

**05673816 (ENGLAND & WALES)**

**CHARITY REGISTERED NUMBER: 1119592**



**DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021**

**THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST**  
**DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021**

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**THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST**  
**LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION**

**Company Number:** 05673816 (England & Wales)

**Registered Charity Number:** 1119592

**Patron:** The Viscount Ashbrook

**Directors:** E M Bennis  
J M Uings  
S Bartlett  
G Darlington  
M Blowey  
D Cash  
N Lightfoot

**Secretary:** J M Uings

**Registered Office:** 26 Sandford Road  
Sale  
Cheshire  
M33 2PS

**Bankers:** CAF Bank Limited

**THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST**  
**DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021**

The Council of Management presents its report with the financial statements of the charity for the Year ended 31 January 2021.

**Structure, Governance and Management**

***Governing document***

The charity is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The objects of the Trust are:

- 1 To promote the education of the public in fine arts, crafts, sciences and all other matters connected with designed landscapes; and
- 2 To promote the appropriate action for any or all of the following: the restoration, enhancement, preservation, conservation, protection and understanding of designed landscapes that may exist or have existed in and around the pre-1974 historic county of Cheshire.

The Cheshire Gardens Trust Council of Management Trustees has adopted the *Charity Governance Code for smaller charities* and is working towards ensuring that it is fully compliant with its stipulated good practice. It acknowledges, however, that it is not possible to be fully compliant at the present time in relation to the proposed maximum length of service of 9 years. Whilst this is a matter of continual review with steps being taken to ensure a regular turnover of Trustee membership, it is necessary to retain Trustee membership beyond nine years in view of the current Trustees' considerable skills and expertise.

The Trustees have reviewed the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. The activities of the Trust fall mainly within the Charitable Purposes: advancement of education, and advancement of arts, culture and heritage. The activities of the Trust in meeting these public benefits are described in detail below. Membership of the Trust is open to everyone and members of the public do not need to be a member of the Trust to benefit from its activities.

***Appointment of trustees***

The trustees who served during the year are set out on the charity information page at the front of these accounts.

Trustees are elected by the members at the AGM to serve on the Council of Management for three years. Members of the Council are restricted to two consecutive terms of three years, unless there are fewer candidates for election than places available. Council may consist of no fewer than seven and no more than fifteen members. A further three co-options may be made.

The Council of Management encourages others to stand for election and has created an information pack for new Trustees.

**THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST**  
**DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT** (Continued)  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021**

***Organisation***

The company is limited by guarantee and was incorporated on 12 January 2006. It was registered as a charity on 11 June 2007. The Trust is a member of the national body The Gardens Trust.

***Risk policy***

The trustees have examined the major strategic, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reports to be produced so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks. The following are in place:

- An annual budget is set and management accounts reported against budget at intervals through the year.
- Public Liability and Trustee Indemnity Insurance;
- Role descriptions and information packs for Council of Management members;
- Risk assessments are made prior to every event; During the COVID pandemic, meetings and events are held on-line;
- Site visit guidance notes and risk assessments for volunteers undertaking research and recording. During the COVID pandemic, precautions are in accordance with current Government requirements;
- An information pack for research and recorders which includes guidance to minimise risk;
- Training for researchers;
- A Data Protection Policy has been drafted to ensure the Trust complies with the General Data Protection Regulation 2018.

The Council of Management also recognises that too much responsibility rests on too few volunteers and will continue to encourage members of the Trust to serve on the Council and to volunteer for the various activities it undertakes.

**Achievements and performance**

***Membership***

Membership levels have fallen slightly, although new members continue to join while others leave. The total membership numbered 150 in February 2021. A number of members are very actively involved in the various activities and a large number attend the on-line talks, which have also attracted some new members. All members receive newsletters and regular emailed news items from various sources.

***Chairman***

Ed Bennis is filling the role of Chairman on a temporary basis.

