



The Friends of Richmond Park

Annual report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024

Charity number: 1133201

Trustees' Report**Introduction**

The Trustees of the Friends of Richmond Park present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 December 2024. The Trustees confirm that the Trustees' report and financial statements of the Charity comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the Charity's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

The Trustees have paid due regard to 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 Charity carrying out its purposes for the public benefit.

Structure, governance and management

The Friends of Richmond Park is an unincorporated association governed under a Constitution dated 12 November 2009, which sets out its objects and powers, and under Rules dated 8 April 2017 and made pursuant to paragraph 29 of the Friends' Constitution.

The Charity is managed by its trustees who are (re-) elected annually in a general meeting of the Charity. Between annual general meetings, the Trustees may also appoint any person who is willing to act as a Trustee. New Trustees are recruited and appointed from within the membership. 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 entitled "The Essential Trustee" and relevant management papers. Trustee meetings are held every two months.

Reference and administrative details

The Charity is registered and known as The Friends of Richmond Park (Registration number: 1133201). The principal and registered address of the Friends is 21 Ormonde Road, East Sheen, London SW14 7BE.

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

Peter Allnutt	
Janet Bostock	
Nick Coleman	
Dr Hugh Deighton	Treasurer
Helene Feger	
Roger Hillyer	Chairman
Chris Mason	
Judith Pearson	Secretary
Dr Vivienne Press	
Dr Monique Sarkany	
Nigel Sherwin	
Lucy Tarleton	Resigned 27 September 2024.

Patrons

We are grateful for the continued support of our patrons: Sir David Attenborough, Clare Balding CBE and Baroness Susan Kramer.

Trustees' Report (continued)

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, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Area of Conservation.

To achieve these objects, the Friends carries out the following activities:

- volunteering including practical conservation work and litter picking, monitoring events in the Park, staffing the Visitor Centre and organising walks
- campaigning to protect the natural and physical environment of the Park, including its wildlife
- education, including producing information and interpretation materials for both adults and children, and running an activity programme for young families
- fund raising through membership fees and through sales from the Visitor Centre, other local outlets and our online shop; and
- awarding grants for projects that support our objects.

The Friends communicates with the public and its members through a website, a magazine published twice a year, a monthly electronic bulletin, X (formerly Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, Threads, YouTube and speaking and displays at public events.

The Friends is run on a voluntary basis and has no paid members of staff.

Achievements and performance

Richmond Park developments

We continued to monitor developments in Richmond Park. The final phase of the three year Richmond Park Restoration capital project which included work on paths, infrastructure, accessible gates and replacement bridges in Isabella plantation and new and replacement fencing was completed in 2024. We emphasised the importance in any changes of preserving the essential character of the Park.

We welcomed the continued rollout of improved signage. The Friends contributed a foundation for this over five years ago, including: carrying out an audit of existing signage in the Park; researching best practice in signage; and organising and carrying out a signage survey to test the impact of different styles of signage.

Cycling

There were increasing concerns at the attitude, behaviour and speed of some cyclists. We support The Royal Parks policy that pedestrians have priority within the Royal Parks and supported their request to the government that the 20mph limit which applies to motorists also applies to cyclists.

Richmond Park police unit

Near the end of the year a threat to the Richmond Park police unit emerged, with proposals that it be disbanded and its officers redistributed to other parts of London. Policing in Richmond

Trustees' Report (continued)

Park would become the responsibility of the local community police team. We are deeply concerned by these latest proposals which, if implemented, would see a further severe reduction in the police coverage of Richmond Park – with adverse implications for visitor safety, protection of wildlife and enforcement of traffic regulations.

Roehampton Restored

The Royal Parks submitted a planning application for £7m improvements to the Roehampton Gate café area, including a new larger café and toilets, with better circulation of pedestrians, cyclists and cars and improvements to the landscaping and biodiversity.

The Royal Parks have consulted with us at each stage of the development over the last five years. We welcome and support the plans, especially the focus on biodiversity and sustainability, but have expressed concern that further work is required on the way cyclists will access the site to improve highway and pedestrian safety.

Petersham Playground

The Royal Parks developed plans to revive and improve the playground near Petersham Gate by installing new equipment, incorporating more accessible opportunities for play, and improving provision for children with additional needs.

We welcomed the more naturalistic approach to the design which should make the playground more fitting for Richmond Park but expressed concern that a dedicated area for den building may encourage den building elsewhere in the Park.

New flight paths planned - a threat to the peace and tranquillity of Richmond Park

We continued to campaign against flight paths over Richmond Park which are being considered by Heathrow Airport Limited as part of its response to national Airspace Modernisation.

