



## Strategic Report with Supplementary Information 2016-17

The Community Volunteering Charity



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April

intu Green Gym launch starts the year for TCV

TCV has partnered with intu Properties for ten years with staff taking part in volunteering days and the company supporting 10 Green Gyms. The new Green Gym at Saltwells Nature Reserve in Dudley is the latest to benefit from intu's support. Working alongside TCV volunteers, 26 staff from the intu Merry Hill centre helped to clear the stream and pathways, removing a staggering 5 skips of rubbish from the site.



September

Promoting community relations for over 20 years

The team at the Laurel Glen project in Lisburn, Northern Ireland, have worked in the area for over 20 years. The Wardens, funded by the Department of Social Development, promote good community relations and discourage anti-social behaviour through a programme of woodland management, fly tipping removal, tree-planting, and path and fence construction.



December

The Dead Good Dead Wood survey gets underway in Scotland

The Dead Good Dead Wood survey went live in December with Forestry Commission Scotland. The survey uses a Citizen Science approach, where participants walk a 100m section of woodland, noting down pieces of large deadwood and their associated wildlife along the way. The survey improves understanding of deadwood habitats and helps community groups to put their newly-acquired knowledge to use in the management of local woodlands.

May

TCV Skelton Grange and M&S get together to #SparkSomethingGood!

TCV's Skelton Grange invited over 30 staff and customers from M&S to help improve the site we manage on behalf of National Grid in Leeds.

It was all part of M&S's Spark Something Good campaign, which is the retailer's way of creating change in the communities that their staff and customers live and work in. Fantastic improvements were made to our sensory, forest and vegetable gardens.



June

Winners at BBC Gardener's World Live

TCV was the big winner at BBC Gardeners' World Live as we took home the 'Best Show Garden' and 'Gold' award for our show garden. Designed and built by local communities under the direction of Owen Morgan of Mosaic Design, the winning garden was a celebration of community gardening and our Birmingham-based Health for Life in the community programme, funded by the Mondelēz International Foundation.



October

We celebrate a new programme and a 90th birthday

October saw the launch of our newest and largest programme to be delivered in partnership with the Land Trust. South Yorkshire Community Woodlands covers 465 hectares of green spaces, which TCV will manage for the next 10 years. The former

coal-mining sites consist of a variety of habitats including wetland, woodland, heathland, meadow and parkland.

TCV Vice President, Sir David Attenborough has supported us for over 30 years, so when his 90th birthday came along earlier in the year it was only fitting that we helped him to commemorate it. Volunteers, staff and supporters of TCV joined Sir David in Waterlow Park in North London to plant an elm tree in his honour. Former TCV Chair, Rita Clifton CBE, presented Sir David with an oak burr bowl made from reclaimed wood.



January

Community Green Gym wins Green Flag Award

TCV was proud to see that Penge Green Gym community group received a Special Award for Innovation from the Green Flag Award scheme. Their site, Winsford Gardens, was

just one of the 15 inspirational green spaces in the UK to receive the award. They were cited by Green Flag Award Scheme manager Paul Todd as a perfect example of how green spaces play a vital role within their local communities.



July

More than 10,000 heritage trees recorded as project comes to an end

After five terrific years, TCV's Kent Heritage Trees project came to its conclusion and planted its last heritage tree. The project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, demonstrated the important contribution trees make to both our environment and the cultural life of our communities. We planted 24 new trees and involved the community in recording old, rare and locally-important trees across Kent.



August

TCV powers the National Citizen Service (NCS) in Wiltshire

NCS is a programme of activities for 16-17 year olds that includes attending an adrenaline-fuelled residential, learning team work and leadership skills, and creating a social action project to make a mark on their local community. In August our Wiltshire group graduated with their much-coveted certificates, enhanced CVs and plenty of newly-acquired skills.



November

Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park causes a buzz

The site we manage on behalf of the Land Trust in Greenwich saw a particular species of bee, more commonly found in continental Europe, using nest boxes for the first time in Britain. The presence of Hoplitiscus adunca, which does not pose a threat to other British pollinators, is a great example of the importance of urban green spaces for pollinators.



March

400,000 trees planted with OVO Energy

Since 2015, TCV has partnered with OVO Energy to plant native trees throughout the country, supported by their Greener Energy plan customers. By doing so, thousands of volunteers, community groups and OVO Energy staff helped to reduce CO2, improve green spaces and create wildlife habitats. 2016-17 saw the 400,000th tree planted through the I Dig Trees programme.



February

TCV searches for Natural Talent

In February, our team in Scotland started our very own talent search for nature enthusiasts across the UK. Each year, six Natural Talent traineeships are made available for individuals to develop and hone their skills and knowledge of practical conservation, botanical recording and habitat surveying relating to some of the UK's lesser known species. Find out more on Page 6.





# Introductions

## From the Chair of the Board



This has been a defining year for TCV. Darren York was appointed as Managing Director in February 2016 and subsequently became Chief Executive in April 2017 and under his guidance a new Leadership Team was established. Despite the continued challenging environment that virtually all charities are facing, under this new leadership, the group has performed brilliantly and was able to slightly increase unrestricted reserves. This is due to the hard work and dedication of all our employees and volunteers – who make a real difference day in and day out in the communities that we work with throughout the UK.

