

TILEHURST POOR'S LAND CHARITY
Registered in England and Wales as Charity No. 204048
Working Name: Tilehurst People's Local Charity

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
for the year ending 31st December 2023

Board of Trustees

<u>Name</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Dates acted</u>	<u>Term ends</u>	<u>Nominating body</u>
Mr. C. Cairns	Chairman	Full year	Nov. 2024	Co-opted
The Revd. Dr E. Ratcliffe, Rector of Tilehurst		Full year	N/A	Ex-officio
Mrs. S. Baker		Full year	Dec. 2025	Co-opted
Mrs. S. D. Vickers		Full year	Dec. 2027	Co-opted
Mr. G. Winter		Full year	Nov. 2025	Co-opted
Mr. D. Hayden		Full year	May 2024	Theale Parish Council
[Vacant]		Full year	May 2026	Tilehurst Parish Council
[Vacant]		Full year	May 2026	Reading Borough Council

The Trustees are volunteers and none of them, nor their Clerk, receives any remuneration or benefits.

Clerk/Secretary

Ms. S. Keighley.

Governing Document

The Charity is constituted under Charity Commission Scheme No. 204048 dated 4th May 1982.

Wheat's Charity (Scheme No. 201973) was incorporated by the Commissioners on 5th March 1985; it was originally established in 1731 to provide overcoats for the poor, with a rent charge on some land at Silchester which was redeemed by a single payment in 2001.

Two amendments to the Governing Document were approved by the Charity Commission in 2022. On 8th November 2022 the Board was authorised to appoint a total of three to five Co-optative Trustees. On 23rd November 2022 the Board was authorised to exercise additional controls over its membership and future Trustee appointments, with extra measures to protect against conflicts of interest.

Objects of the Charity

The charitable purposes are the prevention or relief of poverty for the public benefit (ref Sections 2(1), 3(1)(a) and 4 of the Charities Act 2011).

Subject to payment of expenses, the Trustees shall apply the income of the Charity in relieving either generally or individually persons resident in the area of benefit (the Ancient Parish of Tilehurst) who are in conditions of need, hardship or distress, by making grants of money or by providing or paying for items, services or facilities calculated to reduce the need, hardship or distress of such persons.

It should be noted that Trustees make objective decisions in the best interests of the Charity's purposes and beneficiaries, and that to place any other consideration ahead of the relief of poverty would be a breach of the trusts of the Charity.

Public Benefit

As a charity for the relief of poverty, the requirement for providing Public Benefit is met by the Charity satisfying the 'Benefit' aspect only (ref Section 17 of the Charities Act 2011 and Charity Commission Guidance PB1).

Need, hardship or distress is usually interpreted as being on State benefits. Submissions from referring Agencies are taken into account in determining whether a grant should be made, and the size of the grant.

Within this context, all applications are considered on their merits and eligibility. No applicant is excluded on the grounds of protected characteristics (i.e. age, disability, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment). Some applicants, with their informed consent, are referred to other charities that have more funds available or might better meet their needs.

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Professional Agents/Advisers

Solicitors: Field Seymour Parks, Reading
Surveyors: CDT Surveyors Ltd, Caversham (for land sales and some leases)
Surveyors: Hicks Baker Ltd, Reading (for other matters)

The Solicitors and Surveyors act as instructed by the Board of Trustees. The Surveyors also act as the Charity's 'Qualified Surveyor' (ref Section 119 of the Charities Act 2011) and as the Charity's 'Designated Adviser' (ref Sections 20 & 21 of the Charities Act 2022).

Contacts and Information

The Charity's postal address is P.O. Box 2802, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks, RG30 4GE. During 2023 the Charity's points of contact – now superseded – included an e-mail address, a website and a telephone number (for urgent matters only). Refer to the current website (www.tplc.org.uk) for updated information. Recent Annual Reports and a History of the Charity are available on-line, and printed copies have been deposited at Tilehurst Library.