Richmond Park is currently largely free of aircraft and their noise, with no arrivals flying over the Park (the westerly arrival path is half a mile north of the Park) and only a small proportion of departures flying across the Park's southern tip.

In 2023 Heathrow produced a shortlist of possible new flight paths in which 17 of the 43 (40%) westerly arrival flight path options would impact Richmond Park. Many of these would pass over Richmond Park at low level with intensive bursts of noise.

After complaints from the Friends and others, the CAA refused to approve the shortlist saying it was not satisfied with Heathrow's stakeholder engagement. Heathrow re-engaged with us and with others in spring 2024 and in July published virtually the same short list which the CAA approved.

Our campaigning has meant that Heathrow has made several commitments regarding Richmond Park. These include committing to reduce potential overflight and / or impact to Richmond Park where possible; to carry out a more detailed biodiversity and tranquillity assessment of Richmond Park in the next stage of the process and to undertake a full Environmental Assessment of the environmental impact on Richmond Park, including engaging with us on the process and methodology for that assessment.

Throughout the year, we have been heavily engaged with Heathrow and other stakeholders including the CAA. We have highlighted our concerns within the local community including through email updates. We met with local politicians including MPs and Richmond Council. In 2023 the London Assembly voted to support the proposal that Heathrow's consultation should

Trustees' Report (continued)

include a "Do Minimum" option. We are pleased to see that, following discussions with us, all are now pressing for serious consideration of the Do Minimum option.

The government and the CAA are consulting on a proposal to set up a new body to centralise and take control of all the London area airports Airspace Modernisation plans, including those currently being developed by Heathrow. We responded to the consultation demanding that any new body must honour the commitments Heathrow has already made about Richmond Park and that it must undertake a full environmental assessment of the impact on the Park.

Wildlife survey in collaboration with the Zoological Society of London

We started a wildlife ecology survey working with the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) and The Royal Parks. 80 Friends volunteers set out 151 camera traps for three weeks in April recording all nearby wildlife. The cameras captured more than 600,000 images which have been assessed by ZSL. The next phase will be a citizen science project in which members will be invited to identify wildlife in the images.

Publications

Our twice-yearly members' magazine, *Park Life*, provides enjoyable and interesting articles that inform readers about Richmond Park's wildlife, ecology and history and the activities of the Friends and The Royal Parks.

Members continue to receive our monthly and special email bulletins, which continue to have a high open rate.

For the 13th year running, we produced the popular Richmond Park Calendar, which sold out in late December, as well as Christmas cards, individual greetings cards and postcards. Our publications 'Walks with Remarkable Trees', 'Walks in Pembroke Lodge Gardens' and our 'Let's Discover' children's booklets continued to be sold at the Visitor Centre and are now also available in our online shop.

Events and walks

We attended the Richmond May Fair and the Ham Fair to publicise our work.

We again held a popular online Q & A session for members with the Park Manager, Paul Richards.

Our longstanding guided walks continued to take place on the first Saturday of each month.

Discoverers

Discoverers, our activities programme for families with school age children, has gone from strength to strength and it now has over 300 families on its mailing list (100 more than a year ago). Events take place on a number of weekends throughout the year and during school holidays. In 2024, we held 21 major events (10 more than last year) which included a mystery solving morning with the Parks Police and a weekly Story Time with arts and craft activities during the summer holiday. Families learnt about ants, bats, birds, butterflies, fungi, trees, owls, worms and had lots of fun! We are kindly supported by the Hearsam family who let us make use of the Belvedere Suite at Pembroke Lodge. Our events are free of charge and unique in Richmond Park in that children come along with their parents to discover its wildlife together.

Litter picking

Our Adopt-an-Area litter-picking programme continues to thrive and has about 200 volunteers, including young people volunteering as part of the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. This is the largest number of volunteers of any of our activities. Some volunteers adopt one of 29

Trustees' Report (continued)

areas and others are roaming litter-pickers. Together they make a significant difference to the appearance of the Park.

Our Beverley Brook Litter Clearance team regularly wade through the Brook clearing out rubbish and debris. In 2024 they collected about 35 bags of rubbish including about 500 bottles and cans. 1,000 bottles and cans.

Conservation volunteering

Our conservation volunteers continue to work regularly on Saturday mornings (except in summer) with an average of 15 people at each session. Tasks have included:

- dismantling dens (and using the wood to create leaky dams in streams)
- constructing a kingfisher nest box (funded by the Friends) in a secluded area
- scything bracken to give light to newly planted whips in two enclosures near Sawpit Plantation
- clearing bramble from ant hills on Petersham slope
- clearing rubbish from both Pen Ponds, while the water level was low
- tidying up the Platinum Jubilee Plantation; and
- cutting back bramble to widen the path through Prince Charles Spinney.