We have started to see the benefits of a leaner, more responsive organisation, in terms of some significant contract wins/extensions, which are described by Darren and elsewhere in this report, allied to a clearer definition of the services that we offer and the outcomes that they deliver. This work is continuing and a Strategy Refresh is being undertaken during 2017 to enable TCV to maximise the opportunities available for it to deliver sustainable growth.

During the year, after a review of the materially increased risks and working capital requirement in our subsidiary, Employment & Training Services (E&TS), we decided to close this part of our business. As a result, some contracts are being wound down in a managed way while others are being transferred, where appropriate, to the Charity. It is expected that this will be delivered during the course of this financial year, with no adverse impact on the cash resources of the Charity. The dedication and professionalism of our colleagues in E&TS have ensured that this process has been managed as smoothly as possible, despite its direct impact on their roles.

TCV is a unique and truly amazing organisation. I am immensely proud to have been a Trustee for almost 6 years and during that time I have been privileged to see the real difference that we make to people's lives every day. We are not an organisation that is focused on bricks and mortar – but on much more important things – confidence, community and caring, to enable people to belong and to prosper. I hope that you will see this brought to life through the case studies and feedback from just a small number of the people and communities that we have worked with during the year.

This work would not be possible without the continued input from our supporters and funders. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for their help in making what we do possible.

As my two three-year terms are almost at an end, this will be my first and last Annual Report. I had worked closely with Rita Clifton CBE as Deputy Chair and the changes that were effected under her leadership have been transformative. On behalf of the Board and the whole organisation I would like to thank Rita for her inspirational leadership and guidance over the previous 6 years. Changed circumstances during the appointment of the new Chair have given me the privilege of ending my career with TCV in the Chair role. This will include managing a smooth transition to the next Chair before the end of December 2017. I would like to thank all my Board colleagues for their support during this period.

I will really miss being part of TCV, but it has given me what will be a lifelong passion for what we do – so TCV will not leave me.

**Mike Kirk**  
Chairman

## From the Chief Executive



Following a challenging 2015-16, culminating in significant reductions to our Central Services teams, we faced another difficult year ahead as we began 2016-17. The primary goals for TCV were to sustain the scale of our operational delivery (the day-to-day activities we deliver for the benefit of communities and green spaces across the UK) and maintain our unrestricted reserves (ending the losses incurred in recent years) with just half of the Central Services resource previously at our disposal.

It is with a huge amount of pride therefore that everyone in TCV – from the Charity and E&TS – can look back on 2016-17 having achieved both of these goals. In extremely challenging circumstances their effort has been truly remarkable. As has the commitment and dedication of our volunteers – approximately 120,000 people, including around 11,000 registered volunteers, helped us to create, care for and improve over 1,500 green spaces across the UK.

With a very heavy heart, we took the responsible decision to close our E&TS business and move some of its programmes into the Charity. For many years, in a very different political and economic climate, E&TS generated a significant financial profit which subsidised our charitable activities. In recent years however, even though our E&TS teams have undertaken a lot of fantastic, effective work, it has proved very difficult to sustain a long-term, viable E&TS business in a changing market with such challenging working capital requirements and tight margins. As we move forward therefore, we will focus our resources on our charitable activities to ensure their financial sustainability, and we can take encouragement from the fact that the Charity performed ahead of budget in 2016-17 and TCV the Group was able to make a small contribution back in to unrestricted reserves.

Throughout this report you'll find many examples of the partners who provide the all important funding to support TCV's valuable work and we're grateful to each and every one of them. If I'm to pick one highlight, in the limited space available here, it would be securing a ten-year contract with long-standing partner the Land Trust for the *South Yorkshire Community Woodlands* project – an exciting new programme to engage local communities in the management of 465 hectares of green space across seven former coalfield sites.

The TCV Leadership Team and I are grateful for the continuing support of: our Patron, HRH The Duke of Edinburgh KG, KT; our President, Sir Jonathan Porritt; and each of our Vice Presidents, Ambassadors and Members. A challenging year was made so much easier by our Board of Trustees and Committee Members, all of whom showed great belief in a much-changed Leadership Team and provided valuable support and welcome challenge throughout. I'm enormously grateful to former Chair Rita Clifton CBE, who was a source of inspiration throughout her 6 year term, and to our interim Chair Mike Kirk whose support and expertise continues to prove invaluable.

Having begun our Strategy Refresh in 2016 we look forward to seeing its completion in late 2017. This will provide a more up-to-date framework within which to focus our resources over a three year period – as we build a sustainable Charity capable of supporting communities and green spaces for many more years to come.

**Darren York**  
Chief Executive

# TCV's key services and the multiple outcomes we deliver

**We're TCV, the community volunteering charity. We've been providing volunteering opportunities and connecting people to green spaces for almost 60 years.**

We have a Vision of Healthier, Happier Communities for Everyone, and we aim to achieve this by working together with people, communities and partners to deliver practical actions that have a lasting impact on people's health, prospects and outdoor places.

The activities we deliver are grouped broadly into four key services, which create four distinct outcomes:

**Community Builder** delivers community resilience outcomes.

**Spaces to Grow** delivers environmental outcomes.

**Green Gym** delivers health and wellbeing outcomes.

**Natural Talent** delivers employability and skills outcomes.

Each of these work successfully and are impactful on their own, but their impact is greatest when they are combined. We begin this section with examples of TCV projects that combine these key services, before looking at each outcome in more detail.



