Friends of the QUANTOCKS

2025 TRUSTEES' REPORT & ANNUAL REVIEW

Well, it's been another significant year for the charity with the main highlight being the launch of our "Nature of the Quantocks" book, full of fantastic photography and so much information on the wildlife, geology and early history of the Quantocks. We owe such a debt of gratitude to Nigel Phillips for all his hard work in its creation; it will be a valuable resource for years to come. The book has been really well received with 400 sold in the first 9 months out of a total sale of 1000 books.

Our Elm & Hairstreak project was created as a result of Nigel's book, as the book highlighted the sad decline of butterfly species over the past 75 years with a few rare butterfly species unseen for decades, possibly lost. The project was set up to establish the current true status locally of the rare and illusive White-Letter Hairstreak butterfly and to provide additional habitat for the butterfly by planting disease resistant elm. One year on we are so pleased to report that 141 disease-resistant elm were planted in January 2025, with a further 297 trees planted either side of the new year 2026. In total 38 landowners have taken part in the project together with around 30 volunteers, plus a group of children from a Crowcombe primary school.

What is even more exciting is that our initial surveys of flowering elm trees in spring 2025 identified a number of potential sites for White Letter Hairstreak and then, in the first few days of March, using UV lamps, we were able to see 3 White-Letter Hairstreak caterpillars, followed by 11 butterflies in late June. This after an 18-year gap in sightings and with only 5 records known within the Quantocks in the previous 75 years! This is a really encouraging start to the project and plainly for butterflies on the Quantocks (32 species now confirmed).

In addition to the above, we also carried out renovations of the pond at Fire Beacon, near Crowcombe Park Gate, which was almost totally silted up and is now looking like a pond again. The car park on our land at Dead Woman's Ditch needed some repairs carried out during the year, and we have also been keeping a watchful eye across our 400 acres of land. We are currently looking at the possible future removal of some birch and other scrub which are encroaching onto the heath.

We continue to work closely with (and sit on the Joint Advisory Board of) the Quantock Hills National Landscape team (formerly AONB) and have been helped hugely by their Farming in Protected Landscapes (FIPL) team who have provided grant funding for the Elm & Hairstreak Project. During the year the QHNL team put on an excellent Wildlife Symposium for which we were pleased to provide four speakers. We are represented on the committee of the Deer Management and Conservation group and work closely with the commoners and a raft of organisations such as Natural England, Forestry England, National Trust and Butterfly Conservation.

The Quantocks landscape Partnership Scheme (for which we were founding partners) came to the end of its 5-year life this year, having achieved great things during its time, supported by £40,000 of funding from ourselves. Many of the projects it was involved in will be continued within the Quantock Hills

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National Landscape team, whilst we have now taken on responsibility for adder surveying on the Quantocks.

Our financial position

Our financial position is reported separately but, in brief, the charity has continued over the past year to fund a range of significant projects out of capital, thus reducing our reserves to just under £118,000 at year end. However, our income this year has been bolstered with one donation of just under £10,000, grant receipts from FIPL and book sales which leaves us in a strong position, able to continue current projects and plan more.

Our Objectives, Trustees, officers & committee

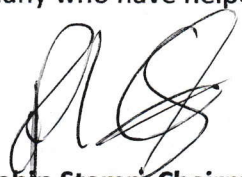
Our Objectives are "To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation protection and improvement of the landscape and natural environment of the Quantock Hills". We define The Quantock Hills to include all of the Quantock Hills National Landscape (formerly AONB) as well as the surrounding countryside and hinterland.

The charity is managed on a day-to-day basis by the officers with the active input and support of the trustees (T) and wider committee. The team in full includes the Chairman (Robin Stamp T), Treasurer (Richard Bott T), Planning Officer (Vernon Hughes T), Secretary (Trudi Mansfield T), Vice-Chair (Tim Whittingham T), Project Officer (Tracey Roberts (SE) and Membership Secretary (Mary ter Braak). John Andrews and Alan Hughes retired from the committee during the year and were replaced by Paul Rutter and John Acland-Hood. Other committee members include Nigel Phillips, Jeremy Scott-Bolton (T), David Lloyd (T) & Stephen Campbell, plus representatives from the Quantock Hills National Landscape team (Iain Porter) and the Commoners Association (Ben Bartlett).

