

The Friends of Richmond Park

Annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2019

Trustees' report

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2019. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" and the Charities Act 2011.

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the objects and activities of the Friends and in planning its future activities. In particular, the Trustees have considered how planned activities will contribute to the objects and activities they have set.

Structure, governance and management

The Friends was registered as a charity (No. 1133201) on 9 December 2009 under a Constitution dated 12 November 2009 which sets out its objects and powers.

New Trustees are recruited and appointed from within the membership, principally those who are engaged in volunteer activities. As part of their induction they receive a copy of the Constitution and Rules, the latest annual report and financial statements, the Charity Commission guidance "The Essential Trustee" and all other relevant management papers. Trustee meetings are held every two months.

The Trustees, all of whom served throughout the year except as noted, are set out below:

Janet Bostock (*appointed 13 April 2019*)

Nick Coleman

Ron Crompton – Chairman

Mary Davies (*resigned 14 March 2019*)

Teresa Grafton

Richard Gray

PJ Greeves

Chris Mason

David McLaughlin - Honorary Treasurer

Richard Polson – Honorary Secretary

Dr Vivienne Press

Steve Sandham

The principal address of the Friends is 42 Rivermeads Avenue, Twickenham, TW2 5JQ.

Objects and activities

The objects of the Friends in summary are to:

- promote the conservation, protection and improvement of the natural and physical environment of the Park and its peace and natural beauty for the benefit of the public and future generations; and
- advance the education of the public in relation to the Park's status as a National Nature Reserve, Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area of Conservation.

To achieve these objectives, the Friends' volunteers undertake practical conservation work and litter-picking, monitor events in the Park, staff the Visitor Centre, organise public walks and courses, and run an education programme for young families.

Registered number: 1133201

Trustees' report (continued)

The Friends also funds conservation projects, campaigns on issues affecting the Park, and communicates with the public and its 2800 members through a website, Facebook page, a printed newsletter three times a year and a monthly e-bulletin. The Friends is run on a voluntary basis and has no paid members of staff.

Achievements and performance during the year

It has been a busy year for the Friends! As well as all the following activities, preparations for "2020 The Year of the Tree" went on throughout the year, with the launch at Pembroke Lodge in November. This included the publication of the first set of "Walks with Remarkable Trees" and the start of sales of the limited-edition Royal Oak prints by Mark Frith.

New Friends' website and online sales

The Friends' new website went live in February, with the immediate advantage that the Friends can now accept membership applications and payments online. In October, a shopping page was launched to permit sales of the 2020 Richmond Park Calendar and subsequently the, successful, sales of the limited-edition Royal Oak prints, which were only available online.

Heathrow flights campaign

The Friends responded in detail to Heathrow's January and June consultations and over 400 members responded individually by email. The Friends had good media coverage in the Times, Guardian and ITN News on the effects of noise on wildlife and on mental health and wellbeing, and produced a short video giving the Park's users' views of the proposals for flights over the Park. The Friends also met Heathrow three times to put across the case for protecting the Park.

Discoverers

Discoverers encourages families with school-aged children to become practically involved in the life and preservation of Richmond Park. New activities in 2019 included butterfly surveying, studying the Park's moths and taking part in a "Star Count" to study light pollution.

Visitor Centre

At the beginning of the year, Mary Davies and Liz Hunt stepped down from running the Visitor Centre, and we thank them again for their many years in this role. Diane Peake is now managing the volunteers, and Marilyn Watkinson and Gillian de Beaumont manage all the stock and how it is displayed. Over this year they have, with the help of other volunteers, given the Visitor Centre a bright, attractive and spacious new look. This contributed to excellent sales of the Friends' Calendar, Christmas cards and other merchandise, with the surplus on all merchandise sales going towards projects in the Park.

Sales through the Visitor Centre increased by £9,000 during the year to £75,000, with more than half of all sales now made by card payment rather than cash. The surpluses from the Visitor Centre go to conservation projects in the Park and during the year included donations to the proposed Heritage Centre, Beverley Brook, gorse and hawthorn planting and veteran tree protection – the latter as part of the Year of the Tree.

Trustees' report (continued)

Cleaning the Park

The Adopt an Area programme continues to thrive, with around 100 volunteers covering the entire Park, and the Beverley Brook Volunteers Group held another clear-up of the Brook in the spring.

