Financials

Donations and grants

£15,000 from the Pilgrim Trust to renovate the glass Lantern Skylight in the main House
£30,495 from the Higher Level Stewardship grant
£34,729 from the Heritage Lottery Fund
£25,390 donations received, including bursary donations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EOY period</th>
<th>March 2017</th>
<th>March 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total income</td>
<td>1.031m</td>
<td>1.094m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure</td>
<td>1.046m</td>
<td>0.995m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total funds</td>
<td>6.26m</td>
<td>6.353m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voluntary income</td>
<td>0.129m</td>
<td>0.106m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment income</td>
<td>0.131m</td>
<td>0.108m</td>
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<td>Charity activity income</td>
<td>0.770m</td>
<td>0.880m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Investment management costs</td>
<td>0.020m</td>
<td>0.023m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of charitable activities</td>
<td>1.009m</td>
<td>0.950m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>0.017m</td>
<td>0.018m</td>
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<tr>
<td>Governance as % total expenditure</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
<td>1.8%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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.
Welcome to the Sharpham Trust’s Annual report – a taste of some of the actions and activities that have taken place over the year.

Internationally the effects of big data and biotech, globalisation and nationalism, and climate change and resource depletion continue to test the fabric of human wisdom and the appropriateness of our institutions. Do we have the capacity and willpower to evolve society as quickly as corporations develop new products? Is the ego stronger than ethics? Do we know ourselves?

At Sharpham our mission is to connect people to the natural world. We have this objective not only because it is worthwhile in itself but because through connection with ourselves, each other, and the planet we are more able to think and act clearly. The life tools developed and practised in our mindfulness courses give people a stable base to think and act from. As the historian Y.N. Harari said in a recent interview when talking about meditation: “it is a way to understand reality ... without any stories or fictions or mythologies. Just to observe what is really happening.”

We do many things here at Sharpham, and you’ll see from this report that it has been another full year. We’re very pleased that so much has been achieved and for the first time in many years, financially, we made a small surplus. This could not have been accomplished without the huge effort from the staff and volunteers. All of the Trustees are grateful, and appreciate the work Julian and his team do, often in the background with little fanfare. The result is a special and unique experience which many people comment on in their feedback forms and through emails, conversations, poems and drawings. So, thank you to all who made these experiences possible, and thank you to all who have participated.

I hope you enjoy the report, share the positive things you do in your life with others, and nourish and develop the tools we need to build a positive future.

With kind regards

William Lana
Chair of the Trust
Mindfulness Retreats & Courses

Mindfulness lies at the heart of the Trust’s charitable activities and is the foundation on which our approach to caring for the land and each other is based. Sharpham has a long-standing involvement with mindfulness, meditation and non-judgemental living, stretching back over 30 years from the founding of the charity by Maurice and Ruth Ash. We are a leading centre nationally for mindfulness offering a rich, varied and authentic programme of retreats and courses with different ‘doorways’ to learning for all levels of mindfulness awareness.

Our programme includes opportunities for those new to mindfulness, as well as those looking to re-connect with or deepen their practice in a supportive and non-judgemental setting. Last year a record 1455 benefited from Sharpham mindfulness retreats and courses.

Sharpham House Retreats

Over the last twelve months we held 40 of our own retreats in the main House with 677 participants exploring mindfulness practice within a rich and varied programme of improvements with the 3 night Mindfulness for Beginners retreats, 5 week Taking Mindfulness Deep and Sustaining Ourselves Through Mindfulness – for people experiencing burn-out. Almost all our retreats were at capacity. Approaching mindfulness through sustained walking, through yoga and through the preparation and eating of vegetarian food proved to be popular retreats as well during this year.

In addition during the last year we awarded 37 bursary places for Sharpham House retreats totalling £64.47 for those experiencing financial hardship and who otherwise would not have been able to attend a retreat.

