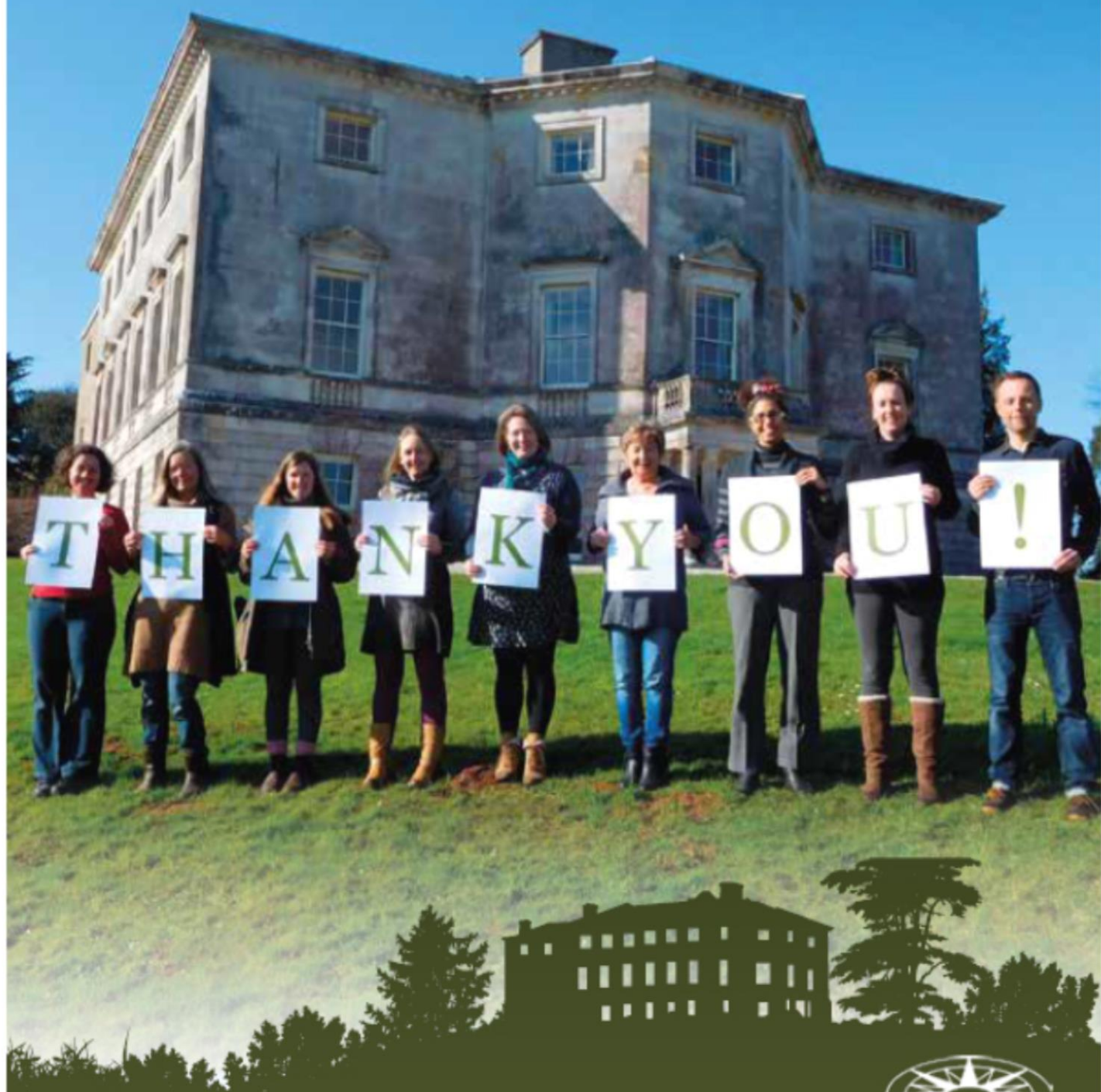


Annual Report 2018-2019



www.sharphamtrust.org



THE
Sharpham
TRUST

Chairman's Introduction



Welcome to the Sharpham Trust's Annual Report.

It has been a wonderful year and I want to first thank our dedicated and thoughtful staff who do many things behind the scenes to ensure our activities and actions go as smoothly, and have as much integrity, as possible. Thank you.