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**DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT** (Continued)  
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**Activities**

The following items were in our plans for 2020:

- To continue with our usual activities with a special emphasis on developing skills among the membership to help with the Conservation and Planning demands.
- To continue the aims set out in the Strategic Review 2019.
- To incur additional expenditure on the Caldwell website with a view to increasing the interrogation of the data.

These have only been partially achieved to date, due to some extent to the exceptional restrictions in place.

**Strategic Review**

This forward-thinking Review circulated in 2019 arrived at a series of recommendations for action.

Of these, only the aims for the Website have been fully achieved and Council of Management meetings have been restructured. The aims for Events and the Bursary have, of necessity, been partially limited due to COVID restrictions.

However, the remaining aims; replacements of Leadership roles, increasing Council of Management members, increasing active Trust Membership and recruiting more assistance with Conservation & Planning activities, all rely on success in growing and diversifying our Membership and involving them directly in these essential activities of the Trust.

In 2021 we must now add the replacement roles of Trust Secretary, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor to our list of requirements. Pursuing these aims has been especially difficult over the past year but it is hoped that more members will be able to step up to help us maintain momentum in the months to come.

**Events**

Sadly, the Events Group has been unable to maintain its usual popular programme of garden visits over the summer months of 2020 due to the COVID pandemic restrictions. With the exception of the talk by retired Cheshire County Archivist, Jonathan Pepler, on local estate maps, this also halted our face-to-face autumn and winter lectures. However, these were replaced by a very successful programme of virtual talks with between 40 and 70 members and guests joining each event.

More than 50 CGT members have attended at least one of these talks and have commended their content and delight in meeting other members, if only in a virtual setting. And as a bonus we have welcomed nine new members to the Cheshire Gardens Trust.

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Rising to the challenge, the Events Group embraced the new technology by presenting five virtual talks from October 2020 to March 2021:

- *An Architect's Dozen*, by David Cash, CGT Council of Management member
- *A Factory Garden: The work of Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe*, by Ed Bennis, CGT Chairman
- *John Claudius Loudon*, by Simon Gulliver, Botanist (*originally to be delivered in March 2020*)
- *Behind the scenes as a RHS Judge at Chelsea and other important garden shows*, by Martin Fish
- *The development of the Gardens Trusts*, by Margie Hoffnung, Conservation Officer and Historic Landscape Project Support Officer (*originally to be delivered in April 2020*)

These talks can be re-visited via articles in our Newsletters and by looking on the Website Gallery tab/Events page.

### **Research and Recording**

We held one meeting before lockdown and then resumed communications in June with a Zoom meeting. Such meetings became the pattern for the rest of the year. They were important for sharing information, ideas and experiences and provided encouragement during a time when the closure of Archives and Local Studies has made research difficult. Cheshire Archives have been helpful answering queries and copying and emailing images to enable progress. We have made full use of online resources, sharing discoveries and sources, and taken the opportunity to write up reports, and to research some public parks. Site visits were limited but undertaken to Verdin Park, Northwich and Elizabeth Park, Thelwall, the site of Thelwall Hall.

Members have contributed to responses on planning applications and discussed contributions to the newsletter and website. All of us have appreciated the online lectures and training webinars from the Gardens Trust, other County Gardens Trusts and our own CGT talks. We attended the Cheshire West and Chester Heritage Forum in October, 'meeting' the new Conservation Officers and hearing about proposals for CWaC and Cheshire East to liaise re local listing, enabling a common approach and criteria to be established. It was affirmed that local listing would include historic designed landscapes and after the meeting further communications took place regarding our research reports issued to Cheshire Historic Environment Record.

