

Charity number: 1171536

Rimrose Valley Friend CIO

Payment and Receipts

For The Period Ended 31st March 2022

Rimrose Valley Friends CIO
Receipts and Payments Account
For the year ended 31st March 2022

	2022	2021
	£	£
Receipts		
Gifts, Donations and Collections	9,436.88	13,451.30
Sefton MBC - Contribution to Wildflower Meadow	-	600.00
The Tides Foundation	200.00	4,449.67
COOP Community Funding	-	5,351.78
Lush Limited - Carbon Tax Grant	2,520.39	2,000.00
INT FIT Grant	12,480.00	-
Canal and River Trust	5,000.00	-
Awards for All Lottery Grant	9,931.00	-
D'Oyley Carte Grant	3,500.00	-
Total Receipts	43,068.27	25,852.75
Payments		
Direct Event Costs	11,585.80	10,693.98
Charitable Activities	7,225.00	551.22
Telephone	-	61.20
Professional Fees	185.00	185.00
Printing, Postage and Stationary	1,732.04	598.60
Neo Enviromental Survey/Research	2,874.00	-
Leaflets, Flyers	-	828.02
Membership / Subscriptions	30.00	242.39
Insurance	792.32	40.32
IRYP Communication - Website	-	5,123.00
Storage	120.00	-
Sundries	15.00	-
Bank Charges	5.00	-
Total Expenditure	24,564.16	18,323.73
Excess of Receipts over Payments	18,504.11	7,529.02
Opening Bank Balances	22,674.17	15,145.15
Closing Bank Balances	41,178.28	22,674.17
Statement of Assetts and Liabilities		
Monetary Assets		
Cooperative Bank Account-68778458	-	-
Cooperative Bank Account-65845666	41,148.28	22,674.17

Signed:  Trustee/Director

Date: 25.11.22

Trustees' Annual Report April 2021 to March 2022

Reference and Administration Details

Charity Name: Rimrose Valley Friends

Registered Charity number: 1171536

Registered addresses:

32 Henley Ave

Litherland

LIVERPOOL

L21 2PU

The Charity's current Trustees are:

Sarah Edey

Linda Gaskell

Gary Young

Tracey Boileau

Structure, Governance and Management

1. The Charity is governed by a written constitution
2. During this period, each of the 4 trustees above retired and were reappointed at the last AGM, in line with the charity's constitution.
3. The Charity has a paid membership scheme, with all members having voting rights at the AGM and other general meetings.
4. The last AGM was held on 23rd February 2022, with the next to take place within the 15-month period permitted by the constitution.

This Annual Report covers the period from April 2021 to March 2022 in line with the Charity's accounts covering the same period.

Objectives and Activities

Objectives:

1. Rimrose Valley Friends sets out to promote, protect and improve the community resource that is Rimrose Valley Country Park.
2. Rimrose Valley Friends aims to benefit the local community surrounding Rimrose Valley, promoting it through events and activities, engaging with other community groups and liaising with the police to cut down on anti-social behaviour.
3. Rimrose Valley Friends' work covers the area of Rimrose Valley Country Park, bordering the Leeds-Liverpool canal and the adjoining communities of Seaforth, Litherland, Waterloo, Crosby, Thornton and Netherton.

Activities:

The Charity's trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit and have undertaken the following activities within the boundaries of that guidance.

During this period, the Charity has aimed to further the core activities of Rimrose Valley Friends and simultaneously run a successful campaign against a road proposal which threatens the park's future, which is known as Save Rimrose Valley. As these have different objectives, the activities for each are summarised separately below.

Rimrose Valley Friends

The Charity's core activities include:

1. Raising awareness and promoting the Charity's work **online** via the following:
 - Writing articles, blogs and content added to dedicated website www.rimrosevalleyfriends.org
 - Administering the campaign's Facebook group "Rimrose Valley Friends"
 - Maintaining the campaign's Twitter account @RimroseValley
2. Raising awareness and promoting the Charity's work **in the community** via the following:
 - Organising activities and events on Rimrose Valley
 - Engaging with local schools, community groups and other charities with shared objectives
 - Attending and supporting local community events
3. Engaging with relevant **stakeholders** including:
 - Local Councillors
 - Green Sefton
 - Sefton CVS
 - Local MPs

Specific activities in this period

In the previous Annual Report, it was noted that delivery of the Charity's core activities was hampered as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, the associated lockdowns and subsequent social distancing rules. These restrictions eased in this period, enabling the Charity to undertake more of its work. Some of the key activities in this period are as follows

