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Charity registration number: 1122103

The Country Trust

(A company limited by guarantee)

Annual Report and Financial Statements

for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

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The Country Trust

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The Country Trust Ltd

Vice Presidents: Sir Henry Aubrey-Fletcher Bt
Sir Nicholas Bacon Bt
Lord Boswell of Aynho DL
W Butterfield
Earl of Carnarvon
J M Carr-Ellison
J Coles B Ed NPQH (appointed Jan 2018)
J Compton (appointed April 2018)
Lord Dear QPM
W J Henderson DL
M Kendall (appointed June 2018)
W Kendall DL (appointed June 2018)
D Laing MA RIBA
Hon. John Leigh-Pemberton
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L V Lyle MA PGCE (appointed Jan 2018)
M Maclay DL
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Dame Fiona Reynolds DBE (appointed March 2018)
E P Serjeant
J R Stanford
I N Tegner CA FRSA
J Tice OBE DL
F Weston MA (Cantab) (appointed May 2018)

Trustees: The Trustees who served the charity during the year were as follows
M A Bufton-McCoy B Phil, Cert Ed (**Chair**)
T Fanshawe (**Vice Chairman**)
S D Bell BA (Hons) ACA CISA CISM
J Brown BSc (Hons) PGCE
T C M Fawcett BSc (Hons)
N J Ford BA MRICS (resigned Dec 2018)
G M H Mills DL
J P Serjeant BA (Hons) ACA
A Stafford MA (Oxon) (appointed Dec 2018)

Chief Executive: J D Attenborough MA (Cantab)

Assistant Director: D Thompson BSc (Hons)

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Trustees' Annual Report 2018

Charitable objectives

Our mission: To bring food, farming and the countryside alive for the children least able to access it, whether through disadvantage or disability.

Our programmes: With the vital support of around 300 farmers and landowners, we help disadvantaged children to learn and grow through;

- day visits to real working farms - Farm Discovery
- residential visits to the countryside - Countryside Discovery
- programmes running through all or part of a school year exploring every aspect of growing, cooking and even selling food - Food Discovery

Our outcomes: This is the difference we want to make across all our programmes:

- Children, their parent helpers and teachers are more knowledgeable and more aware of food, farming and the countryside
- Children are better able to make informed decisions about the food that they eat.
- Children are more engaged with formal education as a result of increased 'real world' and interactive learning experiences
- More teachers see the potential of countryside as a learning resource and feel more confident to use it to enhance their teaching
- Children have more opportunities to develop and display non-cognitive skills, to experience patience, wonder and success
- Children feel more responsible for their own and the wider environment
- Children feel more at home in the countryside and greenspace
- More farmers are able to share their love and passion for what they do

2018 highlights

Our activities - bringing food, farming and the countryside alive for disadvantaged children

- 18,211 children visited real working farms. Though a decrease in absolute terms in comparison to 2017, this reflects an evolving mix of groups. Visits by children needing more support typically comprise much smaller numbers than a mainstream school class (see full report for detail).
- 876 children went on 32 residential visits to the countryside, very similar to 2017.
- 1,422 children experienced a year of Food Discovery, an increase of 278 children.
- We included more children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (at least 59 groups in the 2017/18 academic year).
- We continued to work with refugee families, vulnerable parents and started to work with young carers (16 visits in the 2017/18 academic year including 83 adults).
- We actively sought feedback from every visit or session and followed up with the school if appropriate to inform our practice.

"I think that the experience was revelatory for some of our staff and that they will feel inspired to organise their own trips into the countryside knowing how successful it can be and what an impact it can have on their pupils." Andy Henery, Winchelsea School

Our finances

- 57% growth in income to £1,164K, due to £340k of legacies being received this year
- 4.4% growth in expenditure to £702,974
- 100% of current year expenditure covered by unrestricted reserves at year end

Why we focus on disadvantaged children

“UK research has shown that there is disparity in children’s access to high quality natural environments. All children benefit from opportunities provided by access to outdoor space but these benefits are not equally distributed. Whilst children have universal rights and needs, poverty places severe limits upon the extent to which they can be recognised.”^[1]

This theory is backed by The Institute of Education: *“Some people are simply better placed to take advantage of opportunity, and if equality of outcome is what you are looking for, then the way to achieve it is by offering the greatest opportunity to the least advantaged.”*

Farm Discovery day visits

We want all our visits to

- give children an experience they would not normally have had
- help children gain confidence in the countryside
- give children a better understanding of how and where their food is produced.
- increase children’s interest in learning through their enjoyment of the day
- give reluctant learners the opportunity to engage

“Very impressed with all activities and organisation. Staff were brilliant and informative - children loved all the experiences. Great links between the activities. Will definitely organise to come again.”
Alice Micklethwaite, The Pilgrims School

We evaluated Country Trust farm visits against these 5 simplified outcomes (above) during the 2017/18 academic year, receiving extremely positive feedback from 465 teachers (88% return rate). A full report is available at <http://www.countrytrust.org.uk/what-we-do/evaluating-our-effectiveness> and includes recommendations to improve our programmes.

This year we included analysis of qualitative as well as quantitative feedback, using a light touch thematic approach and the NatCen framework. For the first time, with support from Sir John Cass’s Foundation, we undertook video evaluation two weeks after a number of farm visits to add to our understanding of the longer term impact of our work. These can be viewed [on our website](#), together with the accompanying report.

We are proud of our evaluation and our growing ability to understand the difference we make and are delighted that it has been very well received by funders, and also by other charities.

The difference we made

- Over 99.7% of teachers agree that being on a farm is not an experience their pupils would normally have. Nearly a quarter of the teachers who gave qualitative feedback chose to highlight the value of the visit as a rare experience in the children’s lives.
- There is an increase in those who strongly agree that children who struggle to engage in the classroom find the farm a stimulating place to be - rising to 93% from 86% last year.

^[1] Thomas and Thompson 2004 <https://www.demos.co.uk/files/AChildsPlace.pdf>

- Over 99.5% of teachers agree that their pupils gained confidence in being outdoors and in the countryside during their visit.
- Over 99% of teachers agree that their pupils have a better understanding of how and where their food is produced as a result of the visit.
- Over 99% of teachers agree that reluctant learners had an opportunity to engage whilst on a visit.
- Over 98% of teachers agree that the children’s enjoyment of the day increased their learning.
- 88% of teachers are explicitly using farm visits to link to the curriculum.
- After their visit, 99.7% of teachers felt more confident in using the countryside as a learning resource to enhance their teaching.
- 100% of the respondents completing our new Family Group feedback form, agreed or strongly agreed that the visit promoted language and inclusion.
- There is a small but noticeable trend in our programmes becoming an opportunity for a shared, positive, new experience which brings families together.

NB: Where the percentage is 99% or more, in every case the missing fraction of a percentage point relates to a contrasting opinion voiced by the same teacher. In follow up with the head teacher, a more positive view was given.

For the first time we analysed qualitative feedback from teachers to identify the popularity of curriculum subjects covered on our farm visits.



Countryside Discovery Residential visits

We use Survey Monkey to gather feedback before and after visits and we gather structured feedback from children during the visits. A full report is available at <http://www.countrytrust.org.uk/what-we-do/evaluating-our-effectiveness> and includes recommendations to improve our programmes.