SNH funding enables TCV to provide a range of activities for people to enjoy and learn about the outdoors through volunteering. This includes the *Rewilding* project, which was also supported by Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

Community-led activities such as planting native trees or wildflower species encourage local people's understanding and connection to local wildlife, heritage and nature, plus revives native habitats. A special programme for children, *Rewild the Child*, provided nature play sessions during the holidays.

## Hospital green spaces

TCV has been working with RBS and the Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QE) in Birmingham for a number of years to establish a sensory garden, create a memory and reminiscence area and develop a food growing project.

These varied green spaces provide opportunities for physical activity or tranquil reflection for patients, staff and visitors. RBS teams have supported this project from inception, putting in the hard work of digging, transporting soil and creating raised beds to prepare the site.

## Reviving native habitats

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) provides TCV with vital funding to ensure Scotland's green spaces are cared for, alongside engaging the community in practical conservation activities.



*"TCV has offered a variety of outdoor project work that enables our young people to get off the ward and into the fresh air. One young man receiving treatment for cancer who also has an autism spectrum disorder joined in and continued to volunteer after his treatment had finished."*

**Richard Hitchins** - Teenage Cancer Trust Youth Support Coordinator





## Big Lottery Fund helps TCV to improve coastal communities

TCV received funding through the Big Lottery Fund's (BLF) Coastal Communities Fund to improve access along the 60 mile Solent Way footpath and provide training and skills to increase economic growth and jobs in the area. The project has run successfully for two years now with a number of Wardens protecting the area and encouraging local people to discover and enjoy it.

Volunteers from the community took part in litter picking and practical activities, which included installing over 300m of new fence, resurfacing over 100m of footpath and replacing a rotten boardwalk.

*"My time working as a warden on the Solent Way Project was as enjoyable as it was invaluable for my career development. I joined the project having struggled to find work in the conservation sector*

*and left having gained a number of qualifications as well as essential experience in planning practical projects and running volunteer tasks."*

**Christopher Lickley** - Solent Way Warden (July 2015 to September 2016)

## Conserving habitats and heritage through HLF

*Discover, Explore and Conserve Our Natural Heritage* is an exciting project at Sale Water Park in Manchester, which was funded by HLF. The project focuses on the natural heritage at the park and provides practical skills to local young people with disabilities.

The park has a rich heritage and is an important habitat for wildlife, including the globally threatened willow tit. Volunteers learn conservation skills such as traditional hedge-laying and meadow management, which improves the park for wildlife and for the local community to enjoy.

## Developing the next environmentalists

TCV's *Natural Talent* programme has run for 10 years to fill the substantial gap in ecological skills across the UK. 95% of *Natural Talent* trainees are now active in the conservation sector, using skills and expertise gained with TCV.

The 2016 programme was funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and six trainees worked on topics such as non-marine molluscs and entomology.

We also worked with 19 *Natural Networks* trainees, a project that bridged the gap between natural heritage priorities and community engagement delivery models. The trainees engaged with 13,246 people - including 4,308 schoolchildren, 217 BAME volunteers, 783 volunteers who were over 50 and 409 volunteers with a disability.

# Community Builder – community resilience outcomes

TCV's Community Builder programme encourages people to take an active role in the creation and development of local outdoor spaces that reflect their community's unique needs.



Precious green spaces might be used as somewhere to grow food, as an outdoor classroom, as a haven for wildlife or simply somewhere to meet friends. TCV supports community groups to become more active, to self-organise, to increase their skills and knowledge and connect to the wider community. This creates networks of groups that come together to make communities more resilient.

community spaces that are accessed by thousands of people every year.

*"It was amazing the amount of work we got through and what a difference it made. It was a brilliant experience and great for team building. Everyone without exception enjoyed it."*

**RBS Volunteer**

## Citizen Science

In 2016-17, our Citizen Science project, *Scotland Counts*, provided communities with the practical skills to understand their local environment through surveying nature and identifying different species. Since its inception, this project has been supported by SNH, the Scottish Environment Protection Agency, the Scottish Government and Forestry Commission Scotland - a great example of what a multi-partner supported project can achieve.

## RBS and TCV – from strength to strength

2016-17 was a record year for our partnership with RBS and NatWest through the *Team Challenge* programme, with over 4,300 of the bank's employees volunteering on 39 different TCV projects.

Altogether the *Team Challenge* participants generated over 30,000 hours of community volunteering: laying new paths, creating ponds, managing woodland and helping to transform

group produce a fantastic exhibition, they brought different communities together to learn about theirs.

The LPP in South Wigston and Eyres Monsell empowers a group of local people to allocate funding to different projects. This has included creating STEP OUT Youth Group and developing a community newsletter. Local people recognise the dedication of the group and have commented that the area has 'come alive' since the programme started.

## Swadlincote Woods, The National Forest

Swadlincote Woods is the home to a new community of TCV volunteers who are learning practical woodland management and are a few steps away from becoming self-reliant. Our wood-fuel harvesting events have been especially popular, regularly attracting large groups of volunteers at once. The partnership is delivered with the National Forest Company and South Derbyshire District Council.



## Mercer Woods, West Lindsey

A local community group and TCV volunteers from Lincolnshire and Humberside joined forces with the public and private sectors at Mercer Woods in Gainsborough to create a community orchard.