Sadly, due to health issues, Lady Gass, is standing down as our President after many years of faithful service, she will be greatly missed. Hugh Warmington, our current Vice-President, has agreed to take on the Presidency. He enjoys a long connection with the Quantocks, his family having owned the Cothelstone estate since 1792. He is Chair of the Quantock Hills National Landscape Partnership and is passionate about farming and the natural landscape.

Our Project Officer, Tracey Roberts, has sadly had a recent family bereavement and, as a result, has needed to move away. We shall therefore be looking to recruit a new member of the team this year. Many thanks, Tracey for all your work over the past couple of years.

Thanks to all our members for their support over the past year, and a big welcome to all our new members. Special thanks to all the committee, our volunteers and butterfly transect walkers plus so many who have helped with our events. We look forward to a full and exciting year to come.



9/6/26

Robin Stamp, Chairman

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Trustees and Officers
31st December 2025

President:	Lady Gass DCVO
Vice President:	Mr Hugh Warmington
Vice President:	Mrs Jane Warmington
Chairman:	Mr Robin Stamp
Vice Chairman:	Mr Tim Whittingham
Treasurer:	Mr Richard Bott
Planning officer:	Mr Vernon Hughes
Secretary:	Mrs Trudi Mansfield

Trustees:	Mr Richard Bott
	Mr Vernon Hughes
	Mr David Lloyd
	Mrs Trudi Mansfield
	Mr Robin Stamp
	Mr Tim Whittingham
	Mr Jeremy Scott-Bolton

Committee:	The Trustees
	Mr John Acland-Hood
	Rev Stephen Campbell
	Mr Nigel Philips
	Mr Paul Rutter
	Mr Ben Bartlett (Quantock Commoners)
	Mr Iain Porter (QHNL service)

Other personnel (not committee members)

Ms Tracey Roberts, Project Officer

Mrs Mary ter Braak, Membership Secretary

Bankers: HSBC, 17 North Street, Taunton Somerset, TA1 1NA

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Financial Reserve Policy Background

Over the years, until 2020, the charity built up an income stream from membership subscriptions sufficient to cover the ongoing standard running costs and obligations for the charity as well as enabling a small surplus to be retained. Following a generous legacy in 2021 the Trustees decided to increase the activities of the charity to utilise some of its reserves over the next few years on a series of projects and initiatives to ensure that adequate, but not excessive, reserves were retained and that policy has continued successfully into 2025 - and will continue into 2026 and beyond.

Financial Reserve Policy

The trustees and committee treat very seriously the responsibilities they have to manage the charity resources for the longer term in line with the charity's objectives as set out in its governing document. In short, those objectives are as follows:

"To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the landscape and natural environment of the Quantock Hills".

The charity will use its income and reserves to promote its aims within the wider Quantock Hills National Landscape area, to seek further funding from grant giving authorities and to encourage individuals and local businesses to work with it to fulfil its aims. This policy is expected to see our expenditure continue to exceed income and reserves fall over the current and coming years.

The charity has a policy of holding reserves of funds to:

- Cover its short-term liabilities.
- Maintain sufficient capital to allow a minimum of 3 years' continuity to its services and employment obligations.
- Provide capital for it to carry out land management and other projects on its land and across the wider QHNL area.
- Maintain a capital fund to allow it to fight planning applications or proposals that are considered potentially harmful to the Quantock Hills.
- Provide grants to individuals or organisations whose aims are in line with that of the charity - in particular where such grants are not generally available through other grant giving organisations or authorities - and to provide sponsorship funding for events planned and run by the QHNL and/or English Nature.
- Build up reserves to allow it to pursue the purchase of further land within the QHNL.