Policies

1. Reserves: The Trustees have agreed the following Reserves:
 - Property Reserve of £2,000 – for any liabilities that may arise in respect of each of the three main parcels of land held by the Charity (i.e. the total level of this reserve is £6,000).
 - Contingency Reserve of £1,000 – to meet urgent and severe need, if other funds are insufficient.
 - Key Deposit Reserve of £650 – representing returnable deposits for keys to the allotment sites.The Charity no longer maintains a separate Development Reserve but continues to keep a record of all money spent on planning/development matters since mid-2010.
2. Grant-making: The Trustees have a policy which takes into account the level of need of each applicant, the extent to which a grant would alleviate the need, and the funds available. On-going or repeating grants are not made, as they might prejudice decisions by the Trustees in the future.
3. Investments: The Trustees have a policy of seeking qualified professional advice from time to time.
4. Conflict of interests: The Trustees have a policy of maintaining a Register of Interests based on Declarations of Interests.
5. Letting of allotments: The Trustees have a policy which takes note of the Equality Act 2010 (*inter alia*).

Risk Management

1. Integrity of the Board: The Trustees have taken steps to counter risks to the integrity of the Board by strengthening controls over its membership and future Trustee appointments, and by introducing extra measures to protect against conflicts of interest.
2. Trustees' and Officers' Indemnity: Trustees are required to act in good faith and aim to do so. The Charity's Scheme (governing document) does not expressly prohibit the purchase of indemnity insurance, and Section 189 of the Charities Act 2011 provides a general power for charities to pay for Trustee Indemnity Insurance (TII). Charity Commission guidance states that Officers (volunteers or employees) may be covered by public liability and/or employer's insurance.
3. Employment legislation: This does not apply as the Trustees have no paid employees.
4. Loss of revenue: The main income of the Charity is from stocks, shares and unit trusts. The value of these funds and the level of income generated are obviously liable to fluctuate. The Trustees' policy on Investment selection (see above) helps to reduce the risks involved. No grants are made which involve future and/or regular payments as these might prejudice future decisions of the Trustees by using funds which might be needed for applicants with higher priorities.
5. Extraordinary expenditure: The Trustees have a policy on Reserves (see above), in case of extraordinary items of expenditure arising in any area of the Charity's operations.
6. Public Liability: The Trustees have Public Liability Insurance in respect of the Charity's land. This protects them against claims from the public for injury, loss or damage incurred on the land. This does not cover loss of or damage to the property of licensees or leaseholders.

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7. Legal Expenses: The Trustees have Legal Expenses insurance to indemnify the cost of bringing or defending legal proceedings.
8. Equality legislation: The Trustees have addressed the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 in their Grant-making Policy and in their Policy on the letting/licensing of Allotment Gardens (such as by permitting special plots to be developed for use by people with a disability).
9. Insurance: The Trustees obtain their insurances through a well-established local firm of independent Insurance Brokers with a view to obtaining impartial advice and the best terms available.
10. Health and Safety: the Trustees aim to carry out health and safety inspections of the Charity's allotment sites at least once per year. A formal health and safety meeting was scheduled to be carried out in 2023 by the Trustees and the Clerk but had to be postponed due to unforeseen circumstances.
11. Financial controls: The Trustees have an annual review of the Charity's financial controls to ensure that they are in line with current Charity Commission requirements.
12. Data protection: The Charity has reviewed its handling of personal data to ensure it is compliant with data protection requirements (GDPR) and has published a Data Privacy Notice.

Activities and Achievements

The Trustees met on six occasions during the year, with all meetings conducted in person (unlike recent years when some meetings had to be conducted remotely over secure on-line connections).

It should be noted that the Object of the Charity is to assist those in need, hardship or distress. The provision of allotment garden plots and a recreation ground, although perhaps the more publicly seen and better-known aspects of the Charity's work, are incidental to this, being just two of the means of generating funds to assist beneficiaries.

During 2023, 57 grant applications were received (76 last year) and 19 grants were made (28 last year). The total amount of grants paid out was £5,061.64. Some applicants were referred to other Charities that could better meet their needs. A summary and analysis of grant applications received and of grants made in 2023 is given at page 5. (Note that figures depend on interpretation of information from applicants.)

The Charity received an increasing number of applications direct from individuals or via the Turn2Us website. This process involves additional processing to understand applicants' needs and eligibility. Applications supported by one of the statutory or voluntary caring agencies are preferred by the Trustees, as this provides some assurance on the validity of the information given about the applicant's circumstances and it ensures a more timely response to grant applications. Similarly it is the Trustees' normal practice to pay grants directly to suppliers of goods and/or services or to the referring agency, as this helps to ensure that money is spent as requested and as agreed by Trustees.

Most decisions to award grants are made at meetings of the Trustees. When the matter is considered urgent or timely, grants may be approved *ex committee* by three Trustees (a *Quorum*). All such grants are reported to the next meeting for confirmation, and then minuted.

