

Arboricultural Association

2023 ANNUAL SUMMARY

For the year **2023-2024** to include
summary financial accounts for **2023**



Arboricultural
ASSOCIATION

trees.org.uk



The home of tree care

Your contacts at the Association

As of 1st July 2024

Volunteers (not remunerated)

All contact details can be found on the Association's website – www.trees.org.uk

Arboricultural Association Trustees:

- **Chair** – Michelle Ryan
- **Vice Chair** – Neil Davies
- **Treasurer** – Rob Murison
- **Other Trustees:** Alan Simson, Elizabeth Nicholls, Keith Sacre, Paul Barton, Sarah Armstrong, Sarah Kiss, Stella Bolam, Steve Westmore

Committee Chairs:

- **Finance & Governance Committee**
Chair – Neil Davies
- **Resources Committee**
Chair – Stella Bolam
- **Standards Committee**
Chair – Keith Sacre

Arboricultural Association Trading Ltd

Directors (AATL):

Directors of the AATL are the Chair, Vice Chair, CEO and Finance Manager

The Branches:

Contact details of all branches can be found on the Association's website – www.trees.org.uk

- Cornwall
- East Anglia
- Ireland
- Midlands
- Northern
- Scotland
- South Eastern
- Thames and Chiltern
- Wales
- Western



Arboricultural Association

The Malthouse, Stroud Green, Standish, Stonehouse,
Gloucestershire, GL10 3DL, United Kingdom
Tel: **+44 (0)1452 522152**
Email: admin@trees.org.uk

Cover image credit: Maisey Hammond

Association Representation and Liaison: as of 1st July 2024:

- **Action Oak**
– Emma Gilmartin
- **All Party Parliamentary Gardening Horticulture Group (APPGHG)**
– John Parker
- **Ash Die Back Health and Safety Taskforce**
– Michael Sankus and John Parker
- **British Standards Institution B/213 Trees** – John Parker
- **European Arboricultural Council**
– Jonathan Cocking, Charles McCorkell and John Parker
- **European Forum on Urban Forestry**
– John Parker
- **Environmental Horticulture Group**
– John Parker and Alan Simson (Planning & Infrastructure Subcommittee)
- **Fund4Trees**
(fundraising activity Ride for Research)
– Mick Boddy and Andy Hirons
- **HSE Arboriculture and Forestry Advisory Group (AFAG)**
– Simon Richmond, Chris Cooper-Abbs and Andy Gardner (UAG)
- **International Society of Arboriculture (ISA)**
– John Parker
- **London Urban Forest Group**
– John Parker
- **National Highways Sector Scheme 18**
– Martin Lennon
- **National Tree Safety Group**
– Simon Richmond
- **OPM Advisory Group**
– John Parker and Simon Richmond
- **Plant Health Alliance**
– John Parker and Keith Sacre
- **Scottish Tree Health Advisory Group**
– William Hinchliffe and Fiona Melville
- **Society for the Environment**
– Jessica Palfreyman
- **Trees and Design Action Group**
– John Parker

Staff

(Staff listing as of 1st July 2024)

(All staff contact details can be found on the website)

- **Andrew Stewart**, Business Administrator (Events and Marketing)
- **Charlotte Bohin**, Business Administrator (Training)
- **Emma Gilmartin**, Senior Technical Officer
- **Hanif Bhula**, Finance Manager
- **Hollie Wells**, Business Administrator (Contractor Accreditation Schemes)
- **Holly**, Business Administrator (Membership)
- **Jane Stuart**, Business Administrator
- **Jason Ward**, Designer and Webmaster
- **Jess Palfreyman**, Membership & Systems Manager
- **John Parker**, Chief Executive Officer
- **Kate Beamish**, Business Administrator (Finance)
- **Hayley Derrick**, Business Administrator (Training)
- **Maisey Hammond**, Marketing Officer
- **Paul Smith**, Technical Officer (Contractor Accreditation Schemes)
- **Polly Stone**, Business Administrator (Membership)
- **Sarah Bryce**, Business Administrator (Registered Consultant Scheme) and Production Editor of the ARB Magazine
- **Sarah Jackson**, Training, Events and Fundraising Manager
- **Simon Richmond**, Senior Technical Officer and Editor of the ARB Magazine
- **Steve Hodsmen**, Marketing and Communications Manager