Woodland Retreats

Our woodland retreat programme continues to go from strength to strength and we are particularly pleased this year to have a new audience to Sharpham who may be new to mindfulness and want to take the opportunity to reconnect with nature and the natural world around them. This year 144 people came on Woodland Retreats with us in our woodland bell-tents with views across the Ashprington Valley. We continue with our programme of improvements with the construction of a new tulip-shaped block for the woodland campsite. This new building was built by carpentry and conservation students from South Devon College. They worked to real goals and deadlines to build the timber-framed block, enabling our retreatants to enjoy the luxury of hot showers and flushing loo.

The building continued to demonstrate the Trust’s ability to suit sustainable practices using larch and cedar wood, grown and milled on the Sharpham Estate.

Mindfulness Courses

The 8 week mindfulness course consists of 8 two hour sessions facilitated by our trained teachers. The 8 week mindfulness course consists of 8 two hour sessions facilitated by our trained teachers.

Partners who hire Sharpham House

As well as running our own popular retreat programme we also work with a network of partners who share our ethos and principles and are interested in hosting their own retreat programme. Some of these include the Mindfulness Association in the UK who bring people to stay at Sharpham House, telling us that our incredible setting is perfect for their own retreats and study. Our external partners including The Centre for Mindfulness Practice at Bangor University, Exeter University, Youth Mindfulness, Mindfulness Training Institute and The Bodhi College. The Bodhi College partnership means that we maintain a connection with Stephen Batchelor, John Peacock and Christina Feldman who have a long involvement with mindfulness.

The Barn Retreat Centre

The Barn key purpose is to teach and support the development of mindfulness practice in everyday life, supported by established meditation methods. He is also a place where people re-connect with themselves and nature, in a tranquil, supportive environment. Up to 16 participants stay at The Barn Retreat Centre each week supported by three resident volunteer coordinators and a non-residential manager. This year 496 people stayed at The Barn, some for extended periods. We ran 51 retreats this year, including 8 teacher led retreats, a work retreat, a men’s retreat, and a women’s retreat. All retreats had a waiting list. For the first time, we were able to provide accessibility and a reduced fee for bursaries. We gave a reduction in fees to 30 people during the year, totalling £960.

Some teachers who have come to the Barn represent a variety of Buddhist lineages. Teachers who visited us this year included Suvaco Hansen, Kyria Korgialen, Ajahn Jittisudh, Gemma Polo, Laura Beaglin, and Vajradevi. During this period we had some major upgrades on our plumbing system in order to increase the size of holding tank for our spring water. The previous year we struggled with running out of water, and these renovations fixed that issue. Another change this year was to enable departing residential coordinators to stay on site for an extra four months to support the retreats behind the scenes, including being back up cover for anyone who is off sick. There has been a very supportive team working at the Barn.

On being a coordinator

Lynette Robinson joined The Trust as a mentor Penny Hammond. Lynette Robinson joined The Trust as an apprentice to look after the gardens during Winter 2017, the fruit cage in the Walled Garden and returned. The publication of the book Sharpham, A History was a high point of the year. Written by the Director, Julian Carnell, the archive was able to supply information and advice. The book is being sold in Sharpham House, as well as at the gift shop on behalf of the charity.

Heritage Group

Another landmark was the Discovery of Sharpham Heritage Day 2017 when Peter Lord, Welsh artist, was able to reveal much about the elusive artist John Lewis whose iconic landscapes of Sharpham in the 1970s have informed much of our knowledge of the transformed Sharpham House and romantic landscape.

Research in several areas, particularly on owners and heritage and Sharpham who may be new to mindfulness, and want to take the opportunity to reconnect with nature and the natural world around them.

In 2017 we were awarded £57,400 from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for the Discovering Sharpham project. The fund has been supporting volunteers in carrying out vital conservation work and the restoration of our parkland and gardens, and as a result, school visits to the Estate from local schools and a number of other heritage-based events.

We developed a new Heritage Trail along the original Carriage Drive between Sharpham House and Totnes, with improved signage and information to help enhance your experience. The final section of the original Carriage Drive has also been improved with new fencing to isolate cattle from the path, and a re-surfaced path.

