

**Rimrose Valley Friends**

**Charity No. 1171536**

**Trustees' Report and Unaudited Accounts**

**31 March 2023**

**Rimrose Valley Friends**  
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# 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](http://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

Some of the key activities in this period are as follows:

1. **Facebook** The charity's community group has remained an active and positive forum to 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** The group, which is co-run by the charity's trustee, Sarah Edey, saw another spike in new members and through membership payments, three new run leaders were paid for to enable the club to offer more variety in training including longer run sessions, couch to 5k and speed sessions. The club became affiliated in July 2022 and secured a London Marathon place for a member. There were regular group runs and group events including: the Liverpool Santa Dash; The Mersey tunnel 10k; the Jubilee Bridge 10k; Run for the 97 5k; The Wilmslow running festival; the Liverpool Half Marathon; Southport 10k and a local run raising money for Papyrus. Many social events have been well attended by the club. The club's Facebook group now has over 900 members and regular weekly runs attract approximately 30 to 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. **Queen's Jubilee Fund "Modern Nature" Project** During this period, the charity worked with a local arts organisation, Rule of Threes, to secure funding to deliver free activities on Rimrose Valley, based out of the nearby Crosby Library and aimed at 16-25 year olds. These included a nature & wellbeing walk, 'forest bathing' and art sessions drawing inspiration from the park's surroundings; including a cyanotype photography workshop and collage and riso printing. Unfortunately, the activities were poorly attended, despite both the charity and Rule of Threes following their usual avenues to promote them. The charity felt that because of this, the considerable amount of funding secured did not have the biggest impact and, unfortunately, did not represent value for money. A decision was taken not to co-apply for similar funding in the future without a clearly defined marketing plan and set of deliverables. This will ensure that every step has been taken to ensure that any events in the charity's name are as successful as we would wish them to be.
6. **Guided Walks** The Charity arranged several well-attended 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 September, the charity again worked with Green Sefton to deliver an extremely popular guided bat walk, which was educational and attended by old and young. In November, a Fungal expert returned for another highly popular walk. All were free to attend and well received.
7. **Rimrose Valley Community Celebration** In July, the Charity delivered a free-to-attend community festival using a grant awarded by the National Lottery's Celebrate! Fund. The charity worked with local event management company Waterloo Sunrise CIC who secured approval from Sefton Council to stage the event on the newly resurfaced Chaffer's Running track. The event consisted of live music, food and drink, and free stalls for local charities, community groups and makers to promote their own



activities and products. Free bike repairs and servicing were provided by Dr Bike, free Yoga sessions for adults and children, and a “sports day” was held by coaches from a local running group. The event was delivered on budget, it was a memorable occasion and the feedback received was extremely positive. The charity hopes to organise a similar event in the future.

8. **Wildflower meadow** Once 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. The wildflower meadow and the newly extended section bloomed during the summer of 2022, attracting large amounts of visitors to the park. Based on concerns expressed in previous years around the herbicide used to prepare the ground, the charity erected signs and put posts on social media channels fully explaining the works and heading off complaints, which was a success. The Charity did explore the use of non-chemical, organic alternatives but after consulting Richard Scott, were advised that these were not suitable on this scale. In the future it is hoped that less intervention (and herbicide) will be needed.
9. **Rimrose Valley Calendar** The Charity again invited people to submit photographs for the 2022 calendar. The Charity doubled the order from previous years (500 to 1,000) but were left with a surplus so will revert to 500 copies in future. However, this still made a healthy profit from the sales, Leftover copies were given to local individuals, community groups and businesses who support the Charity’s work.
10. **Forest School.** After the previous year’s successful Forest School sessions, our relationship with My Outdoor Classroom who delivered these events continued to grow. We assisted them in promoting more free Forest School Toddler sessions which were delivered across Autumn 2022. Funding for these was received from Sefton Council, but the Charity’s social media platforms meant that participants could be targeted from the surrounding Rimrose communities.
11. **John Muir Environmental Award.** The Charity and My Outdoor Classroom secured funding for a programme of environmental education for children from our area, via The D’Oyly Carte Charitable Trust. The [John Muir Environmental Award](#) which encourages people of all backgrounds to connect with, enjoy and care for wild places. The programme was delivered from August to November of 2022 by My Outdoor Classroom. All activities and learnings for the award took place on Rimrose itself which fits perfectly with the Charity’s objectives. A total of 27 children successfully completed the award which involved committing to attending every session in order to qualify. The children and family members were invited to a presentation ceremony at Old Christchurch and Cllr Paul Cummins of Church Ward presented the certificates.
12. **Proposal to grow the charity** As reported in the previous period, an application to the National Lottery’s Community Fund was unsuccessful, but plans to grow the charity on such a scale were put on hold rather than abandoned and are to be revisited in the following period (2023-24)
13. **Rimrose Rounds craft group** Card-making classes continued during this period with sessions taking place at the nearby Queensway allotments. Cards and gifts created are sold at community events with proceeds going to the charity and its campaign.
14. **Marsh Lane Harriers** In September 2022, Marsh Lane Harriers submitted a planning application for a clubhouse at the newly refurbished Chaffers Running Track on Rimrose Valley and The Charity was invited to respond. The Charity responded positively and supported the application, highlighting the need to continue to encourage people to travel to the track on foot, bicycle or public transport wherever possible, drawing attention to the protected species on the park and encouraging measures to ‘green’ the new building to help it blend into its surroundings.
15. **Former trustee, Hazel Davies.** In December 2022, Hazel Davies, a former trustee passed away. The Charity shared the news on its website and social media and agreed

