

# ***FINAL DRAFT***

***As agreed by PACE Trustees 13 March 2025 and awaiting the Financial Statements which are in preparation and will be added soon.***

**PACE Manningtree (Practical Actions for Climate and the Environment)  
A Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)  
Registered Charity Number 1204980**

**Trustees Report and Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2024**

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## **PACE Manningtree**

### **Trustees Annual Report for the period ended 31 December 2024**

#### **Information about the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)**

**Registered Name:** PACE Manningtree

**Registered Charity Number:** 1204980

**Registered Address:** 10 Grange Road, Lawford, Manningtree. CO11 2JB

**Website:** [www.pacemanningtree.org.uk](http://www.pacemanningtree.org.uk)

**Bankers:** Metrobank, 31 – 32 High Street, Colchester CO1 1DB

#### **Members and Trustees of PACE Manningtree**

The Trustees are the only Members of PACE Manningtree, and the following Trustees were all appointed to serve from 29 September 2023 for the following terms

##### **For 4 years:**

John Morley Hall (Chair of Trustees)

Christopher James Bowden (Treasurer)

Stephen George Norrison Marr (Deputy Treasurer)

Jonathan Michael Wistan Wise

##### **For 3 years:**

Sarah Louise Smith

Bonny Marie Williams

Rebecca Sheila Jane Bibko

Halford Hewitt (Deputy Chair of Trustees)

##### **For 2 years:**

Caroline Birgit Rose Hall (Secretary)

Iris Eileen Marr

Rachael Helen Hurst

Tom Moat

#### **The Charity Objects of PACE Manningtree**

To promote for the benefit of the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment, particularly but not exclusively in Manningtree, by carrying out local environmental conservation action such as tree planting, litter picking, pavement weeding, the use of an electric cargo bike to demonstrate low carbon transport, water quality sampling and other initiatives considered suitable by the trustees.

To advance the education of the public, particularly but not exclusively in Manningtree, in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment for the public benefit, through presentations, meetings and other educational events or means as the trustees may determine.

## **Trustees Annual Report**

### **Governance and Management**

This Trustees Report covers the period from 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2024.

PACE Manningtree was originally formed as a Local Community Group of volunteers in April 2019. On 20 September 2023 PACE Manningtree was registered by the Charity Commission as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation CIO. Between 1 July 2023 and 31 December 2024, the PACE Trustees held 8 Board of Trustees meetings where they dealt with the administration and business of the charity. In addition to these Board meetings there were PACE supporters meetings approximately once per month totalling 16 Supporters Meetings covering the following main subjects:

1 August 2023 Community Solar Energy Scheme Manningtree, Mistley, Lawford, Ardleigh

5 September 2023 Water Quality of the River Stour and Manningtree Mermaids

3 October 2023 Introducing the Local Food Project

7 November 2023 Rent-my and the Manningtree Repair Café

5 December 2023 Christmas Review of PACE Projects

1 February 2024 Gardening for Nature

5 March 2024 Water in a Changing Climate

2 April 2024 The Future of Local Farming

7 May 2024 Climate Concerns – how we can influence our politicians

4 June 2024 Field Trip to South Heath Farm, Great Bentley

2 July 2024 Field Trip to SRC Aggregates, Martell's Quarry, Ardleigh

6 August 2024 Field Trip to Humberlands Farm

3 September 2024 Field Trip to Manningtree Sewage Treatment Works

1 October 2024 Community Climate Forum – Planning for the future

5 November 2024 Unpacking the Food System

3 December 2024 – planning for the Manningtree Earth Festival 2025

On average 32 people attended these PACE Supporters Meetings (Max 45, Min 25). A short summary was produced for each of these meetings - these are available on the PACE website.

### **Public Benefit Statement**

The Trustees of PACE Manningtree have complied with the duty of the Charities Act to have due regard to the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit "Charities and Public Benefit".

The Trustees refer to the Charity Commissions guidance on public benefit when reviewing the aims of PACE and when planning future initiatives and projects.

## Strategic Vision and Plan

PACE Manningtree agreed a 5-year Strategic Vision and Plan in November 2021. In July 2023 the Trustees reviewed the Charitable Objects of PACE Manningtree in preparation to becoming a Registered Charity and answered a series of questions from the Charity Commission with the help of a charity lawyer from Ellisons solicitors. The constitution of PACE Manningtree was agreed by the Charity Commission and finally PACE registered as a charity on 29 September 2023.

