

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2020

**The Conservators of Ashdown Forest
The Ashdown Forest Centre
Wych Cross
Forest Row
East Sussex
RH18 5JP**

Foreword

The accounts for 2019/2020, set out in the following pages, show the financial performance of the Board of Conservators for the year, together with its overall financial position as at 31 March 2020. The purpose of the published statement of accounts is to give the Board of Conservators and other interested parties clear information about the Board's finances. The accounts provide the reader with information of the cost of conserving and managing Ashdown Forest and running and maintaining the Ashdown Forest Centre.

Statement of Accounting Policies and main principles adopted in compiling the accounts

The Board's accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Account and Audit (England) Regulations 2015 for Councils with a gross budgeted income of less than £6,500,000. In addition, supporting notes have been included where appropriate.

The Balance Sheet

This shows the balances and reserves at the Board's disposal as well as the liabilities as at 31 March 2020 (see page 4).

General Account

This reports the expenditure and income relating to conservation and management of the Forest in order to comply with the requirements of the Ashdown Forest Act 1974 and in recognition of the Forest's status as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area for Conservation (SAC) under European legislation.

Countryside Stewardship

Countryside Stewardship is a ten year conservation contract funded by Natural England. The funding must only be spent on the Natural England-approved Conservation Work Programme. Some costs are recharged to the Core Budget for staff and resources shared with the core running of the Forest Centre.

The Income and Expenditure Accounts

A summary is shown on page 5 with a detail breakdown shown on pages 6 and 7.

Debtors and creditors outstanding at the end of the year are included in the accounts on the basis of known quantifiable commitments. There are no known Capital Creditors and Debtors.

All capital works and purchases of vehicles, etc., funded by the Conservators are charged to the budget in the year in which expenditure arises (i.e. no depreciation applied).

Central administrative charges are wholly charged to the Core Budget.

As a non-principal authority there is no requirement to produce a Cash Flow Statement.

Statement of Responsibility for the Statement of Accounts

The Board's Responsibilities

The Board is required to:

- a) make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to secure that one of its officers has the responsibility for the administration of those affairs. The Conservators have employed a Finance Officer to undertake this responsibility.
- b) manage its affairs to secure economic, efficient and effective use of resources and safeguard its assets;
- c) approve the statement of accounts.

The Responsible Financial Officer's Responsibilities

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is responsible for the preparation of the Board's statement of accounts which, in terms of the Account and Audit (England) Regulations for Councils 2015, is required to present fairly the financial position of the Board at the accounting date and its income and expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2020.

In preparing this statement of accounts the RFO is responsible for:

- a) selecting suitable accounting policies and then applying them consistently;
- b) making judgements and estimates that are responsible and prudent;
- c) complying with the Account and Audit (England) Regulations for Councils 2015 and fully disclose any significant non-compliance.

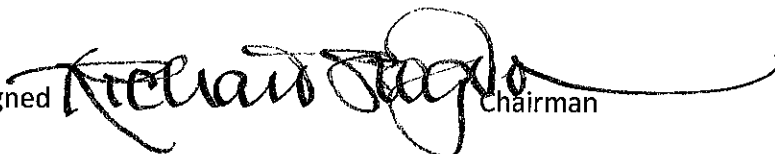
The RFO is also responsible for:

- a) keeping proper accounting records which are up to date;
- b) taking responsible steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

These financial statements represent fairly the financial position of the Conservators as at 31 March 2020 and reflect its income and expenditure during the year.

Approved by the Board on 29 June 2020

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard Steggle', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Chairman

Signed

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Meehan', written in a cursive style.

Finance Officer

Ashdown Forest Finances to 31 March 2020

Balance Sheet

2018/19		2019/20		
	£		£	
	CURRENT ASSETS			
3,426	INFORMATION CENTRE STOCK	3,000		
9,230	RENTS AND RATES OUTSTANDING	15,810		
30,074	DEBTORS	25,606		
268,813	ACCRUED INCOME*	658,425	<i>* Natural England funding for CS contract</i>	
243	PAYMENTS IN ADVANCE	-		
671	FUEL & STAMPS	45		
569,252	CASH ON DEPOSIT	300,053		
326	CASH IN HAND	124		
0	VAT	-		
882,036	TOTAL ASSETS	1,003,064	300,178	702,886
	CURRENT LIABILITIES			
	£		£	
74,948	CREDITORS	18,389		
13,896	STAFF COSTS	14,527		
2,781	CREDIT CARD	761		
19,461	ACCRUED EXPENDITURE	26,800		
2,300	DEPOSITS IN HAND	800		
1,950	VAT	3,416		
	SALES TAX CONTROL ACCOUNT	(246)		
	EXHIBITION SALES	62		
115,335	TOTAL LIABILITIES	64,508		
766,701	TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	938,556		
766,701	NET ASSETS	938,556		