The difference we made:

- 100% of teachers rate Country Trust residentials as either ‘Excellent’ (74%) or ‘Very good’ (26%) for providing value for money, with an increase of 18% for ‘Excellent’ this year.
- 100% of teachers agree that their pupils were also able to discover new places, 95.2% of teachers report that their needs have been ‘fully met’ in widening children’s experience.
- 100% of teachers agree that the residential had provided their pupils with a sense of achievement, with 80.9% agreeing that it had also increased motivation.
- 95.2% of teachers say that their residential ‘fully met’ their need to both raise self-esteem and develop independence in their pupils. An increase of 5% from last year.

- 90% of teachers rate our on-site organisation, and the quality of our activities as either ‘Excellent’ (60%) or ‘Very good’ (30%).
- 90.4% of teachers agree that they were able to transfer experiences back to the classroom, with the remainder agreeing they were able to apply it to some extent.
- Activities involving animals and natural landscapes continue to receive top ratings from the children.
- 90.4% of teachers agree that their pupils had an opportunity to meet positive role models, whilst on the residential.
- 85.6% of teachers report that their expectations have been ‘fully met’ for encouraging children to develop an interest in the countryside.
- 81% of teachers agree that pupils were able to try and taste new things, as part of their residential.
- 60% of teachers recognise that residential help to close the attainment gap for Pupil Premium funded children.
- Nearly 40% of children on residential from London to Norfolk and Suffolk had never visited the countryside before, 25% in Yorkshire.

Food Discovery

In the 2017/18 academic year we ran Food Discovery programmes in 22 schools involving 1,422 children. We continued to run a range of parent cooking sessions supporting Life Skills programmes and other initiatives for vulnerable or isolated parents, and for the first time piloted training another organisation, Adventure Hyndburn to deliver Food Discovery, with The Country Trust providing farm visits.

“I now know what is good and tasty to cook for my family and we’re starting to eat much better. Although it is still difficult to say ‘no’ to them when they want all the sugary treats.” Parent, Catton Grove

We seek feedback from teachers at the start of, and on completion of the programme, and seek feedback after every session. We survey the knowledge and attitudes of pupils at the start of each programme and on completion to assess the impact of Food Discovery. A full report is available at <http://www.countrytrust.org.uk/what-we-do/evaluating-our-effectiveness>

The difference we made:

- All teachers report an increased use of cooking, tasting, gardening or learning outside the classroom activities as a result of Food Discovery.
- 99.3% of sessions are rated by teachers as ‘Very good’ or ‘Excellent’ in terms of management and organisation, and 97.7% of sessions in terms of pupil enjoyment.
- 97% of teachers agree that Food Discovery enables children to make more informed decisions about what they will eat.
- 95% of pupils report they have learnt that they enjoy spending time in the countryside.
- Over 83% of teachers agree that taking part in Food Discovery helps children feel more responsible for their own and the wider environment.
- As a result of taking part in Food Discovery, over three quarters of pupils think they will eat more fruit and vegetables from now on.
- Over 36% of pupils tell us they go on to cook a Food Discovery recipe at home.
- There was a 20% increase in pupils reporting that they enjoyed tasting new foods over the year.
- Teachers believe that taking part in Food Discovery contributes to closing the attainment gap for those in receipt of Pupil Premium.
- Teachers are able to link all elements of Food Discovery back to the curriculum, providing a real-life platform for learning.
- In the qualitative feedback, 40% of teachers mentioned the impact Food Discovery had on non-cognitive skills like self-confidence, teamwork and communication.

- Children’s confidence in their ability to grow their own food at home decreases across the year - this may indicate a naivety at the start of the year and deeper knowledge of the challenges by the end of the year?

Our focus - disadvantaged children

The Country Trust’s particular mission is to focus on those children least able to access the countryside, primarily children from areas of urban and rural deprivation, but also children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN/D) and those facing other challenges that limit their opportunities. We help to address poverty of opportunity, bringing rich experiences - vital for building language, literacy, self-confidence and self-esteem - to children who lead limited and often chaotic lives. We focus on primary schools with a greater than average percentage of children from low income families, defined by their eligibility for Free School Meals (FSM) - the national average during 2018 was 24.9% using the Ever6 measure. We recognise that universal FSM provision at KS1 has an impact on parents’ willingness to register their eligibility and so FSM percentages may now be understated. We will also examine the Index of Multiple Deprivation and talk to the school about their school community.

This ensures that we focus on children in areas of deprivation, but also don’t miss those living in wealthier areas where outcomes for disadvantaged children are notably worse¹. One in four children in Britain is growing up in poverty, defined as those lacking *“the resources to obtain the types of diets, participate in the activities, and have the living conditions and amenities that are customary... in the societies to which they belong.”*² By the time they start school, children from the poorest families and therefore eligible for FSM, have already fallen behind in language and personal development, *“by age five, children from the poorest fifth of homes in the UK are already on average over a year behind their expected years of development.”*³ As they grow up they are twice as likely to have Special Educational Needs⁴, twice as likely to be obese⁵, three times as likely to have a mental health problem⁶ and are just under half as likely to achieve the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics than children growing up in more affluent homes⁷. *“Too many children fail before they’ve even started in life. This is in large part because of an enduring ‘achievement gap’: the gap in outcomes between disadvantaged children (in this country measured by uptake of free school meals) and their better-off peers (those not entitled to free school meals).”*⁸

The amount of per pupil spending in England’s schools has fallen by 8% since 2010⁹, forcing Head teachers and school governors to make very difficult decisions. As a result, the trips and visits that provide vital time for personal development, for learning essential life skills, for building resilience, for opening their eyes to a wider world and for growing communication skills may be cut. The number of schools able to fund their own Food Discovery programme has decreased significantly in the last two years and we are conscious of a growing number of schools where the cost of transport has become a barrier to participation in our Farm Discovery visits. The impact is potentially huge for children, the ‘soft’ non-academic skills gained through programmes like ours are *“increasingly thought to play an important part in learning, as well as contributing to children’s wider development, well-being and readiness for life beyond school.”*¹⁰

This issue is exacerbated for children from low income families where activities and opportunities may not be available at home either.

¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/662744/State_of_the_Nation_2017_-_Social_Mobility_in_Great_Britain.pdf

² <http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/what-is-poverty>

³ http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/Sutton_Trust_Cognitive_Report.pdf

⁴ SEN and their links to poverty- Rowntree

⁵ Childhood Obesity a Plan for Action HM Gov

⁶ Centreforum Commission on children and young people’s mental health

⁷ gov.uk/SFR62_2016

⁸ <https://www.savethechildren.org.uk/content/dam/global/reports/education-and-child-protection/too-young-to-fail.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/13144>

¹⁰ <https://www.suttontrust.com/research-paper/life-lessons-workplace-skills/>

Review of achievements and performance for the year 2018

2018 was the first year of our new Strategic Plan 2018-2020. Our aim is to increase the number of children we work with, whilst also focusing on the quality, outcomes, relevance and impact of our activities and programmes, on developing powerful partnerships, on growing and broadening our income streams, and on valuing and investing in the people who make The Country Trust possible.

