



The Friends of Cannizaro Park Trustees' Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2021

Registered Charity No. 1160982

Address: % Willow House, 35 High Street, Wimbledon, London SW19 5BY

Introduction & Constitution

The trustees present their Report and the Financial Statements of The Friends of Cannizaro Park ("FoCP") for the year ended 31st March 2021, which comply with the FoCP's Constitution and with applicable law and accounting requirements. In accordance with the FoCP's Rules, the Financial Statements have been examined by a person who is not a trustee or otherwise involved in the charity's administration.

The purposes and administration of the FoCP, which is an unincorporated association, are regulated by its Constitution filed with the Charity Commission; the current version was adopted in 2019. It is managed by trustees, with a minimum of three and a maximum of 11. Trustees are appointed based on their interest in the FoCP's activities and their specific skills and ability to contribute.

Founded in 1997, the formal objects of the FoCP set out in the Constitution are for the benefit of the inhabitants of Merton, to provide or assist in the provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving their conditions of life for the inhabitants of the area of benefit in particular but not exclusively by the preservation, promotion, support, assistance and improvement of Cannizaro Park.

To focus our work, the FoCP has translated this formal statement into two practical objectives. The first is to support park-owner Merton Council with the maintenance and renewal of the park landscape. The second is to enhance appreciation and enjoyment of the park, by engagement with park visitors and our local community. Merton Council supports most hard landscaping requirements in the park and, through its contractor idverde, provides one full-time gardener to maintain the park's thirty four acres.

In the wake of the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, this past year has seen Cannizaro Park become an even more vital feature of the Wimbledon area. The trustees are proud that, with the help of a hugely expanded volunteer team and our active embrace of online meetings, the FoCP has been able to complete all areas of the 2020/21 strategic plan developed prior to Covid.

2020/21 Achievements in the Park Landscape

Despite the challenges of lockdown, we were delighted to complete our goal of two significant park landscape renewal projects. The Park Entrance Project was realised thanks to an inspiring multi-partner collaboration. Merton Council resurfaced the path and supplied new fencing; award-winning landscapers Landform UK assisted with the design and tree planting; following kind assistance from Crowdfunder, our generous local community part-funded the planting; and an amazing volunteer gardening team worked through all temperatures to complete the project before the winter lockdown. The Mayor of Merton performed the official opening ceremony in April 2021. Our second project involved re-design and re-planting of a major bed in the Tennis Court Garden. Again, volunteers worked tirelessly to remove old planting and to settle in new rhododendrons and shrubs.

Beyond these two focal projects, the volunteer gardening team did substantial maintenance work in Cannizaro. The team's numbers almost doubled over the year, with an average attendance of 20 people in non-lockdown weeks, meaning the volunteer crew adds the labour of at least one extra full-time gardener to the park. Work tackled across the year ranged from essential weeding, watering and pruning to technical projects including the installation of new trial squirrel-proof bins and improvements to drainage around the pond and the cascade. The volunteer team also completed the cleaning and re-furbishment of the Toilets block, after many years of closure.

Finally, the Tree Group began the installation of one hundred new tree labels. Marked with a QR code as well as tree name, these labels allow visitors to learn more about the park's important tree collection through links to information on our website.

Looking ahead, the trustees identified the need to develop a number of longer range plans, in order to accomplish our future strategic goals. These saw the development of an outline 10-Year Renewal Plan of Park Projects 2021-2031, together with a more detailed 5-Year Renewal Plan 2021-2026. In addition, an Annual Maintenance Plan was created to help guide volunteer gardening activity.

2020/21 Achievements in Enhancing Visitor Appreciation & Enjoyment

Throughout 2020/21, the Friends worked to increase visitor appreciation of Cannizaro in two main ways. Firstly, we transformed our communications with park visitors. A new monthly e-newsletter provided nature news and park information to over 1000 people, while our re-launched Instagram account has seen followers increase by 56% from 1167 to 1825. These initiatives were buttressed by the rollout of our new online membership system in May 2020, which facilitates easy contact with members as well as simplifying internal administration on Gift Aid and GDPR.