1. **Facebook** The charity's community group has continued to grow, with thousands of members predominantly from the surrounding communities. At the time of preparing this report, membership of the group stands at around 8,500. The group is used for people to share relevant news stories, photographs and information and is administered by volunteers.
2. **Website** The mailing list has continued to grow. Members of the public can subscribe to this list and receive email notifications of news and events added to the website.
3. **Twitter** This has proven to be a great way of connecting with similar local community groups and supporting each other's work. Again, the account is administered by volunteers.
4. **Rimrose Runners** Post-lockdown, Rimrose Runners saw a huge spike in new members and the run leaders were able to reinstate regular training sessions. This included marathon and half marathon training and several couch to 5ks to help people on their running journey. Funding was secured through membership fees to allow 2 new run leaders to be trained in Autumn 2021. There were regular group runs and group events. The club's Facebook group now has almost 800 members and regular weekly runs attract approximately 40 attendees. The Club continues to promote health and wellbeing among the local community, using Rimrose Valley as its base, raising awareness of the park and the campaign to save it.
5. **Guided Walks** The Charity arranged several successful guided walks during this period. In spring, a nature walk was led by a ranger from Green Sefton which took in large sections of the park and highlighted plant and birdlife. In November, a walk was led by a Fungal expert which identified almost 100 different species in 3 hours. Finally, the Charity's popular Boxing Day and New Year's Day walks returned for the first time since Covid-19 and again, were well attended. All were free to attend.
6. **Pop-up Yoga** The Charity was approached by a local Yoga practitioner who offered to run outdoor Yoga classes on the park in the summer of 2021. These were really popular and she requested that donations be made to the Charity in lieu of charging for the sessions.
7. **Litter Picks** 2 litter picks were held during this period in conjunction with Green Sefton, but despite being publicised, these were poorly attended. However, the Charity has found that the vast majority of people respect Rimrose Valley and littering is not as big a problem as often perceived. This will be monitored and any ad hoc litter collections arranged, as necessary.
8. **Wildflower meadow** Again, the Charity sold seeds harvested from the previous year's meadow to raise the funds for subsequent sowing and to generate income for the Charity. As with the previous period, due to Covid-19 restrictions the proposed public sowing event was unable to be held, but a small number of children from local primary school Our Lady Star of the Sea attended a less formal event. The wildflower meadow was again a success during the summer of 2021. The wildflower meadow project was extended during this period in a project led by Cllr Mick Roche using Council funds. He worked with the same delivery partner, Richard Scott of the Eden Project. Members of the Charity's Facebook group expressed concerns around the herbicide used to

prepare the ground, the lack of advanced notice and signage, highlighting the potential impact on dogs, children and wildlife. The Charity committed to exploring alternatives and to working with the contractors and Green Sefton to provide advanced notice of this activity in subsequent years.

9. **Summer Raffle** The Charity was gifted an oil painting by a local artists which was raffled off and tickets were sold at various community events.
10. **Rimrose Valley Calendar** The Charity again invited people to submit photographs for a calendar. This proved to be very successful, with the Charity making a healthy profit from the sales, doubling the order from previous years (500 to 1,000). Leftover copies were given to local individuals, groups and businesses who support the Charity's work.
11. **Forest School.** The Co-op Community fund secured in the previous period was to be used for community events which we were unable to deliver due to Covid restrictions. As soon as this situation changed, the Charity partnered with My Outdoor Classroom to deliver 8 x Forest School taster sessions on the parkland during this period to both pre-school and older children. Paying My Outdoor Classroom to deliver these events meant that these sessions were completely free to members of the public. The Charity believes that such activities which promote access to nature are vital in a post-Covid world and making them free is just as important. The sessions were extremely well received and after some initial admin difficulties around booking, every session was soon full and oversubscribed. The Charity agreed to deliver similar events in the future with My Outdoor Classroom in the future and worked together on a funding application to the The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust which was successful. The activity would be delivered in the next period.
12. **Walk/Run/Cycle/Play (WRCP)** The Charity was successful in an application to the Tackling Inequalities fund during this period. This was administered by the Canal & River Trust with whom the Charity has good relations. The Charity partnered with HYPE Merseyside to deliver 6 x WRCP events on Rimrose Valley, based out of Liverpool County FA's site at the north of the park. Again, these were free sessions, designed to get local families active on a Sunday morning between 10am-Midday and included football coaching and a route for people to follow around the park itself – either walking, running or cycling. Initial sessions during the summer holidays were poorly attended. We believe that this was due to many families taking their first opportunity to go on holiday following the pandemic. The sessions were paused and restarted when the schools returned. Many schools publicised this and attendance went up. The Charity will consider continuing this programme in the future and explore ways to make it more effective.
13. **Survey of activities** In spring 2021 a survey was undertaken to explore what events and activities people wished to see take place on Rimrose Valley and approx. 200 responses were received. This information informed the application outlined in the next item below.
14. **Proposal to grow the charity** During the previous period, a motion was put forward to grow the Charity and to try and secure funding for full and/or part-time resource. During this period, a subgroup was formed to try and deliver this. This information was used in an application submitted to the National Lottery's Community Fund. The application to this highly competitive fund was unsuccessful but useful feedback was received. At the time of writing this report, the amount of work generated by the charity's campaign has meant that the Charity has been unable to follow this up. However, the Charity remains committed to growing its work and hopes to revisit this piece of work in the future.
15. **Rimrose Rounds craft group** During this period, one of the charity's members, Kate Elder, launched a craft group. The group meets periodically to knit, crochet and create.