Activities

Farm Discovery visits

“The children were really amazed by the vast green open space around them. Most had never even been out of Ashington or even on a bus!” Mrs Fraser, Thomas Bewick Primary

18,211 children visited real working farms and estates during 2018

This is a lower figure than in 2017, and therefore is not aligned with our strategic plan. Our analysis shows the following:

- A higher number of small/specialist groups. Average class size is 26 children, however, with specialist groups this may be as low as 9 as more support is needed.
- We over-estimated what new Coordinators could achieve in their first term.
- Illness - 5 key staff experienced significant (but unrelated) ill health. The geography of our team structure didn't enable us to provide cover, or necessarily pick up on problems at an early stage.
- Changes to staff roles and responsibilities and a recruitment setback in one area.

We have adapted our practice as follows in order to increase the numbers of children visiting working farms and estates in 2019:

- Clearer guidance on estimation and better visibility of the number of specialist groups we work with.
- We are recruiting and managing our Coordinators so that they are better able to provide support and cover to each other.
- We have reviewed and strengthened our recruitment process to ensure it is fit for purpose.

Hands-on visits to real working farms and estates are at the heart of all our work, and every year, we make it possible for hundreds of volunteer farmers and landowners to welcome thousands of disadvantaged children from all backgrounds and faiths onto their farms to share their passion for food, farming and the countryside. Children (and teachers!) are invited out of their classrooms, away from any social or academic constraints and into the wider world. They see a wide variety of crops grown on a commercial scale, learning that farming is a business, they experience huge farm machinery up close and may be inspired at how farming has embraced the latest technology, they have the opportunity to interact with livestock (often a very memorable 'first' for the children) and discuss life cycles and food production. It is very important to us that children really

“It’s absolutely incredible that that oak tree has lived here for so long - 400 years - just think of the history! I never knew trees could live so long!” Pupil Armitage C of E Primary

“Mark and Clive were amazing, very patient with the children and very knowledgeable. We will continue to build on what we have learnt today in topic this half term. Thank you!” Haley Hudson, St James Academy

enjoy their day too. On a Country Trust visit they are given the chance to 'be' in the countryside, to run in meadows, to roll down a hill, to smell the country air and hear birdsong.

“Opportunity to learn first-hand how food goes from field to fork. They didn't know where all our food comes from! Seeing machines is always interesting for the children and makes them realise how many things farmers have to do to their crops. Feeling the different crops - great for those really tactile children.” Hayley Taylor, Baddesley Juniors

Many of the children have chaotic and stressful home lives and may not go on day trips or holidays. Not only does enjoyment enhance learning but a brilliant day out on the farm helps to build a bank of great experiences and memories, enabling them to talk and write from firsthand experience. We know that the opportunity to build positive relationships with new adults is also very valuable. Our skilled Coordinators work closely with class teachers and hosts to ensure that the carefully planned interactive activities enhance classroom learning, allow the children to gain confidence in the countryside, provide reluctant learners with the chance to engage and offer all children insight into an inspirational world which may have previously been unavailable to them. Almost every class we work with contains at least one child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEN/D) and this year we have been more overt in encouraging SEN/D groups to take part in our activities. We have successfully integrated children with severe physical disabilities, and significant behavioural, learning and social needs into all our activities.

“So accommodating for our complex pupils and great at explaining what we can see on the farm.” Melissa Timms, Dorothy Goodman School

The visits are provided free of charge to schools, with schools taking responsibility for transport arrangements and costs. Increasingly, the cost of transport is becoming a barrier to participation and we are trying to raise more funds to enable us to offer transport subsidies. The majority of visits are for one class. With many schools increasing in size, we also host larger groups if the farm facilities, and our staff support can accommodate them safely and to the same high standards.

In Hampshire, slightly different funding arrangements have traditionally enabled us to provide farm and estate days for children throughout Hampshire. Our aim, however, is for our focus to be purely on disadvantaged children by the end of 2020. Countryside Days enable country estates to welcome larger numbers of children. We run Countryside Adventure Days specifically for SEN/D children.

Parents

This year we have seen an increase in teachers commenting on parents' involvement with the day. Schools have been involving parents to support farm visits for many years, but there is a small but noticeable trend in asking for activities for parents, and family groups. Many schools struggle to engage some parents with their children's learning, and the Educational Endowment Foundation has reported on the challenging nature of developing effective parental engagement¹¹. Using a farm visit as a shared new experience which brings families together is something which we are aware that schools may need more of in the future.

“Parents who otherwise remain uninterested in their child's learning not only came on our trip but have also returned to show us a floral display they created for themselves at their home.” Emma Ince, Tudor C of E Primary

¹¹ <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/parental-engagement/#closeSignup>

Refugees, young carers and vulnerable families

“The group got to experience a family day out together which they felt safe and secure attending. They gave one another confidence in handling equipment and touching animals” Lesley Young, Refugee Action, Bradford

The Country Trust’s mission is to bring food, farming and the countryside alive for those children who are least able to access it. Working with groups supporting young carers, vulnerable families and refugees has been an excellent way to extend our ability to meet this objective.

Four of our Coordinators led 16 visits with non-school groups: 4 with young carer groups facilitated by the local council and 12 with family and refugee groups in the Bradford area, facilitated by Enable2, and involving Bevan Health,

Barnardo’s Stronger Families, Bradford Refugee Action and SELFA.

A young carer is “is someone under 18 who helps look after someone in their family, or a friend, who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol.”¹² Young carers have limited opportunities to enjoy themselves and one of the ways local authorities provide support is through organising activities and day trips.

Comments from young carers are very positive:

“It has been great, I loved every single bit, feeding the lamb was best.” Maddox 11

“I didn’t know you could eat plants (said after smelling and tasting herbs for the first time).”

Young carer, Thameside

Countryside Discovery Residential visits

876 children from 25 schools and 1 non school-group went on 32 residentials in 2018 (calendar year)

“All our pupils, from a deprived area of east London, have never had experience with nature at this high level. The Country Trust have set up a fantastic opportunity for all our pupils, who have thoroughly enjoyed every aspect of their visit.” Culloden Primary

We celebrated 25 years of residential visits this year, enabling children from disadvantaged areas of London, Yorkshire and Lancashire, many of whom would never leave the area where they live and go to school, to discover the wonders of the countryside. A typical visit will involve a two to four-night stay at a hostel or bunk barn, and children will explore forests, farms, rivers and the seaside. Schools integrate the residential into the children’s learning and personal development, and they eat well, learning and playing outside together. Natural habitats, managed landscapes and heritage attractions provide an exciting context for geography, science and history. Autumn visits can generate greater teamwork and cooperation amongst children for the remainder of that school year, and hopefully beyond. Summer visits prepare children well for transition to their next year group or secondary school as they become more confident and resilient. For many children this is their first time away from home and their first time in the countryside.

¹² <https://carers.org/about-us/about-young-carers>

In our 25th year of residential visits we were thrilled to hear from a young man, now aged 35, who took part in one of our first visits, from Hague Primary School, Tower Hamlets.

“I still remember it like yesterday.. I’d never been outside Bethnal Green before.. I’d never seen a forest in my life.. It was an inspiration, at home I was surrounded by concrete. Feeling the air on the farm, the smell of freedom, the open space, stuck in my mind. I work in St Ann’s now and it is quiet and peaceful too. My children are surrounded by the countryside now.”

Visiting Suffolk with Hague Primary School 25 years later in 2017, this pupil’s comment shows that Country Trust Residentials are no less important or impactful now than they were 25 years ago:

“I will remember everything because i always stay at home and this time i was outside more and explored. It will surely be a memory for me.”