The Charity recognised continuing wider needs across the community during 2023. In order to meet some of these needs, the Trustees made donations totalling £1,750 to the following charities: Berkshire Women's Aid, Launchpad and Readifood.

In addition, 34 allotment licensees who met the Charity's grant criteria received fee rebates totalling £743.00.

During 2023, there were no changes to the membership of the Trustee Board. However, two of the three Nominative Trusteeships remained vacant throughout the whole of the year despite correspondence with the nominating bodies.

In addition to routine business, the Trustee Board also agreed to plans for the development of a new website for the Charity, and plans for the revision of the Allotment Garden contract (last updated in 2013).

Number of Serious Incidents Reports in 2023 submitted by Trustees to the Charity Commission: none.

Number of Incident Reports in 2023 submitted by Trustees to the Police: none.

The Charity's Land

Ever since the charitable trust was founded by the Tilehurst Inclosure Act of 1811 and the Tilehurst Inclosure Award of 1817, the Charity has owned land in Tilehurst. All of the Charity's land is privately owned. None of the Charity's land is dedicated to the public. There are no rights of way over the Charity's land.

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It should be noted that the Charity's Governing Document explicitly states that Trustees may sell the whole of, or any part of, the Charity's land. Also, the Charity objects do not include the provision of allotment gardens or a recreation ground, and any such provision is undertaken solely to generate funds for charitable purposes.

For the sake of convenience, in this Annual Report, the land is treated as four separate areas.

1. Victoria Recreation Ground (land off Armour Road and Kentwood Hill): This land has been a Recreation Ground since 1897. For many years it has been let to and managed by Reading Borough Council. The 21-year commercial lease expired on 28th September 1997 but is being held over by continuing payments. The permitted uses of the site were restated and documented in a letter to the Council dated May 2022. Requests for the revision and renewal of the lease and the removal of the dilapidated changing rooms have not been fruitful, but the present arrangement is continuing for the time being. The Trustees have no remit to operate a recreation ground themselves but are content to renew the lease subject to a commercially reasonable and acceptable annual rent with modern terms and conditions.
2. 'Reserved Area' (land off Kentwood Hill and Armour Hill): An area comprising mainly scrubland with the remains of derelict buildings, but including some rough woodland ('The Withies'), and an enclosed yard. The yard continues to be let under a commercial lease (renewed in 2021), but the rest of the Reserved Area is currently unused. The area has been fenced as it contains uneven ground with scattered detritus (masonry, metal and glass). Notices have been displayed warning the public that it is private land. The Trustees deem this area to be unsuitable at present for access or use of any kind.

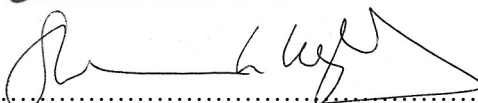
In order to maximise the Charity's assets and income, the Trustees would like to sell all of the Reserved Area for development. The land has been included in the Reading Local Plan (November 2019) and has been designated as suitable for residential development. During 2023, surveys and inspections were carried out on the land by the Charity's preferred development partner, having been marketed in line with the recommendations of the Charity's Qualified Surveyors / Designated Advisers.
3. Allotment Gardens site (accessed from Polsted Road and Armour Hill): There are approximately 160 five-pole plots on the site, including some with raised beds for use by persons with disability or restricted mobility. Plots are let commercially on licence to individual allotment gardeners in order to generate income for the Charity, with charges being reviewed annually.
4. Chapel Hill site: This site lies in an area zoned for residential use, and is awaiting sale for development. Comments have been received about the overgrown state of the site, and maintenance work will be undertaken as soon as adequate funds become available.

A 'blanket' Tree Preservation Order (TPO) still exists in respect of all trees in areas (2) and (3), having been imposed by the Local Authority (LA) in March 2022. A limited TPO, dated June 2000, already covered several specific trees and groups of trees in those same areas.

In late November 2022, the Charity had received notification from the LA of a second 'Asset of Community Value' (ACV) Nomination,. On this occasion it was submitted in the name of 'Keep Kentwood Green' campaign group, and related to all of area (2) except for the enclosed yard. The Charity had duly responded by the 14th December deadline. The LA was due to issue its decision by 8th January 2023, but its letter rejecting the ACV nomination was published on 23rd February 2023.

