



Ethiopian Heritage Trust (UK), AGM#1. 18th February 2018 Chairman's Annual Report for 2017

BEGINNING DATE

The Trust's bank account was opened on 17 July 2017. Though the Constitution was not signed until 9 September 2017, this report covers the period 17 July – 31 December 2017.

STATUS AND CONSTITUTION

1. We are a charity, but we are not recognised as such by the Charity Commission because they refuse any application for recognition from a charity whose income is less than £5,000 a year.
2. However, it seemed sensible to follow as closely as possible the Guidelines set out by the Charity Commission and this we have done.
3. In particular our Constitution is modelled on the Model Constitution for a Small Charity provided by the Charity Commission.
4. The Trust's Constitution was signed on 9 September 2017. The founding members were Peter McCann, Michael Sargent, Patricia Sargent, Janice Boldt and Elizabeth Casbon.
5. Dr. Negusse Tewoldemedhin was later appointed as an Additional Trustee.
6. The Constitution was approved by the Ethiopian Heritage Trust in Addis Ababa on 11 October.
7. When we applied to HMRC for Gift Aid status they requested revision of Paragraph 3 of the Constitution. This was done and they accepted our revision with effect from 15 December 2017. HMRC as of that date has recognised us as a charity for tax purposes, and from that date we can reclaim Gift Aid.
8. The amendment to the Constitution is a separate item on the agenda.
9. If the amendments to the Constitution are accepted then we will again seek the approval of the Trust in Addis Ababa.
10. Operating Procedures were agreed and signed on 11 October 2017. If anyone would like a copy please say so.

CHANGE OF NAME

Several people pointed out that to have the name of the Trust in Addis Ababa the Ethiopian Heritage Trust, while our name is the Ethiopia Heritage Trust (UK) is confusing. We agree and, if you agree the proposed constitutional change, our name will become the Ethiopian Heritage Trust (UK).

MEMBERSHIP AND DONATIONS

1. At the end of 2017 we had 38 members and 5 donors.
2. There are graphs showing a breakdown by type of membership, and by nationalities. I think it's nice that people from 6 different countries have contributed.



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3. The generosity shown has been remarkable. We have 6 life members, 2 silver life members and 3 gold life members and have raised over £3,500.
4. We have not gone hell-for-leather in our recruitment and fund-raising, for three reasons.
 - a. Firstly, we were waiting till we were authorised by HMRC for Gift Aid, which was completed on 15 December.
 - b. Secondly, we still need to set up a web-site, produce a leaflet and create membership cards.
 - c. Thirdly, the difficulties faced by the Ethiopian Heritage Trust in Addis Ababa made for a degree of uncertainty.
5. As promised in our literature, no funds at all have been spent in the UK on administration with the sole exception of a bank charge of £15 every time we send funds to Ethiopia.
6. I know that it is outside the time frame of this report, but you may like to know that the Ethiopian Ambassador and the Minister for Public Diplomacy at the Ethiopian Embassy joined our Trust last week.
7. A newsletter was published in November 2017. We expect to produce 2 newsletters per year.

THE ETHIOPIAN HERITAGE TRUST

1. Without good working relations with the Trust in Addis Ababa we would be wasting our time and I am pleased to say that relations have become very good. The Board is working hard to rejuvenate the Trust.
2. It has been very helpful for our working together that Dr. Negusse was in Addis Ababa in the summer of last year and had meetings with the Trust there. Fortunately for us he is planning another visit to Addis Ababa next month, and will have time for discussions with the Trust there. If there are any particular issues you would like him to raise, please let him know.
3. In financial terms by 31 December we had sent £1,750 to the Trust in Addis Ababa. (As an aside, although it relates to this year rather than 2017 I would like to say that we sent a further £1,000 in January).
4. We had expected that the funds we sent would be used to grow seedlings and plant them in Entoto Park. But in the event, there was a more immediate and pressing need. The funds we have sent have been instrumental in helping to save the Entoto Park from serious depredation. The Park needs around 100 park guards for protection, and the Trust simply did not have the funds to be able to pay them all. The majority of the guards had to be let go, but our funds helped to pay for 30 guards and one coordinator. They are working in 3 shifts for 24 hours.
5. The Trust in Addis Ababa recently had its Annual General Meeting. It was a successful meeting and our support was recorded with grateful thanks.
6. Two other pressing problems face the Trust in Addis Ababa.
 - a. A church next to the Park claims part of the land, and