I also want to take a moment to appreciate all of our partners and members of the public who participate, visit, meditate at, and generally breathe life into Sharpham.

We know you get something out of being at Sharpham (because you tell us in your overwhelmingly positive and generous feedback forms) but we also get something from your input, sharing and energy. Thank you for coming to Sharpham.

Thinking about what I might be able to offer you in this short space I went through various drafts. I think Julian's report on the facing page summarises well where we are and what we're hoping to do.

In reflecting on the times we are in and what Sharpham can offer, I'd like to suggest something a little different.

I'd like to invite you be a poet in the coming year. It may not be the most obvious action, and I'm not proposing it is the only thing we do in the face of the challenges we face, but I have personally tried it recently and...well... yum, grrrr, kersplash. I think it'll get your juices flowing and who knows what that will lead to?

With kind regards and respect,

William Lana, Chair of the Trust

Our Vision

To create a more mindful, compassionate and environmentally-sustainable world.

Our Mission

To connect people with nature and foster mindfulness and wellbeing.

The Trust works to a strong set of guiding principles and these act as a moral and creative compass in the planning of activities and projects.

Our Principles

The Trust's activities are guided by

- an understanding of the interconnectedness of all life
- a deep respect for the natural world
- a belief in learning through experience, creative engagement and enquiry
- an acknowledgement of the value of stillness and awareness

The Trust aspires to be a living demonstration of these principles in all its activities.

Objectives

1. To develop a range of innovative educational activities based on a sense of Sharpham as a special place
2. To demonstrate sustainable approaches to managing the land and buildings
3. To promote greater access to the Sharpham Estate
4. To operate a balanced budget with a secure income base

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Sharpham House, Ashprington, Totnes, Devon, UK, TQ9 7UT
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Company No. 1659601. Charity No. 285767

Director's report



At times over the past year it has felt that we were being assailed by a never-ending torrent of information and stories detailing the threats to the natural world around us: plastic pollution, the loss of species and habitats, the climate crisis, flooding and heatwaves.

These threats seem to be paralleled by an increasing mental health crisis in the UK. The number of prescriptions for anti-depressants in England has almost doubled in the past decade. Data from NHS Digital show that 70.9 million prescriptions for anti-depressants were given out in 2018, compared with 36 million in 2008.

Whilst the causes for this increase are complex and no two individuals are the same, a background of environmental collapse and ecological anxiety cannot be helping.

At Sharpham we try to offer a place where people can connect to the natural world, connect with themselves and connect with each other. We do this by creating spaces and experiences which are accessible and appeal to a wide range of audiences. It appears from the evidence that we are having some success.

Our users tell us that they really value the time they spend on the Estate and they are returning in ever greater numbers.

The Trust now has two key challenges: how can we reach and help more people and how can we integrate the activities across the Estate to demonstrate our values and ethos?

To this end we have drawn up plans to create more retreat accommodation by renovating the Coachyard behind Sharpham House. This will be a major project for the Trust in the coming years. At the same time Trustees have been considering how we manage the land on the Estate and how we can do more for wildlife.

A visit to Knepp Estate has inspired a plan to re-wild some of the land at Sharpham and we have recently applied to the National Heritage Lottery Fund to help make this happen. Making space for wildlife should no longer be seen as a luxury.

These exciting plans and projects are only possible because the Trust's finances have improved and are now on a firm footing. This is due to the hard work and inspiration of our staff, our Trustees, our volunteers and our donors.

The Trust is many things: a landowner, a protector of heritage, an educational provider, a conservation body and a social enterprise. Our programme of courses, events and retreats generates the income that enables the Trust to continue to operate and to invest back in the Estate. At the same time we deliberately try to keep our charges as accessible as possible and we operate a bursary scheme to help people.

This report details the amazing range of activities happening across the Estate. It is a big thank-you from me to all those who have helped make this happen, ensuring that the Trust goes from strength to strength.

Julian Carnell
Trust Director



*Our Trustees (left to right):
Elizabeth Seward, Charlotte Rathbone, William Lana, Daniel Stokes, Tony Kuhl, Martin Wright*

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Financial information

Donations and grants

£19,204 for the Mindful-in-Nature project

£17,709 from the Heritage Lottery Fund

£94,052 donations received, including bursary donations.