Conservation projects

The Friends funded three major, and some smaller, conservation projects in the Park during the year, often jointly with the Visitor Centre and sometimes with TRP also. The major projects comprised:

- £13,500 to fund the second stage of the Beverley Brook restoration works;
- £17,500 for further fencing to protect the Pen Ponds shoreline and its wildfowl from deer and dogs; and
- £10,000 for gorse and hawthorn planting and fencing.

In addition, the Friends provided donations of:

- £5,000 for the Heritage Centre;
- £250 to The Swan Sanctuary in recognition of their important work to protect the swans in the Park;
- £250 to HACAN with regard to their work on Heathrow;
- £625 towards an aerial survey carried out by drone; and
- £550 towards minor works connected with Beverley Brook.

The second stage of the Beverley Brook works in the autumn marked the completion of the last of the Ponds & Streams conservation projects funded by the Friends.

Practical conservation work

Friends' conservation volunteers continued to provide valuable and effective support for conservation within the Park.

Public walks and talks

The Friends' monthly free public walks, weekly informal bird walks, and our talks with walks for members all continued to be popular and well-attended, particularly the Dawn Chorus and Boxing Day walks.

Volunteer Community Rangers ("VCRs")

TRP started a three-year trial of VCRs in spring 2019 following a research-based proposal from the Friends. There are now over 50 volunteer community rangers in Richmond and Bushy Parks and the number is likely to double in 2020. We and the Friends of Bushy Park continue to be involved. With their highly visible orange uniforms, their role is to educate visitors about the Parks and particularly about behaviour that is harmful to the Park and its wildlife.

For more detailed information on these topics, please see individual articles in the 2019 newsletters, all of which are available from the FRP website: www.frp.org.uk.

Trustees' report (continued)

Plans for the future

The Friends plans to maintain its activities broadly along the present lines. A major priority in 2020 will be conservation projects associated with the Year of the Tree. These will include protection of veteran trees, planting of hawthorn, blackthorn, goat's willow and fruit trees and fencing of gorse enclosures, which provides year-round nectar for invertebrates, and is a refuge and nesting site for many species of birds.

This will require funding of about £75,000, which will be funded by the Friends and surpluses generated by the Visitor Centre.

In addition, the Friends will continue to support TRP in the implementation of the Volunteer Rangers and other activities. The Friends will also continue to campaign strongly to protect Richmond Park against threats to its peace, natural beauty and wildlife, in particular from planned developments at Heathrow and developments on the periphery of the Park that could have an adverse impact on the Park.

Financial review

The financial position of the Friends remains healthy with total funds constant at just over £132,000, of which £92,000 was held in restricted funds and £40,000 in unrestricted funds.

At £31,786, unrestricted income was higher than the prior year by £4,972, attributable to further increases in total subscription income and related Gift Aid. General donations were also higher as was interest received on deposits.

General operational costs were slightly higher than the prior year at £13,714 – compared with £11,601, an increase of £2,113. This is primarily attributable to the hosting and maintenance cost of £3,090 associated with the new website, with some savings being made in other areas, in particular a saving of about £750 in costs related to the Annual General Meeting.

Total costs of £8,139 were incurred in respect of the Heathrow campaign, nearly all of which was related to the production of the video (as mentioned above).

Restricted income was lower than last year – when £84,750 was raised for the Elm Walk appeal. There were two generous donations, totalling £1,570 from individuals, and income from sponsors increased to £7,540 with the full-year effect of all three sponsors being part of the programme. These are Russell-Cooke, Thames Water and The Property Partnership.

General merchandise sales accounted for £12,326 and a net surplus of £8,226, all of which has been, or will be, applied to conservation and other projects in the Park. In addition, sales of the limited edition "Royal Oak" print, and the smaller prints, were very successful and amounted to £35,175, generating a surplus of £21,000 that will be ring-fenced for projects associated with the Year of the Tree.

Conservation and other grants paid out during the year, amounting to £41,500, comprised the three major projects listed above.

Trustees' report (continued)

Reserves and reserving policy

At the year end, unrestricted funds stood at £40,087, down by £5,453 following the transfer of £8,000 from unrestricted funds to the Year of the Tree fund. Restricted funds were higher by £4,889 at £92,406, with significant payments being made during the year, but a substantial surplus generated in the last few weeks of the year from the sales of the limited-edition Royal Oak prints.

Within the unrestricted funds is a designated amount of £25,000 set aside to cover potential urgent campaign expenses (in respect of which the Charity could be required to provide support, without the need to recourse to campaign funding and the delays which might result), which leaves a balance of £15,087: this represents about 12 months (2018: 22 months) of general expenditure. The policy of the Trustees is to maintain reserves at more than six months and less than twelve months of general expenditure, and the Trustees will ensure that funds are deployed to conservation and other projects as soon as is practicable.