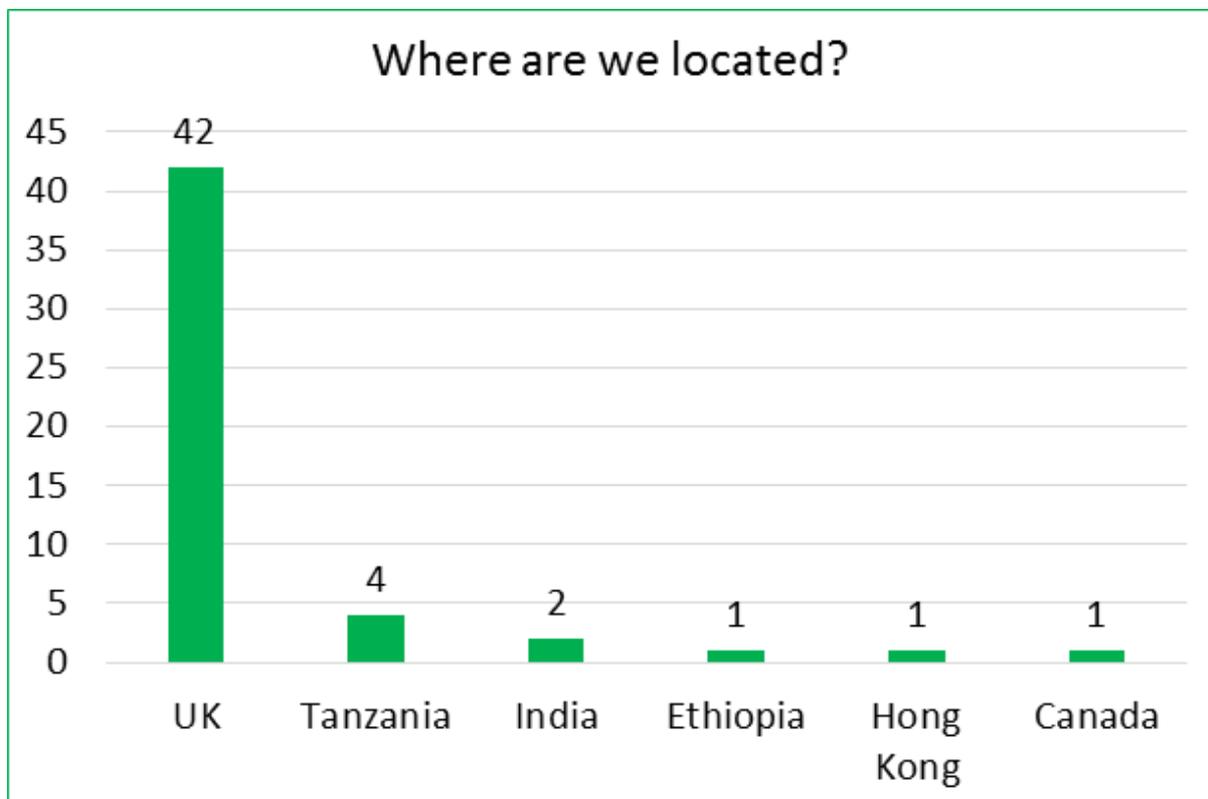
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- a. the Oromia Region claims half of the Park.

One result of these issues was that the Trust was unable last year to harvest and sell eucalyptus trees (as they do each year), and this was and is a major contributing factor to their current financial problems.