Headline Figures		
EOY period	March 2018	March 2019
Total income	1.086m	1.238m
Total expenditure	0.995m	1.027m
Total funds	6.344m	6.821m
Voluntary income (donations)	0.017m	0.094m
Investment income	0.108m	0.124m
Charity activity income	0.880m	0.963m
Investment management costs	0.023m	0.027m
Cost of charitable activities	0.950m	0.952m
Governance	0.018m	0.020m
Governance as % total expenditure	1.80%	1.95%

Trust Salaries

The Trust believes in equal pay and a living wage. It pays all staff more than the current governmental national minimum wage and more than the Living Wage as defined by The Living Wage Foundation.

Pay ratio

The ratio between the highest paid member of staff and the median or average pay for all staff at the Trust is 1.95. The ratio between the highest paid and lowest paid is 2.75.

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Mindfulness Retreats & Courses

Mindfulness supports The Trust's charitable activities, our approach to caring for the land and each other.

- The Sharpham Trust was founded in 1982 by Maurice & Ruth Ash, daughter of the Elmhursts of Dartington.
- The Trust is **a leading centre nationally** for mindfulness offering a rich programme of retreats and courses with different doorways into mindful awareness – from retreats for beginners to those for experienced meditators.
- We offer **secular** mindfulness retreats & courses as well as retreats in the **Buddhist** tradition.
- Last year **a record 1550 people** benefited from Sharpham mindfulness retreats and courses.

Retreats in 3 venues

Sharpham House Retreats



People stay full-board in Sharpham House where we offer a **core programme** of Mindfulness for Beginners, Taking Mindfulness Deeper and Sustaining Ourselves Through Mindfulness retreats (for people experiencing burn-out).

In this year, we launched **new retreats** in response to requests from participants, including a silent retreat and seasonal retreats. Almost all our retreats were **at capacity** and **feedback was overwhelmingly positive**.

The Barn Retreat Centre



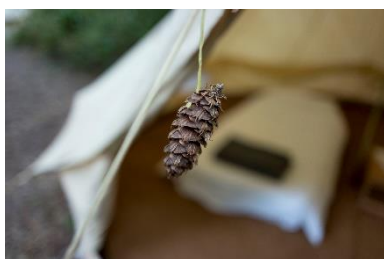
The Barn is a retreat centre in the Buddhist tradition, founded on the principles of daily meditation, working on the land and living in community.

Some teachers who came to The Barn this year represented **a variety of Buddhist lineages**. They included Suvaco Hansen, Laura Bridgman, Vajradevi, Rupert Marques, Dene Donalds, Ramiro Ortega and Gavin Milne.

"This was my first retreat and my only regret is that I did not do this 20 years ago. Well organised, friendly & informative staff and a range of activities regarding mindfulness practices. My first retreat, but definitely not my last"

Participant at The Barn

Woodland Retreats



Retreats in the Woodland offer **a deeper experience of nature connection** and themed retreats such as foraging and retreats for women.

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Mindfulness Courses



We run 8-week and 1-day mindfulness courses, facilitated by our **trained and hugely experienced mindfulness teachers**.

We delivered **10** 1-day courses and **4** 8-week courses to a total of **152** participants.

We also offer **an outreach programme** for organisations, companies or schools.

Mindful-in-Nature



This year saw the beginning of our ground-breaking project Mindful-in-Nature, a 4-year programme to support mental health recovery, resilience and well-being for people aged 18+ living locally, combining mindfulness and nature connection.

The project is supported by **a grant of £134,120** from the National Lottery Community Fund.

The project is **co-designed with Devon Recovery Learning**

Community, including input from people with lived experience of mental health challenges.

We completed the first 2 cohorts of the programme in this year, with **28** people completing either the 1-day or the 9-week programme.



**15 out of 18
respondents (83%)
recorded an increase
in their mental well
being between the start and
end of the course.**

*"I've had a complete fundamental change in my
being and how I interact with the world"*

Mindful-in-Nature participant

There are 2 ways to participate in Mindful-in-Nature:

- a **1-day** introduction day, to give people a taste of the programme.
- a **9-week** programme of sessions.

We put on **FREE** transport to get participants from Torbay and Totnes out to Sharpham.

CONTACT: sharphamtrust.org/Mindful-in-Nature or call the Project Co-ordinator on **01803 731802**

Sharpham House Hire



We offer Sharpham House & grounds for hire to organisations sharing our ethos and principles.

