & maintenance	8,125	7,226
Tree work	3,831	4,682
Depreciation on assets	1,458	1,043
Rent	1,140	1,202
Other:		
Fund Management	6,270	5,686
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	84,526	73,653
NET INCOME FOR THE YEAR	3,115	8,257

For the financial year ended 31 March 2017, the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Registered Office: The Magog Trust,
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