Association Reports 2023–24



Report of the Chair of Trustees for the period AGM 2023 – AGM 2024

The period between AGM 2023 and 2024 has been as busy as ever for the Association as we continue to deliver for our members and the wider arboricultural sector. 2023 was a successful financial year, and as you will see in the figures contained within this Annual Summary, the team at the Malthouse were able to achieve another surplus. Conference in 2023 was held at Warwick University and was well received by delegates and speakers alike, with attendance approaching pre-pandemic levels. We look forward to returning to Warwick again in September 2024. The other big event of the year, ARB Show, was held at Westonbirt, The National Arboretum in May and attracted record crowds, from those working in arboriculture and the general public. I was pleased to join a number of Trustees helping out at ARB Show, and it was great to meet so many members.

Our efforts to overhaul the governance of the Association continued after AGM 2023, and having developed a new Committee Structure – which is working well – we have spent the last few months updating our Articles of Association. Originally adopted in 2000 and revised in 2015, the Articles have needed an update for some time. Whilst we have not made any dramatic changes, we believe that the new Articles better reflect the needs of the organisation today and we very much hope that the membership will vote to adopt them at AGM 2024. We have also written a new Governance Policy to go alongside our Trustee Code of Conduct. I have been very keen to deliver these projects during my time as Chair, and I am pleased to have been able to do so with the help of the Board of Trustees and the Association's staff team.



As ever, it is worth highlighting the amazing contributions of all of the people who make the Association such a success. This includes the staff team at the Malthouse, and all of our volunteers. This is my last Chair's update in an Annual Summary, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank my fellow Trustees, both those currently serving on the Board and all of the others who have played a role whilst I have been Chair. Since AGM 2023 our Vice Chair has been Neil Davies, and Rob Murison volunteered to take on the role of Treasurer. Both have done a great job, and I look forward to continuing to work with them on the Board. There will not be any Trustee elections this year, but if you are interested in shaping the future of your Association then please do consider putting your name forward in 2025.

Michelle Ryan
Chair of Trustees

Report of the Chief Executive Officer for the period AGM 2023 – AGM 2024

2023 was another successful year for the Association, as demonstrated by the figures presented on these pages. We initially budgeted for a loss, based largely on a combination of rising costs and a recognition that the wider economic climate might have a detrimental impact on key income streams such as membership, training, events and publications. Instead, we were ultimately able to deliver a surplus – all thanks to the hard work of our staff team and volunteers.

We are delighted to have been able to report successes across the board in 2023. Membership reached another all-time high, and we broke the 3000 paying member barrier. Training courses are back to our pre-pandemic levels, and we have expanded use of our on-site training facility at the Malthouse. We enjoyed a successful ARB Show at Westonbirt and a great Conference at Warwick, as well as numerous other events throughout the year. Demand for our free resource packs has soared, and we are receiving more and more requests from members who want to get out into their communities, at schools and careers fairs, to promote arboriculture. And this all feeds into the continued efforts we are putting into the Succession in Arboriculture project. Sales of publications continued to grow in 2023, this time helped considerably by Ted Green's *Treetime*, and the generosity of the author in donating all profits from the book to the Association. You can read more about some of these successes in the following pages.

As with valuing trees, not everything that is important in business can easily be counted or quantified. What you will not easily find in this Annual Summary is the ethos and culture change that sits behind the figures. As we celebrate our 60th anniversary in 2024, we can reflect on the past and the incredible efforts of those who have come before us, and we are able to focus on the future. What sort of organisation do we want to be? Through conversations with hundreds of members across the world over the last twelve months I have heard the same sort of message repeated. That people are increasingly proud to be part of the Association – not just for the benefits they get for their subscription, but because they know that they are investing in the sector they love and contributing to their professional community. Awareness of the Association, and arboriculture in general, is growing – and we are increasingly regarded as an internationally important organisation. Our marketing – particularly the increase in video content – has helped ensure that more people than ever before are aware of who we are, and what we do.



I am very proud to be part of a team in which my colleagues consistently go above and beyond in order to deliver for our members, and for the sector. Also hugely important are the volunteers on whom we rely – our Trustees, working group members, Branch officials and all of the Arb Ambassadors who give up their free time for the cause. 2023 was a successful year for us, but we must not be complacent and we still face many challenges. In 2024 we have once again budgeted for a deficit year, and despite our best efforts this might indeed be the outcome. However, as you will see in this report, the overall financial picture for the Association is strong and we will continue to invest in our future, ensuring we have the resources we need to see our organisation successfully through the next 60 years and beyond. I hope that you find the information in this Annual Summary useful and of interest – thank you all for your support.