We work with **some of the leading mindfulness organisations in the UK**, who tell us that our incredible setting is perfect for their own retreats and study.

LEARN MORE: www.sharphamtrust.org/hire

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Fundraising, Gardens & Heritage

We rely on the generosity of our friends, visitors and donors to help care for the special location of Sharpham House and Estate and to support our mission to connect people to nature and foster mindfulness and well-being.



Some of our donations go to our Bursary Funds, helping people of a low-income to access retreats in this beautiful place.

"I just wanted to email to express my heartfelt thanks for the last few days on the stress and burn-out retreat...it came at a time I really needed it, and I wouldn't have been able to do it without the kindness of you and The Trust giving me the bursary"

A beneficiary of our Bursary Fund, who was able to join a retreat in Sharpham House

HOW TO GIVE

1. Choose whether to give a Bursary Donation (enabling those on lower incomes to come on retreat, a monthly gift or a donation to our General Fund
2. Donate quickly and securely online here: **www.sharphamtrust.org/donate**

Our gardens

The gardens that surround Sharpham House and The Barn don't just look beautiful – they produce food beautifully too for the people who stay with us.

The 18th century Walled Garden behind Sharpham House is a big focus for the garden team, producing fresh, organic food all-year-round for the kitchens.

Meanwhile, in the hillside organic garden at The Barn retreatants work daily on mindful food-growing, going on to prepare shared meals using vegetables tended by previous participants.

During this year we:

Welcomed new Head Gardener Bryony Middleton and Garden Apprentice Amy Cairns.



Developed The Walled Garden - the epicentre of our production space – as a beautiful space full of life and energy, edible flowers, insects and worms.

Being a no dig garden, we incorporated a lot of organic matter into the soil, including our own compost, seaweed mulch, organic manure and municipal green waste compost. We have since noticed our worm population increasing, our soil condition improving & weeds decreasing.

The Lean-To was tidied, becoming the main seed-sowing and harvest-weighing area, while the tool shed has been revamped & labelled thanks to Amy's organisational skills!

We replanted The Sunny Border in the Spring and that filled out beautifully during the year.

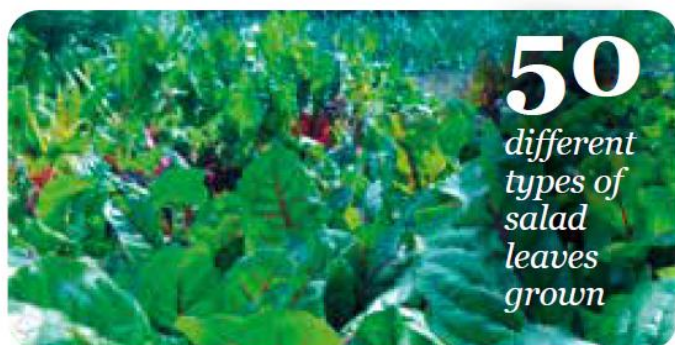
Bryony and Amy gained certificates in Brushcutter and Ride-On Mower training and kept the lawns and hedges in trim.

We completed the Home Orchard with a final area of apple tree plantings on the east slope, with a selection of early eating apples and late storers that will keep the kitchens going after Apple Day. We also pruned the trees in Home Orchard which should allow for a good harvest next year!

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Sharpham Heritage

Cataloguing has remained the major focus for the material held in the Sharpham archive, including documents, images and recordings.

We'd like to thank our archive volunteers and former Barn manager Peter Mallard for their work in preserving Sharpham's heritage.

Volunteers led tours of the house for the annual Open Day, giving slide presentations and answering questions in the principal rooms of the house.

800 documents at the Devon Record Office catalogued

100+ hours of talks listened to

2 19th century landscape paintings of Sharpham House bought by the Trust



Discovering Sharpham Heritage Day 2018 featured the career of the 18th century naval captain, Philemon Pownoll, who commissioned the architect Sir Robert Taylor to design the Palladian villa Sharpham House in 1765. Many naval historians attended and shared their knowledge.

Archive Coordinator Volunteer Lynette Gribble retired at the end of the reporting period. The Trust then advertised for a part-time archive position to further the cataloguing and keep the archives up to date.