“One autistic child has been thinking about the school journey for four years and it lived up to his high expectations. He was a constant commentary on what was happening out the coach window and said ‘everything in Suffolk was as amazing and beautiful as I expected’. He is now making links from the classroom back to Suffolk experiences.” Hague Primary School, London (Suffolk residential)

“It would have been difficult to generate the sense of wonder about the natural world that the residential offers in the classroom. Although this is not strictly a curriculum outcome, it is an important source of motivation for the children to move forward with their science learning in particular.” Woolmore Primary School (Norfolk residential)

“Diary entries written across week - highest quality writing they have produced yet this year.”
Hague Primary

Value for money

With increasing budgetary pressures within schools, it is positive to note that, when asked about our residential programmes providing value for money, this year we recorded our highest ever ‘Excellent’ rating. Reflecting the worth, even in financially constrained times, that our schools place on our residentials. The Country Trust, through raising funds, is able to subsidise 25% of the overall cost of the residential. Some schools meet the remaining costs in full or in part, whilst others ask for some parental contribution. The reason given by a teacher in Yorkshire for the unexpected low numbers attending one of the visits this year was, parents’ “lack of funds following the expense of Eid”, a recognition that schools and families are increasingly having to make choices.

Food Discovery

1,422 children experienced Food Discovery during the 2017/18 academic year.

Over 10,000 children from over 75 schools have participated in the programme in all since 2012.

“All children were very engaged in the project and took their learning home. Parents did begin to cook at home with their children and children also went home and showed an interest in gardening.” Bassett Green Year 5 teaching team (end of year feedback)

Over the course of a school year, we teach pupils how to grow vegetables and herbs, and how to cook cheap, healthy delicious meals from the crops they are growing and other simple, nutritious ingredients. They explore and taste new foods (a significant step for children who may have very limited diets and life experiences which lead them to lack confidence and fear change), visit local farms to see food growing at a commercial scale, run a Playground Market and finally cook up a celebration Harvest Feast to share with their friends and families. The simple act of sowing seeds and nurturing them enables children to experience patience, wonder, success and responsibility. Resilient children have a bank of happy memories, and experiences of success to draw on when faced with change, challenges, or failure. Cooking a meal to take home to their family gives children an enormous sense of pride, and parents who might be reluctant to engage with the school, may support a gardening session or come to the Harvest Feast to celebrate their child's involvement in Food Discovery.

“The children left the session absolutely ‘buzzing’ about what they had made. They spoke of how much fun it was to make their own food and that they wanted to try the recipe out again at home. All the children of all academic abilities felt like they had achieved.” Anita Warren, St Christopher’s C of E Primary

The difference we make:

“Seeing nutritional fresh food was so valuable for several children who do not seem to get balanced meals.” Teacher, Catton Grove

“One child who is a very fussy eater tried all the foods and discovered 2 new foods he liked!” Helen Court, Mansbridge Primary

“Pupil A has increasingly taken a leadership role in the CT lessons. This hasn’t overflowed into other lessons yet, but it has been wonderful to see her feel safe to develop these skills.” Rebekah, Canon Barnett

“So you plant one bean and then you get lots....that’s cool!” Pupil, Mile Cross

“The children with EAL needs in the class, along with a child who is a selective mute, were all thoroughly engaged and excited throughout the session.” Teacher, Bassett Green (at the harvest feast)

GDPR and Cybersecurity

Working to a yearlong plan we were compliant with GDPR by May 2018. All our supporters have been contacted and any communication preferences received have been recorded and implemented. Privacy policies are available on our website <http://www.countrytrust.org.uk/privacy-policy>

Our expert Volunteer IT Consultant Martin Stevens undertook a cybersecurity review (a 2018 milestone in the Strategic Plan) and his recommendations are now being implemented.

Exceptional developments

The Trustees were honoured to receive two major legacies in 2018 - the first in the Charity’s history. One from the late Duke of Westminster, Country Trust President for 25 years, and another from an anonymous donor. The Board and the Executive are now committed to a plan to make best use of these amazing gifts to bring opportunities to more children, but to do so in a way that can be sustained. The requirement to recognise this extraordinary income in the year in which it was received has obviously significantly increased the Charity’s income for 2018, taking it to just over £1 million and therefore into

the next income bracket for charities. The Charity's income without the legacies however would place it squarely within the £500k-£1 million income range. This income range is also reflected in the Charity's Budget for 2019.

We were delighted to receive support from the Westminster Foundation, Dulverton Trust and The Rank Foundation, enabling us to continue the transformational organisational development that has been taking place over the last 4 years.

- Income rose by 57%. However, this was largely due to £340k of legacies being received in the year.
- Website traffic rose and we received a steady flow of enquiries from schools, hosts and potential supporters. Our annual evaluation reports, policies and recruitment advertisements are all published on the website.
- Clear communications planning and improved story telling resulted in 20 regional and national media articles including a feature on our farm visits for refugee groups on BBC Countryfile. We have continued to share stories to a growing audience through social media (Facebook and Twitter) and with the support of a graduate placement our Instagram presence is increasing.
- We have appointed two part time Major Donor Fundraisers to grow our network of support in East Anglia and the North East.
- We have followed the progress of the Agriculture Bill, submitting thoughts on public access and education to a number of MPs and peers. We are in conversation with Natural England and DEFRA over Environmental Land Management Scheme trials and ideas.
- We continue to develop our evaluation and are proud that to date two organisations have asked us to share how we go about it.
- We continue to develop our Health and Safety policy and practice and throughout 2018 have been gathering data and trialling approaches to lessen the risk of contamination via footwear on visits to livestock farms.
- We undertook our first crowdfunding campaign, which though it didn't follow a conventional course was successful in raising the funds for a Southampton school to have a Food Discovery programme.

With the support of the John Ellerman Foundation we were once again able to meet together as a whole organisation and benefited greatly from the chance to share strategy and best practice, and to be inspired by external speakers including Professor Mick Waters. This event has become an exceptionally important part of our coordinated growth and accelerates and enhances our learning.

With funding from BBC Children in Need we were able to continue our programme of visits for refugees, young carers and vulnerable families, developing our practice as we learnt how these visits differ from our programmes for primary schools. We have also been able to work very successfully with schools who wanted to use our visits or our Food Discovery sessions to engage hard to reach parents.

2018 was our 40th Anniversary year. The Partners of C Hoare and Co generously hosted a reception for Trustees, Vice Presidents, farmer hosts, funders, supporters and the daughter and grandson of the Charity's founder, Lance Coates. Sheila Dillon (Radio 4 Food Programme) and the Head teacher of St Paul's Primary school, Wood Green, joined the CEO and Chair of Trustees in presenting the work of The Country Trust. With the ambition of building a network of 40 new friends, a number of Farm Discovery visits were opened up to guests during the year to enable them to get first-hand experience of a Country Trust visit alongside excited children, many discovering the countryside for the first time. The success of these visits has led to the programme continuing into 2019. The Trustees were delighted to receive photos and stories from the early days of The Country Trust during the year.

Volunteers

The Country Trust relies heavily on the support and dedication of volunteers: as hosts for visits, supporting Country Trust visits and activities, and providing expert support and guidance to staff. The Charity is fortunate to have the support of over 900 such volunteers who collectively donated in the region of 11,000 hours in 2018. The Board of Trustees would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers for their commitment and support, without which the Trust could not accomplish its work.