to commemorate Hazel in the new year, which would take place in the following accounting period.

## **Save Rimrose Valley**

The Charity continues to oppose 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 20 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](http://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 >3,500 followers of the Facebook page, >2,200 on Twitter. The campaign previously had >1,000 followers on Instagram but the account was hacked. It was subsequently retrieved and, at the time of writing, is back up towards 400 followers. 2-factor authentication was then added to all social media accounts. Analytics show that many tweets and posts have been viewed thousands of times.
2. **Website** The campaign-specific website was updated consistently 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** Work began on updated traffic surveys during this period, but there were no consultations or public information events held. The last formal update posted to its project page was in July 2022 and its last formal newsletter in October 2010.
4. **Alternative Solutions** The campaign continued to chase Sefton Council and the Liverpool City Region on follow up work to 2020's ARUP report and for greater clarification around the role of PASG (Port Access Steering Group) where such topics are discussed and progressed. We continued to push for cross-community representation on PASG, with continued resistance and no genuine desire to engage forthcoming.
5. **Politics** The campaign maintained good relations with Councillors, the relevant Council Officers and MPs; all of whom oppose the road proposal. Major developments as follows:
  - a. **\*Formal delay confirmed\*** In March 2023 current Transport Secretary, Mark Harper, announced that the A5036 Port of Liverpool Access Scheme was to be formally delayed and moved to the subsequent batch of road building projects,

- known as RIS3. These projects are not due to commence until early 2025, meaning a delay of more than 18 months. Crucially, there will be a general election in the interim and therefore a new government in place at the beginning of RIS3. Work with the Shadow Transport team is therefore even more vital and will be a priority in the subsequent period. The formal explanation for the delay was as follows: “(the project) faces a range of challenges including environmental considerations and ongoing scope and design changes to ensure stakeholders' views are fully considered”. Much of this can be attributed to the work of the campaign team.
- b. Also in March 2023, we attended **Transport for the North's conference** in Newcastle which proved to be a good networking opportunity and an important contact was established with the Chair of the Liverpool City Region's Transport Committee – an elected body – which would be followed up in the next period.
  - c. In February 2023, we attended the **Northern Transport Summit** in Liverpool which again proved to be a good networking opportunity and an opportunity to raise and discuss the Port of Liverpool Access Scheme in a high-profile forum.
  - d. In efforts to secure the Shadow Transport team's support, we **attended the Labour Party Conference** in October 2022 which was in Liverpool and spoke with Shadow Transport Secretary, Louise Haigh, and other shadow ministers on the subject of the road proposal and port access.
  - e. **Westminster Hall Debate.** In September 2022, local MP Peter Dowd secured a Westminster Hall Debate on the issue of access to the Port of Liverpool and the threat to Rimrose Valley. The speeches were supported by other Labour MPs including Bill Esterson, and Mike Kane MP, Shadow Minister for Maritime. All opposed National Highways' road proposal and called for proper investment in port infrastructure. The debate was open to members of the public and 4 members of the campaign team attended in person.
  - f. **TUC support.** In April 2022, the campaign secured the support of the Trades Union Congress after a motion was passed at its North West Conference to demand better, non-road alternatives to port access. This support will have a bearing on the Shadow Transport team, with Labour's close ties to unions.
  - g. In June 2022, the campaign secured the **support of Liverpool City Region Metro Mayor**, Steve Rotherham, who joined MP and Council calls for better alternatives to be explored, writing to then Transport Secretary, Grant Shapps
6. **We Said No** The podcast series continued throughout this period covering topics of rail access, the role of Rimrose Valley and local green spaces in supporting football/local sports activities, our Manchester demonstration (see below) and the importance of the wildflower project. All episodes include local contributors and we are able to track the number of downloads/plays
  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. However, in August 2022, The Champion newspaper collapsed.
  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 new 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. The Charity also applied to Patagonia Action Works for funding beyond this period.