STATEMENT OF RESERVES AS AT 31 MARCH 2020

	CORE	HLS*	CS	TOTAL
Reserves Balance as at 1.4.19	374,858	224,204	305,298	904,360
Plus Income	565,598	-	522,676	1,088,274
Less Expenditure	580,204	-	473,874	1,054,078
RESERVES BALANCE AS AT 31.3.20	360,252	224,204	354,100	938,556
ALLOCATION OF RESERVES				
Restricted Reserves for Conservation Contract		224,204	284,100	
Restricted 6 mths Overheads & Staff Costs Reserve	196,000		70,000	
Total Unrestricted Reserves	164,252			

RESERVES POLICY as agreed by the Board of the Conservators on 21 March 2016

- 1 It is the Board's policy to maintain an Overheads Reserve equal to six months salaries and administration costs. The salaries accounted for exclude staff costs covered by Countryside Stewardship grant funding.
- 2 The Board will maintain Restricted Discretionary Reserves which will be allocated to earmarked projects or cost centres, to be reviewed annually.

Additional note: *Higher Level Stewardship (HLS) was a conservation programme preceding CS – paid bi-annually in arrears there was a surplus of £224,204 when the programme ceased at the end of 2016. These funds are currently being used for cash flow management and will ultimately be spent in the spirit of the original agreement under the guidance of Natural England.

Ashdown Forest Finances to 31 March 2020
Income and Expenditure Summary
Core Budget and Countryside Stewardship Budget Combined

2018/19	INCOME SUMMARY	2019/20
£		£
197,049	Licences & Forest Rate	191,295
79,248	Unrestricted funding (ESCC, WDC, AFT, PCs)	112,800
82,939	Income generation and Donations	34,249
38,039	Forest Products incl. Meat and Deer Carcasses	29,111
13,961	Visitors	19,276
1,436	Financial	2,841
412,672	Total Core Income	389,572
530,676	Countryside Stewardship Funding from Natural England	522,676
31,482	Other Restricted Funding/Grants (designated for a specific purpose)	25,943
562,158	Total Funding Received for Specific Purposes	548,619
974,830	TOTAL INCOME	938,191

2018/19	EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	2019/20
£		£
347,464	Core Forest Staff Costs	380,724
70,896	Operational expenses	82,471
67,582	Administration Overheads	58,134
19,705	Financial	18,589
8,199	Visitors	8,091
4,264	Capital purchases - Core	510
518,110	Total Core Expenditure	548,519
155,330	Countryside Stewardship Work Programme Project Expenditure	182,709
122,388	Staff Costs (Countryside Stewardship)	126,511
35,952	Expenditure from Ringfenced Funding (primarily education programme)	26,422
-	Capital purchases - Countryside Stewardship Budget	14,571
5,290	TAFF Governance	5,263
100	SAMMs Project	-
319,060		355,476
837,170	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	903,995

137,660 SURPLUS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE **34,196**

Note: Allocation of surplus

Surplus / (Deficit) attributable to Core Budget	(14,606)
Surplus / (Deficit) attributable to Countryside Stewardship*	<u>48,802</u>