Simons Group, West Lindsey District Council and Mercer Wood Community Group provided valuable support as 500m of footpath, steps and benches were installed to ensure that the site is accessible to the local community.



# Spaces to Grow - environmental outcomes

Environment lies at the heart of TCV. While we have developed and delivered multiple other outcomes – community resilience, health and wellbeing and employability and skills – through the decades, the management of green spaces for environmental outcomes has been a constant since we were founded in 1959. TCV values the importance of the natural environment and the role it plays in helping nature and people to grow.

## Growing / Dig Trees

Following the success of our partnership with OVO Energy in 2015-16, our 2016-17 / Dig Trees programme was even bigger and better with an incredible 250,000 trees distributed and planted across the UK in just six months.

Trees were planted in over 700 UK communities by 11,000 volunteers of all ages. Together, we generated 70,000 hours of community volunteering.

*"We were delighted with the response to the programme and it's been fantastic to know that so many have benefited from improved greener spaces right here in the UK."*

**Adam Rostom** - Chief Marketing Officer at OVO Energy

## The Land Trust – community land management

TCV works in partnership with The Land Trust to manage some of their key sites. Together we have created a vibrant array of landscapes and habitats for local communities to enjoy including wetland, woodland, heathland, meadows and parkland.



Seven such green spaces comprise our South Yorkshire Community Woodlands programme, which began in October 2016. Created over 20 years through the reclamation and landscaping of former coal mining sites, they have been transformed to create a vibrant natural environment, which supports a wide range of wildlife.

Our vision with The Land Trust is to make the most of these green spaces by engaging an ever greater number of individuals and organisations in their care and management.

## Protecting green spaces

With support from a local developer, Sellar, alongside Southwark Council and local

community groups, we renewed the paths of the Stave Hill Ecology Park in London. Now the paths are more accessible and will protect the nearby meadow from trampling feet. The work was completed by volunteers from the TCV Biodiversity Action Teams, RBS and Natwest.

Also in London, a former derelict dockyard now features an urban nature reserve, Lavender Pond. With materials funded by Southwark Council, volunteers took on an ambitious project to install a circular boardwalk so that people of all abilities can access the dipping pond. Thanks to our volunteers' hard work, this site is now enjoyed by many more local families and schools.

## Green hotspots for Belfast

Wildflowers and native plants were introduced to sites around Belfast Harbour for our corporate partners' employees and visitors to enjoy through our Harbour in Bloom project. The 15 new green hotspots will attract wildlife



as well as providing vibrant pockets of colour. The most visible green hotspot is at the entrance of Belfast City Airport,

with more than 3 million travellers passing by per year.

## Partners in Scotland's largest urban nature park

We are part of an exciting partnership that secured £4.5million funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop Seven Lochs Wetland Park. We supported the local community to set up the Seven Lochs Volunteers group who make weekly improvements to the many green spaces in the Park. The site, which lies between Glasgow and Coatbridge, is destined to become Scotland's largest urban nature park and comprises almost 20 sq km of lochs, parks, nature reserves and woodland.

# Green Gym™ - health & wellbeing outcomes

TCV created and runs Green Gym, with over 140 now in place across the UK in addition to licence agreements in Australia, Germany and the Republic of Korea.

Green Gym sessions consist of fun, free, outdoor practical activities such as planting trees, sowing meadows and growing food. The emphasis is very much on health and wellness. Activities range from light to vigorous – as determined suitable for each volunteer – and sessions begin and end with warm up and cool down exercises.

## Recognition and evidence

TCV holds a Health and Wellbeing Award from the Royal Society of Public Health, which recognises that Green Gym demonstrates excellence and innovation in improving health and wellbeing.

Our evidence to show that volunteering in nature can positively affect people's mental and physical health continues to grow. 2016 saw TCV achieve Level 2 Evidence Standards for Green Gym, as recognised by Nesta and The Social Innovation Partnership. This means we can demonstrate that "rigorous evaluation techniques have been used to show



a positive change in one or more key outcomes among Green Gym beneficiaries".

As the evidence for Green Gym grows, TCV is developing partnerships in the health sector to create more innovative programmes. For example, we are working with Newham University Hospital and QE Hospital Birmingham to develop Green Gym programmes for patients with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, musculoskeletal issues and obesity-related ill health.

*"Following his stroke, my husband refused to leave the house. He lost interest in spending time with the family and stopped all the activities he once loved. I persuaded him to come along to a Green Gym taster session. Once we started the activity there was no looking back! He became alive again. He has been a regular volunteer at the Green Gym ever since and even pops in to the centre between sessions for a chat and to water the garden."*

**Participant's wife** - South Eastern Green Gym Project, Belfast

## Working in partnership with Mind

In 2016, TCV and Mind launched our innovative programme, Pro-Active Minds, using the Green Gym model with funding from the Department of Health's Health and Social Care Volunteering Fund. The programme promotes individual resilience and wellbeing for people who are at risk of developing a mental health condition or who have otherwise presented with emotional distress. It was co-designed with NHS and Public Health commissioners and uses a volunteer-led approach in an outdoor setting. Participants have reported that they feel more confident in social groups and therefore experience reduced loneliness.





# Natural Talent – employability and skills outcomes

Through Natural Talent we provide people of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to realise their potential. Our tailored approach supports the development of a wide range of skills from core numeracy and literacy through to hands-on conservation experience.

