



Trustees' Annual Report for the period



From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	01	12	2018		30	11	2019

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

River Lark Catchment Partnership

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any)

1177318

Charity's principal address

24, Northgate Avenue

Bury St Edmunds

Suffolk

Postcode

IP32 6BB

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	James Stephens	Treasurer		
2	Andrew Hinchley	Chairman		
3	William Cranstoun			Suffolk Wildlife Trust
4	Chris Gregory			
5	Anthony Weston			Lark Angling and Preservation Society
6	David Palmer			Lark Valley Association
7				
8				
9				
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12				
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14				
15				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

CIO Association Constitution
Association
Elected by members

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

Our trustees are nominated and elected directly by our membership and we ensure that trustees are practitioners who bring a full set of competencies for our board to be effective.

In this our second year as a registered charity, we continuously had six trustees serving on our board. Our constitution allows for a maximum of twelve trustees and our policy is to continue to attract nominees to add to the board to enhance the good governance and functioning of the charity.

We also enjoy the strong support of the Cam and Ely Ouse Catchment Partnership within which the Lark Partnership is a sub-catchment.

We have formally adopted an array of policies covering:-

- risk management
- volunteer management
- safeguarding
- complaints handling
- managing conflict of interest
- ensuring equality

Section C Objectives and activities

To conserve, preserve and improve the River Lark and its catchment area for the benefit the public, in particular but not exclusively by:

(i) Improving access and encouraging the appropriate use of the River and its environs by members of the public.

(ii) Educating the public about the River and its environs

(iii) Facilitating community involvement in the conservation of the River

(iv) Monitoring the River & its catchment and reporting any issues or concerns to the appropriate bodies having statutory responsibility.

The Trustees of RLCP actively engage in the formulation of the charity's annual action plan and in so doing ensure that they have due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance. The Trustees constantly reviewed the annual work plan as it was underway for 2019.

Building community-based organisation to deliver River conservation:

The conservation activities we aspire to in line with the charity's objectives require us to develop an effective linked community organisation along the full extent of the river. We intend to do this progressively over the next few years. In 2019 we have made good progress, developing our hubs in Bury St Edmunds (working with Bury Water Meadows Group) and Mildenhall, and forming new hubs for the Fornhams and the villages downstream.

Volunteer delivered River restoration works:

The RLCP's main focus for some years to come is community and volunteer-based restoration of the River Lark. River restoration is about re-establishing more natural flow channels, banks and beds for rivers which were heavily disfigured in the previous industrial ages for navigation by widening and canalsing the river together with installing weirs, sluices and gates to raise the water level and slow flow. The River Lark requires intensive restoration along most of its length to improve the flow regime and the in-channel habitats to foster bio-diversity. Throughout 2019 we have been progressing our river restoration activities funded by grants from Environment Agency's WEIF (Water Environment Improvement Fund), Mildenhall Parish Council and support from the Rivers Trust's WaterCog project.

In September 2019 Heritage Lottery Fund agreed to the Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers Landscape Partnership proposal, a five year long programme of broad community based development initiatives in our region led by Suffolk and Norfolk County Councils. We have secured a five year funded programme within BFER of river restoration projects along the Lark within the Brecklands from the Fornhams to downstream of Mildenhall (some 25km of the river).

Taking the initiative to improve the catchment water resource balance:

The East of England is a water deficit region and the rivers and aquifers are extremely stressed. A research programme sponsored by DEFRA and led by the Environment Agency to reform abstraction practices is underway and RLCP has proposed to commission a study and assist with the design a pilot project for improved river water abstraction and management by the agricultural abstractors. Towards the end of 2019 we successfully applied for a grant to cover this work by the EA and Rivers Trust through the Water Resources Communications and Engagement Fund set up by the Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) Water Resources Working Group. This initiative will provide the basis for RLCP to develop our relationship with the agricultural water users who are core River Lark stakeholders.

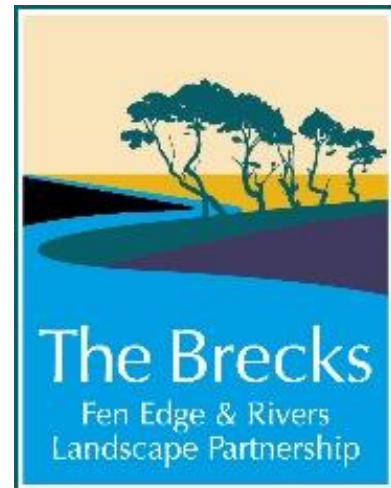
Coordinating community and stakeholder engagement for the Lark River catchment:

We aspire to engaging with River Lark stakeholders such as riparian landowners, agricultural landowners, managers and businesses, other relevant businesses, relevant statutory authorities and relevant community operations to provide a platform for integrated initiatives to improve the river. In 2019 we have continued to make good progress through our regular RLCP meetings and by targeted outreach. This includes participating in the Fornham-fest in September, the Fornhams villages main annual event celebrating life on the river, and deliberating with our agricultural abstractors and EA about abstraction reform.