The Visitor Centre - information and sales, and the online shop

We continued to operate the Visitor Centre at Pembroke Lodge. More than 60 volunteers ensure it is open every day except Christmas Day. We welcomed more than 50,000 visitors in 2024 and had record sales.

This was the fifth year of our online shop. While this is focused on the pre-Christmas period, it was again kept open all year for the Royal Oak print and selected publications.

Operational improvements

During the year we implemented two significant improvements to our operations.

In the Visitor Centre we implemented a standard piece of software for managing the volunteers' rota. This has provided a more secure system that includes several improved features such as automated reminders of shifts booked and alerts when there are vacancies to be filled.

We have implemented a new membership system for holding our membership records to replace the Excel based system we had used for many years. The new system modernises the way members join the Friends, how we manage memberships and automates the renewal and payment process for our membership fees. For the first time we are able to accept direct debits and by the end of the year 250 members had moved to direct debit payment.

Grants

We funded 30 new standalone trees to be planted in Richmond Park, together with special crates for deer protection, staking, mulch and the watering gator bags. The trees are a mixture of large and smaller saplings. A variety of trees were chosen: white elm; canker and leaf miner-resistant Indian horse chestnut; small leaved lime; alder; wild service; and English elms. The trees will be planted in Sheen Wood, Barn Wood, White Lodge Hill, Spanker's Hill Wood and Platinum Jubilee Woodland surrounds. We also funded a number of whips, young seed-

Trustees' Report (continued)

grown trees which have had no pruning or training, to supplement new scrub planting across the park.

We bought a new buggy to replace the previous buggy which had been acquired in 2012. It supports the work of our Conservation volunteers, our Beverley Brook litter team, our river fly survey team and our Discoverers team.

The funding for both items included income received from sales at The Visitor Centre.

Members and volunteers

At the end of the year, we had about 3,600 members. This includes over 300 volunteers who together work about 15,000 hours, which is worth over £200,000 to the Park (valued at the London Living Wage).

We thank all our volunteers for their hard work, which contributed so much during the year.

For more detailed information about the Friends and our activities, please see our website: www.frp.org.uk.

Plans for the future

The Friends plans to maintain its activities broadly along the present lines.

The Friends will continue to campaign strongly to protect Richmond Park against threats to its peace, natural beauty and wildlife, in particular from new flight paths and developments, in or on the periphery of the Park, that could have an adverse impact on the Park.

Financial review

Membership income continues to be the largest source of income, with sales of Friends of Richmond Park branded items at the Visitor Centre and online also very important.

Our publications and merchandise sales through the Visitor Centre and online continued throughout the year and our sales were boosted for the Christmas period through our offerings of cards and calendars. Both our 2025 Calendar and our Christmas cards provided significant contributions to our income.

We made grants of £18,290 to The Royal Parks for conservation projects in the Park, including tree planting and a new electric buggy to be used in the Park by Friends' volunteers.

The financial position of the Friends continues to be healthy, and current balances stand at £162,649. The restricted fund balance has continued at zero as there were no project-specific fundraising campaigns during 2024.

Our balances at the end of the year were higher than required by our reserves policy so the Charity is well placed to continue to fund projects which further our objects.

Reserves policy

Within the unrestricted funds is a designated amount of £25,000 that has been set aside to cover potential urgent campaign expenses (which could support the Charity's activities, without recourse to campaign funding and the delays which might result). In addition, the policy of the Trustees is to maintain other reserves at more than six months and less than twelve months of general expenditure, which corresponds to £40,000 for 2024 (ie 9 months of general expenditure).

Trustees' Report (continued)

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:

Roger Hillyer
Chairman

Date: 16 January 2025

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 2024 which are set out on pages 9 to 13.