## Employment & Training Services

TCV Employment and Training Services' (E&TS) range of programmes supports people on their journey towards sustainable employment and helps them to achieve new skills and qualifications.

In 2016-17, E&TS delivered the UK Government initiatives Study Programme in the North East of England and Work Programme in the North East, North West and South West.

Through the Study Programme, our groups of 16-19 year olds were given a boost to their education and employment prospects. Learners on the Work Programme received a personalised action plan and worked with our expert teams to help overcome any barriers to employment, such as disability, mental illness or lack of qualifications.

Over the year, we worked with individuals to:

- Develop skills in core numeracy and literacy
- Provide guidance during their job search
- Help navigate personal barriers to employment
- Give tailored support once successfully in a job.

We are proud to have helped over 1000 people in 2016-17 into and towards employment by developing their skills, confidence and CVs.

## Building confidence in jobseekers

Our teams delivered training and skills for jobseekers including communication, problem solving, team work, acting professionally and confidence-building. The aim was to increase the enthusiasm of customers when searching for jobs and returning to work or exploring further education options.

We made sure that courses were interesting for our customers. So as well as learning skills for the employability market, we introduced activities that

encouraged customers to think of innovative solutions, which could then be applied to a job role. For instance, the marshmallow and spaghetti tower building challenge requires communication, a trip to the Sealife Centre builds confidence in a group setting outside of the classroom, and deciding items to buy for a day trip involves maths and negotiating with a team.

## Youth-focused programmes

TCV youth volunteering projects include NCS in Wiltshire and *Clip 2 your future* in Cumbria. These programmes help individuals to gain valuable life skills, make new friends and support their local communities.

## NCS

TCV supported 213 16-17 year olds in the summer of 2016 through NCS, which is a UK Government voluntary personal and social development programme. The group raised over £7,000 for a wide range of charities and made their mark in communities by delivering social action projects. These included building sensory gardens for Special Educational Needs Schools, raising awareness of mental health and developing a website promoting volunteering opportunities for the under-16s.

The NCS Graduate Evening gave those taking part a chance to share their favourite stories and experiences from the programme.



*"NCS has allowed me to be more impulsive, confident and independent. Other people should do NCS because it can be an easy way to meet new people who feel the same way as you do. And it's a holiday filled with fun activities and gives opportunities valuable for later in life. You'll do things you've never done before."*

**Kya Ritchie** - NCS Graduate 2016 who will work for TCV in summer 2017 as an NCS Residential Leader.

## Clip 2 your future

*Clip 2 your future* is a youth volunteering project funded by the Big Lottery Fund. 16-24 year olds volunteer with charities and take part in fun activities such as rock climbing and trampolining to push themselves out of their comfort zones and build confidence.

TCV helps the volunteers find placements with companies and charities, puts on workshops and provides one-to-one mentoring. 360 young people have been involved in the project over the past two years.

# Trustees' and Directors' report incorporating the Strategic Report

## Our objectives and activities

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission for England and Wales' general guidance for the advancement of environmental protection or improvement for public benefit when reviewing the Charity's aims and objectives and in planning future activities and setting the grant making policy for the year. The Charity's objectives continue to be:

- Conservation of the environment for the benefit of the public including:
  - the conservation and maintenance of the character and amenity of rural, urban and inner city areas
  - the maintenance and management of nature reserves and other sites of biological, scientific or environmental importance
  - educating the public in principles of conservation through volunteering, community support and social inclusion.
- To advance the education of the public through the provision of training, in particular:
  - in practical conservation skills
  - in skills to improve employment prospects
  - To develop the capacity and skills, primarily through volunteering opportunities, of the public at large and those who by reason of youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty or economic and social circumstances, have need of such facilities with the object of improving their conditions of life.

## Strategic report: achievements and performance

### Community Builder – community resilience outcomes

TCV's Community Builder programme encourages people to take an active role in the creation and development of local outdoor spaces that reflect their community's unique needs. Precious green spaces might be used as somewhere to grow food, as an outdoor classroom, as a haven for wildlife or simply somewhere to meet friends. TCV supports community groups to become more active, to self-organise, to increase their skills and knowledge and connect to the wider community. This creates networks of groups that come together to make communities more resilient.

During 2016-17 we have built resilience and engagement through programmes large and small, including our continued work on the *Local People Programme* in communities across the UK, funded by PHT.

### Spaces to Grow - environmental outcomes

Environment lies at the heart of TCV. While we have developed and delivered multiple other outcomes – community resilience, health and wellbeing and employability and skills – through the decades, the management of green spaces for environmental outcomes has been a constant since we were founded in 1959. TCV values the importance of the natural environment and the role it plays in helping nature and people to grow. Highlights for the year included an expansion to our successful *I Dig Trees* programme with OVO Energy. Working with 670 communities, we planted 250,000 trees across 700 locations.

### Green Gym - health outcomes

TCV created and runs Green Gym, with over 140 now in place across the UK in addition to licence agreements in Australia, Germany and

the Republic of Korea. Green Gym has been recognised by Nesta and The Social Innovation Partnership as having Level 2 Evidence Standards. As the evidence for Green Gym grows, we are developing partnerships in the health sector to develop increasingly innovative programmes.