ASHDOWN FOREST FINANCES

Core Budget

INCOME

Year ending 31 March 2020

	2019/20 Year end Actual £	2019/20 Budget Agreed £	NOTES
Licences	191,295	190,952	
Domestic (Track) Rents	25,983	24,000	
Commercial Rents/Licences and Wayleaves			
<i>Wayleaves - BT</i>	53,514	54,500	
<i>Ice Cream Licence</i>	23,100	22,500	
<i>MOD licence</i>	11,000	10,000	
<i>Cats Protection</i>	4,044	4,010	
<i>Dog Walking Licence</i>	1,283	1,000	
<i>Wayleaves - EDF & UKPN</i>	1,110	1,150	
<i>Aerial site rental</i>	-	500	
<i>Model Airplane Licence</i>	405	392	
<i>Wayleaves - S E Water</i>	-	-	
<i>Wayleaves - Southern Water</i>	-	-	
<i>Wayleaves - Transco</i>	-	-	
Riding Permits	38,169	32,000	1
Forest Rate	24,317	24,000	
Licence preparation/deed of covenant/consideration fees			2
<i>Consideration Fees</i>	3,375	8,000	
<i>Deed of Covenant</i>	854	1,500	
<i>Licence preparation fees</i>	881	1,500	
Temporary licences (incl Filming, Wood, Events)			
<i>Wood Permits</i>	2,469	2,400	
<i>Marketing Board licences</i>	115	500	
<i>Filming Permits</i>	488	3,000	3
<i>Events licence incl. fitness licence</i>	188	-	
Countryside Stewardship Staff Recharge	150,083	115,000	4
Core staff: 1.8 multiplier difference above employee cost	58,597	50,000	
Contracted-out in-house staff	91,486	65,000	
Income Generation and Donations	34,249	32,500	5
Memorials	18,083	5,000	
Donations incl. Donations Box and Post	10,147	7,500	
Donatel Text Giving	1,597	20,000	
Car stickers	2,657	-	
Online maps and walks leaflets	1,645	-	
EasyFundraising	119	-	
Unrestricted Funding	112,800	110,100	
Ashdown Forest Trust	65,100	65,100	
ESCC	30,000	30,000	
WDC	10,000	10,000	
Parish Councils	7,700	5,000	6
Sale of Forest Products including Meat and Deer Carcasses	29,111	25,300	7
Products (e.g. Logs, Xmas trees)			
<i>Sale of forest products</i>	3,534	500	8
Grazing Project Income (deer)	2,568	10,000	

ASHDOWN FOREST FINANCES
Core Budget
INCOME
Year ending 31 March 2020
Grazing Project Income (sheep)

<i>Sheep meat sales</i>	5,391	3,500
<i>Wool</i>	74	100
<i>Sale of breeding sheep</i>	1,970	2,000

Grazing Project Income (cattle)

<i>Beef</i>	4,719	2,000
<i>Hides</i>	-	-
<i>Sale of Breeding cattle</i>	350	-

Grazing Project Income (other)

98 -

Miscellaneous Other

<i>Ashdown Forest Riding Association</i>	5,250	4,000	9
<i>Maintenance of Pooh Car Park from ESCC</i>	1,400	-	10
<i>Deposits</i>	300	500	
<i>Corporate volunteers</i>	-	-	
<i>Miscellaneous</i>	712	500	

Renewable Heat Incentive (Boiler)

1,731 1,000

Feed in Tariff (Solar Panels)

1,014 1,200

Visitors
19,276 13,360 11
Barn sales

12,178 6,500

Pop-up café

3,227 -

Sheep Proof Your Dog

1,422 -

Exhibition sales

- 500

AF Centre Events

362 4,500

Education team-run events

1,058 -

Hire of premises/equipment

<i>Hire of premises</i>	529	760
<i>Hire of staff/equipment</i>	338	1,000

Talks by staff

162 100

Financial
2,841 200
Bank Interest

2,031 200

Sale of Assets

170 -

Insurance Claims

639 -

Restricted Funds (designated for a specific purpose)
25,943 - 12

<i>Natural England contribution for school visits</i>	7,250	
<i>School income for school visits</i>	7,805	-
<i>Friends of Ashdown Forest</i>	5,375	-
<i>Ashdown Forest Conservation Trust</i>	-	-
<i>Other grants or funding received</i>	5,513	-