John Parker
Chief Executive Officer

Report of the Treasurer for the year 1st January 2023–31st December 2023

This is my first Treasurer's Report since taking over the mantle Treasurer of the Arboricultural Association and I want to thank the team for welcoming me in and being patient while I have been getting my feet under the desk.

As an organisation, we forecasted 2023 to be a challenging year financially with rampant inflation and the effects of the wider economic headwinds surrounding the UK economy. Whilst there were challenges to endure along the way, I am pleased to say these were overcome, resulting in an forecast loss of just over £50,000 becoming a reasonable surplus of £16,569.

Total income continued to increase year on year, up 17% on 2022's performance to £1,770,162. In addition, and as expected, expenditure levels also increased, rising from 95% in 2022 to 99% of total income in 2023. This increase in expenditure is due to inflationary pressures experienced across the board.

Membership subscriptions continue to form the largest revenue stream for the Association with membership numbers rising to over 3,000 for the time. In addition, ARB Show and Conference both contributed to the robust performance. The combined revenue from ARB Show and Conference represents 18% of the year's total income with both events outperforming their forecasted figures.

The Association continues to pay down its debt with the balance at the end of 2023 on the Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan (CBIL) down to £103,000 from a starting figure of £200,000. This is a £40,000 reduction on the principal across the year of 2023.

Lastly, I am pleased to report the cash reserves continue to be in a healthy state with a £470,000 balance; I note this is more than the updated Reserves Policy figure of £220,000.

This represents an opportunity to reinvest in the Association's activities in the coming years, continually improving the day-to-day operations of the charity as well as increasing the offering we make to our membership.



2024 is looking as challenging as 2023: the majority of the increased costs have now crystallised but there is still significant economic and political uncertainty. However, I am confident that the Association is in a strong position to meet these challenges head on and will continue to promote and represent arboriculture and the arboricultural industry.

Rob Murison
Treasurer

Report of Arboricultural Association Trading Ltd (AATL) for the year 1st January 2023–31st December 2023

The accounts of AATL have been approved by the company's auditors. Being wholly owned by the Association, these accounts are incorporated within the Association's annual accounts. The company's accounts have been approved by the Directors of AATL. The AATL Directors express their thanks to the Association's staff team who continue to make AATL a success.

Michelle Ryan
Chair of Trustees

Accounts and audit

Receipt of the Accounts of the Association for Financial Year 2023

Trustees' Statement

The accounts have been audited and given an unqualified report. Copies of the accounts have been filed with Companies House and will be filed with the Charity Commission by the due date.

A full copy of the audited accounts for 2023 is available on the website (www.trees.org.uk/About-Us/Policies-and-Reports) or may be obtained from the registered office at The Malthouse, Standish, Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, GL10 3DL, United Kingdom.

A summary for 2023 with a comparison to 2022 is provided in the following pages, as well as details showing year-to-date performance in 2024 alongside the 2024 budget and forecast.

The Association's Strategic Plan 2022-24 was adopted in October 2021 and came into force on 1st January 2022. This Strategic Plan has been communicated to all members of the Association and other stakeholders.

Michelle Ryan

Chair of Trustees

Independent auditor's report to the members and Trustees of the Association

The summary financial accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023 included in this report do not constitute statutory financial statements. The summary financial accounts are extracted from the Group's consolidated statutory financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2023. The auditor has reported on those consolidated financial statements; their report was unqualified and did not contain statements under s498 (2) or (3) Companies Act 2006 or equivalent preceding legislation.