## Natural Talent – employability and skills outcomes

Through Natural Talent we provide people of all ages and backgrounds the opportunity to realise their potential. Our tailored approach supports the development of a wide range of skills from core numeracy and literacy through to hands-on conservation experience. Through our inspiring youth volunteering projects such as the NCS in Wiltshire and *Clip 2 your future* in Cumbria, TCV helps individuals to gain career-enhancing skills and experience, while making new friends and supporting local communities.

## Activities in Scotland

Our Scottish operations had another successful year. Highlights included renewal of our SNH funding, supporting a wide range of activities such as the *Rewilding* project for people to learn about the outdoors through volunteering. The Citizen Science approach continues to be a key component of our activities in Scotland, such as the Forestry Commission Scotland-funded *Dead Good Dead Wood* survey. We are also excited to be a partner in the £4.5m development of Seven Lochs Wetland Park.

## Strategic Report: financial review and key performance indicators

TCV reported stable unrestricted reserves in 2017 and remains compliant with its reserves policy. Restricted reserves decreased as anticipated due to programmes running in 2017 that received funding upfront in the previous year.

## Income

	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
Charitable activities:		
Health, conservation and community	7,735	7,295
Training and employment	2,593	4,665
Other trading activities	116	340
Donations and legacies	96	155
Investments	105	123
Other	72	119
<b>Total income</b>	<b>10,717</b>	<b>12,697</b>

Group income for the year reduced by £2.0m to £10.7m. This was largely due to planned reductions in training and employment-related revenues and trading activities, partially offset by growth in our core health, conservation and community programmes.

The reduction in training and employment income reflects the impact of us choosing not to bid for a number of government contracts during the last two years. As described below we have taken the difficult but responsible decision to run down our employment and training business over the coming year.

Other trading revenues have decreased following our 2016 decision to wind down our online retail function and concentrate more of our resources on our charitable activities, where we are pleased to report growth in several areas including Employee Action Days, our tree-planting programme with OVO Energy and NCS youth volunteering.



Statement of financial activities

	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000
Income	10,717	12,697
Expenditure:		
Activities undertaken directly		
Health, conservation and community	(6,720)	(6,578)
Training and employment	(2,555)	(4,302)
Support costs	(1,369)	(2,920)
Fundraising costs	(269)	(733)
Grants awarded	(199)	(20)
Taxation	51	114
Net unrestricted income/ (expenditure)	62	(1,817)
Net restricted income/ (expenditure)	(406)	75
<b>Total net expenditure</b>	<b>(344)</b>	<b>(1,742)</b>

Under our new operating model, TCV has generated a surplus of £0.1m on unrestricted funds. The 2015-16 unrestricted deficit included £0.4m of strategic costs as we transitioned to this new model and higher support costs required by our previous model.

Support costs have been reduced by 53% to £1.4m, with efficiency savings made across all support functions as we transitioned to networked sustainable systems and processes commensurate with the size and complexity of our charitable activities.

Cessation of online trading accounted for £0.3m of the reduction in fundraising costs. We recorded a restricted funds deficit of £0.4m (2016: surplus of £0.1m) as multi-year programmes that were funded upfront were delivered in 2015-16.

We are pleased to report current year performance in both restricted and unrestricted funds in line with our expectations. This was achieved with our new operating model in place whilst continuing to deliver our outcomes.

**Balance sheet**

	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000
Tangible fixed assets	1,746	1,859
Debtors	2,051	2,491
Cash and cash equivalents	1,507	1,096
Creditors <sup>1</sup>	(2,021)	(1,917)
<b>Net current assets</b>	<b>1,537</b>	<b>1,670</b>
Provisions	(145)	(47)
<b>Net assets</b>	<b>3,138</b>	<b>3,482</b>

<sup>1</sup> Excluding overdraft £12,000 (2016: £975,000) presented within cash and cash equivalents.

The net asset value has reduced by £0.3m with net assets at March 2016 of £3.1m.

The Group had a net cash inflow of £0.4m for the year (2016: net cash outflow of £1.6m), with the £0.3m deficit offset by non-cash depreciation charges and a stronger working capital position.

The dilapidations provision has increased by £0.1m, with exposure remaining dispersed across a number of Group properties.

Funds and reserves

	2017	2016
	£'000	£'000
Restricted income funds	1,614	2,020
Unrestricted funds	1,524	1,462
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>3,138</b>	<b>3,482</b>

Unrestricted funds have increased by £0.1m during the year, following implementation of our new operating model and associated reductions in support costs. The net balance on restricted funds has reduced by £0.4m, as grants on new projects that were funded upfront have been lower than our use of existing funding during the year, which was anticipated.

**Strategic report: plans for future periods**

Since March 2017 we have been encouraged by the continuation of key partnerships and programmes with the private, public and voluntary sectors. We were particularly pleased to receive confirmation in May 2017 of funding from the BLF for *Growing Communities* in Adur & Worthing. This transformational three-year project will build on our strong partnership with co-funders Adur & Worthing Councils and their *Rethinking Parks* programme.

Through the new operating model, implemented in 2016, we are supporting our front line delivery with more fit-for-purpose systems at a significantly lower cost than in previous years. Whilst public sector funding in particular remains uncertain, TCV has built a broad and resilient pipeline of funding opportunities which forecasts a small amount of growth in funding for our charitable activities.