As part of this communication programme, the Friends conducted its first ever visitor survey in summer 2020, which helped us assess visitor numbers and profiles. During lockdown, we estimated approximately 9000 visits per week, with 50% visiting at least once per week and over three quarters of visitors coming from SW18/19/20 postcodes. We also learnt the qualities of the park most valued by visitors - the variety of its landscape, a feeling of safety and tranquillity, and the quality of its maintenance - as well as most desired improvements: a cafe; toilets; better litter collection; and drainage. We acted on these learnings, with work on toilets and drainage across the following autumn and winter. We also sought to promote the newly opened Hotel du Vin cafe van, and liaised with idverde on litter collection.

Our second route to build engagement was through the expansion of our Events programme. Sadly, staples of our calendar such as the Spring Talk and the Bridge Drive were cancelled by Covid-19. However, thanks to the energies of a new Events team, we pioneered a summer well-being festival, I CANN, which received a great response from both teachers and participants despite mixed weather.

Finances & Funding

The FoCP's funds increased by £6,086 during the year, to a total of £31,362 at 31st March 2021, compared with a decrease of £1,794 in the previous year. Expenditure in the year included £16,791 for the front entrance project and donations included £12,113 received from the related fundraising campaign. Other donations more than doubled to £9,012. The generosity of all donors is very gratefully acknowledged, as well as the contribution from the Hotel du Vin for the sunken garden bedding. The net result from Activities decreased by more than £3,000; in the previous year significant amounts were generated from the Bridge event and two talks.

Under the Constitution, the FoCP's funds shall be applied only in furthering its objects. A long-term programme of park improvement projects was begun in 2020 and, as part of the budgetary process, including fundraising considerations, the trustees reviewed the reserves policy. It was decided that £10,000-£15,000 should be held as reserves, to ensure that there would be sufficient funds to cover expected (a) ongoing annual expenditure in case of a significant reduction in income and (b) upfront costs for major projects before any specific fundraising takes place. This policy will be reviewed at least annually. The trustees intend to reduce the level to the target range over the next three years through the planned park renewal projects.

In addition to a review of the reserves policy, the FoCP began the development of a longer-term funding model, which would assess the relative contributions of membership subscriptions, donations and external funding such as grants and sponsorship in the funding of our 5-Year Renewal Plan 2021-2026.

Structure and People

Trustees: There were four changes during the year. Catherine Nelson assumed the Chair role in June 2020, in addition to Marketing responsibilities, with Chris Mountford moving to focus on his role as trustee for Park Matters; Anna Watkin was co-opted as trustee responsible for Fundraising in November 2020; and Alison Young and Juliet Willis stood down from their trustee roles in July 2020 and March 2021 respectively. We are extremely grateful for Chris' long service as Chair, and for his continued commitment to renewal work in the park. The similar long service of Alison and Juliet has been hugely valued, and we send them our very best wishes for new adventures.

At the end of the financial year, the following trustees were in place:

Chair	Catherine Nelson	Secretary	Elizabeth ("Pit") Rink
Treasurer	Simon Ingall	Park Matters	Chris Mountford
Volunteers	Anne Peacock	Membership	Jeremy Lumbers
Legal	Caroline Newsholme	Fundraising	Anna Watkin

The trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit in exercising their powers or duties. The trustees are required to manage the FoCP in accordance with its Constitution and to maintain appropriate books and records in order to comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are responsible for safeguarding the FoCP's assets and therefore for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and irregularities. They are also responsible for the preparation of an annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and accounting requirements.

Membership: Our membership rose substantially over the year, which we attribute to a combination of improved communications, awareness of park projects, the new membership system (spring 2020) and greater value placed on parks as a result of the pandemic. At the financial year end, membership stood at over 400, up by one-third since the new system has been in place.

Volunteers: The Friends' volunteer corps has grown significantly over the year, and we are grateful to be working with so many enthusiastic and talented individuals. The gardening volunteer team numbered forty at the year end, from which approximately twenty people were attending each week. Over 2020/21, we have also been fortunate to build our team of organisational volunteers, who lead our communications and events programmes. At year end, over twenty volunteers were helping in these areas.