TOTAL INCOME
565,598 487,412

Core Budget
EXPENDITURE
Year ending 31 March 2020

Non capital	2019/20 Year End Actual £	2019/20 Budget Agreed £	Notes
Staff Costs	380,724	361,500	13
Operational expenses	81,825	50,579	
Transport, machinery, equipment (incl vehicle insurance)	57,997	38,859	
<i>Machinery (Big) - Parts</i>	880	500	
<i>Machinery (Big) - Repairs</i>	583	800	
<i>Machinery hire</i>	-	-	
<i>Machinery (Small) - Parts and fuel</i>	1,326	1,000	
<i>Machinery (Small) - Repairs</i>	510	500	
<i>Tractors - Fuel & Oil</i>	6,131	3,000	14
<i>Tractors - Parts</i>	357	1,500	
<i>Tractors - Repairs</i>	39	500	
<i>Tractors - Servicing</i>	2,707	2,000	
<i>Vehicles - Fuel & Oil</i>	12,031	8,000	14
<i>Vehicles - Repairs</i>	2,035	1,100	
<i>Vehicles - Servicing</i>	1,734	2,000	
<i>Vehicles - Parts</i>	456	1,000	
<i>Vehicles - Insurance</i>	15,359	14,809	
<i>Vehicles - Licences</i>	1,560	1,700	
<i>Fire Tender</i>	-	-	
<i>Radio</i>	10,733	150	15
<i>Hand tools</i>	1,558	300	
Income Generation expenses	1,568	-	16
Staff expenses	2,519	2,400	
<i>HR expenses</i>	233		
<i>Travel expenses</i>	-	100	
<i>Mileage Allowance</i>	166	800	
<i>Staff and Volunteer Clothing</i>	2,120	1,500	
Staff training	269	1,000	
<i>Staff training</i>	269	1,000	
Volunteer expenses	2,522	2,200	
<i>Mileage Allowance</i>	806	1,200	
<i>Meetings & volunteer expenses</i>	1,717	1,000	
Byelaws and signage	-	-	
<i>Interpretation panels</i>	-	-	
<i>Bye Law and other Signage</i>	-	-	
General conservation	3,235	4,000	
<i>Woodland management (contractor costs)</i>	3,235	4,000	
<i>Fencing (non-CS)</i>	-	-	
<i>Non-CS herbicides</i>	-	-	
General Operations	2,183	700	
<i>Car park surface materials</i>	-	-	
<i>Bridges</i>	1,092	-	17
<i>Non-CS Fencing</i>	146	200	
<i>PR and Leaflets</i>	-	-	
<i>Litter disposal</i>	258	-	
<i>Commoners' Expenses</i>	308	-	

Core Budget
EXPENDITURE
Year ending 31 March 2020

	<i>Health & Safety</i>	379	500	
Other		11,533	1,420	
	<i>Memorials</i>	9,462	-	18
	<i>Subscriptions</i>	364	420	
	<i>Miscellaneous Amenity and Community Costs</i>	1,707	1,000	
Administration Overheads		58,134	48,153	
Forest Centre Running costs (rates, utilities, maintenance)		17,723	14,481	
	<i>Office Furniture - small items</i>	40	-	
	<i>Buildings Maintenance</i>	10,498	8,150	
	<i>Refreshments</i>	89	200	
	<i>Rates (WDC)</i>	3,150	3,081	
	<i>Electricity</i>	2,914	2,000	
	<i>Water rates</i>	1,033	1,050	
Other core staff costs (contract staff, recruitment expenses)		9,098	5,000	19
Post, phone, printing, stationery		6,879	6,000	
	<i>Postage</i>	1,612	500	
	<i>Stationery</i>	460	500	
	<i>Reference books</i>	-	-	
	<i>Stationery - Printing</i>	1,389	1,500	
	<i>Telephone</i>	3,419	3,500	
Professional Fees		5,438	6,000	
	<i>Audit and accountancy</i>	4,938	6,000	
	<i>Legal</i>	500	-	
	<i>Other professional fees</i>	-	-	
Insurances, excluding vehicles		9,619	9,772	
	<i>Insurance buildings</i>	8,236	8,572	
	<i>Trustee Indemnity Insurance</i>	1,383	1,200	
IT		9,260	6,600	
	<i>Computing - hardware & software small items</i>	533	100	
	<i>Computing - service</i>	8,727	6,500	
Miscellaneous		117	300	
	<i>Miscellaneous finance and support purchases</i>	117	300	