This Annual Report (pages 1-5) and the accompanying Statement Of Accounts (pages 6-8) were formally accepted by the Trustees on:

Signed..........Chairman of the Trustees (to 31st December 2023).

Signed..........Clerk to the Trustees (to 31st December 2023).

Date.....2nd June 2025

Summary and analysis of grant applications received during 2023 and of grants made

Figures in this table are based on information given by applicants, which may not be clear, complete or correct.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Number of Applications received:	39	71	61	53	58	70	81	90	76	57
Outside area of benefit	7	19	13	8	14	18	26	14	7	8
Referrals to other agencies and charities	5	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Applications refused	0	3	1	1	2	0	0	0	2	2
Applications withdrawn	0	0	1	0	3	5	1	5	2	2
Additional information sought, but not provided	1	5	0	5	8	8	5	10	11	15
Grants not taken up	0	3	1	3	1	4	0	4	0	3
Applications pending	2	1	3	8	1	6	12	18	26	7
Number of Grants made:	24	40	42	28	29	29	36	39	28	19
Number of Requests ...										
(all applicants, including multi-item requests)										
Electrical goods	16	29	23	21	33	41	33	45	19	27
Furniture, beds, carpets &c.	15	23	25	29	18	22	20	41	26	17
Clothes, mainly for children	4	5	1	1	7	6	5	5	6	1
Arrears of rent or payment for essential services	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	4	5	2
House repairs/decorating material	0	2	2	3	0	0	0	1	2	2
Setting up home	0	1	2	2	0	0	1	0	1	0
Educational/youth grants	0	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	2
Others – a great variety	3	13	14	7	6	8	27	13	24	16
Applications from Residents of ...										
Tilehurst	15	37	26	21	25	23	18	30	20	20
West Reading	8	11	10	15	11	17	4	15	15	10
Southcote	7	3	8	7	7	8	10	11	4	3
Calcot	1	1	4	2	1	2	1	6	1	3
Theale [usually referred to another charity]	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	2	6	0
Holybrook [usually referred to another charity]	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
Out of area [usually referred to another charity]	8	19	13	8	14	19	25	13	11	10
Unknown							11	13	15	8
Full Area of Benefit							10	0	4	3
Applications from ...										
Applications from organisations	2	0	0	1	1	0	10	2	4	4
Applicants with young children	2	8	8	4	4	5	6	4	9	3
Applicants who were single parents	22	38	24	25	19	38	24	41	39	24
Applications from other single persons	9	20	27	19	32	24	36	39	15	19
Applications from old age pensioners	0	1	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	6
Applicants from couple/other individuals	4	4	2	4	0	0	4	3	9	1
Referring Agencies ...										
Council Depts – Children, Health, Housing &c.	8	13	18	17	12	13	13	13	10	10
Health Visitors/surgeries	20	8	4	7	4	4	1	2	3	3
Refugee Support Group	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0
Christian Community Action	2	5	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Citizens' Advice Bureau	0	1	0	0	2	1	0	3	1	2
Associations/Charities for specific health issues	2	2	0	3	1	3	0	3	7	6
Associations/Charities for family support	2	1	5	5	10	10	0	10	11	7
Associations/Charities for general support	3	2	0	1	2	11	0	5	3	1
Associations/Charities for the homeless	14	10	8	13	18	7	20	13	2	6
Other agencies	4	10	9	3	4	7	2	4	4	4
Self referrals	3	9	17	6	13	18	21	23	25	17
Self referrals via <i>Turn to Us</i>								14	10	0
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023

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Receipts and Payments Account for the year ending 31st December 2023