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Receipts and Payments account for year ending 31/12/25

	2025			2024
	£	£	£	£
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	
Receipts:				
Annual Subscriptions	7,015		7,015	6,213
Grants received	6,744		6,744	0
Business subscriptions	140		140	325
Sub-total	**13,899**	**0**	**13,899**	**6,538**
Donations	1,237	9,988	11,225	12
Events	0		0	988
Book sales	9,551		9,551	0
Gift Aid reclaim	0		0	1,094
Other	0		0	25
Interest	4,775		4,775	5,334
Total receipts, excluding investment assets	**29,462**	**9,988**	**39,450**	**13,991**
Investment assets: growth	0		0	2,471
Total receipts	**29,462**	**9,988**	**39,450**	**16,462**
Payments13/02/2026				
National Landscape/AONB contribution	0		0	1,000
Project Officer	7,101		7,101	10,243
Accountant fees	0		0	240
Clerical, secretarial, project officer etc costs & expenses	746		746	1,424
Print, post, stationery & sundry expenses	1,236		1,236	2,184
Bank and finance charges	1,219		1,219	1,279
Insurances	734		734	685
Events	263		263	1,234
Book	15,541	779	16,320	0
Projects*1	9,551	9,209	18,760	27,437
legal and planning fees*2	0		0	1,405
Software	308		308	950
Grants and Sponsorships	250		250	250
Total payments:	**36,949**	9,988	**46,937**	**48,331**
Net of receipts/payments for year	**-£7,487**	**£0**	**-£7,487**	**-£31,869**
Transfers between funds	0	0	0	0
Cash funds last year end	£124,887	0	£124,887	156,756
Cash funds this year end	£117,400	£0	£117,400	£124,887

Notes on 2025 and 2024 payments

Projects*1:

2025: Car Parks (£2,976), Deer Management (£2,700), Bicknoller Quarry (£1,034), Signage (£1,521), Moth Traps (£350), Elm Project (£10,179).

2024: Butterfly Training (£636), Elm Project (£6,228), Landscape Partnership (£20,000), Land Maintenance (£300), Mire Survey (£273).

Legal and planning*2:

2024: Quarry purchase expenses £1,021, Planning £384.

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Statement of Assets and Liabilities

	Notes	2025	2024
		£	£
Fixed Assets			
Land owned by the charity	1	0	0
Cash Funds – Instant access:			
HSBC Community Account		9,494	11,757
Total instant access		**9,494**	**11,757**
Cash Funds: Notice accounts			
Cambridge and Counties 31 Day notice		27,735	36,207
Cambridge and Counties 95 Day notice		24,358	23,457
Unity Trust 120 day notice		55,813	53,466
Total notice accounts		**107,906**	**113,130**
Total cash funds		117,400	124,887
Total Assets		**117,400**	**124,887**
Represented by:			
Unrestricted reserves	2	**117,400**	**124,887**
Restricted reserves	3	0	0
Total reserves		117,400	124,887

9/6/26

Robin Stamp, Chairman

Richard Bott, Treasurer 9/6/26

Notes:

1 The charity owns three parcels of land which were, in essence, gifted to it for negligible consideration. These parcels of land comprise Over Stowey Customs Common, Halsway Hill and Bicknoller Quarry.

2 Whilst the Trustees do not formally designate their funds, there are a number of initiatives that will be undertaken going forward for which retained funds will be utilised. These projects, which are for improvement of the landscape and natural environment, include:

- *Ongoing work with the Elm and Hairstreak project: £10,000*
- *Land management and remedial work: £2,500*
- *Signage and banners: £630*
- *Membership leaflets and publications: £2,000*

3 During the year the charity received a restricted donation towards the Elm/Hairstreak project and for donating Nature of the Quantocks books for neighbourhood schools. This was all utilised in the year.

4 Whilst the charity has a stock of books which have not yet been sold, no monetary value has been attributed to them, given the uncertainty as to what proceeds will be realised from them

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Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Friends of the Quantocks

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Friends of the Quantocks (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2025.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the *Charities Act* 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under s.145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under s.145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

(1) accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or

(2) the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed MBark

Name: PJN Barker

Relevant professional qualification or body: Member, ICAEW. (Retired)

Address: Stable Cottage, Triscombe, Taunton TA4 3HG

Date: 9/6/26

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