Partnerships

After a successful pilot in 2017, our 'Discover Wheat' partnership with Warburtons developed to a full programme encompassing 26 visits for schools to Warburtons growers in 2018. Feedback from schools been very positive (evaluated for Warburtons by the British Nutrition Foundation) and we have been able to apply learning from the programme to our work as a whole.

We were delighted to work with a team from Ardan UK and the Ardan Foundation. Their support is enabling hundreds of children to visit working farms across the country, and 30 children in a former coalfield area in the NE to experience a year of Food Discovery.

We are members of LEAF (formerly FACE) and we continue to be part of the core partner group of Countryside Classroom and are delighted at its growing visibility amongst teachers. The CEO also takes part in the Access to Farms Network - there is great value in being able to share with and learn from other member organisations.

We have been able to add value to the programmes of other organisations who support the most vulnerable in our society including Barnardo's, Enable2, Young Carer groups, SELFA, the Catton Grove Primary school LifeSkills programme and Adventure Hyndburn.

We continue to benefit from the collective learning and encouragement provided by the Brilliant Residential campaign led by Learning Away, and to work with Reach2 and Ark Multi Academy Trusts.

Fundraising performance

Income increased from £739,674 to £1,164,257 of which 62% was unrestricted. A further £141,653 of income received in 2018 was deferred to 2019 for activity taking place in the second half of the academic year.

Financial Review

Having successfully rebuilt The Charity's reserves, the focus in 2018 was on deciding at what level they should be maintained, and how to use funds beyond this level to best achieve our mission. Reserves rose from £289,268 to £750,551. Unrestricted reserves rose from £230,008 to £703,891. Expenditure was carefully monitored and controlled and rose from £673,056 to £702,974. This was actually below budget as a result of slightly lower than anticipated activity levels in our Farm Discovery programme, however it did include a significant increase in our day rates for our self-employed Coordinators, following benchmarking.

Financial management consists of the monthly preparation of management accounts that are distributed to all Trustees for review. Monthly forecasting enables Trustees to view the financial landscape ahead. Our mid-year review included consideration of our reserves and legacy planning.

CEO or Assistant Director authorisation is required for all payments; all payments made by the Charity over £5,000 require dual authorisation with an authorised Trustee signatory. Following a successful

Independent Examination in 2017, the Trustees chose a full audit for 2018, which then became a requirement as our income has exceeded £1m as a result of the two legacies received during the year.

Whilst the Charity considers that sound management, strong central administration, and adequate capacity to fundraise and raise the profile of the Country Trust fundamentally underpin successful delivery of the Charity's objectives, it continues to strive for a lean and efficient operation.

Reserves policy

The Charity's reserves policy is to have unrestricted funds available for three months' operating costs. This would indicate a reserves level of approximately £175,000. At the end of 2018 the unrestricted reserve level was £703,891 up from £230,008. Our reserves are now substantially higher than required by our policy, primarily as a result of the two legacies received in the second half of 2018. These additional funds will be used over the coming years to bring the working countryside alive for significantly more children experiencing disadvantage by means of a carefully planned, stepped and sustainable expansion of our activities. This is described in more detail in the Strategic Plan and reflected in the Budget for 2019.

Principal funding sources

The Charity continues to derive the majority of its funding from grant making trusts, with a significant proportion also earned from schools in the delivery of services such as Food Discovery and in the contributions received from schools towards their Residential visits. A target within the Strategic Plan is to increase the percentage of funding committed for more than one year, in order to support longer term planning. We are pleased to report that 7 multi-year funding commitments were secured in 2018, totalling £64,826.

We would like to acknowledge the support received from all our funders, but mention specifically, Sir John Cass's Foundation, The Dulverton Trust, Lance Coates Foundation, John Ellerman Foundation, The Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation, Westminster Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Yorkshire Agricultural Society.

Income from corporate donations is level at £92.9k, helping to meet our strategic objective of diversifying our funding sources. The Trustees would once again like to particularly thank the Charity's Vice Presidents for their support in identifying and making introductions to potential new funding sources.

Fundraising practice

Legal and ethical fundraising remains a key target of the Trustees, and they take their responsibilities with regard to proper fundraising practice very seriously. They have read the Charity Commission's *Guidance on Charities and Fundraising Practice (CC20 updated in 2016)* as well as the *Charity Governance Code*, and the *Guidance Note from the Fundraising Regulator on New Reporting Requirements published October 2018*. The Country Trust is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and complies with the *Code of Fundraising Practice*.

- Fundraising activity is included within the Trust's Risk Register, which is reviewed at each Board meeting; a senior member of staff directly involved with fundraising is present at every Board meeting.
- The Charity does not make use of professional fundraisers or commercial participators.
- The Charity complies with the Fundraising Regulator's voluntary regulation scheme.

- All fundraising is carried out by employed staff, or very occasionally named volunteers working closely with the employed staff on our behalf, primarily networking with peers and friends. Some volunteers will fundraise in aid of The Country Trust and the Charity provides support for them on its website.
- The Charity did not receive any complaints about fundraising activities carried out by The Charity or someone acting on The Charity's behalf.
- The Charity respects the privacy of the public, including the need to take special care with vulnerable people. Any mailing or emailing for fundraising purposes is in accordance with GDPR preferences. Public fundraising is through online fundraising platforms, or through static collection goblets and is carried out in accordance with the *Code of Fundraising Practice*. The Charity undertakes very little face to face fundraising and what is done is primarily by invitation.

The Charity will comply with requests issued by the *Fundraising Preference Service*. The Charity followed the ICOs 12 steps and achieved GDPR compliance by May 2018. The Charity has registered with the ICO.

The Charity had one anonymous donation (a legacy) over £25,000. The Charity undertook due diligence before accepting the donation and the Executors have been closely associated with The Charity for over 20 years. However, in accordance with Charity Commission requirements that all anonymous donations over £25,000 must be reported, a Serious Incident Report was filed with the Charity Commission. The Charity Commission has confirmed that, based on the information we provided, we have assured them at this stage that the trustees have dealt with the matter appropriately and responsibly.

Safeguarding

Government guidance is clear that all organisations working with children, young people, families, parents and carers have responsibilities. At The Country Trust we recognise that the welfare of all children is paramount and that all children, regardless of ability or culture, have equal rights of protection. We have a duty of care when they are in our charge and we will do everything we can to provide a safe and caring environment whilst they attend our activities. Our policy for child safeguarding can be found on our website and is reviewed annually by our Board of Trustees. The Country Trust is a member of SAFEcic, an umbrella organisation providing safeguarding training, advice and standards. All staff, volunteers and Trustees undertake safeguarding training and during the year our Designated Safeguarding Lead and our Chair of Trustees completed training and attended a national conference on safeguarding. The Charity's Deputy DSL retired and a new Deputy was appointed who has undertaken Level 3 training. During the year 4 safeguarding concerns were assessed by the DSL and DDSL, and there was 1 referral to local safeguarding services. We sought further advice from our safeguarding umbrella body SafeCIC on 2 occasions.