### **Caldwell's Nurseries Project**

The Website continues to be used on a regular basis. We were particularly pleased to note that both the website and the Caldwell book had been extensively used in an article entitled "*From specimens to commodities: the London nursery trade and the introduction of exotic plants in*

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*the early nineteenth century*". This was written by Keith Alcorn and published in the November 2020 edition of *Historical Research* (put the title in your search engine to read the whole article). We were particularly pleased to note the comment "Caldwell's Nursery was chosen as a regional comparator owing to the extensive digitization of business records of the nursery carried out by Cheshire Gardens Trust". It was good to see this recognition of the hard work of our volunteer transcribers.

Plans to make the archives more accessible via mobiles and tablets were put on hold during 2020 due to Covid and staff sickness both of which impacted upon the company that designs and hosts the website.

There are currently no plans for further transcriptions (which would require a new way of entering and displaying data) but there are plans for making the current transcriptions more usable. These are dependent upon events at the designer company.

Meanwhile the information transcribed to date is being used to explore the world in which the nurseries worked. It is hoped that this will eventually lead to a new book being published.

### ***Planning and Conservation***

This year a small number of volunteers have reviewed fifty-eight planning applications affecting historic designed landscapes of which twenty-one merited a response. We received ten Neighbourhood/Local Development Plans of which five were commented on, and contributed to two planning policy consultations and four pre-application consultations. Members have attended consultations on three sites between lockdowns, and two meetings. We are grateful to members for their time and expertise in contributing to the planning process.

These activities are challenging and can be time consuming but are rewarding when we have a positive influence on decision making. Planning Officers value our knowledge and contribution. If members care about our heritage of parks and gardens then it is essential that more people volunteer to assist with this activity. Without greater involvement the activity cannot be sustained and our parks and gardens are at serious risk of ill-informed development occurring without comment.

Members can view details of our Planning-related activities and read the submitted responses on our website: Conservation tab/Planning Log page.

### ***Networking***

During the pandemic, networking has generally been restricted to on-line communications. This has included advertising for and joining with other Cheshire organisations' talks and connecting with non-members via CGT talks.

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**Newsletter**

The quarterly CGT Newsletter has always played an important part of our communication link and the COVID pandemic has certainly underlined the importance of its role in maintaining contact with Members. 2020 saw the production of three special issues in addition to the usual four.

Members may have also noticed the Newsletter's fresh appearance, designed to echo our redesigned Website. In addition to our long-term series and our response to Members' contributions, a number of new series have also been introduced including the Research & Recording Group's articles entitled 'Why is this here?' and a fresh focus on Cheshire's Public Parks which have become an even more essential and valued resource for local residents in current times.

As ever, the Newsletter is circulated mainly via email and by post to suit individual Members' requirements. It is also available to read/download from the CGT Website where there is a search facility on the top righthand corner of each website page which helps in finding subjects of interest in the Newsletters, without having to systematically look through past issues. So, in addition to thanking the Newsletter team of two and our greatly appreciated contributors, we must also thank Tina Theis for her skilful contribution to this useful facility.

**Website**

Following recommendations from the Strategic Review, discussions to refresh the Website began and then gained momentum as Website Group members found themselves with more available time because of Covid restrictions. The Trust's healthy bank balance also had a bearing on the Council of Management's decision to step up a level and undertake a complete Website redesign.

After months of work by the Website Group, with essential input from our other Groups, the new site was launched on 18 November 2020. As well as re-stating the aims and values of the Trust in a fresh and more accessible way, the new website has several totally new features such as the Newsletter search system and the Parks and Gardens section, both of which continue to be developed. We are grateful to Roxbury Dynamic for their advice and patience during the design process.

We have been encouraged by Members' responses and the increase of contacts from persons outside the Trust via the site, some seeking advice whilst others offered information. This will always be a 'work in progress' so we strongly encourage Members to provide comments and contributions, including photographs, so that we can keep the site up to date and fresh. Please do this by emailing [info@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk](mailto:info@cheshire-gardens-trust.org.uk) or contacting members of the Council of Management directly.