The River Lark is a sub-catchment of the Cam and Ely-Ouse catchment (Cam EO). Throughout the year we have participated in the regular CamEO 'collaboration and engagement' meetings, sent delegates to relevant CamEO special events and presented at the CamEO annual conference.

River restoration projects in 2019:

Throughout 2019 we continued with our efforts to recruit river restoration volunteers and tackle projects along the river. Our works programme has been hugely boosted by the successful Brecks Fen Edge & Rivers Landscape Partnership Scheme (BFER) which was awarded in September within which we will be tackling restoration projects throughout 2020 to 2025 along 25km of the Lark river.



In 2019 our main funder was the Environment Agency's Water Environmental Improvement Fund (WEIF). We also received a grant from Mildenhall Parish Council to complete our bank stabilisation works along Jubilee Field in Mildenhall.

Mildenhall and Worlington riverbank stabilisation –

The embanked riverbank along Jubilee Field which is a run of over half a kilometre has suffered from degradation with many lengths exposed to scouring and, importantly bereft of material that supports habitats for the building blocks for a flourishing bio-diversity (aquatic invertebrates, etc). In 2019 our Mildenhall volunteers completed the works along the embankment.

Later in the year similar bank stabilisation works were undertaken in the upstream reach towards Barton Mills and these will continue into the new year.

The riverbank at Worlington further downstream of Mildenhall has suffered from serious erosion caused by animals, mainly dogs entering the river. We repaired the bank and installed a fence to prevent further damage.



The Lee Brook at Freckenham –

The Lee Brook is an important tributary of the River Lark connecting the river Kennet. The Lee Brook at Freckenham is very picturesque and complements enormously to the playing fields, the main amenity for the community. The stream however, has been badly affected by overgrowth on the banks and silt depositing along the bed due to slack flows. Towards the end of the year our Mildenhall volunteers joined local community enthusiasts to complete a major restoration of the stream. This included tree work and bank stabilisation works along some 200m together with works to augment gravel on the bed and create pools and riffles to enhance the aquatic habitat.



Scoping and permitting works at Tollgate in Bury St Edmunds and Fullers Mill –

Our next restoration projects will be at the Tollgate bridge on the outskirts of Bury St Edmunds and in the reach at Fullers Mill garden. We have prepared the way for these substantial works by securing WEIF funds which will be matched with the BFER grant and obtaining the requisite EA permits.

Combatting Non-Indigenous Invasive Species in 2019:

An important dimension to river care is the controlling and preferably elimination of invasive non-native species (INNS). In 2019 RLCP was particularly active pulling Himalayan Balsam and has initiated a wider programme of INNS management activities in collaboration with Cameo which ran a INNS Biosecurity and Eradication Workshop in Bury St Edmunds in December.



Catchment Water Resources Management in 2019:

Piloting River Abstraction Reform –

East Anglia is a region that is water stressed. Our catchment is particularly exposed with the underlying chalk aquifer heavily exploited to supply the public water services and with many agricultural and industrial water users also licenced to abstract from out of the river and the aquifer. Government through DEFRA is leading interest in improving our water resources management by adapting, even reforming our regulation based on licenced abstractions. CamEO has been selected as a priority catchment by DEFRA and the Environment Agency is seeking to pilot abstraction reform with partners. The River Lark Catchment Partnership is leading an initiative to pilot improved surface water abstraction management. The licenced river water abstractors in the Lark valley are all agricultural water users. At the end of 2019 we secured a Water Resources Communication and Engagement Fund grant to carry out preparatory investigations and a collaborative design for the River Lark abstraction pilot which will be delivered by June so that the pilot can be launched later next year.

The Anglian Water Upper Lark River Water Compensation Scheme –

The upper River Lark suffers from depleted dry weather flows due to the irreversible long-term impact of heavily exploited chalk aquifer. To compensate for this poor hydrological condition (classified as ‘bad’ under EA’s Water Framework Directive assessment) Anglian Water has committed to an environmental water recirculation scheme in its next five year investment programme. The envisaged project will pump treated effluent from the Fornham water recycling plant (AW’s new branding of their sewage treatment works) to discharge it into the upstream river above the Abbey Gardens in Bury St Edmunds. The effluent will be mixed 50:50 with fresh pumped groundwater from AW’s existing permits before discharging to the stream. We are looking forward to being closely involved in the project through its early stages and into its design to ensure a community friendly outcome.

Outreach events in 2019:

Throughout 2019 we have presented at various venues including meetings organised by BFER, and numerous smaller scale events. In September our Fornham volunteers manned display boards at the Fornham Fest which proved a good volunteer recruitment event.