Health and Safety

Our health and safety policy can be found on our website and is reviewed every two years. Following the last review we are part way through the planned process of implementing some significant changes to strengthen our practice, including footwear hygiene, with a programme related to farmer host Risk Assessments planned for 2019/20. The Trustees have also undertaken a review of our policy in practice. Safeguarding, and Health and Safety reports of all disclosures, accidents, incidents and near misses and subsequent actions taken are brought to every Board meeting, preserving the appropriate confidentiality.

Plans for the future

In 2019, our focus will be on developing sustainable, multi-year funding derived from a range of sources, to help us maintain, but ideally grow, both the depth and reach of our work. We will also plan the use of our reserves to enable sustainable growth in reach, quality and impact.

- We want to take more children onto farms and estates, and to maintain or grow our Food Discovery and Residential programmes.
- We want to continue to reach disadvantaged children through working with parents and families.
- We will continue to develop our partnership working, with corporate partners, but also with other agencies and charities to enhance our ability to achieve our mission.
- We will continue to be a learning organisation, seeking feedback, evaluating the difference we make and publishing our annual evaluation reports on our website.
- We will demonstrate that we value and invest in the people who make The Country Trust possible, including holding our first farmer host workshop.
- We will continue the transition of Country Trust Hampshire to full integration with The Country Trust.

Our operating environment is constantly changing; in 2019 we will need to pay particular attention to the following challenges and opportunities:

- Public and private sector response to Brexit particularly in relation to agriculture, the countryside and education.
- Any impact on availability of funding as a result of financial volatility.
- Schools facing increasing pupil numbers and class sizes, the new Ofsted Planning Framework and curriculum changes, and continuing budget cuts.
- The continued rise of Multi Academy Trusts and the accompanying changes to communication and decision making.
- Continued concern for children's mental health, as well as their physical wellbeing and educational attainment
- The needs of vulnerable parents and families
- The need for transparency in all our practices.

Structure, Governance and Management

Structure

The Country Trust was founded in 1978 and is registered with the Charity Commission under Charity Number 1122103. The Board of Trustees, Board of Vice Presidents, Chief Executive Officer, senior staff members and professional advisers are listed on page 1.

On the 23rd November 2007 the Country Trust was incorporated; it became a company limited by guarantee and not having share capital. On the 1st January 2008, the Charity commenced trading as an incorporated Charity. The Company number is 6436266 and the registered address is shown on page 1.

Governing document

The Charity is governed by the Memorandum and Articles of Association of The Country Trust Ltd.

Governing Body

The structure of the Charity consists of a Board of Trustees, a Chief Executive supported by a Senior Leadership Team, and a non-executive board of Vice Presidents. The Board of Trustees is a self-appointing body. The Chief Executive reports directly to the Chair of Trustees and is responsible for the day-to-day running of the Charity. The Board of Vice Presidents has no executive power; it operates as an advisory, networking and fundraising resource.

Recruitment and training of Trustees

Trustees are recruited as and when required through advertising, personal recommendation and through the recommendation of third party advisors according to the Board's specifications concerning eligibility, personal competence, and specialist skills. Potential candidates are invited to apply and are interviewed by the Chair and at least one other Trustee. Successful applicants are co-opted to join the Board until their appointment is confirmed. Training and induction for Trustees is now in place. One Trustee resigned and one Trustee was appointed during 2018.

Organisational management

The Charity's Trustees are legally responsible for the overall management and control of the Charity. The Board of Trustees meets four times a year to discuss and implement strategic issues, monitor income and expenditure, monitor risk, review and approve policies and approve annual budgets. The day to day running of the Charity is delegated to the Chief Executive, the Senior Leadership Team, staff and sessional staff, and reports to the Board monthly and quarterly.

The Country Trust Hampshire is managed as part of The Country Trust.

Risk management

The Board of Trustees is responsible for the management of risks associated with the activities of the Charity. The Board refers to the Charity's Risk Register at each meeting. The Risk Register is prepared and updated by the Chief Executive. Risk Assessments are prepared by staff and self-employed sessional contractors for all activities led by the Charity. The Charity receives the help of professional advisors for risks associated with health and safety, safeguarding and employment practice.

The Board of Trustees also has in place key controls for use by the Charity, such as formal agendas for meetings, comprehensive strategic planning and monthly management accounting, established lines of

reporting, formal written policies and a review schedule, clear authorisation levels for all payments and a safeguarding policy which provides guidance for all on best safe practice for adults within an organisation working with children.

Strategy

A new Strategic Plan 2018-2020 was approved in December 2017. By 2020:-

- **We will be providing transformative opportunities to more disadvantaged children**
- **We will have increased and diversified our funding streams, and made them more resilient**
- **We will have forged more, powerful partnerships greatly enhancing our ability to achieve our mission**
- **We will have enhanced the impact and quality of our work, our relevance and our effectiveness**
- **We will be doing more to value and invest in the people who make The Country Trust possible**

How the Charity's activities deliver public benefit

The Trustees are confident that the activities of the Trust fulfil the requirements set out in the Charity Commission's guidance on Charities and Public Benefit, to which they have had due regard. Most of the Charity's activities focus on the education of children experiencing disadvantage, whether economic, social or educational and are undertaken to further the charitable objectives of the Trust for the public benefit.

Statement of compliance with prevailing laws and regulations

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the accounting policies set out in notes to the accounts and comply with the charity's governing document, the Charities Act 2011 and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland published on 16 July 2014.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies entitled to the small companies exemption.

The Country Trust

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees (who are also the directors of The Country Trust for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the financial statements in accordance with the United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) and applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the trustees of the charity on 26 March 2019 and signed on its behalf by:

M A Bufton-McCoy B Phil, Cert Ed
Chair of Trustees

The Country Trust

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Country Trust

Opinion

We have audited the financial statements of The Country Trust (the 'charity') for the year ended 31 December 2018, which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cash Flows, and Notes to the Financial Statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is United Kingdom Accounting Standards, comprising Charities SORP - FRS 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and applicable law (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charity's affairs as at 31 December 2018 and of its results for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the charity in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the ISAs (UK) require us to report to you where:

- the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is not appropriate; or
- the trustees have not disclosed in the financial statements any identified material uncertainties that may cast significant doubt about the charity's ability to continue to adopt the going concern basis of accounting for a period of at least twelve months from the date when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Other matter

The prior year financial statements are unaudited because the total income in the prior year was below the audit requirement threshold.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the annual report, other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

The Country Trust

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Country Trust

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of our knowledge and understanding of the company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees' Annual Report.