The Trustees agreed a set of Rules for Trustees and a series of Policies and Procedures which can be found on the PACE Website. In early 2024 the Trustees undertook a review and agreed a new 5-year Vision which recognised that keeping within 1.5°C rise in average global temperature, as referred to in the 2015 UN COP Paris Agreement, is unlikely to be achieved and it is therefore important to include adaptation and resilience in the PACE Vision. Biodiversity loss is also serious and should be reflected in the PACE Vision. The following updated Vision was agreed by the Trustees

*PACE Manningtree works with local communities to increase understanding and take positive actions to address climate change and the loss of biodiversity – we aim to build our resilience to the impacts of climate disruption and threats to the natural world.*

This Vision would influence which projects and initiatives the Trustees would support and promote and this is reflected in the summaries below. Any proposals for new projects or initiatives have been considered by Trustees with reference to this Vision. The Trustees have received regular reports on projects and initiatives together with reports on financial position, safeguarding, health and safety.

The progress of PACE has been recognised by two important Awards in 2024. PACE won the BBC Essex Make A Difference Award – Green Category in September 2024 and won the King's Award for Voluntary Service in November 2024.

None of this, nor the progress with the Projects and Initiatives outlined below would have been possible without the huge contribution of volunteers in every aspect of PACE's work and the Trustees are enormously grateful to these volunteers.

Trustees are very grateful for grants and donations which have been received during this financial period.

The Trustees continue to consider the accessibility needs of participants at meetings and projects to ensure that people of all abilities can participate as well as possible.

The Trustees are aware of the need to identify and manage significant risks to protect the charity and is in the process of undertaking a Risk Register which includes such strategic risks as:

- Governance Risks – we have developed Rules for Trustees to ensure that we meet our governance, regulatory, and legal obligations.
- Reputational Risks – the Trustees are aware of the need to prevent and manage any incident which could lead to reputational damage.
- Operational Risks – we actively and regularly keep track of our different initiatives and projects to help identify any concerns including ensuring that at least one Trustee is engaged in each of the PACE Projects.

- People Risks – we have processes in place to ensure that our Trustees and volunteers are looked after well, and we ensure that everyone works within our Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies to protect people. We have insurance to cover a number of risks and eventualities including Public Liability cover and Trustee indemnity insurance.
- Safeguarding Risks – as we are undertaking some educational work which may include young people and/or vulnerable adults, we have policies and procedures in place to consider safeguarding issues and ensure we work within these policies.
- Complaints – PACE Manningtree has a Complaints Policy and procedure in place which, like other policies, is available on the PACE website and any complainant is directed to and encouraged to follow this policy.
- Financial Sustainability – we manage our finances and fundraising to ensure that we can meet our commitments short term (within 1 year), as well as longer term. The Trustees are aware of the need to know about the source of any funds and the Treasurer is mindful to identify each source of income.
- Additionally, at each Trustees meeting includes an Agenda item on safeguarding and Health and Safety

## **Brief Summaries of PACE Projects and Initiatives 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2024**

### **Manningtree Earth Festival**

The last Manningtree Earth Festival was on 11 June 2023. It was very successful with 56 Stalls, 10 Speakers, and 8 Family Activities and attracted over 3000 visitors. It was, however, a major commitment for PACE and over 100 volunteers. Following a review the Trustees agreed to run the Festival every other year which would be in June 2025. The Trustees reviewed this again in October 2024 and discussed with many volunteers on 3 December 2024 whether there was sufficient resource to run the Festival. There was a good response from volunteers, however, in early 2025 several issues emerged, and the Trustees decided to postpone the Earth Festival to June 2026.

### **Wildlife Friendly Gardens**

The aim of this initiative was to demonstrate practical steps that gardeners can take to support local biodiversity. On 8 June 2024 PACE volunteers organised the opening of 10 gardens in Lawford half of these were well established gardens, and the other half were recently created. All showed interesting wildlife features. Over 200 visitors visited the gardens and over £874 was given in donations which more than covered the costs. Over 30 volunteers were involved – thanks go to them and the garden owners who made this successful. PACE also organised a Wildlife Gardening Showcase in September for 30 residents of new properties in Lawford Green in conjunction with Beth Chatto Gardens, to explain a range of garden plants and features can improve biodiversity.

### **Water Sampling on the River Stour and River Brett**

The aim of this project is to investigate the local concerns about the water quality of the River Stour and River Brett. The Environment Agency (EA) originally trained 9 PACE volunteers in a method called *Riverfly* which uses freshwater invertebrates as indicators of water quality. 5 of these volunteers have continued to be active throughout this period.

Another 7 PACE volunteers were trained in *Riverfly* in 2024, so we have a pool of 12 volunteers and they have enabled *Riverfly* samples to be taken once each month through this period. Volunteers have also taken bacteria samples which, with the support of University of Essex, have been cultured to give counts of *E. coli* and *Enterococcus* as indicators of gut bacteria. We have identified two incidents of suspected pollution during this period, both of which were investigated by Environment Agency ecologists. Bacteria counts have been low during most of this period, but high levels of gut bacteria were recorded in May and June 2024 at several of our 5 sites on the River Stour, and these high levels are of significant concern. We aim to continue samples throughout 2025 and then publish our results in a joint paper with University of Essex.