Statement of Trustees' responsibilities

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the Friends' financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing financial statements giving a true and fair view, the Trustees should follow best practice and:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the applicable Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed, subject to any departure disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Friends will continue in operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Friends and which enable them to ascertain its financial position and to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations and the provisions of the constitution of the Friends. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Friends and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Independent Examiners

The Independent Examiners, Feltons, will be proposed for reappointment.

Approval

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Ron Crompton
Chairman

23 January 2020

Report of the Independent Examiner to the Members of The Friends of Richmond Park

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Friends of Richmond Park (the "Charity") for the year ended 31 December 2019 which are set out on pages 7 to 11.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Richard Rhodes
Chartered Accountant
Feltons, Independent Examiners
1 The Green, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 1PL

27 January 2020

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 December 2019

		2019		2018
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total last
	Note	funds	income	year
		£	£	year
				£
Incoming resources	2			
Subscriptions		23,396	-	20,861
General donations		2,556	1,570	3,908
Gift Aid	3	5,262	-	4,240
Interest		521	-	246
Recoveries and sponsorship		51	7,540	6,818
Merchandise and publication sales		-	47,501	10,960
Appeals, grants and legacies		-	-	84,750
Total incoming resources		31,786	56,611	131,783
Resources expended				
Regular newsletters and leaflets		(5,334)	-	(5,272)
Administration and governance		(2,571)	-	(3,351)
Booklets and publications		(346)	-	(352)
Walks, courses and volunteers		(279)	-	(813)
Discoverers		(382)	-	(398)
Adopt an Area		(828)	-	(860)
Other volunteering and events		(884)	-	(555)
Website hosting		(3,090)	-	-
		(13,714)	-	(11,601)
Merchandise and publication costs		(711)	(18,222)	(3,409)
Heathrow campaign		(8,139)	-	-
Website development and film costs		-	-	(12,618)
Conservation and other grants payable		(6,675)	(41,500)	(77,892)
Total resources expended	5	(29,239)	(59,722)	(105,520)
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources		2,547	(3,111)	26,263
Transfers		(8,000)	8,000	-
Total funds brought forward		45,540	87,517	106,794
Total funds carried forward		40,087	92,406	133,057

The notes on pages 9 to 11 form part of these financial statements.

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2019

	Note	2019		2018	
		£	£	£	£
<u>Fixed asset investments</u>	6		7,500		-
<u>Current assets</u>					
Stock	7		400		1,321
Debtors		5,452		6,815	
Other prepayments	8	3,852		3,560	
Debtors and prepayments			9,304		10,375
Cash at bank and in hand		53,020		86,334	
Deposit accounts		75,000		45,000	
Bank			128,020		131,334
Total current assets			137,724		143,030
<u>Current liabilities</u>					
Deferred income		(10,760)		(9,700)	
Accrued expenditure		(1,971)		(273)	
Creditors falling due within one year			(12,731)		(9,973)
Net assets			132,493		133,057
<u>Funds of the charity</u>	9				
Unrestricted funds			40,087		45,540
Restricted income fund		20,526		19,113	
Restricted merchandise funds		5,444		16,718	
Ponds & Streams		-		15,303	
Year of the Tree fund		30,053		-	
Elm Walk appeal fund		36,383		36,383	
			92,406		87,517
Total funds			132,493		133,057

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 23 January 2020 and were signed on their behalf by:

David McLaughlin
Honorary Treasurer

The notes on pages 9 to 11 form part of these financial statements.

Registered number: 1133201

Notes to the financial statements

1. Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011. The Friends of Richmond Park meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy note(s).

2. Incoming resources

Incoming resources from regular subscriptions and annual sponsorship are recognised in the period to which they relate, with amounts received in advance recorded as deferred income. Incoming resources from general donations, appeals and legacies are recorded in the statement of financial activities on receipt.

Major grants are disclosed in debtors at the end of the financial year where payment has not been made, provided there is evidence of entitlement, receipt is probable and the amount can be measured reliably. Grants which have related expenditure are reported gross in the statement of financial activity.

3. Gift Aid

Tax credits receivable from Gift Aid donations are recognised in the same period as the gift to which the claim relates.

4. Donated services and volunteer help

The value of donated services and volunteer help is not included in the financial statements but is described in the Trustees' report.

5. Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis, including royalties payable in respect of the Guide to Richmond Park and Family Trails sales.