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept, or returns adequate for our audit have not been received from branches not visited by us; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities (set out on page 19), the trustees are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

As part of an audit in accordance with ISAs (UK), we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

The Country Trust

Independent Auditor's Report to the Members of The Country Trust

- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.
- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the charity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the trustees.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the trustees use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the charity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures, and whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.
- Obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence regarding the financial information of the entities or business activities within the charity to express an opinion on the financial statements. We are responsible for the direction, supervision and performance of the charity audit. We remain solely responsible for our audit opinion.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charity's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its trustees as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Colin Andrew Barker FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)
For and on behalf of Edmund Carr LLP, Statutory Auditor

146 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0AW

28 March 2019

The Country Trust

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 December 2018 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Other Comprehensive Income)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Income and Endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	719,152	291,022	1,010,174	586,366
Charitable activities	4	-	153,533	153,533	153,068
Investment income	5	550	-	550	240
Total income		<u>719,702</u>	<u>444,555</u>	<u>1,164,257</u>	<u>739,674</u>
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	6	256,127	446,847	702,974	673,056
Total expenditure		<u>256,127</u>	<u>446,847</u>	<u>702,974</u>	<u>673,056</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		463,575	(2,292)	461,283	66,618
Transfers between funds		10,308	(10,308)	-	-
Net movement in funds		473,883	(12,600)	461,283	66,618
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		<u>230,008</u>	<u>59,260</u>	<u>289,268</u>	<u>222,650</u>
Total funds carried forward	16	<u><u>703,891</u></u>	<u><u>46,660</u></u>	<u><u>750,551</u></u>	<u><u>289,268</u></u>

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The Country Trust
(Registration number: 6436266)
Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2018

	Note	2018 £	2017 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	12	6,371	1,413
Current assets			
Debtors	13	33,194	24,258
Cash at bank and in hand	18	<u>887,674</u>	<u>512,464</u>
		920,868	536,722
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	14	<u>(176,688)</u>	<u>(248,867)</u>
Net current assets		<u>744,180</u>	<u>287,855</u>
Net assets		<u>750,551</u>	<u>289,268</u>
Funds of the charity:			
Restricted funds			
		46,660	59,260
Unrestricted income funds			
Unrestricted funds		<u>703,891</u>	<u>230,008</u>
Total funds	16	<u>750,551</u>	<u>289,268</u>

These financial statements have been prepared accordance with the special provisions for small companies under Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements on pages 23 to 36 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on 26 March 2019 and signed on their behalf by:

M A Bufton-McCoy B Phil, Cert Ed
Chair of Trustees

The Country Trust

Statement of Cash Flows for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

	Note	2018 £	2017 £
Cash flows from operating activities			
Net cash income		461,283	66,618
Adjustments to cash flows from non-cash items			
Depreciation		707	471
Investment income	5	<u>(550)</u>	<u>(240)</u>
		461,440	66,849
Working capital adjustments			
Increase in debtors	13	(8,936)	(960)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	14	14,638	(4,380)
(Decrease)/increase in deferred income		<u>(86,817)</u>	<u>77,344</u>
Net cash flows from operating activities		<u>380,325</u>	<u>138,853</u>
Cash flows from investing activities			
Interest receivable and similar income	5	550	240
Purchase of tangible fixed assets	12	<u>(5,665)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash flows from investing activities		<u>(5,115)</u>	<u>240</u>
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		375,210	139,093
Cash and cash equivalents at 1 January		<u>512,464</u>	<u>373,371</u>
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December		<u><u>887,674</u></u>	<u><u>512,464</u></u>

All of the cash flows are derived from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

1 Charity status

The charity is limited by guarantee, incorporated in England & Wales, and consequently does not have share capital. Each of the trustees is liable to contribute an amount not exceeding £1 towards the assets of the charity in the event of liquidation.

2 Accounting policies

Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

Statement of compliance

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102). They also comply with the Companies Act 2006 and Charities Act 2011.

Basis of preparation

The Country Trust meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

Going concern

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern nor any significant areas of uncertainty that affect the carrying value of assets held by the charity.

Income and endowments

All income is recognised once the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of the income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations and legacies

All donated income and grants receivable are included in income on receipt except where the donor requires that the sum is to be treated as income in future accounting periods, in which case it is deferred. Where a donor has specified that a donation should be used for a particular purpose this is treated as restricted income.

Grants receivable

Grants are recognised when the charity has an entitlement to the funds and any conditions linked to the grants have been met. Where performance conditions are attached to the grant and are yet to be met, the income is recognised as a liability and included on the balance sheet as deferred income to be released.

Deferred income

Deferred income represents grants and service fees received in respect of visits and activities taking place after the year end. It also represents unrestricted income where that income relates to future periods.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

Investment income

Interest received is accounted for when the interest is credited on the Bank deposit accounts.

Charitable activities

Income from charitable activities arises from educational visits and activities where schools or other partners fund all or a proportion of the costs incurred.

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and includes VAT as the charity is not VAT registered. Governance costs are associated with the governance arrangements of the charity. Where expenditure is apportioned between charitable activities and support costs, this is done based on the portion that is applicable to the direct provision of educational visits and activities or the administration of the charity. In the case of staff costs, this is based on the time spent on charitable activities or administration.

Charitable activities

Charitable activities comprise costs incurred in carrying out educational visits and activities to farms, estates and the wider countryside, and in schools.

Governance costs

These include the costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including audit, strategic management and trustees's meetings and reimbursed expenses.

Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing a significant amount are initially recorded at cost, less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Office equipment & software	25% straight-line

Trade debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Trade creditors

Creditors are recognised at their settlement amount.

Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees's discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those donated for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

Financial instruments

Classification

The charitable company only holds basic financial instruments as defined in FRS 102. The financial assets and financial liabilities of the charitable company and their measurement basis are as follows:

Financial assets - trade and other debtors are basic financial instruments and are debt instruments measured at amortised cost. Prepayments are not financial instruments.

Cash at bank - is classified as a basic financial instrument and is measured at face value.

Financial liabilities - trade creditors, accruals and other creditors are financial instruments, and are measured at amortised cost. Taxation and social security are not included in the financial instruments disclosure definition. Deferred income is not deemed to be a financial liability, as the cash settlement has already taken place and there is an obligation to deliver services rather than cash or another financial instrument.

3 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Donations	104,673	64,157	168,830	113,889
Legacies	340,097	-	340,097	-
Charitable Trusts and grant making bodies	274,382	226,865	501,247	472,477
	<u>719,152</u>	<u>291,022</u>	<u>1,010,174</u>	<u>586,366</u>

Unrestricted funds are much higher than usual at the year-end due to two large legacies received in the second half of the year. These additional funds will be used over the coming years to expand activities.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

4 Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Countryside Discovery Residential Visits	-	103,322	103,322	104,642
Food Discovery	-	43,626	43,626	43,396
Farm Visits	-	6,585	6,585	5,030
	<u>-</u>	<u>153,533</u>	<u>153,533</u>	<u>153,068</u>

5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Interest receivable on bank deposits	550	-	550	240

6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Programmes - Transport		-	49,498	49,498	46,107
Programmes - Accommodation		132	68,867	68,999	77,444
Expenses relating to visits and activities		81	32,216	32,297	29,386
Self-employed contractors		19,803	223,516	243,319	214,424
Staff mileage, accommodation and expenses		-	36,474	36,474	38,214
Volunteer mileage, accommodation and expenses		-	1,335	1,335	1,789
Staff costs		-	24,297	24,297	29,340
Allocated support costs	7	230,711	10,644	241,355	233,832
Governance costs	7	5,400	-	5,400	2,520
		<u>256,127</u>	<u>446,847</u>	<u>702,974</u>	<u>673,056</u>

£256,127 (2017 - £122,811) of the above expenditure was attributable to unrestricted funds and £446,847 (2017 - £550,245) to restricted funds.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