### **Workshops on Climate Change**

The aim of these workshops is to ensure that the knowledge of our PACE Trustees and volunteers is up to date. Professor Jules Pretty from University of Essex and Chair of the Essex Climate Action Commission held a 3-hour Workshop in September 2024 on Changing Climate and Biodiversity Loss and we explored ways to explain this information to local residents and organisations.

### **Field Trips for Local Schools**

The aim of the Field Trips is to provide environmental studies which support school staff and complement elements of the National Curriculum. PACE volunteers worked closely with schoolteachers to provide the best support for their curriculum activities. PACE then organised activities for 2 local Primary Schools at Lawford and Highfields Manningtree, and led these with the support of the School staff, for example: a local Tree Survey, Insect Biodiversity, Small Mammal Survey and Visit to the Sewage Treatment Works. PACE volunteers prepared Lesson Plans and Worksheets with the staff and addressed Safeguarding and Health & Safety issues in advance of the practical work.

### **Presentations and Talks**

As part of the PACE Objects “to advance education of the public”, PACE volunteers gave presentations during the period to Essex County Council, Great Bentley Parish Council, Coggeshall Society, Colchester Eco-Centre, Several Rotary Groups and Bradfield Club.

### **Reduce Reuse Recycle – the 3Rs**

The aim is to raise awareness of and support actions to reduce, reuse, and recycle. The 3Rs project takes over from the Plastic Free Manningtree Project which was linked to Surfers Against Sewage and was successful in encouraging many local businesses to reduce single-use plastic. The first initiative being developed by the 3Rs will focus on reducing the number of wet wipes being flushed down local toilets. Many wet wipes contain plastics which prevent them from disintegrating and therefore they cause enormous problems by blocking and degrading our local Sewage Treatment Works.

### **Tendring Show**

The aim is for PACE to work with Tendring Show Organisers so that together we progressively make the Show more sustainable by reducing carbon emissions and increasing support for the environment. Between 20,000 and 25,000 people visit this one day Show each year – it is a good Show and one of the largest public events in the PACE catchment. The Show Organisers recognise they must become more sustainable. Most visitors arrive by

car. The first PACE initiative at the Show in July 2024 was to thank those visitors who arrived on foot, by bike or with a full car by offering them entry into a Prize Draw. 32 volunteers were involved and reached over 2,000 visitors. The PACE stand at the Show won the cup for Best Charity Stand. Since the Show, two PACE volunteers have held a Workshop with the Show Organisers to help them prepare their long-term Sustainability Plan for the Show.

### **Election Question Time Hustings**

PACE organised this event in the Lawford Venture Centre on 18 June 2024 which was attended by 4 of the 5 election candidates for the Harwich and North Essex Constituency in the General Election. The aim of this event was to enable PACE volunteers and local residents to ask questions of the candidates and hear what the candidates had to say on climate change, loss of biodiversity and other environmental matters. The hall was packed with over 120 local people, there was a good range of questions and each of the candidates had a fair opportunity to answer questions and explain their position and views on environmental subjects.

### **The PACE Food Project**

A team of PACE volunteers are investigating food and farming – understanding the complexities of the systems, structures and policies which produce and provide our food and understanding local consumers choices regarding food. The first initiative agreed by the Trustees is a series of public presentations, debates and discussions about food which will be run in 2025.

### **Climate FRESK**

FRESK is a workshop, initially developed in France, where participants create a “Fresco” which helps them understand climate change and actions they can choose to help address the impacts of a changing climate. Most of the PACE Trustees participated in a 3-hour FRESK Workshop, 6 of the Trustees have been trained to facilitate FRESK Workshops and 3 of the Trustees have led their first FRESK.

### **PACE Newsletter**

The first PACE Newsletter was issued in December 2024. The aim is to send the Newsletter out once each month, by Email to our signed up supporters, and through social media and the PACE website, to inform and educate local people, and to provide them with practical information which will help them change their behaviour in support of a more sustainable community. The first Newsletter was well received and attracted new supporters to sign up.

### **Community Soar Energy Scheme**

The aim is to work with Essex County Council, South East New Energy and Power Circle to encourage and support residents in Manningtree, Lawford, Mistley, Ardleigh who want to install solar panels and battery and therefore reduce their energy bills and reduce the electricity demand our community places on the national grid. PACE organised several public meetings in late 2023 to explain this Scheme to local residents and about 300 households “Expressed Interest”. There are two options in this Scheme 1) Pay for your own solar panels and battery 2) Pay as you Save Funded Option. (The latter would be part funded by grants from a Social Fund). A Feasibility Study was undertaken which showed that this area has good potential for solar generation on domestic buildings. The Scheme offered surveys to each household to assess their suitability and provide competitive quotes. There

was initial enthusiasm for this Scheme, however, the Social Fund has been slow in finalising their funding and therefore the Scheme has stalled – but we are hopeful it will come through.