Felicity Sang

Senior Statutory Auditor

For and on behalf of Hazlewoods LLP, Statutory Auditor

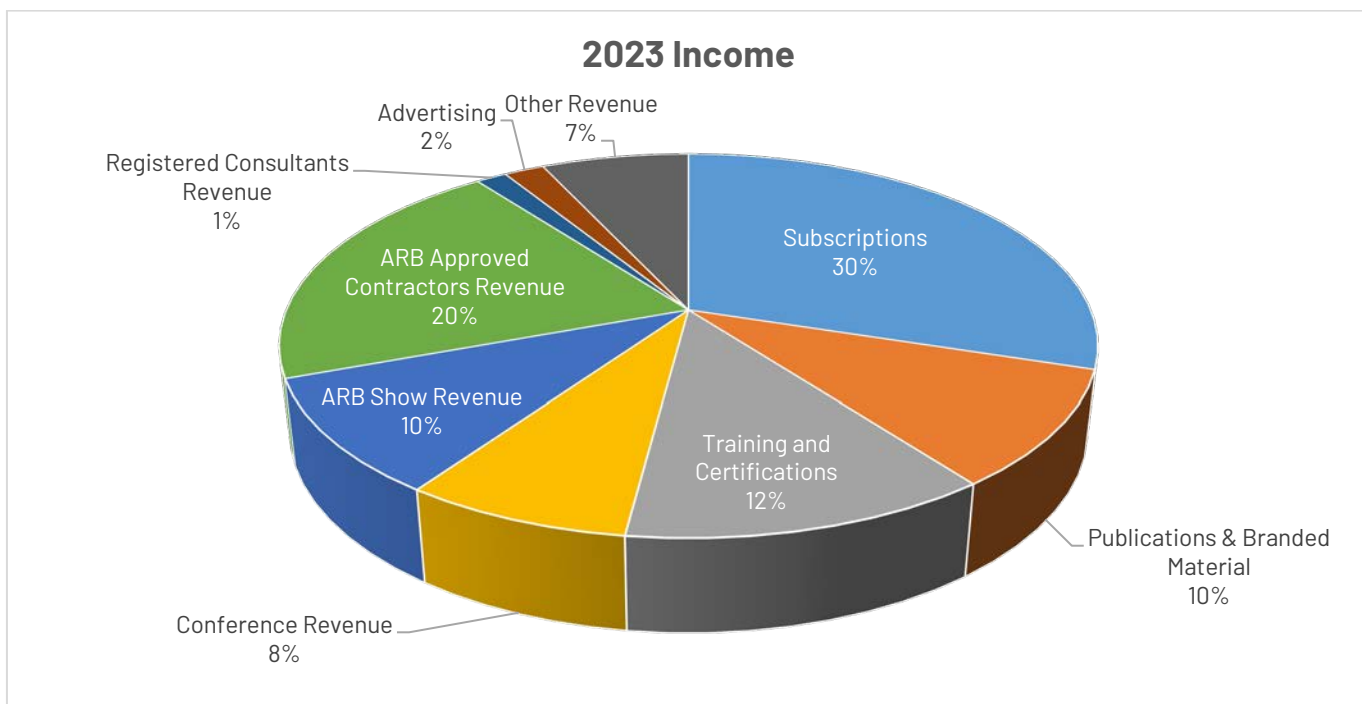
Arboricultural Association Summary Financial Information

