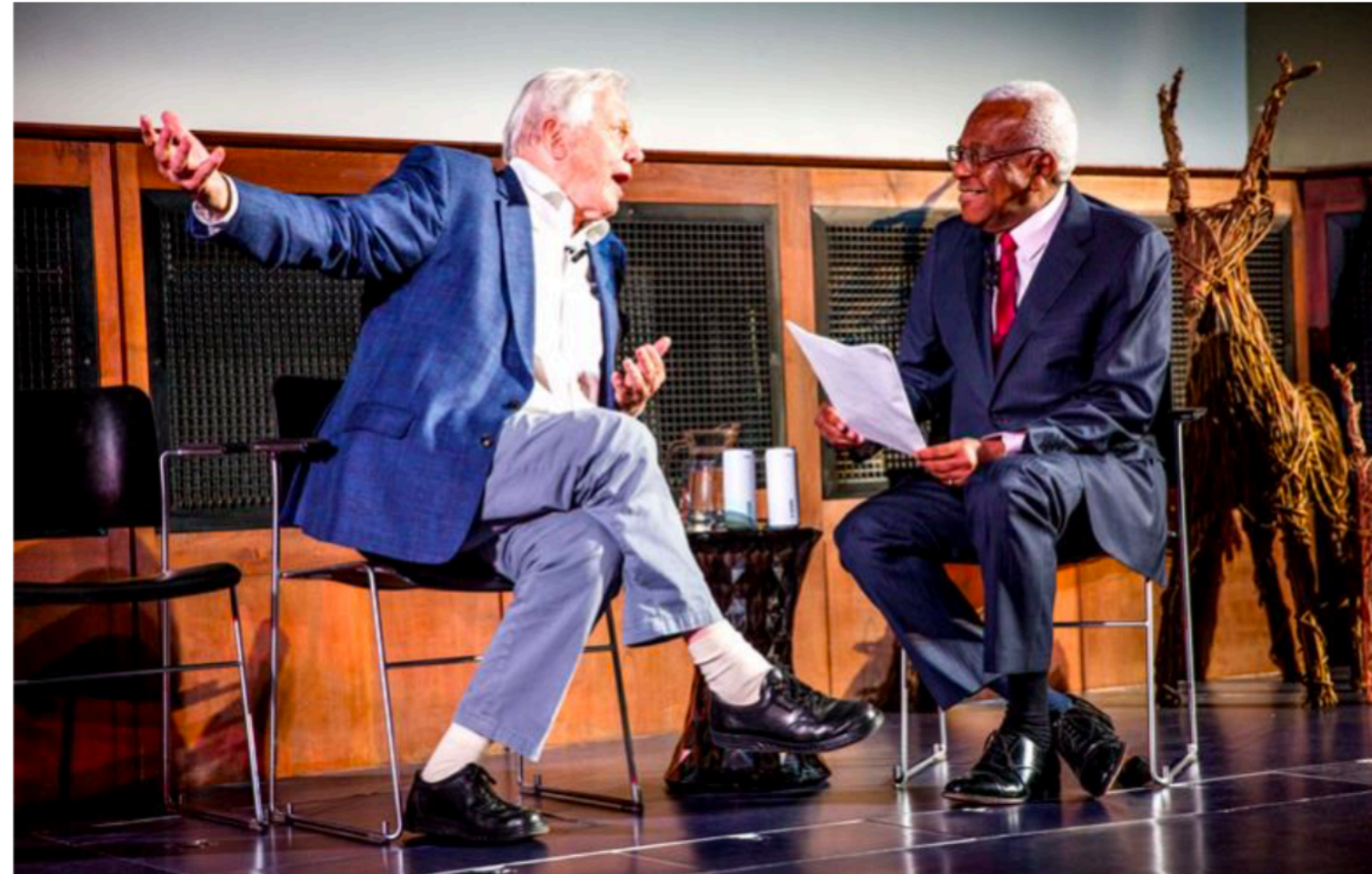


Richmond Park film launched to overwhelming praise

Eighteen months of writing, filming and editing culminated on 25 April with the launch of the Friends' new film: **Richmond Park – National Nature Reserve**, presented and narrated by Sir David Attenborough. The objective is to help visitors understand the rich wildlife of the Park and the threats it faces, so that they want to protect it and Tread Lightly.

Nearly 650 guests were privileged to attend the premiere screened at the beautiful Royal Geographical Society in Kensington. They included Friends' volunteers and ballot winners, the Park's wildlife experts, people from key organisations linked to the Park, especially TRP, and a lively group of more than 200 children from local schools.



Enthusiastic applause greeted the end of the inspirational 21-minute film. This was redoubled when Sir David took the stage to answer questions posed by another local veteran broadcaster, Sir Trevor McDonald. Asked to name his favourite animal in the Park, Sir David chose stag beetles, but confessed that his real favourites were the children he sees delighting in the natural surroundings.

They were joined on stage by TRP head of ecology, Julia Balfour, the film's director George Chan, executive producer/FRP trustee Richard Gray and Dougie Poynter, bass player of McFly. Dougie raised a laugh when he said that he knew nothing about where to live in London so did a Google search to see where Sir David lived and made the decision to move to Richmond because it must be good if David Attenborough lived there!

The event was introduced by Ron Compton, Chair of FRP, and the new TRP Chair, Loyd Grossman, spoke about the importance of the Royal Parks and the need to protect them. Local actor Julian Glover closed proceedings with a moving reading of excerpts from the FRP commissioned poem, *A Dream of Richmond Park*, by David Harsent.



FRP's Richard Gray said: "We're immensely proud of the film; it's made to the highest production standards but also evolved from considerable input from Park wildlife experts, TRP staff, brilliant film makers and, of course, Sir David".

The film was broadcast on London Live the night after the launch and tens of thousands have since viewed the full film online or a 4 minute version made specially for social media. There is a special film website www.richmondparkfilm.org.uk which has links to the film and more, or see it via www.frp.org.uk.

We now want everyone – and especially members – to do all they can to spread the word:

***Tread Lightly*
in Richmond Park!**

A DVD of the film, with highlights from the launch including Sir David's interview with Sir Trevor, is on sale now at the Visitor Centre by Pembroke Lodge.