We are closing our E&TS business for the reasons outlined by the Chairman and the Chief Executive on page 4 of this report. We recognise the positive impact that employability has on people's health, prospects and outdoor places and we are moving some of our employability and skills programmes into the Charity. Furthermore, we intend to develop new programmes for delivery in the Charity, where we know that they will be valuable to our beneficiaries, where we can be sure of their financial viability and where we are confident that we can deliver them well.

Unrestricted funds are once again expected to be broadly maintained over the coming year, whilst restricted funds may decrease slightly, based on expected timings of receipts and related activities on existing long term grants.

**Going concern**

The Trustees have reviewed forecasts to 30 September 2018 and on the basis of those forecasts believe that the Charity will be able to meet its liabilities as they fall due. These forecasts have been prepared conservatively, including risks and sensitivities to anticipated financial performance, including a review of actual performance compared to previous forecasts and consideration of financing facilities available. Mitigating actions available in the event of adverse circumstances or financial performance have also been considered. Cashflow forecasts prepared for the Charity do not rely on any Gift Aided profits or other cash distributions from our subsidiary TCV Employment and Training Services, as it concludes delivery of existing employment support programmes. Based on the information currently available in respect of the future, the Trustees consider that the Charity has the plans and resources to manage its business risks successfully. The Trustees have therefore prepared these financial statements on the going concern basis.

Strategic report: principal risks and uncertainties

The Trustees have overall responsibility for ensuring that the Charity has appropriate systems of control for managing risk within the organisation. TCV's risk management process is designed to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to identify and mitigate risk and to provide reasonable assurance against material misstatement or loss. TCV aims to identify the major risks to the organisation, ranking them on the basis of both likelihood and impact. Major risks are considered when setting operational and strategic objectives and in approval of significant grants and contracts. TCV operates a multi-year planning, budgeting and internal audit cycle that compares actual results to planned outcomes.

The risk management process is managed throughout the business, with standards set and monitored by the Risk and Compliance team. The Performance, Audit and Risk Committee reviews the underlying management of risk within the organisation and the work of the Risk and Compliance team in monitoring performance and compliance. It then brings this to the attention of the Board of Trustees on a quarterly basis.

This process is supported by performance against quantified thresholds for strategic risks being embedded in the monthly management reporting programme to provide triggers for actions to mitigate risks in order to avoid the breach of risk appetite limits agreed by the Board. On an annual basis, the Performance, Audit and Risk Committee provides the Board with a with a summary review of risk management issues for it to consider.

Principal risks have been reviewed and are aligned to our strategic plan. Risks are categorised as:

- Financial: including volatility of financial performance, liquidity and reserves strength**

Restrictions on traditional sources of income, the constrained economic environment and the need to renew or replace fixed term grants and contracts all contribute to financial risk. The Group also recognises that internal monitoring is essential to reduce the volatility of financial performance by ensuring grant

and project delivery and expenditure are properly controlled and that reserve strength is maintained.

- Operations and people: including operational performance and people management**

The Group recognises that risks arise from operational systems and management of staff. It monitors and reviews decision making and operational systems, and monitors staff engagement and retention levels.

- Reputational: including regulatory compliance, IT security and quality of volunteer and partner experiences**

The Board recognises that risks arise from potential reputational damage from regulatory and data breaches, the essential use of information technology and the experiences of volunteers and partner organisations. Steps are taken to ensure that regulatory breaches - including safeguarding, data protection and health and safety - do not happen, IT security breaches are prevented, volunteer experience and retention are monitored and stakeholder relationships are managed.

Risk management is embedded within the organisation in order to enable risk to be assessed effectively and appropriate controls and actions put in place to mitigate risks to acceptable levels.

The Trustees have given consideration to the major risks to which the Charity is exposed and satisfied themselves that systems or procedures are established in order to manage those risks appropriately, and that internal systems and procedures are developing in the light of new requirements and learning from the risk management process.

  
**Mike Kirk**  
Chair of the Board  
20 September 2017







## Trustees and advisors

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### President

Sir Jonathon Porritt CBE

### Vice Presidents

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Professor David Bellamy OBE

Dr William Bird MBE

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### Board of Trustees

Mike P Kirk \*\* (Chair of the Board of Trustees)

Maria Adebowale \*\* (Resigned 15 June 2017)

Tony Burton CBE

Rita Clifton CBE (Resigned 31 March 2017)

Paulette Cohen \*\* (Resigned 23 November 2016)

Michael Kellet \* (Appointed 23 November 2016)

John Mallalieu

Roger Perkin (Appointed 6 February 2017) \*

Simon Rennie MBE

Julie Royce \*

Jane Stevenson

Richard Stiff \*\*

### Nominations and Governance Committee

Dr Rupert Evenett (Chair)

Maria Adebowale

Paulette Cohen

David Coleman

Mike P Kirk (Chair of the Board of Trustees)

Richard Stiff

### Performance, Audit and Risk Committee

Roger Perkin (Chair)

Michael Kellet

Julie Royce

Tilden Watson CFPA, IIA, MBCOI, Zurich Risk Engineering UK

### Principal Banker

NatWest Plc

12 High Street, Doncaster, DN1 1EJ

### Statutory Auditor

Grant Thornton UK LLP

2 Broadfield Court, Sheffield, S8 0XF

**Company number:** 00976410

**Charity numbers:**  
261009 (England and Wales)  
SC039302 (Scotland)

### Registered office

Sedum House, Mallard Way, Doncaster, DN4 8DB

\* Performance, Audit and Risk Committee member

\*\* Nominations and Governance Committee member

## Our Trustees

### Mike Kirk

Mike was previously a partner at Cazenove and Co, providing financial and strategic advice to clients in a wide range of sectors including sustainable technology, and led the financial PR practice of Weber Shandwick, which included assisting companies to improve their CSR policies and reporting. He is currently the Chair Designate of Portsmouth Water Ltd, Chair of VIVID, a leading provider of social housing in Hampshire and Surrey, and Executive Chairman of Quadrise Fuels International, an AIM listed technology company offering services to the energy and marine industries.