Conservation grants payable are recognised in the financial statements when a commitment has been made and there are no conditions to be met relating to the disbursement of that grant which remain in the control of the charity.

No Trustee received any remuneration during the reporting period. The Trustees were able to recover reasonable expenses incurred by them, wholly, necessarily and exclusively for the Friends: these included the purchase of equipment to support volunteering activities as well as stationery and software supplies for newsletters and membership activities. The total cost reimbursed to trustees in respect of such expenditure during the year amounted to £2,811 paid to eight trustees (2018: £5,264). There were no related party transactions.

The independent examination was conducted on a pro-bono basis by Feltons and all other services were provided on a voluntary basis by Trustees and volunteers.

6. Fixed asset investments

Fixed asset investments are a form of financial instrument and are initially recognised at their transaction cost and subsequently measured at fair value at the Balance sheet date, unless fair value cannot be measured reliably in which case it is measured at cost less impairment. Investment gains and losses, whether realised or unrealised, are combined and shown in the heading "Gains/(losses) on investments" in the Statement of financial activities.

Registered number: 1133201

Notes to the financial statements (continued)**6. Fixed asset investments (continued)**

Fixed asset investments comprise the original artwork of the Royal Oak drawn by Mark Frith. The trustees reviewed the valuation of the artwork at the year end and believe that there has been no change in the fair value since it was acquired.

7. Valuation of publications, leaflets and booklets

Publications, comprising books and DVDs, for sale are valued at the lower of the cost of production and net realisable value. The cost of publications (including DVDs) sold is charged to the statement of financial activities, together with any royalties paid or payable on sales, for all copies sold or provided on a complimentary basis.

The costs of leaflets and booklets for free distribution are expensed in full in the statement of financial activities as incurred.

8. Other prepayments

Other prepayments comprise the remaining stock of postage stamps purchased in advance of the increase in rates and prepayments for website hosting and maintenance paid in advance.

9. Total funds

The analysis of total funds as at 31 December is shown below.

	Unrestricted funds		2019	Total	2018
	Designated	Other	Restricted funds	funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets	-	7,500	-	7,500	-
Total current assets	25,000	20,318	92,406	137,724	143,030
Creditors falling due within one year	-	(12,731)	-	(12,731)	(9,973)
Total funds	25,000	15,087	92,406	132,493	133,057

Unrestricted funds are represented by general funds which are expendable at the discretion of the Trustees in furtherance of the objects of the Friends. These arise from the net surplus generated on ordinary activities during a financial year. Within unrestricted funds, there is a designated balance of £25,000 set aside for immediate access to provide funding for any campaign in respect of which the Charity could be required to provide support, without the need to recourse to campaign funding (such as was the case during the year with the Heathrow campaign actions).

The restricted funds represent amounts received, granted, donated or bequeathed to the Friends for specific purposes, primarily for conservation projects.

The income fund represents specific small, or general, donations and sponsorship funding received in respect of, or to be applied to, conservation projects.

Notes to the financial statements (continued)**9. Total funds (continued)**

The merchandise fund represents the net surplus realised by the Friends on the sales to the Visitor Centre and other third parties of the range of merchandise specially designed, or produced, for the Friends, but excluding Year of the Tree merchandise which has its own separate fund.

The appeal fund created for further conservation and enhancement work in respect of ponds and streams has been fully applied with the second stage of works at Beverley Brook.

The movements in the restricted funds for the year ended 31 December 2019 are shown below.

	Opening balance	Additions	Payments	Transfers	Closing balance
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted income fund	19,113	7,540	(6,127)	-	20,526
Restricted merchandise fund	16,718	12,326	(23,600)	-	5,444
Ponds & Streams appeal fund	15,303	570	(15,873)	-	-
Year of the Tree fund	-	36,175	(14,122)	8,000	30,053
Elm Walk appeal fund	36,383	-	-	-	36,383
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total funds	87,517	56,611	(59,722)	8,000	92,406
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

The comparative movements in the restricted funds for the year ended 31 December 2018 are shown below.

	Opening balance	Additions	Payments	Transfers	Closing balance
	£	£	£	£	£
Restricted income fund	21,604	9,259	(11,750)	-	19,113
Restricted merchandise fund	26,342	10,960	(20,584)	-	16,718
Ponds & Streams appeal fund	15,303	-	-	-	15,303
Elm Walk appeal fund	-	84,750	(48,367)	-	36,383
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total funds	63,249	104,969	(80,701)	-	87,517
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>