**The River Lark
Catchment Partnership**

**FORNHAMS GROUP
VOLUNTEERS WANTED!**

- Make a difference to our historic River Lark
- Help restore our river and its banks
- Help to decide what changes are needed to the Lark in the Fornhams
- Get access to river restoration training and equipment

Email us at: fornhams@riverlark.org.uk

Catchment collaboration and engagement events in 2019:

RLCP is a sub-catchment partner of the Cam and Ely Ouse (CamEO) catchment partnership which is hosted by the Rivers Trust and Anglian Water. In 2019 we attended all the CamEO collaboration and engagement meetings and special events organised for partners and we attended in numbers and presented at the CamEO annual conference held in Ely in February.

Section E Financial review

For 2019 the charity does not have a reserves policy and does not hold funds in reserve. This will be actively reviewed in 2020 together with considerations about any necessary decisions to have funds in reserve.

The charity registers Receipts & Payments accounts. No funds were materially in deficit in 2019.

Further financial review details (Optional information)

In 2019 The charity received grant funds from the following donors:

- Environment Agency, Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF)
- WaterCog via The Rivers Trust.

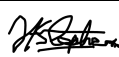
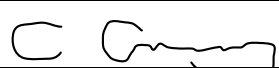
Grant funded expenditure has supported our Lark River restoration efforts and our outreach campaigns.

Section F Other optional information

Section G Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	James Stephens	Christopher Gregory
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Treasurer	Trustee
Date	17th March 2020	

Receipts & Payments Accounts

Name River Lark Catchment Partnership
 Charity Number 1177318
 For the period from (start date) 1st Dec 2018 To (end date) 30 th November 2019

Section A Receipts & Payments					
	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Flourishing Environment Grant (Ref: A453516) from Anglian Water				0	4074
Partnership Grant for Chalk Stream and Sea Trout Project (PG/1718/WEIF/EAN/0001)				0	10000
Speaking fee from Mildenhall Society				0	40
Grant from St Edmundsbury Council for in -river training				0	347
WatertCog Grant from CamEO/Rivers Trust	804			804	1518
Outreach assistance from Forest Heath DC				0	1300
Mildenhall PC Grant for river restoration				0	1975
EA Underspend(PG/1819/WEIF/EAN/017)		10000		10000	
CamEO Hosting Grant	2000			2000	
EA Lark Restoration (PG/1920/WEIF/EAN/004)		6925		6925	
				0	
<i>Sub total</i>	2804	16925		19729	19254
A2 Asset & investment sales, etc	0	0		0	0
<i>Total receipts</i>	2804	16925		19729	19254
A3 Payments					
Partnership Grant for Chalk Stream and Sea Trout Project (PG/1718/WEIF/EAN/0001)				0	8210
Flourishing Environment Grant (Ref: A453516) from Anglian Water				0	5310
WatertCog Grant from CamEO/Rivers Trust				0	1610
A Hinchley Outreach Expenses (19/04/18)				0	52
River Licences					40
Administration services - Bright, Huggins	415			415	667
Independent Examiner Certification				0	97
RLCP Annual Insurance Premium	351			351	131
RLCP Web hosting (Hostpapa)				0	357
EA Underspend(PG/1819/WEIF/EAN/017) - Training and support Services		2314		2314	
EA Underspend(PG/1819/WEIF/EAN/017) - Environmental Permitting		796		796	
EA Underspend(PG/1819/WEIF/EAN/017) - Restoration Materials and Consumables		6939		6939	
WaterCog - AH Waders Expenses	347			347	
WaterCog - Leaflet Expenses	84			84	
Mildenhall PC river restoration Grant - training and printing Expenses		474		474	
Mildenhall PC river restoration Grant - Restoration materials		1265		1265	
WaterCog - AH RLSS Expenses	383			383	
WaterCog - Realise Futures room hire	75			75	
EA Lark Restoration (PG/1920/WEIF/EAN/004) - Environmental Permitting		925		925	
EA Lark restoration (PG/1920/WEIF/EAN004) - prints 2019		56			
EA Lark restoration (PG/1920/WEIF/EAN004) - prints 2020		58		58	
EA Lark restoration (PG/1920/WEIF/EAN004) - Restoration Materials and consumables		5944		5944	
<i>Sub total</i>	1655	18771		20370	16474
A4 Asset & investment purchases, etc	-	-		-	-
<i>Total payments</i>	1655	18771		20370	16474
<i>Net of receipts/(payments)</i>	1149	-1846		-641	2780
A5 Transfers between funds	816	-816			
A6 Cash funds last year end	1119	2604	0	3723	943
<i>Cash funds this period end</i>	3084	-58	0	3026	3723

Section B
Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

	Details	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Receipts	2804	16925	0
	Payments	1655	18771	0
	Cash funds last year end	1935	1788	0
	<i>Total cash funds</i>	3084	-58	0

	Details	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets				

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets				

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Laptop Computer	unrestricted	200	200
	Gardening equipment	unrestricted	150	150
	River restoration materials	restricted	150	150
	PPE (Waders, Gantlets, etc)	unrestricted	370	300
	Display kit and banners	unrestricted	245	200

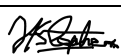
	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities				

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature

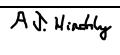
Print name

Date of approval



James Stephens

15/03/2020



Andrew Hinchley

15/03/2020