Regarding the claims on the Park's land the Trust's Board in Addis Ababa are doing everything possible to defend the Trust's rights and we have good reason to hope that a satisfactory result will be achieved.

7. While we focus our attention of the Park we should also remember that the Trust has another responsibility - which is the good care of the historic building in their charge.

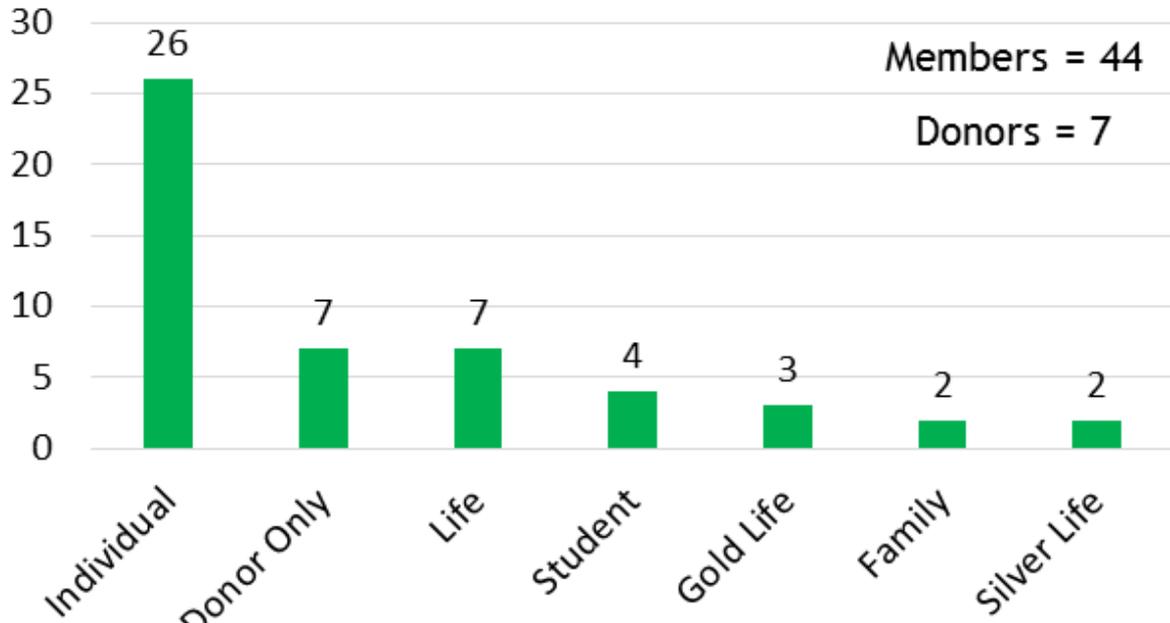




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What sort of Members are we?





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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The fact that the Trust has got off to a good start is thanks to many people, chief among whom is Pete McCann as Treasurer. His contribution from the very beginning has been indispensable, and I, personally, would like to give him my sincerest thanks.

Dr. Negusse Tewoldemedhin formally joined us a little later as a Trustee, but from the inception of the Trust has been invaluable, providing wisdom and judgement and a cheerful willingness to help in all tasks that may come up.

I would like to thank all the other Trustees, with a special thank you to Elizabeth Casbon for helping redraft our Objects (otherwise known as Objectives) in line with HMRC'S request.

Christopher Sargent has been supportive from the beginning and with his wife Teri designed and produced the membership cards.

And we owe our thanks to Mr. John Bowthorpe, a professional accountant, who inspected and certified the accounts.

We are also very grateful to Andrew Sargent, who, uniquely, became a Gold Life Member twice, once in 1995 and once in 2017.

And finally, thanks once more to Patsy Sargent for all she did in the 1990's and all she is doing now.

But, most of all, thank you, the members and the donors, most sincerely. Your support is the rock on which we build.

Michael Sargent

Chairman

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