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Events & Volunteering

Volunteers

We continue to run weekly volunteer days that offer participants the chance to meet new people, learn a new skill, connect with nature and get active in beautiful and inspiring surroundings.

LEARN MORE:

www.sharphamtrust.org/volunteer



11,870
hours contributed to
the Trust this year

Garden volunteers
2216 hours

Archive volunteers
1754 hours

Conservation volunteers
1662 hours

Barn co-ordinator volunteers
5751 hours

Open day volunteers
487 hours



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RETREATS

101 retreats attended by
1396 participants



43 of our own
retreats in Sharpham
House with **795**
participants



52 Barn retreats
& **526** people



6 woodland retreats
& **75** people



2528
people attended our events



179,372
website visitors



DONATIONS

£94,052
in donations given



62 bursaries worth
£11,223 given to people
of low income, enabling
them to come on retreat
at Sharpham



700 litres
of apple juice produced on
Apple Day 2018



VIDEO

13,100
minutes of Sharpham
video watched 2018-19



SOUNDCLOUD DOWNLOADS

11,093
plays of our meditations
in this financial year



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Sharpham Meadow

Sharpham Meadow offers natural burials and ashes interments and is hugely appreciated by the local community whose loved ones are buried at this special place.

The meadow was previously farmed bio-dynamically, so it has a well-established flourishing and healthy ecosystem, including wildflowers, skylarks and hares.



Natural Burials

64 burials and ashes interments at Sharpham Meadow.

LEARN MORE:

www.sharphamtrust.org/burials

Weddings at Sharpham



A few times a year, the Trust welcomes couples to use Sharpham House and its wonderful gardens exclusively for their weddings, with all proceeds going to help support the work of the charity and upkeep of the estate.

LEARN MORE:

www.sharphamtrust.org/weddings

What the papers say...

The Guardian "Full immersion in the natural world", listing us in '10 of the best meditation retreats in the UK & Europe'

The Observer "If you really want to make a connection with nature, opt for one of the Woodland retreats" - listing us in '25 of the best retreats to reboot your life'

TimeOut list of 'best wellbeing breaks and yoga retreats in the UK' as the 'best for getting back to nature'

PSYCHOLOGIES "Stay in a gorgeous Palladian-style mansion on a 550-acre estate in Devon"

What the people say...

Visitors who stayed on retreat in Sharpham House in this year gave The Trust ratings of 90% and higher for their experience.



"We are delighted about getting such high ratings from our retreatants, and it's a real testament to the work everyone at the charity puts in," said Trust Director Julian Carnell.

"It's fantastic to be getting above 90% in every category and it's really encouraging for staff of the Trust, especially those who work in the House."

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Sharpham on film

We made our first retreat promo video, about our Woodland Retreats.

Guest retreatants were filmed on our Woodland campsite – we can't film REAL ones of course!

The video was shared on social networks, helping us to quickly fill our Woodland Retreats.

SEE MORE: www.sharphamtrust.org/video

Our Tenants

Sharpham Wine & Cheese



The Sharpham Partnership's vineyard and cheese dairy have been producing wines and unpasteurised cheeses for over 30 years to local and national acclaim.

Both the wine and cheese is made from start to finish at Sharpham, giving a flavour that reflects its unique position in the South Hams area of Devon. In regional and national competitions, Sharpham Wines have won trophies every year since 1992 and have never failed to win an international award every time their wines have been entered.

Upper Sharpham Barton

This holding of approximately 100 acres is being farmed by David Camp who keeps cattle and sheep and is certified organic.

Lower Sharpham Barton Farm

This farm is operated by our partners Ambios, offering courses, events and working with United Response as a care farm for adults with learning disabilities.

This year saw 20 students from EU countries including Italy, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Belgium engage with our programme of 3-month traineeships, which include training courses about birds, mammals and plants, practical habitat management, applied language classes and public engagement work including hosting school groups at the farm and supporting the care work of United Response.