Financial		18,589	23,280	
Irrecoverable rents and rates and bad debts		1,009	-	20
Credit card terminal		1,192	1,300	
Bank charges		1,145	980	
	<i>Bank Interest Paid</i>	8	30	
	<i>Bank charges</i>	1,137	950	
Input VAT irrecoverable (non-CS)		15,867	21,000	
Suspense account	-	624	-	

Core Budget
EXPENDITURE
Year ending 31 March 2020

Visitors	8,091	3,400	
Information Centre (Shop)	4,176	2,500	21
<i>Barn stock - Opening</i>	3,025	-	
<i>Barn Stock - Closing -</i>	3,000	-	
<i>Stock for resale</i>	4,151	2,500	
Forest Centre Events	3,915	900	22
<i>Forest Centre Events</i>	144	-	
<i>Sheep Proof Your Dog</i>	1,452	-	
<i>Pap-up Café</i>	1,263	800	
<i>Info centre purchases other than stock</i>	1,056	100	
Governance/Charity Expenditure	5,263	-	
Funding for charity	5,263	-	23
Expenditure from Ringfenced Funding	26,422	500	24
Education programme resources	22,275	-	
Travel bursaries for schools	1,287	-	
Education Team-run Events	2,241	-	
Riding Expenses	620	500	
Total non capital Expenditure	579,049	487,412	
Capital Expenditure			
<i>Machinery (Small) - Acquisition - Capital</i>	1,155	-	25
Capital expenditure	1,155	-	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	580,204	487,412	

COUNTRYSIDE STEWARDSHIP PROJECT BUDGET SUMMARY

Year ending 31 March 2020

RINGFENCED INCOME SUMMARY	2019/20
	£
CS Heathland Area Payment (LH1)	431,775
CS Other Payments	90,901
TOTAL INCOME	522,676

EXPENDITURE SUMMARY	2019/20
CS Staff Costs	126,511
Staff cost multiplier (to Core budget as staff recharge)	58,597
Contracted-out inhouse staff costs (to Core as staff recharge)	91,486
Project expenditure (excl. staff costs)	182,708
Total non capital Expenditure	459,303
Total CS Capital Expenditure	14,571
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	473,874

C.S. 2019/20 YEAR END SUMMARY

Total Income	522,676
Total Expenditure	473,874
Surplus/Deficit	48,802

C.S. RESERVES TO YEAR END 2019/20

Reserves b/f YE 2018/19	305,298
Forecast Surplus/Deficit year ending 2017/18	48,802
Reserves balance YE 2019/20	354,100

Ashdown Forest Finances to 31 March 2020
Supporting Statement to the Income and Expenditure Accounts

<u>Income</u>	£
1 Sale of riding permits increased by 18% against budget. Riding permist costs had been increased by 7%.	38,169
2 Property sale and purchase-related income are below budget. This income is dependent on property market.	5,110
3 Commercial filming licences are dependent on interest in the location. Higher in previous years due to being a location for Disney films.	488
4 Natural England funds CS core staff; a multiplier is added to these costs which is allocated to the Core Budget to cover overheads. In-house staff (countryside workers) time allocated to individual projects is also allocated from CS funds to the Core Budget.	150,083
5 Overall income generation has exceeded budget, with memorials being the largest source of donation income.	34,289
6 A number of local Parish Councils have generously supported the Forest	7,700
7 Grazing project income - sale of livestock, meat (beef & hogget), deer carcasses and venison.	15,170
8 Sale of Forest products - predominantly the sale of Christmas trees	3,534
9 Ashdown Forest Riding Association provided donations throughout the year as a percentage from their fundraising events to be put towards ride maintenance and purchase of riding badges.	5,250
10 Maintenance of Pooh Car Park - backdated payment from ESCC for a number of years	1,400
11 Visitors income increased due to investment in new products for sale onsite and online	12,178
12 All of the funding presented here has been donated to the Conservators for specific purposes and the funds can only be spent for that use. Primarily for the Education Programme.	25,943
<u>Expenditure</u>	
13 Salaries total expenditure over budget due to staff changes within the year	380,724
14 Tractor utilised more this year hence higher fuel cost. Overall higher fuel cost due to additional order placed at the end of March.	18,162
15 Radio communication system repair and upgrade	10,733
16 Expenditure developing new income generation activities	1,568
17 Bridge repair funded by Danehill Parish Council	1,092
18 Expenditure on memorial structures	9,462
19 Contract staff: bookkeeper and cleaner	9,098
20 Aged debts written off by agreement at Finance and Regulatory Committee 17th June 2020	1,009
21 Shop sotck - development of new product range	4,176
22 Forest Centre events with related income.	3,915
23 Funding commitment to The Ashdown Forest Foundation to ensure guaranteed income for 3 years	5,263
24 Expenditure for ringfenced funding, primarily Education Programme	26,422
25 Capital expenditure. See asset purchases (page 10)	1,155