1st January 2023–31st December 2023

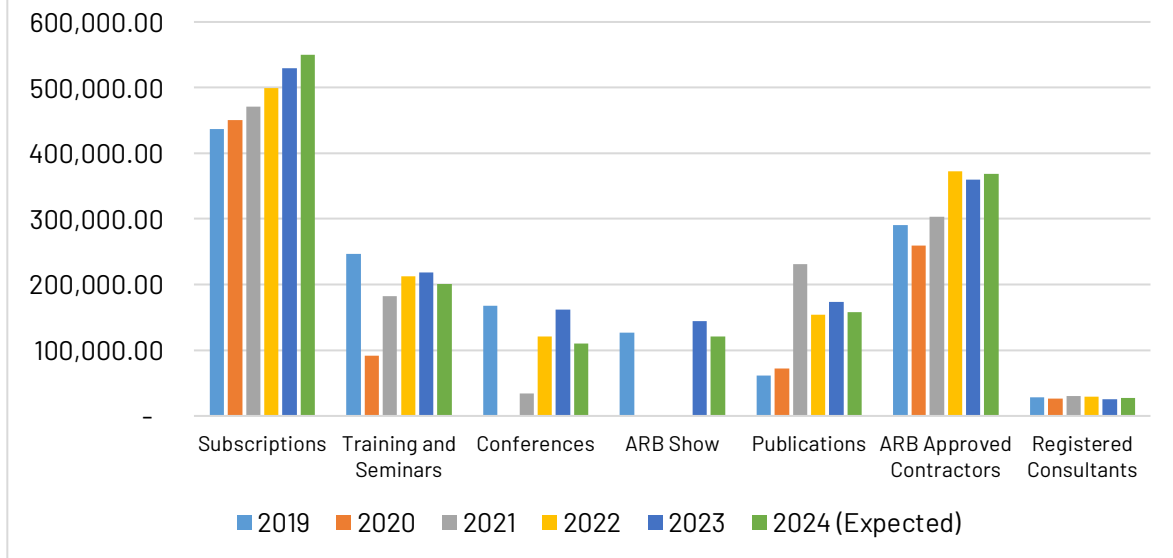
Summary consolidated income and expenditure account	2023			2022		
	Income £'000	Expense £'000	Total £'000	Income £'000	Expense £'000	Total £'000
Activities to further the charity's objectives:						
Subscriptions	529.5	(95.0)	434.5	499.2	(97.9)	401.3
Publications	173.3	(128.8)	44.5	154.1	(142.5)	11.6
Conferences	135.1	(194.6)	(59.5)	120.8	(133.3)	(12.5)
Workshops and seminars	218.7	(210.0)	8.7	212.8	(196.2)	16.6
Trade fair	171.1	(200.4)	(29.3)	-	(66.4)	(66.4)
Meeting costs	-	(40.8)	(40.8)	-	(35.4)	(35.4)
Newsletter and journal	-	(83.0)	(83.0)	-	(83.7)	(83.7)
Political expenditure	-	(18.2)	(18.2)	-	(11.2)	(11.2)
Grant/Other Grants	-	(32.7)	(32.7)	-	(20.9)	(20.9)
	<u>1,227.7</u>	<u>(1,003.5)</u>	<u>224.2</u>	<u>986.9</u>	<u>(787.5)</u>	<u>199.4</u>
Activities to generate funds:						
Consultants and contractors	386.0	(359.6)	26.4	401.3	(331.6)	69.7
Marketing and advertising	33.5	(14.8)	18.7	46.9	(10.1)	36.8
Promotion	-	(114.7)	(114.7)	-	(86.0)	(86.0)
Management and administration	-	(141.6)	(141.6)	-	(122.6)	(122.6)
Committees and governance	-	(22.0)	(22.0)	-	(25.5)	(25.5)
Branch expenditure	-	(18.4)	(18.4)	-	(13.3)	(13.3)
Technical support	-	(78.9)	(78.9)	-	(67.2)	(67.2)
Interest received	6.9	-	6.9	1.1	-	1.1
Other activities	116.0	-	116.0	72.1	-	72.1
	<u>542.4</u>	<u>(750.0)</u>	<u>(207.6)</u>	<u>521.4</u>	<u>(656.3)</u>	<u>(134.9)</u>
Totals:	<u>1,770.1</u>	<u>(1,753.5)</u>		<u>1,508.3</u>	<u>(1,443.8)</u>	
Net income over expenditure:			16.6			64.5
Gains on revaluation of fixed assets			0			137.3
Surplus of income over expenditure			<u>16.6</u>			<u>201.8</u>

Summary consolidated balance sheet	2023		2022	
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Fixed assets:		856.3		866.4
Current assets:				
Stock	68.8		42.6	
Debtors	148.7		134.7	
Cash at bank and in hand	470.5		484.1	
	<u>688.0</u>		<u>661.4</u>	
Creditors due within one year:	<u>(391.1)</u>		<u>(351.2)</u>	
		296.9		310.2
Creditors due after one year:		(63.3)		(103.3)
		<u>1,089.9</u>		<u>1,073.3</u>
Funds:				
Restricted fund	6.1		6.1	
Unrestricted fund	942.2		925.0	
Revaluation reserve	136.7		137.3	
Non-charitable reserves	4.9		4.9	
	<u>1,089.9</u>		<u>1,073.3</u>	

Graphical representation of 2023 income



Income per year for Subscriptions, Training, Conference, ARB Show, Publications, ARB Approved Contractors and Registered Consultants



Summary consolidated movement in reserve funds

31 st December	Unrestricted Funds/Revaluation Reserve £	Restricted Funds £	Total £	Movement on previous year £
2018	747,738	6,086	753,824	44,474
2019	790,865	6,097	796,962	43,138
2020	703,750	6,097	709,847	(87,115)
2021	865,407	6,097	871,504	161,657
2022	1,067,189	6,097	1,073,286	201,782
2023	1,083,758	6,097	1,089,855	16,569