Their handiwork has been placed around Rimrose Valley for people to enjoy and sold via the RVF stall at community events.

Save Rimrose Valley

The Charity opposes National Highways' plans to build a dual carriageway through Rimrose Valley Country Park, known as The A5036 Port of Liverpool Access Scheme.

The Charity set up a Road Action Group in September 2017. The group comprises the four trustees and additional volunteers from the community, with approximately 18 active members.

The campaign's work is coordinated by Stuart Bennett on a paid contractor basis. The role is paid for via a combination of funding from grants and general Charity fundraising.

Guidance and support are received from relevant environmental groups and NGOs including Transport Action Network, Friends of the Earth, CPRE and Lancashire Wildlife Trust.

This guidance informs the campaign's strategy which has two key objectives:

1. To change minds of decision-makers at Westminster
2. To engage the community in the fight to save the park

The campaign's work should therefore fulfil either of the two objectives, with the Road Action Group supporting the delivery of this work.

The campaign's core activities include:

1. Raising awareness and promoting the campaign's work **online** via the following:
 - Writing articles, blogs and content added to dedicated website www.saverimrosevalley.org
 - Writing and distributing press releases to local, regional and national media outlets
 - Maintaining the campaign's Facebook page @saverimrosevalley
 - Maintaining the campaign's Twitter account @saverimrose
 - Maintaining the campaign's Instagram account @saverimrose
 - Producing a podcast series "We Said No" covering many of the issues around the campaign
 - Creating videos to convey key messages
2. Raising awareness and promoting the campaign's work **in the community** via the following:
 - Organising demonstrations
 - Leafleting
 - Using signs, posters and banners in prominent locations

- Engaging with local schools
 - Promoting the campaign at 'in store' events such as LUSH and local supermarkets
 - Engaging with other environmental groups and campaigns from across the Liverpool City Region
 - Attending and supporting local community events
3. Engaging with key stakeholders in the road proposal including:
 - National Highways
 - Peel Ports
 - Department for Transport
 - Transport for the North
 - Local MPs, Councillors, the Metro Mayor & Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
 4. Documenting key arguments against the road proposal
 5. Exploring and promoting viable alternatives the road proposal

Specific activities in this period

1. **Social media** The campaign continued to grow its following across all platforms during this period and it continues to be a vital and dynamic way of communicating key issues. At the time of preparing this report, the campaign has >3,000 followers of the Facebook page, >2,000 on Twitter and >1,000 on Instagram. Analytics show that many tweets and posts have been viewed thousands of times
2. **Website** The campaign-specific website was updated throughout this period with press coverage secured, blogs and longer articles covering the more detailed topics linked to the campaign. Website visits continue to be encouraging. As with social media, website analytics show that many articles have been viewed thousands of times
3. **National Highways' activities** The fallout from Covid continued to result in more delay with just 2 public updates shared during this period. The first advised that ecological studies would be taking place in the spring. Other environmental studies were due to commence, including air quality, groundwater and noise, although these were again paused later on during this period meaning that the statutory consultation was deferred.
4. **Alternative Solutions** In the previous report, Sefton Council released an Inland Port Connectivity Concept which detailed possible non-road solutions to port access. In this period, the campaign pushed for the next phase – a more detailed feasibility study. However, at the time of writing this is still to be commissioned, which is a concern. The campaign continues to chase Sefton Council and the Liverpool City Region on this matter. In addition, during this period Transport Secretary Grant Shapps rejected the Integrated Rail Plan presented by Northern Metro Mayors. Better rail freight connectivity is vital. Again, the campaign continued to push for this.
5. **Politicians** The campaign maintained good relations with Councillors, the relevant Council Officers and MPs; all of whom oppose the road proposal. Work continued to engage the Metro Mayor and the Liverpool City Region in the debate which would bear fruit in the following period. We send emails, letters and request meetings with all levels of the local political scene in order to further our work. In addition to local and regional politicians, we also wrote to Transport Secretary Grant Shapps and the

relevant DfT ministers, often to no avail. We continue to push for cross-community representation on the Port Access Steering Group, which is a key forum.