Partnerships: Key to our achievements this year have been our relationships with external partners. As part of ongoing collaboration, Merton Council provided not only Park Entrance items, but also extensive new railings on Cannizaro's Chester Road boundary, and towards the end of the year, resource to investigate drainage issues around the Italian Garden. The Hotel du Vin continues to finance planting within the Sunken Garden and signed up for cleaning support in the Toilets' reopening. Catherine Macdonald, Nicola Hale and Mark Gregory of Landform UK provided invaluable support in the design and execution of the Park Entrance project, while Phil Geraghty of Crowdfunder UK guided us through our first crowdfunding project and Royal Wimbledon Golf Club assisted with some heavy lifting! Finally, we continue to appreciate working alongside the park's full-time gardener from park contractor idverde.

Plans for 2021/22

Against our charitable objective of restoring the park's horticultural fabric, next year's strategic plan will see us targeting two new renewal projects in the park (the Rose Garden and a Bog Garden). We will also undertake maintenance of last year's projects and, working with Merton Council, we will tackle further drainage work in the Italian Garden and around the pond, and consider the viability of the toilet block in the face of vandalism. As we look ahead to longer-term projects, the trustees will also be completing the development of the previously mentioned funding model, together with a donations and commemoration guide.

To address our objective of building visitor enjoyment, the next year will see the launch of an expanded events programme and a re-design of our website, while we continue to provide the regular newsletter and Instagram service.

Approved by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:



Catherine Nelson, Chair
23rd April, 2021

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2021

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st March 2021

2020		2021
£		£
	Income	
3,485.00	Members' subscriptions	4,035.00
3,958.39	Donations (Note 3)	21,125.33
2,134.87	Gift Aid claims	5,321.23
5,978.00	Activities (Note 2)	1,609.00
10.75	Other	13.85
15,567.01	Total	32,104.41
	Expenditure (Note 3)	
(4,779.17)	Planting and maintenance	(18,019.94)
(3,099.36)	Permanent items for visitors	(2,721.50)
(2,663.81)	Aviary	(383.70)
(2,533.85)	Activities (Note 2)	(1,255.78)
(1,916.36)	IT	(1,381.00)
(1,695.61)	Communications	(1,724.23)
(672.96)	Other	(532.37)
(17,361.12)	Total	(26,018.52)
(1,794.11)	Movement in funds	6,085.89
27,070.40	Funds brought forward	25,276.29
25,276.29	Funds carried forward	31,362.18

Balance Sheet at 31st March 2021

2020		2021
£		£
	Net current assets	
3,111.06	Cash at bank - current account	3,743.61
28,010.75	- deposit account	32,018.57
33.48	PayPal account	100.00
(5,879.00)	Creditors (Note 4)	(4,500.00)
25,276.29		31,362.18
25,276.29	Funds	31,362.18

Notes to the Financial Statements

1 Basis of preparation and accounting policies

The Financial Statements have been prepared in accordance with Statement of Recommended Practice SORP (FRS 102) under the Charities Act 2011 and therefore on an accruals basis, except for subscriptions, donations and Gift Aid claims which are recognised as income when received.

2 Results of Activities

2020		ICANN event	Calendars	Talk	2021 Total
£		£	£	£	£
5,978.00	Income	1,185.00	424.00	-	1,609.00
(2,533.85)	Expenditure	(923.91)	(231.87)	(100.00)	(1,255.78)
3,444.15	Net result	261.09	192.13	(100.00)	353.22

There was a Bridge event and two talks during the year ended 31st March 2020.

3 Expenditure and donations

The categories presented have been updated to provide additional transparency; comparative information has been reclassified accordingly.

Planning and maintenance for the year ended 31st March 2021 includes £16,791 for the park's front entrance project. Donations include £12,113 received from the related fundraising campaign. Expenditure is shown net of the contribution from the Hotel du Vin for sunken garden bedding and, for the year ended 31st March 2021, after the reversal of £3,179 accrued at 31st March 2020 no longer required for entrance work.

4 Creditors

Creditors at 31st March 2021 comprise the amount due to Merton Council for the sunken garden bedding in 2020 and a prepayment from the Hotel du Vin for the bedding in May 2021.

Approved by the trustees

23rd April 2021



Catherine Nelson, Chair



Simon Ingall, Treasurer

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE FRIENDS OF CANNIZARO PARK

I have examined the Financial Statements of The Friends of Cannizaro Park for the year ended 31st March 2021 and confirm that they have been correctly prepared and are in accordance with the books and records.

Signed



Colin Price

23rd April 2021