50 people with learning disabilities work at Lower Sharpham Farm each week



100+ people at our Farm & Wildlife Fayre



200+ people at our fundraising barn dance



The work of United Response continues with regular numbers of adults with learning disabilities engaging with the programme of the farm. The farm adage of ***living, learning and working for wildlife*** plays out in a

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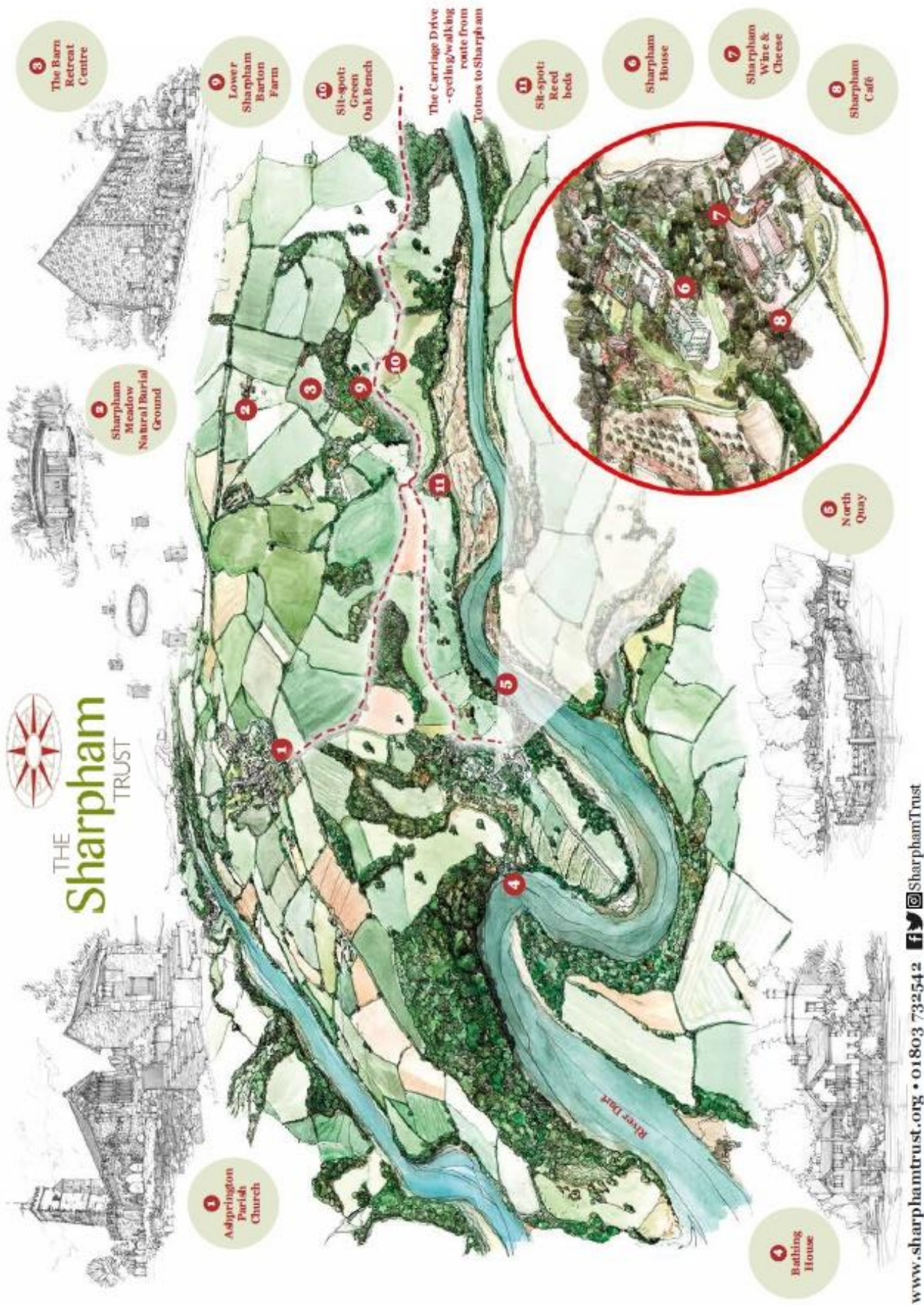
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number of ways, such as the horticulture team growing food for the students or pollinating plants for invertebrate life, and people in the wood workshop making wildlife boxes to sell at the market or set up across the farm, for example.

Some of these wildlife boxes form part of our scientific survey work, where we are studying the breeding traits of woodland bird populations, part of a national nest box scheme. Alongside this, with funding from Learn Devon, our Wildcams project supports United Response folk and Ambios students collaborating to gather images and tell stories of the wildlife using the farm by setting up stealth cameras.



SEE MORE: www.ambios.net/our-farm and www.ambios.net/blog



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