6. **We Said No** The podcast series continued throughout this period covering a wide range of topics including air pollution; our biggest demonstration to date (see below), 'voices from Rimrose' and the alternatives presented in Sefton-ARUP report. All episodes include local contributors and we are able to track the number of downloads/plays which are typically 200 per episode
7. **Media coverage** Press releases remain a key tool for the campaign and we continued to keep the story in the news with major developments covered locally in The Champion. Bigger stories, including our big demonstration received coverage on Granada, BBC NWT and the Echo
8. **Funding** The campaign held several in-store fundraising events at LUSH in Liverpool. These proceeds go towards the general costs of running the campaign – leaflets, signs and design costs. The Charity was also successful in a funding application to Foundation for Integrated Transport. This secured the role of campaign coordinator for 2 days per week for 12 months, which put the campaign in a secure position.
9. **Consultations** During this period, the campaign responded to key consultations and encouraged supporters to do the same. These ranged from topics including the Council's efforts on active travel (walking and cycling), Transport for the North's decarbonisation and freight & logistics strategies and the Liverpool City Region efforts on public transport and reaching net zero. All had a direct link to the campaign's work
10. **Demonstrations** August 2021 saw the campaign deliver its biggest demonstration to date. Almost 1,000 members of the public attended a mass rally on Rimrose Valley. This featured speeches from local MPs and councillors and environmental groups including Transport Action Network, CPRE and Friends of the Earth. The rally was followed by a march to the gates of the Port of Liverpool, with roads blocked. A letter was delivered to Peel Ports, highlighting their major role in the road proposal. The event will live long in the memory and was a resounding success. TAN advised that it was the biggest anti-road protest in a generation. Other protests during this period including another demonstration at the port to highlight Drax's operations. They import wooden pellets via the port to be burned in UK power stations, occupying a vital rail link in the process. Finally, as the UK hosted COP26 Save Rimrose Valley was well represented at a Liverpool-wide march which began in Sefton Park and ended in the city centre. We addressed crowds at the start of the rally, linking road building to the climate emergency. The campaign is now well known in the Liverpool area.
11. **Peel Ports** The above demonstration was followed up with correspondence to the CEO of the port. The port's response was dismissive and generated further media coverage. It is clear to the campaign that direct pleas to the port will not work, which reconfirms the need to pursue both a political and a direct, public campaigning approach.
12. **Petition** During this period, we updated the supporting our ongoing petition to more accurately reflect our work and what we are calling for. This led to another push on signatures and we passed the 15,000 mark.
13. **WildLIVE** The campaign was invited to take part in The Wildlife Trust's series of YouTube livestreams where we talked about campaigning with fellow campaigners from across the country
14. **Lancaster University** The campaign was also invited to present to students at Lancaster University and to explain the link between the road proposal and climate change

Achievements and Performance

The Charity continued to raise awareness of Rimrose Valley Country Park and this period was the most active in its short history in terms of delivering events and activities.

The campaign measures its performance by the status of the road proposal. Construction should have commenced in 2020. Instead, National Highways are not much further along in their plans than they were in 2018, meaning that the proposal is at least 4 years behind schedule. The hope is that with the sustainability, net zero and the climate emergency having become more relevant than ever, the scheme will eventually be cancelled.

Financial Review

1. The Charity is regularly funded by public donation. It has a LocalGiving account which can accept one-off donations as well as recurring direct debits.
2. The Charity has actively applied for grants and other funding to finance both the Charity's activities and events and the work of the Save Rimrose Valley campaign. All funds applied for are ringfenced for their specific purpose and are clearly referenced in the Charity's accounts
3. The Accounts for the financial year 2021/22 have been prepared and audited by Sefton CVS and will be reviewed and approved at the upcoming AGM.

Declaration

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'Gary', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Independent Examiners Report
To the Trustees of the Rimrose Valley Friends CIO
For the year ended 31st March 2022**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the CIO for the year ended 31st March 2022

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the CIO 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 CIO's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed all applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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 as required by section 130 of the Act: or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed: 

Date: 25/11/22

Anthony Deegan MAAT, MICB Pm.Dip
Community Accountant
Sefton Council for Voluntary Service
Crosby Road North
Waterloo
L22 0LG