### **Community Allotment**

The aim of the community allotment at Mistle is to encourage local people to grow-their-own vegetables to reduce food miles and carbon emissions, and to provide nutritious organic food. About six volunteers have continued to work most Sunday mornings throughout this period. 2024 was a good growing season with good crops of potatoes, broad beans, runner beans, garlic, beetroot and superb onions. Parsnips and leeks failed to germinate this year, and crops of mangetout, sprouts and other brassicas were poor.

### **40 Ways to cut your carbon emissions**

The aim of this project was to produce a Booklet and Poster which explain 40 different ways that local people can reduce their carbon emissions and emphasise that people with different circumstances should choose which ways are manageable for their household.

During this period, we completed the delivery of the 40 Ways Booklets, used the Booklets in a wide range of Talks and Events. Several other organisations wanted to produce a bespoke version of the 40 Ways Booklet for their community, and we provided the artwork free of charge for this.

### **Local Tree Planting**

The aim of this initiative is to support the planting of trees in our local community because trees help to reduce carbon dioxide levels as well as providing important habitats for biodiversity and greenspaces for local people. PACE volunteers checked the young trees we planted at Owls Flight Dell in 2021/22 and replenished mulch and tree guards. It is proving a difficult site for trees to grow, however, sufficient trees remain to establish a woodland.

### **Electric Cargo Bike**

The aim of this project was to encourage local people to use the cargo bike for local journeys to reduce carbon emissions. A committed PACE volunteer continues to look after the bike but, in spite of increased promotion, interest in hirings has been very poor. Trustees have now accepted that this initiative was good in principle, but the initiative has not been successful in practice.

### **Outreach Group initiatives**

A team of PACE volunteers select initiatives which will broaden the interest in PACE and its work. In the present period the Outreach Group have undertaken several initiatives with Manningtree Library for example Green Library week and Environment Bookshelf. They have supported work with the Schools and Nurseries and were crucial to the Wildlife Gardening events and the initiative with Manningtree Co-op where the Co-op staff selected PACE as the charity they wanted to support.

### **Supporting other community initiatives**

PACE volunteers have supported several other important initiatives which meet PACE Objects, but which were not organised by PACE but by other local community groups, for example:



- *Street keepers of Manningtree* - organised by Manningtree Town Council, this initiative keeps the streets of the town free from weeds so that the Council no longer needs to spray weedkiller Glyphosate.
- *Manningtree Repair Café* – open once per month so that residents can take various items for repair at minimal cost.

### **Our aims for 2025/2026**

Trustees will continue to review the progress we are making on the existing initiatives and projects. Any new initiatives or projects which come forward will be assessed to help Trustees select those which will best achieve the Objects of the charity and the new Strategic Vision. Each new initiative or project will engage at least one Trustee. The Trustees have agreed to meet at least bimonthly and will receive regular reports on any significant progress or decisions that need to be made.

We will also continue to hold PACE monthly open meetings for supporters and the general public to educate and inform them of the issues and concerns relating to the changing climate and threats to the environment.

We will continue to identify what resources are needed for each initiative or project in terms of volunteer power and financial or other needs and aim to secure the resources needed. We will endeavour to increase the number of supporters through these meetings and through the PACE Newsletter, the website, social media, other press and publicity.

We will continue construct a financial budget for the funds needed to progress the work of the charity, and the Treasurer will monitor the income (checking the source of grants, donations etc) and the expenditure to ensure that PACE operates within its financial means. Every Trustee meeting will receive a report on PACE's latest financial position.

We will review the skills of the existing Trustees by conducting a Skills Audit so that, in the future, we are ready to appoint any new Trustees who can fill any skills gaps which are identified by the Skills Audit.

Other policies, rules and procedures will be developed and agreed by the Trustees as these are required, and we will review them on a regular basis. Every Trustee meeting will continue to have a standing agenda item to report any Safeguarding or Health and Safety issues.

PACE Manningtree was originally registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) where the Trustees are the only voting Members (Foundation Model). This was the simplest and most appropriate model at the time. Trustees will now consider whether or not it is the right time to move to an Association Model CIO which would have a wider voting membership where each member contributes an Annual Subscription.

### **Financial Review.**

The Financial Statements for the period 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2024 are being prepared and will be added soon.

### **Independent Examiner's Report.**

The Independent Examiner's Report will also be added soon.