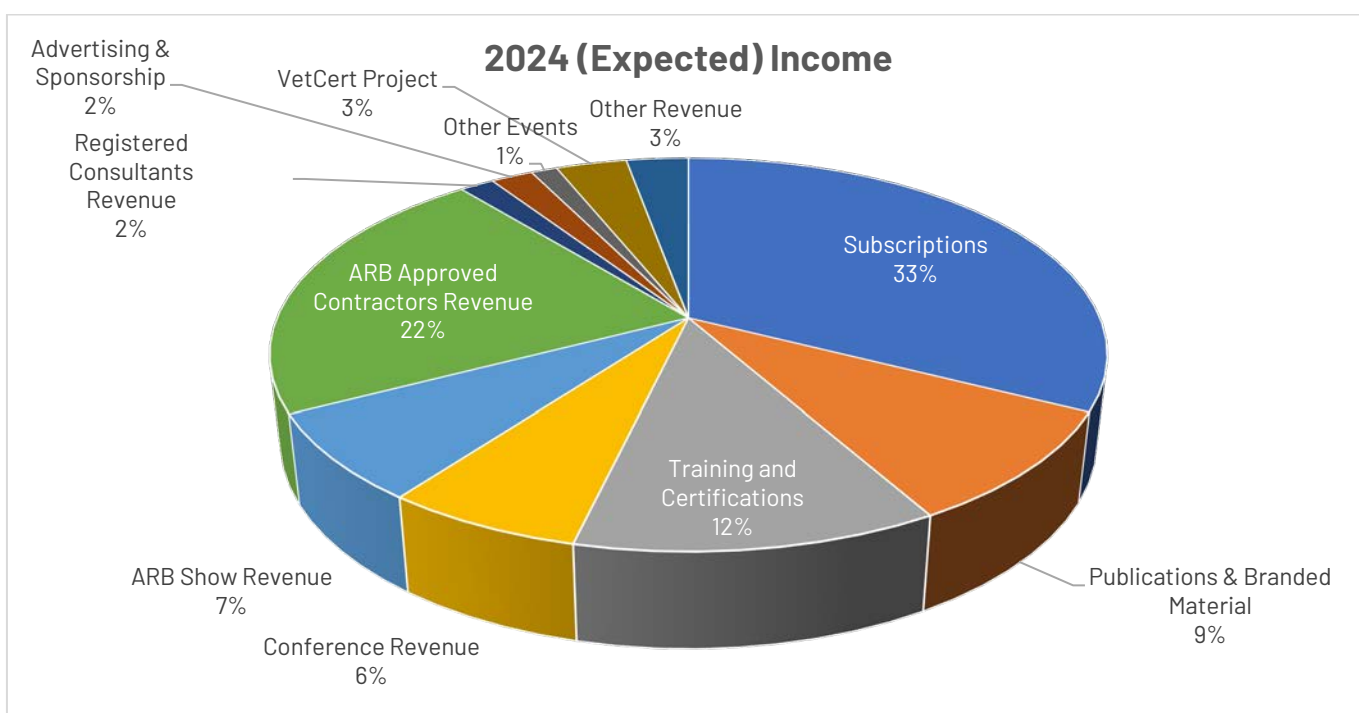
Presentation of the Budget and Performance for 2024 and Re-forecast Data as at 30th June 2024

In accordance with the Association's established practice, a Business Plan and a Budget for 2024 were approved by the Board of Trustees at the start of the financial year. Performance against Budget is monitored regularly. At the present time - August 2024 - there is no reason to believe that the final outcome for the year will be materially at variance with Budget.