### Tony Burton, CBE

Tony is Vice Chair of the Big Lottery Fund and Friends of the Earth, Chair of Wandle Valley Forum and a Trustee of mySociety. He founded Civic Voice, helped establish Heritage Alliance and has over twenty five years' experience on the Executive Boards of charities including National Trust, CPRE and as Chair of Wildlife & Countryside Link. Tony also works on a wide range of community and environmental projects, including neighbourhood planning.

### Michael Kellet

Michael Kellet is the Director of Fife's Health and Social Care Partnership. He took up the post in August 2016 and is accountable to the NHS Fife Board and Fife Council, as well as the Scottish Government's Health Secretary.

Michael has 20 years' experience working in government in Scotland. He has taken on a range of key roles over the years as private secretary to 3 separate Ministers, as the policy lead on flagship pieces of legislation and a key role representing Scotland abroad. Michael's previous SCS roles include in education on the teacher workforce and as Head of Emergencies for Scottish Government.

### John Mallalieu

John is CEO of The Bank Workers Charity, which supports the health and wellbeing of the banking community. From a career in retail banking John has held a range of senior leadership roles across Health and Social care delivery for public sector, private sector and third sector organisations.

John holds a lay role with NHS Calderdale Clinical Commissioning Group and is also the Lay Chair of the Primary Medical Services Committee.

John additionally chairs the Department of Work & Pensions Mental Health & Work Group for the Welfare Minister and is a member of the Psychological Wellbeing & Work Expert Advisory Group.

### Roger Perkin

Roger Perkin spent 40 years at Ernst & Young, including over 30 years as a Partner, working with a wide range of clients before specialising in financial services and retiring in 2009.

Roger has significant global accounting experience and financial services expertise, which he has brought to TCV as Trustee and the Performance, Audit and Risk Committee as Chair. He served as an Independent Non Executive Director for companies including Nationwide Building Society and Friends Life Group. He now has a portfolio of Trustee positions, including the Charities Aid Foundation, as well as continuing to serve on a number of plc boards in the financial services sector.

### Simon Rennie, MBE

Simon is Chief Executive of the Central Scotland Green Network Trust and is a director of the Falkirk Community Trust and Paths for All. With a degree in forestry, Simon worked in private sector forestry abroad before returning to the UK in 1990. He has since worked in the charitable sector focusing on social inclusion and environmental justice.

### Julie Royce

Julie is currently employed by The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE), leading a team who help the users of NICE guidance to put it into practice. Previously she has held a range of senior management, training and marketing positions, including for Unilever, the NHS and a small advertising agency.

### Jane Stevensen

Jane is Engagement Director to the FSB (Financial Stability Board) Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures for CDP (formerly the Carbon Disclosure Project).

Prior to joining CDP, Jane was Director of Sustainability Advisory Services for Grant Thornton LLP. She is a Natural Resources sector expert, and has worked all over the world becoming an expert in stakeholder engagement in fragile environments. She chairs the CDP Oil & Gas Advisory Group, and is working on developing Board level expertise and understanding in Climate risk.

She is an affiliate of CISL, the University of Cambridge's Institute for Sustainable Leadership, and a Mentor for Inspiring Women at Inspiring the Future.

### Richard Stiff

Richard's career has taken him from teacher in Bognor Regis to Chief Executive of Angus Council via Deputy Chief of Education Leeds, Executive Director of Children's Services and other posts in local government. Richard has extensive experience of working in rural and urban environments in England and Scotland and of public and private sector partnerships.

Since retiring from Angus Council in May 2017, Richard works as an independent public sector consultant. He is a non-executive director of a local authority-owned CIC and a governor of a tertiary college in North Yorkshire.





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**TCV has a Vision of Healthier, Happier Communities for Everyone, and we aim to achieve this by working together with people, communities and partners to deliver practical actions that have a lasting impact on people's health, prospects and outdoor places.**

**Complementing TCV's core work is a network of community groups that regularly work with TCV to organise outdoor and learning activities aimed at bringing the community together tackling social isolation and loneliness, and putting local people in control of their own prospects and outdoor places.**

**The Conservation Volunteers give their time, energy and enthusiasm to transform local areas for the benefit of the whole community. Through your generosity, we can provide the training, support and equipment to help them achieve even more.**

**Please make a donation today to support our valuable work.**

**Visit [www.tcv.org.uk/donate](http://www.tcv.org.uk/donate)**

The Conservation Volunteers  
Sedum House, Mallard Way  
Doncaster DN4 8DB  
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Email: [information@tcv.org.uk](mailto:information@tcv.org.uk)  
[www.tcv.org.uk](http://www.tcv.org.uk)

The Conservation Volunteers, a registered charity in England (261009) and in Scotland (SC039302)

\* Green Gym™ is an internationally registered trade mark of TCV.