We installed a new Green Oak Bench on the Carriage Drive to create a wonderful sit-spot with views down the River Dart Valley. This was the culmination of a Discovering Sharpham Project volunteers working with wood-artist Peter Lanyon.

As part of this project we commissioned wood worker Martin Beet to design and build a circular oak bench in Sharpham Memorial Garden with the help of East Devon Volunteers. Over four months our volunteers helped to restore and clear the path into the garden that leads from the original Carriage Drive between Sharpham House and Totnes, which is now open for all to enjoy.

Our gardens

The garden that surround Sharpham House and The Barn don’t just look beautiful – they produce food beautifully for too 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, the monthly workshops and activities run by the Barn retreatants work daily on mindful food-growing, going on to prepare shared meals using vegetables tending by previous participants.

We cleared the herbaceous planting in the same border last Autumn to reduce the perennial weed problems, and then we replanted the soil with compost and sand to improve its fertility and structure. It was replanted in the Spring.

The base of one of the old glasshouses was cleared to use for a cold frame to make more space for growing vegetables in the Walled Garden. There was more planting, including in the Woodland Garden – with thanks to Richard Sears who donated the interesting hydangeas and other shrubs.

The banana tree flowered! Tiny fruits were spotted, thanks to some hot days this year, but they never matured – nor were they likely too. Gardener Jesse said he’s going to keep an eye on the plant in his time at Sharpham.

During Winter 2017, the fruit cage in the Walled Garden was re-built, only for it to collect in the snow of early 2018’s Spring blizzards.

We have just one Head Gardener and an apprentice to look after the gardens and grounds here, assisted by our garden mentor Marzy Hammond.

During this financial year, our Head Gardener Jesse Hammond (no relation!) went to pastures new after seven years Sharpham service. Thank you for your time with us Jesse.

Apprentice Luca Middleton gave us another nine months of service to help when we were recruiting for a new Head Gardener.

The gardens and our orchards benefit hugely from input by our Sharpham volunteers, who give their time freely. We were able to invite friends and family into the outdoors, be sociable and share in our wonderful setting.

Discovering Sharpham Project

LOTTERY FUNDED

 supporting mindfulness information and development, and the book is being sold in Sharpham House, as well as at the gift shop on behalf of the charity.

Funding

A major renovation of Sharpham House happened this year, and the House’s lantern skyLight was repaired. This is the glass ‘lanterns’ that cover the dome inside, and made the house look much lighter.

This vital repair was supported by £5,000 funding from The Pilgrim Trust, who awarded it to The Sharpham Trust, with the rest of the cost covered by The Sharpham Trust.

Subscribe to our monthly newsletter via our website to keep updated about Sharpham Trust news and events
Our Apple Day was our busiest yet, with more than 800 people participating, and more than 700 litres of delicious juice pressed. Other activities on the day included apple stories & harvest crafts, composing apple songs and writings. Our Apple Day was our busiest yet, with 99,136 website visitors.

On a few limited occasions each year, the Trust websites coachus to grow Sharpham House and its wonderful gardens exclusively for the weddings, with all proceeds going to support the work of the charity and upkeep of the estate. We held 2 weddings in 2017–18.

The Trust would also like to acknowledge and thank all those who have contributed 11,894 volunteering and work experiences for this reporting period each of the cohorts had a high percentage of students attending (around 80% occupancy). Trainers engage with the ongoing farm programme of organic beef and sheep farming as well as organic egg production. Our new herd of striking organic Belted Galloway cows help in our biodiversity management and they can be seen grazing the species-rich slopes at Lower Sharpham – fulfilling their careers in conservation. We will be breeding from them over the coming months, so keep an eye out for beautiful Belted Galloway calves soon.

To book, call 01803 732542 or email bookings@sharphamtrust.org
Retreats also take place from every Sunday at The Barn Retreat Centre, on Sharpham Estate