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***Bursary***

Although the Strategic Review identified the Bursary Scheme for further support and development, it was not possible to make an award in the year ending January 2021 because of the Covid restrictions and their impact on aspects such as travel. Due to the more straightened financial circumstances currently being experienced by both educational institutions and many horticultural students, discussions are underway with Ness College to investigate ways in which the scheme can be modified going forward so that it continues to provide much needed support with the successful recipients feeding back the results of their research to CGT members. The scheme may be extended to other interested educational institutions within the county.

***Volunteers***

Maintaining our activities requires the input of our many volunteers. However, we are very aware that some have been undertaking their roles for more than a decade and unfortunately that means we are getting older! It is important that the Trust is refreshed by the different ideas and experiences of younger members. Everyone can help, whether occasionally or for longer periods. Please allow our older volunteers to take a step backward. We will still be around to offer support.

***Financial review***

Due to the exceptional circumstances of 2020, the Trust made a substantial loss of nearly £2,000. In normal years the excess income from Events enables us to run a surplus rather than a deficit, and because this has happened in previous years, we were in a healthy position to be able to cope with this loss. It has, of course, reduced our funds, but these still stand at nearly £17,000, so we are in a good position should the restrictions we have been living under be extended or renewed. The detailed figures on page 13 show that most of our expenditure items continued as normal; the main differences being the reduction in expenditure due to the inability to continue with Events and the additional expenditure on overhauling the Website.

***Reserves policy***

It is the policy of the charity to maintain unrestricted funds, which are the free reserves of the charity, at a level which equates to approximately six months unrestricted expenditure. This provides sufficient funds to meet operational costs and to fund the next two events of the Trust. Unrestricted funds were maintained above this level throughout the year.

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**Plans for future periods**

Following the popularity of their virtual talks, the Events Group has decided that the programme should be extended by a further three talks to take place from April to June 2021. Subsequently it is hoped it will be possible to announce a summer series of garden visits from July to October 2021.

The Events Group will be issuing to members a questionnaire requesting views on the CGT programme of events, particularly in relation to their participation in the virtual talks, with the possibility that the use of Zoom will be continued in an exciting new programme of virtual talks over the winter of 2021-22.

Across our other activities we will continue to follow up the ideas arising from the Strategic Review 2019, focusing specifically on attracting more active members to progress and refresh the stated aims of the Trust.

The positions of Chair, Company Secretary and Treasurer will be vacated on 30 September and new people will be appointed.

**Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements**

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity at the end of the financial Year and of its surplus or deficit for the financial Year. In doing so the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether the policies adopted are in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and with applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements.
- prepare the financial statements on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in existence.

The trustees (Council of Management) are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enables them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. 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.

This report was approved by the Council of Management on 6 May 2021.

*Ed Bennis*

Edward Bennis, Trustee

# THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST

## BALANCE SHEET

AT 31 JANUARY 2021

	Note	2021		2020	
		£	£	£	£
<b>Current assets</b>					
Debtors and prepayments	3	30		130	
Bank Accounts		17,168		19,421	
		<u>17,198</u>		<u>19,551</u>	
<b>Creditors</b>					
Amounts falling due within one year	4	350		760	
		<u>350</u>		<u>760</u>	
<b>Net current assets</b>			16,848		18,791
			<u>16,848</u>		<u>18,791</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>			16,848		18,791
			<u>16,848</u>		<u>18,791</u>
<b>Net assets</b>			16,848		18,791
			<u>16,848</u>		<u>18,791</u>
<b>Capital funds</b>					
Unrestricted funds			16,848		18,791
			<u>16,848</u>		<u>18,791</u>
<b>Total funds</b>			16,848		18,791
			<u>16,848</u>		<u>18,791</u>

For the year ending 31/01/2021 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The Members have not required the Company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime.

Approved by the trustees on .

*Ed Bennis*  
Edward Bennis  
Trustee

*David Cash*  
David Cash  
Trustee

The annexed notes form part of these financial statements.

**THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST**

**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31  
JANUARY 2021**

	<b>Unrest'd Funds</b>	<b>Total Funds 2021</b>	<i>Unrest'd Funds £</i>	<i>Total Funds 2020 £</i>
<b>Incoming resources</b>				
Incoming Resources from generated funds:				
Voluntary income	750	750	4,352	4,352
Activities for generating funds	1,735	1,735	1,907	1,907
Investment income	7	7	11	11
<b>Total incoming resources</b>	<u>2,492</u>	<u>2,492</u>	<u>6,270</u>	<u>6,270</u>
<b>Resources expended</b>				
Costs of generating funds	2,890	2,890	899	899
Charitable activities	831	831	3,462	3,462
Governance costs	714	714	971	971
<b>Total resources expended</b>	<u>4,435</u>	<u>4,435</u>	<u>5,332</u>	<u>5,332</u>
<b>Net movement in funds</b>	(1,943)	(1,943)	938	938
<b>Total funds brought forward</b>	<u>18,791</u>	<u>18,791</u>	<u>17,853</u>	<u>17,853</u>
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>	<u><u>16,848</u></u>	<u><u>16,848</u></u>	<u><u>18,791</u></u>	<u><u>18,791</u></u>

Details of Incoming resources and resources used are given in the notes to the financial statements.

**THE CHESHIRE GARDENS TRUST**  
**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2021**

**1. Accounting policies**

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention (as modified by the revaluation of certain assets) and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (Effective January 2005). The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP 2005) issued in March 2005.

**Cashflow statement**

The Company has taken advantage of the exemption in Financial Reporting Standard No.1 from the requirement to produce a cashflow statement on the grounds that it is a small company.

**Incoming resources**

All incoming resources are included in the SOFA when the charity is legally entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

**Resources expended**

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with use of the resources.

**2. Investment Income**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Interest	7	11
	=	=

**3. Debtors and prepayments**

Amounts falling due within one year:

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Prepayments and Accrued Income	30	30
	=	=

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**NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS** (Continued)  
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**4. Creditors**

Amounts falling due within one year:-

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Accruals and Deferred Income	350	760
	<u>350</u>	<u>760</u>
	<u><u>350</u></u>	<u><u>760</u></u>

**5. Incoming resources**

	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Voluntary Income</b>				
Income from events and workshops	590		3,547	
Donations and Grants	160		805	
	<u>750</u>		<u>4,352</u>	
		750		4,352
<b>Activities for generating funds</b>				
Book and plant sales	43		127	
Membership subscriptions	1,692		1,780	
	<u>1,735</u>		<u>1,907</u>	
		1,735		1,907
<b>Investment income</b>				
Interest	7		11	
	<u>7</u>		<u>11</u>	
		7		11
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<u><u>2,492</u></u>		<u><u>6,270</u></u>

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<b>6. Costs of generating funds</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
	£	£	£	£
Membership stationery & postage	79		79	
Newsletter stationery and postage	481		378	
Publicity	2,179		362	
Miscellaneous expenditure	151		80	
	<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>	
		<u>2,890</u>		<u>899</u>
<b>7. Charitable activities</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
	£	£	£	£
Research and recording expenses	120		286	
Caldwell Project	284		294	
Conservation and planning expenses	-		52	
Event & workshop expenses	427		2,630	
Miscellaneous Charitable expenditure	-		300	
	<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>	
		<u>831</u>		<u>3,562</u>
<b>8. Governance costs</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2020</b>
	£	£	£	£
Returns and Registration Fees	48		48	
Council Meetings	-		50	
TGT Subscription and Insurance	626		644	
AGM	40		229	
	<u>          </u>		<u>          </u>	
		<u>714</u>		<u>971</u>
<b>9. Related party transactions</b>				

All directors are volunteers and receive no remuneration or other financial reward from the Trust.