9. **Consultations** During this period, the campaign responded to key consultations and encouraged supporters to do the same. This included the Liverpool City Region's Local Transport Plan, which had a direct link to the campaign's work
10. **Demonstrations** August 2022 saw the campaign organise its biggest demo of this period: a trip to Manchester, the location of National Highways' regional headquarters. The event was planned in conjunction with funders Patagonia who paid for a coach to take members of the public to its Manchester store where placards were made before protestors marched through the city centre to Piccadilly Gate. The campaign presented the Regional Delivery Director with materials made by local school children, opposing plans to destroy the park. We were joined by members of Lancashire Wildlife Trust.
11. **Campaign Strategy.** In March 2023, Chris Todd, Director of Transport Action Network and long-time supporter of the campaign visited Liverpool to deliver a campaign workshop to ensure that the campaign team and wider community remain engaged in the fight to save the park and come up with new ways of communicating our messages. This support was gratefully received and resulted in a positive day of workshops and activities held at Marine FC.
12. **Peel Ports** Following the formal delay to the project, we again wrote to Peel Ports asking for their cooperation in securing a better outcome and better infrastructure. Non-committal responses were received.
13. **Petition** At the time of writing signatures stand at 16,127.

## 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.

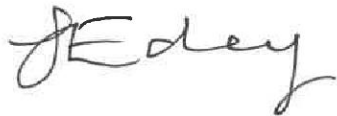
The campaign measures its performance by the status of the road proposal. Construction should have commenced in 2020. Instead, National Highways were notified in March 2023 that the road proposal has been deferred until 2025 at the earliest, as outlined above.

The campaign will use this newly-found time to ramp up efforts to ensure that the road project is cancelled completely, in favour of better, more sustainable solutions.

## 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 2022/23 have been prepared and audited by Sefton CVS and will be reviewed and approved at the upcoming AGM.

## Declaration



18.12.23

**Rimrose Valley Friends**  
**Receipts and Payments Account**  
**for the year ended 31 March 2023**

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
<b>Receipts from:</b>				
Donations, legacies and similar income	13,330	-	13,330	9,437
Grants	3,688	19,972	23,660	33,631
Fundraising	760	-	760	-
Investment income	178	-	178	-
<b>Total gross income</b>	<b>17,956</b>	<b>19,972</b>	<b>37,928</b>	<b>43,068</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>17,956</b>	<b>19,972</b>	<b>37,928</b>	<b>43,068</b>
<b>Payments on:</b>				
Charitable payments	19,368	21,758	41,126	21,605
Charity costs	5,252	-	5,252	2,909
<b>Total gross expenditure</b>	<b>24,620</b>	<b>21,758</b>	<b>46,378</b>	<b>24,514</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>24,620</b>	<b>21,758</b>	<b>46,378</b>	<b>24,514</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>(6,664)</b>	<b>(1,786)</b>	<b>(8,450)</b>	<b>18,554</b>
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Cash funds last year	36,298	4,930	41,228	22,674
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>29,634</b>	<b>3,144</b>	<b>32,778</b>	<b>41,228</b>

**Rimrose Valley Friends**  
**Statement of Assets and Liabilities**  
**at 31 March 2023**  
**Charity No. 1171536**

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £	Total funds 2022 £
<b>Cash funds</b>				
Current accounts	4,486	3,144	7,630	41,228
Deposit accounts	25,148	-	25,148	-
<b>Total cash funds</b>	<u>29,634</u>	<u>3,144</u>	<u>32,778</u>	<u>41,228</u>

Signed by the trustees on 22 December 2023

And signed on their behalf by:



S. Edey  
Trustee  
22 December 2023



## 1 Accounting policies

### Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on the 'Receipts and Payments' basis.

### Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds	These are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objects of the charity.
Designated funds	These are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.
Revaluation funds	These are unrestricted funds which include a revaluation reserve representing the restatement of investment assets at their market values.
Restricted funds	These are available for use subject to restrictions imposed by the donor or through terms of an appeal.

## 2 Income from grants

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Community Foundation	-	9,972	9,972	-
Lush Limited	3,688	-	3,688	2,520
Foundation For Integrated Transport	-	10,000	10,000	12,480
The Tides Foundation	-	-	-	200
Canal & River Trust	-	-	-	5,000
Awards for All	-	-	-	9,931
D'Oyley Carte Grant	-	-	-	3,500
	<u>3,688</u>	<u>19,972</u>	<u>23,660</u>	<u>33,631</u>

# **Trustees' Annual Report April 2022 to March 2023**

## **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 23<sup>rd</sup> 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 2022 to March 2023 in line with the Charity's accounts covering the same period.