

Chichester Harbour Trust

Review 2020



Racing dinghies at Rockwood



Centaury, East Head



School group at Fishbourne Meadows



Harbour seals at Thorney Island

Founded in 2002, the Chichester Harbour Trust is a registered charity dedicated to the protection of Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We believe that the strongest method of protection is by direct control of land through ownership or long leases, and we strive to achieve this end.

We now safeguard over 275 acres of land across 13 sites throughout the AONB, working in close partnership with Chichester Harbour Conservancy, the local authorities and the harbour community.



Dear Supporter,

Welcome to the newsletter for the Chichester Harbour Trust 2020, updating you on our work over the past year to conserve this beautiful harbour.

It really has been an exceptional year, not least in terms of the challenges that we have been facing. I write in the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, which has changed the way we all live and work so starkly. There are positive messages to take away though, reflecting on how living in a more sustainable way has huge benefits for wildlife and our unique coastal environment.

We are fortunate to have the support of our donors who allow us to continue working through the crisis due to regular giving contributions. We are grateful for these donations and urge anyone who does not already have a standing order set up to please consider it, to secure our future operation. Needless to say, our major fundraising campaign to establish a “fighting fund” for land purchase has been put on hold during the current crisis.

We have worked tirelessly over the past year to secure new land acquisitions with live projects involving the Manor of Bosham property sale, and Upper Pond at Birdham Marina. Very sadly, despite our best efforts these did not come to fruition. Our Administrator, Nicky Horter, reflects on some of the unique challenges we face in the Harbour in our article “Some you win, some you lose” in this newsletter.

We have long been concerned about the potential impact of the large scale development proposed in the new Chichester Local Plan on the Harbour, and following last year’s consultation, the timeframe for its publication has been delayed due to further work needed to address the multitude of issues raised. We support Chichester District Council’s application to Government to extend the lifetime of the existing plan while this work is completed, to avoid developers exploiting this vulnerable period. We will continue to communicate with the Local Planning Authority on the environmental challenges this plan creates.

Once again, we thank you for your support, and we are looking forward to embracing the challenges ahead in the coming year.

John Nelson CBE DL
Chairman



Photo: Peter Arnold

Nicky Horter, Patron Sir Jeremy Thomas and John Nelson



Some you win, some you lose...

Nicky Horter, Trust Administrator

We have been feeling reflective after two recent land acquisitions fell through. We are experiencing some recurring themes and particular challenges within Chichester Harbour that are helping us to review our strategy to achieve our goal of protecting this special environment.

In one case, we had agreed a private purchase for an 11-acre saline lagoon within the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty at Birdham. We worked very closely with the local community to raise funds and buy this Local Wildlife Site to put it into positive conservation management for the benefit of its ecology, and to provide assurance to local people that this special area would be protected permanently. However, at an advanced stage and after many months of work, we were informed that the land was in fact being sold to a private individual.

In the second case, we were working closely with the Conservancy and others on the purchase of an important parcel of land at Bosham and received great support from the local community. Again, the land was sold to a private individual. We had been involved in this project for a number of years, and sadly we were not able to complete the transaction.

We face an unusual set of circumstances in Chichester Harbour, whereby the particularly high land prices are coupled with a concentration of high net worth individuals. Whilst this presents many opportunities for our fundraising campaigns, it also raises conflicts of interest and a desire from individuals to purchase land for private purposes. Ownership by the Trust provides long term security for the harbour community and the environment.

Given these recent events, we are reviewing our approach to land purchases, to try to avoid these circumstances arising in future. As our unique and distinctive harbour comes under increasing pressure on all sides, our role has never been more important in ensuring it survives for future generations to enjoy.

The Covid-19 crisis is undoubtedly reinforcing community spirit all around the harbour. Let us hope this will encourage all of us to work more closely to support our communities.



Chichester Harbour Trust
Working to secure the future
of Chichester Harbour



Looking after our land

The Chichester Harbour Trust holds 13 sites and over 275 acres in total, through a combination of direct ownership and long leases. Some of our land is managed through agreements with Chichester Harbour Conservancy, or leased directly to tenants who look after the land on our behalf, delivering our objectives of permanently protecting the land.

Apuldram Meadow

This 15-acre meadow joining the shore of the Fishbourne Channel has been owned by the Trust since 2009. Wild flowers thrive around the network of fresh-water ditches. The meadow is crossed by two public footpaths at the western end, nearest the shore. It is grazed by a local farmer.

Chidmere Pond

The freehold of this beautiful 4.5-acre lake has been in Trust ownership since 2005. The area is leased to the owners of the nearby Chidmere House and provides a valuable haven for wildfowl.

The Dell, Chidham

We have held a 125-year lease on this small woodland from Chichester District Council since 2005. The mixture of grassland, woodland and scrub provides a wonderful habitat for birds and insects. The outdoor classroom area is enjoyed by children from Chidham School.