7 Analysis of governance and support costs

Charitable activities expenditure

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Staff costs	160,173	-	160,173	155,335
Staff mileage, accommodation and expenses	12,740	-	12,740	10,582
Volunteer mileage, accommodation and expenses	248	-	248	12
Office costs	23,792	1,169	24,961	24,899
Computer and website costs	878	-	878	4,493
Advertising and publicity	7,738	7,614	15,352	18,362
Insurance	2,447	-	2,447	2,373
Recruitment and training	6,210	1,843	8,053	1,121
Subscriptions and sundry costs	890	18	908	1,995
Bank charges	160	-	160	124
Legal and professional fees	2,011	-	2,011	1,753
Annual meeting and report	11,338	-	11,338	11,367
Trustee expenses	1,379	-	1,379	945
Depreciation	707	-	707	471
	<u>230,711</u>	<u>10,644</u>	<u>241,355</u>	<u>233,832</u>

Governance costs

	Total 2018 £	Total 2017 £
Audit fees		
Audit of the financial statements	4,200	-
Other fees paid to auditors	1,200	-
Independent examiner fees		
Examination of the financial statements	-	1,520
Other fees paid to examiners	-	1,000
	<u>5,400</u>	<u>2,520</u>

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

8 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming resources for the year include:

	2018 £	2017 £
Fees payable to auditor	5,400	-
Fees payable to independent examiner	-	2,520
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>707</u>	<u>471</u>

9 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

No trustees have received any other benefits from the charity during the year.

During the year, 2 trustees were reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses totalling £796 (2017: £612 to 4 trustees).

10 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2018 £	2017 £
Staff costs during the year were:		
Wages and salaries	168,003	168,094
Social security costs	12,916	13,033
Pension costs	<u>3,551</u>	<u>3,548</u>
	<u>184,470</u>	<u>184,675</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management team) employed by the charity during the year expressed by head count was as follows:

	2018 No	2017 No
Charitable activities	1	2
Support and administration	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>
	<u>7</u>	<u>7</u>

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year expressed as full time equivalents was 4.9 (2017: 4.7).

7 (2017 - 7) of the above employees participated in the Defined Contribution Pension Schemes.

Contributions to the employee pension schemes for the year totalled £3,551 (2017 - £3,548).

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The total employee benefits of the key management personnel of the charity were £64,912 (2017 - £62,772).

11 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

12 Tangible fixed assets

	Office equipment & software £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 January 2018	3,995	3,995
Additions	5,665	5,665
At 31 December 2018	<u>9,660</u>	<u>9,660</u>
Depreciation		
At 1 January 2018	2,582	2,582
Charge for the year	707	707
At 31 December 2018	<u>3,289</u>	<u>3,289</u>
Net book value		
At 31 December 2018	<u>6,371</u>	<u>6,371</u>
At 31 December 2017	<u>1,413</u>	<u>1,413</u>

13 Debtors

	2018 £	2017 £
Trade debtors	17,714	10,037
Prepayments	15,480	12,371
Accrued income	-	1,850
	<u>33,194</u>	<u>24,258</u>

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

14 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2018	2017
	£	£
Trade creditors	24,290	7,214
Other taxation and social security	4,845	3,271
Other creditors	-	348
Accruals	5,900	9,564
Deferred income	<u>141,653</u>	<u>228,470</u>
	<u>176,688</u>	<u>248,867</u>

	2018
	£
Deferred income at 1 January 2018	228,470
Resources deferred in the period	141,653
Amounts released from previous periods	<u>(228,470)</u>
Deferred income at 31 December 2018	<u>141,653</u>

Deferred income relates to grants and service fees received in respect of visits and activities that took place after the year end as well as ongoing core costs that were incurred after the year end. All deferred income brought forward was released in the current year.

15 Pension and other schemes

Defined contribution pension scheme

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme. The pension cost charge for the year represents contributions payable by the charity to the scheme and amounted to £3,551 (2017 - £3,548).

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

16 Funds

Current year:

	Balance at 1 January 2018 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2018 £
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>					
General	230,008	719,702	(256,127)	10,308	703,891
Restricted funds					
a) Residential	14,908	152,896	(142,594)	(6,102)	19,108
b) Food discovery	24,376	88,548	(80,797)	(9,434)	22,693
c) Farm visits	-	158,413	(179,557)	21,144	-
d) Country Trust Hampshire	7,343	44,698	(43,899)	(3,283)	4,859
e) Duke of Westminster	12,633	-	-	(12,633)	-
Total restricted funds	<u>59,260</u>	<u>444,555</u>	<u>(446,847)</u>	<u>(10,308)</u>	<u>46,660</u>
Total funds	<u>289,268</u>	<u>1,164,257</u>	<u>(702,974)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>750,551</u>

Prior year:

	Balance at 1 January 2017 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 December 2017 £
<i>Unrestricted funds</i>					
General	160,821	195,735	(122,811)	(3,737)	230,008
Restricted funds					
a) Residential	321	166,516	(146,001)	(5,928)	14,908
b) Food discovery	27,268	76,258	(72,379)	(6,771)	24,376
c) Farm visits	-	131,557	(151,534)	19,977	-
d) Country Trust Hampshire	18,873	50,571	(58,560)	(3,541)	7,343
e) Duke of Westminster	15,367	119,037	(121,771)	-	12,633
Total restricted funds	<u>61,829</u>	<u>543,939</u>	<u>(550,245)</u>	<u>3,737</u>	<u>59,260</u>
Total funds	<u>222,650</u>	<u>739,674</u>	<u>(673,056)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>289,268</u>

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

- a) Funds to subsidise the cost of Countryside Discovery Residential visits enabling disadvantaged primary age children to experience food, farming and the countryside.
- b) Funds for teaching disadvantaged primary school children to grow and cook fresh produce, to explore local farms, run playground markets and a harvest feast, and also to train teachers in relevant elements of Learning Outside the Classroom.
- c) Funds relating to the provision of Farm and Countryside Discovery educational day visits bringing the working countryside to life for primary school children from disadvantaged areas.
- d) Provides for Farm and Countryside Discovery educational visits for primary school children to working farms and estates specifically in Hampshire and the surrounding counties.
- e) Funds provided by the Westminster Foundation for the provision of a small central team supporting the development of the charity.

17 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £
Tangible fixed assets	6,371	-	6,371
Current assets	759,470	161,398	920,868
Current liabilities	(61,950)	(114,738)	(176,688)
Total net assets	<u>703,891</u>	<u>46,660</u>	<u>750,551</u>

18 Analysis of net cash

	At 1 January 2018 £	Cash flow £	At 31 December 2018 £
Cash at bank and in hand	512,464	375,210	887,674
Net cash	<u>512,464</u>	<u>375,210</u>	<u>887,674</u>

19 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.

The Country Trust

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 December 2018

20 Prior year Statement of Financial Activities

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2017 £
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	3	195,495	390,871	586,366
Charitable activities	4	-	153,068	153,068
Investment income	5	240	-	240
Total income		<u>195,735</u>	<u>543,939</u>	<u>739,674</u>
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	6	<u>122,811</u>	<u>550,245</u>	<u>673,056</u>
Total expenditure		<u>122,811</u>	<u>550,245</u>	<u>673,056</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		72,924	(6,306)	66,618
Transfers between funds		<u>(3,737)</u>	<u>3,737</u>	-
Net movement in funds		69,187	(2,569)	66,618
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward		<u>160,821</u>	<u>61,829</u>	<u>222,650</u>
Total funds carried forward	16	<u><u>230,008</u></u>	<u><u>59,260</u></u>	<u><u>289,268</u></u>