	<u>2023</u>	
A1b. Net Receipts from Trading Activities (Allotments)	£ 6,765.76	
Licence Fee receipts		£ 9,356.50
add Grants to needy licensees (contra)		£ 743.00
Subtotal of receipts		£ 10,099.50
Less – Public Liability Insurance		– £ 0.00
Water charges		– £ 2,235.32
Printing, postage &c.		– £ 0.00
Site maintenance & security		– £ 1,098.42
Subtotal of expenses		– £ 3,333.74
A1c. Receipts from Assets	£ 14,101.85	
Charifund, M. & G.		£ 5,421.08
Charinco, B.R.I.M.		£ 1,617.72
Merchants' Trust		£ 843.00
United Utilities plc		£ 1,093.61
Commercial rents		£ 5,000.00
Bank interest, C.O.I.F.		£ 126.44
A1d. Other Receipts	£ 0.00	
Donations		£ 0.00
Development payments		£ 0.00
Sub-total (Revenue Receipts)	£ 20,867.61	
Drawdown investment from Deposit a/c (contra)		£ 0.00
A1. Sub-total (All Receipts)	£ 20,867.61	
A2a. Charitable Payments	£ 5,804.64	
Grants to those in need		£ 5,061.64
Licence Fee reductions for needy licensees (contra)		£ 743.00
A2b. Expenses of management and administration	£ 1,205.44	
Printing, postage, telephone &c.		£ 0.00
Charges and fees (see note)		£ 612.00
Insurances		£ 593.44
Sub-total (Revenue Payments)	£ 7,010.08	
A2c. Transfer to Deposit a/c for investment (contra)	£ 0.00	
A2. Sub-total (All Payments)	£ 7,010.08	
Receipts net of Payments.	£ 13,857.53	
Increase in funds over the year (2023).	£ 13,857.53	
Cash funds at 31 Dec 2023		£ 44,367.65
Less Cash funds at 31 Dec 2022		– £ 30,510.12

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Asset and Capital Statement for the year ending 31st December 2023

			Price	Value (at 31.12.2023)
Assets – Permanent Endowment Investments				
M. & G. Charifund	6,340	units @	£14.87	£ 94,285.94
B.R.I.M. Charinco	19,030	units @	£1.43	£ 27,212.90
Merchants' Trust Ordinary 25p.	3,000	units @	£5.47	£ 16,410.00
United Utilities Ordinary GBP1	2,403	shares @	£10.15	£ 24,378.44
Total value of Assets (Permanent Endowment)				£ 162,287.28
Assets – Other Investments				
B.R.I.M. Charinco	7,932	units @	£1.43	£ 11,342.76
Subtotal: Other Investments				£ 11,342.76
Assets – Cash Deposits				
Current Accounts – balances at Bank				£ 41,425.21
Deposit Account – balance at COIF				£ 2,942.43
Subtotal: Cash Deposits				£ 44,367.64
Total value of Current Assets (non-permanent)				£ 55,710.40
Total value of Assets (other than real estate)				£ 217,997.68
Adjustments				
Licence Fees due but not yet received				£ 2,682.50
Less – Grants offered but not yet taken up				— £ 2,520.00
Cheques drawn but not yet presented				— £ 1,742.95
Due to Clerk				— £ 0.00
Allotment key deposits (returnable)				— £ 650.00
Total value of Adjustments				— £ 2,230.45
Net Worth (Total Assets less Adjustments)				£ 215,767.23
Current funds available for use				£ 53,479.95

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Notes on the Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2023

Receipts and Payments Account:

A2b) i	Charges and fees include:	P.O. Box number	£ 396.00
		Bank/card fees	£ 216.00
		Planning-Related	£ -
		Website	£ -
		Other	£ -
			£ 612.00

Any planning-related payments were as a result of the Trustees' decision to maximise income by sale of land, and was in connection with consultations about Reading Borough Council's Local Development Plan. None of the money was taken from funds invested for the benefit of the Charity's beneficiaries.

Asset and Capital Statement:

The funds invested in Black Rock Investment Management Company's Charinco units are in two separate accounts. The larger account is part of the Permanent Endowment, and the other is part of the current assets, and is available for use by the Trustees.

Investment Valuations:

The valuation of the M. & G. Charifund investment shows a rounded unit price of £14.87 per unit, based on an actual unit price of 1,487.16p.

The valuation of the United Utilities Ordinary GBP1 investment shows a rounded unit price of £10.15 per share, based on an actual share price of 1,014.5p.

Reserves:

The Trustees have maintained reserves which stood, at 31st December 2023, as follows:

Property Reserve	£ 6,000.00
Allotment Key Deposit Reserve	£ 650.00
Contingency Reserve	£ 1,000.00
	£ 7,650.00

Available funds:

Funds available to the Trustees for current expenditure as at 31st December 2023 were:

Bank – current accounts	£ 41,425.21
Bank – deposit account	£ 2,942.43
Charinco (current asset account)	£ 11,342.76
	£ 55,710.40
Less current liabilities	— £ 2,230.45
Current funds available for use	
	£ 53,479.95

Capital Movements:

There were no capital movements during 2023.

Independent Examination:

These accounts and financial statements have been independently examined and found to be in good order.
30th May 2025.

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