Eames Farm

This 170-acre farm is our biggest and most important site. A large area of coastal grazing marsh, wetland and reedbed, it provides vital habitat for a wide range of migrating waders and wildfowl, and many rare plant and insect species. The converted Stables building provides a wonderful space for meetings and events and is available to hire through the Conservancy. The farm is managed through a tenancy with an organic farmer and is in an environmental stewardship scheme.

Ellanore Spit

We hold a 999-year lease on this unique acre of saltmarsh and shingle at Ellanore. Each winter, up to 6,000 waders use the spit as a high tide roost. During the summer, the northern area of the spit is fenced to protect nesting seabirds.

Fishbourne Meadow

This wet grassland is held in a 10-year lease from West Sussex County Council and supports a wide range of wild flowers, including the Southern Marsh Orchid. The stream banks provide a home for a thriving Water Vole population. The Meadow is managed by Chichester Harbour Conservancy, and is grazed by cattle during the summer months.

Itchenor Field, Wittering Rd

In 2017 we completed the purchase of 3.5 acres of grazing land at Itchenor on behalf of the local community, to protect it permanently from inappropriate use. The land is now grazed by horses.

Itchenor Meadow

This small meadow lies adjacent to the Salterns Way cycle route, behind the Itchenor Memorial Hall. Fruit trees have been planted to attract a wide range of insects.

Maybush Copse, Chidham

This flagship community project has created an 8-acre woodland for local people from a once-derelict site. The Trust purchased the land in 2009, and it is now managed by the Conservancy and Maybush Copse Friends for the enjoyment of the local community.

Oyster Quay, Warblington

This historic quay at Pook Lane, Warblington, was purchased in 2018. We hope to commission research to find out more about its local historic importance.

Prinsted Field, Southbourne

The Trust purchased this 25-acre field at Prinsted in 2018, with support from the local community, parish council, Garfield Weston Foundation and Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust. The field will remain in arable use under a tenancy with a local farmer.

Sandy Point Lagoon

This beautiful 18-acre tidal lagoon lies behind Hayling Island Sailing Club and is a fantastic feeding ground for migrating and overwintering birds.

Seaview Road, Hayling

We have held this small plot at south Hayling since 2009 and it is leased to a neighbouring property. We also own the mudland that joins it.



Protecting our Unique Harbour

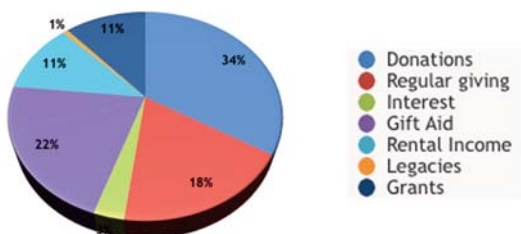
Financial Summary

At the end of our financial year at 31 March 2020 we held net liquid resources of £476,000, a 2.5% increase on last year.

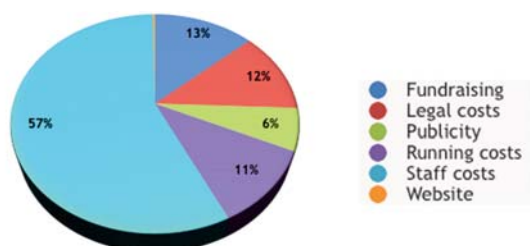
The Trust's total income during the financial year was £70,000, made up of donations (both one-off and regular giving), rental income and support from West Sussex County Council and Hampshire County Council. The gift aid income relates to donations given the previous financial year for the Prinsted land purchase.

Our total expenditure during this period was £44,700, consisting entirely of administrative costs as there were no land acquisitions during this period. Administrative costs were higher than usual this year because of our fundraising strategy project, and the legal costs incurred on the Manor of Bosham and Upper Pool Birdham projects.

Income 2019 - 20



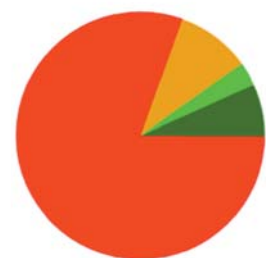
Expenditure 2019 - 20



The new Chichester Local Plan has been delayed until 2021 while the Local Authority carries out further evidence-based studies to inform the plan in the light of the consultation feedback received last year. Chichester District Council has applied to the Government for an extension of the existing plan until July 2021.