	Final 2023	Budget 2024	Actual/Forecast June 2024
Sales			
Subscriptions	529,479	549,700	550,320
Training & Certifications	218,683	200,000	201,099
Amenity Conference Revenue	161,591	110,000	110,000
ARB Show	144,607	127,000	121,274
In-person Events (including Branches)	23,978	25,000	19,460
Approved Contractors Revenue	360,343	362,000	368,918
Registered Consultants Revenue	25,645	26,000	26,897
Publications	173,334	130,000	157,575
Advertising Revenue	33,519	30,000	32,889
On-demand Events	812	1,000	1,000
VetCert Project Revenue	41,637	40,000	55,265
Other Revenue	56,534	43,000	48,504
Total - Sales	1,770,162	1,643,700	1,693,201
Purchases			
Membership Expenses	5,826	10,000	13,698
Training Expenses	79,571	82,000	84,225
Amenity Conference Expenditure	113,337	93,500	93,500
ARB Show	103,271	83,025	109,429
In-person Events	16,463	18,129	17,942
Online Events	728	812	812
Approved Contractors Expenditure	161,922	150,000	153,554
Registered Consultants Expenditure	8,168	8,174	8,445
Publications Expenses	52,817	30,930	36,489
Marketing Expenditure	51,156	44,143	47,030
Partner Sponsorship	2,000	3,500	4,598
Research Grant	5,000	5,000	5,000
Editor's Expenses	17,773	16,338	17,044
APPGHG/OHRG	12,688	12,000	12,000
Climbing Competitions	16,896	16,778	16,791
VetCert Project Expenditure	27,658	30,592	32,129
Other Purchases	4	275	183
Total - Purchases	675,278	605,196	652,869
Gross Income	1,094,884	1,038,504	1,040,332

	Final 2023	Budget 2024	Actual/Forecast June 2024
Overheads			
Member Publications Expenses	70,326	62,119	68,419
Trustees Expenses	2,568	3,000	2,601
Committees & Other Meetings	5,876	1,000	1,943
Branch Events	14,599	6,000	6,657
Staff Expenses	10,783	13,715	14,528
Finance Expenses	24,848	24,450	23,618
Property Costs	22,162	16,669	18,247
Administration Expenses	102,147	92,628	100,571
Staff Overheads	729,825	797,204	777,279
Staff/Trustee Development	1,571	2,405	1,603
Internet Support and Administration	35,446	35,937	35,347
Legal & Professional Fees	24,072	23,776	25,781
Depreciation, Disposal & Bad Debt	29,968	34,091	14,612
Malthouse Loan Interest	4,124	2,643	2,900
Total - Overheads	1,078,315	1,115,637	1,094,106
Surplus before Contingency expenses	16,569	(77,133)	(53,774)
Contingency costs	-	3,000	3,000
Surplus/(Deficit) Income	16,569	(80,133)	(56,774)

Graphical representation of 2024 (Expected) income



Annual General Meeting 2024

at 7pm on Thursday 28th August 2024

Appointment of auditors for the 2024 Accounts

It is recommended that the following be reappointed as auditors for the coming year:

Hazlewoods LLP

Business Advisors and Chartered Accountants

Windsor House, Bayshill Road, Cheltenham, GL50 3AT

Board of Trustees AGM 2023–2024

After the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in 2023 there were nine elected Trustees of the Association.

Michelle **Ryan** (2022), Chair

Neil **Davies** (2022), Vice Chair

Rob **Murison** (2022), Treasurer

Paul **Barton** (2023)

Sarah **Kiss** (2023)

Alan **Simson** (2022)

Keith **Sacre** (2022)

Stella **Bolam** (2022)

Steve **Westmore** (2021)

(Brackets show year of election).

In addition to the above, two Trustees were co-opted onto the Board between AGM 2023 and AGM 2024.

Sarah **Armstrong** (first Co-opted 2021)

Elizabeth **Nicholls** (first Co-opted 2021)

At each AGM, all Trustees who have served a term of three years shall retire from office, other than any Trustee who is in mid-term of office as Chair.

At the close of the period AGM 2023-2024, there will only be one Trustee who has come to the end of their three-year period in office – this is Steve Westmore.

Election of Association Trustees at AGM 2024

Proposed changes to the Articles of Association (the Articles) mean that, if they are adopted by the membership, there will not be Trustee elections in 2024. The current breakdown of Trustees as permitted in the Articles is 9 elected Trustees and 3 Co-opted Trustees. Under the proposed Articles, this will change to 8 elected Trustees and 4 Co-opted Trustees.

With a reduction in the maximum number of elected Trustees of one, and only one Trustee coming to the end of their term, there will be no need for elections in 2024.

If the Articles are not adopted by the membership at AGM 2024 then at the next meeting of the Board an item will be included on the agenda to discuss potential ways forward.