Ashdown Forest Finances to 31 March 2020

Combined Assets

<u>Assets</u>	<u>Cost</u>
<u>Movements in the year</u>	<u>£</u>
The following assets were purchased:	
DeWalt 18v 1.5Ah cordless combi drill (core)	125
15ft Mower: McConnel SR15 M1956582 (CS purchase)	16,800
Husqvarna Chainsaw 535i XP (9678938114) (core)	360
Husqvarna chainsaw i20 2019 2700423 (core)	160
Husqvarna 550XP chainsaw (CS purchase)	570
Gun Stalon Victor L 6.5x55 (deer project)	300
Tikka T3X Super Varmit 6.5x55 (deer project)	1,215
Husqvarna 560XP chainsaw (59.8cc) (core)	510
	20,040
The following assets were sold:	
Chainsaw	170
Total assets sold	170

As at 31 March 2020 the following land assets were held:

	<u>Value</u>	
	<u>£</u>	
Hectares		
The Conservators own the following land:		
34.80	Chelwood Gate (Streeters Rough)	1
27.92	Chelwood Vachery	1
5.54	Isle of Thorns	1
5.15	Friends Wood (land at Broadstone Warren)	1
2.30	Friends Fields, Chuck Hatch	1
1.82	Chelwood Gate (Charles Smith Wood)	1
1.42	Brabies Gate	1
1.27	Twyford	1
0.80	Whitehouse Farm, Duddleswell	1
0.37	Lamberts	1
0.20	Glenmore Road, Crowborough	1
0.19	Browns Brook, Fairwarp	1
0.12	Millbrook, Nutley	1
81.90		13

Since the Board's policy is that land acquired within the Pale will not be disposed of, a nominal value of £1 per item is given. The remainder of the Forest is owned by the Ashdown Forest Trust.

The Insured Value of the Centre and assets, including those on page 9, is as follows:

	£
Ashdown Forest Centre buildings (Insured replacement value)	1,513,017
Whitehouse Barn (Insured value)	91,001
Contents, stock, equipment, machinery (excl. vehicles and livestock)	266,038
Vehicles	276,064
Livestock	48,300

Debtors

At the year end, sundry debts due to the Conservators of Ashdown Forest of £32,912 were outstanding. This largely consists of outstanding revenue from the ice cream licence.

Accrued income is almost entirely accounted for by the Countryside Stewardship annual revenue payment for 2019, plus the first three months of 2020.

Creditors

At the year end sundry creditors were owed £18,389 by the Conservators of Ashdown Forest. This is an accumulation of a high number volume of invoices received in March, paid in April. The highest value owing to any single creditor was £3,000.

Outstanding staff costs to be paid to Inland Revenue and to the East Sussex Pension Fund after year end amount to £14,527.

Accruals have also been made for payment of internal and external audit services, estimated to be in the sum of in the sum of £4,600.

The ice cream licence is shown as a creditor as it is invoiced in January for a calendar year and is considered to be deferred income due to the annual licence being paid in equal monthly instalments. This is represented by the accruals sum on the balance sheet, bringing the total of accrued expenditure to £26,800.

Employers Pension Contributions

The Conservators of Ashdown Forest contributed a sum equivalent to 17.4% of the salaries bill to the pension fund to total of £61,587 plus an additional monetary amount of £17,000 for Past Service Deficit, as set by the East Sussex Pension Fund. The employees' contribution totalled £22,047.

Advertising and Publicity

The Conservators have a statutory obligation to advertise the publication of the accounts and the notice of the Commoners' Annual Meeting. Public Notices are placed in local newspapers, on the Forest Centre's notice boards and on the Conservators' website to meet this requirement. The total financial cost during 2019/20 was £300.