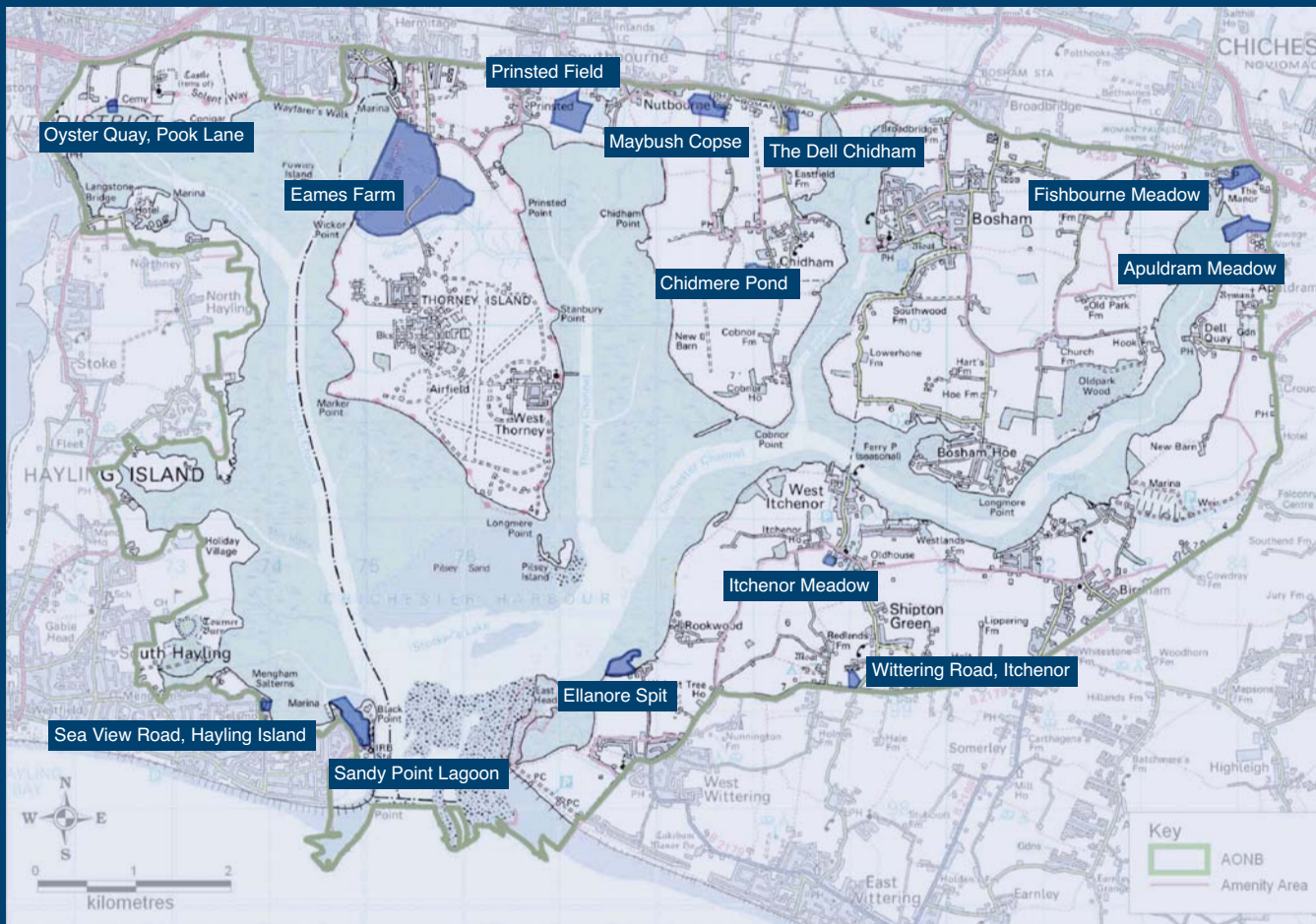
In response to concerns about the impact of proposed development along the coastal plain, Chichester Harbour Conservancy joined forces with the South Downs National Park to commission a priority views study. This important piece of work evaluates the landscape impact of the proposed development sites on the interconnecting views between the two nationally protected landscapes. It can be found on the Conservancy's website at conservancy.co.uk

A recent study by Natural England into the condition of Chichester Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) paints a bleak picture. 80% of the area is now classed as "unfavourable declining", reflecting the negative impacts on habitats and species of increased disturbance, nitrates and coastal squeeze. These issues must be adequately addressed by the new Local Plan if Natural England is to endorse it.



■ Favourable
 ■ Unfavourable - Recovering
 ■ Unfavourable - No change
 ■ Unfavourable - Declining

The Chichester Harbour Trust continues to work hard to engage with the Local Authority and our MPs to ensure proper protection for our unique harbour environment.



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We need your help

To protect the natural beauty and wildlife of the land around the harbour, the Trust needs resources. It is important that the charity has a reserve of funds that will allow it to act swiftly to fulfil its role when the need arises.

We need your support now to ensure that we are ready when the time comes to act decisively to safeguard the unique landscape of Chichester Harbour and to look after the important sites already within our care.

Today we need your regular donations, and in the longer term we would urge you to consider supporting the Trust through a legacy, ensuring that the natural beauty and environmental value of Chichester Harbour is conserved for future generations to enjoy.

Complete a Standing Order form today, and if you would like more information about leaving the charity a legacy, including the generous tax advantages, please contact the Trust administrator at the address below:

Chichester Harbour Trust

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Registered Charity No. 1096308

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