This report is made solely to the Charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. My work has been undertaken so that I might state to the Charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an Independent Examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Charity and the Charity's Trustees as a body, for my work or for this report.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the 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

10th February 2025

Financial Statements for the calendar year 2024

Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 December 2024

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2024 Total £	2023 £
Incoming Resources					
Subscriptions	2	30,680	-	30,680	28,604
Donations		2,946	-	2,946	4,801
Gift Aid	3	5,871	-	5,871	5,673
Interest		3,828	-	3,828	1,010
Sponsorship		2,500	-	2,500	5,000
Publications & VC Sales		16,632	-	16,632	16,083
Merchandise (Online)		4,763	-	4,763	5,101
Total incoming resources		67,220	-	67,220	66,272
Resources expended on charitable activities					
Magazine & Newsletters		(6,232)	-	(6,232)	(7,112)
Governance & administration		(7,670)	-	(7,670)	(3,023)
Discoverers		(810)	-	(810)	(1,548)
Adopt An Area		(603)	-	(603)	(893)
Walks, talks & films		-	-	-	(457)
Other volunteering		(2,355)	-	(2,355)	(1,607)
Website hosting and maintenance		(4,786)	-	(4,786)	(4,819)
Heathrow Campaign		(11,807)	-	(11,807)	(4,851)
ZSL Wildlife Survey		(10,000)	-	(10,000)	-
Merchandise & publications		(8,975)	-	(8,975)	(12,631)
Grants		(18,290)	-	(18,290)	(15,874)
Total resources expended	5	(71,528)	-	(71,528)	(52,815)
Net incoming / (outgoing) resources		(4,308)	-	(4,308)	13,457
Total funds brought forward		166,957	-	166,957	153,500
Total funds carried forward		162,649	-	162,649	166,957

The notes on pages 11 to 13 form part of these financial statements.

Financial Statements for the calendar year 2024 (continued)

Balance Sheet as at 31 December 2024

	Note	2024	2023
		£	£
Fixed assets	6	7,500	7,500
Total fixed assets		7,500	7,500
Current Assets			
Stock	7	1,722	2,631
Debtors	8	5,700	5,700
Cash at bank and in hand	9	147,727	151,126
Total current assets		155,149	159,457
Current liabilities	10	-	-
Total Current Liabilities		-	-
Net assets/(liabilities)		162,649	166,957
Funds of the Charity	11		
		£	£
Unrestricted funds			
Brought forward		166,957	153,500
Current year		(4,308)	13,457
Total Unrestricted funds		162,649	166,957
Total Restricted funds		-	-
Total charity funds		162,649	166,957

The financial statements were approved by the Trustees on 16 January 2025 and were signed on their behalf by:

Dr Hugh Deighton
Honorary Treasurer

The notes on pages 11 to 13 form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements

(* indicates a general note whose number is not included in the Financial Statements above)

1* General information and basis of preparation

The Friends of Richmond Park is a UK registered charity, number 1133201, and governed by its constitution dated 12 November 2009.

The address of the principal office of the Charity is given on page 1 of this report.

The nature of the Charity's operations and principal activities are detailed in the Trustees' Report above.

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)" - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) and in accordance with 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).

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the Charity, and are rounded to the nearest £1.

2 Incoming resources - subscriptions

Incoming resources from regular subscriptions are considered as gifts and therefore recognised on receipt.

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 above (in the section on "Members and volunteers").

Other income is recognised in the period in which it is receivable and to the extent the goods have been provided.

5 Resources expended

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis.

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 magazines and membership activities. The total cost reimbursed to trustees in respect of such expenditure during the year amounted to £4,464 paid to nine trustees (2023: £4,619 paid to nine trustees). There were no related party transactions.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

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, if applicable.

Fixed asset investments currently comprise only 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 stock

Publications, comprising books and prints for sale, are valued at the lower of the cost of production and net realizable value. The cost of publications 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.

300 copies of the small Royal Oak print by Mark Frith were bought in 2021 in the expectation that they would sell over several years. 1,000 copies of the "Walks in Pembroke Lodge Gardens" booklet were printed during 2023. The cost price of unsold copies of both items is included in the unsold stock amount.

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

8 Debtors

The only debtor is the repayment of tax due for the year from HMRC in Gift Aid, which has been accrued.

9 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

10 Liabilities and Creditors

The Charity's policy is to pay creditors in a timely manner and there are no outstanding creditors or other liabilities at the year end.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued)

11 The analysis of total funds as at 31 December 2024 is shown below:

	2024			2023
	Unrestricted Funds		Restricted	Total
	Designated	Other	Funds	Funds
	£	£	£	£
Total fixed assets	-	7,500	-	7,500
Total current assets	25,000	130,149	-	155,149
Creditors falling due within one year	-	-	-	-
Total Funds	25,000	137,649	-	162,649
				166,957

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 recourse to campaign funding.

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

The restricted funds were all reduced to zero at the end of 2022. There were no movements in the restricted funds for the years ended 31 December 2023 and 31 December 2024, which all remained at zero throughout the year since there were no project-specific fundraising events in those years.

12* Financial instruments

Except for fixed asset investments, the Charity only has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments, which are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

End of Notes to the Financial Statements.