



RIVER OAKS CHARITY - ANNUAL REPORT April 2023 - March 2024

Executive Summary,

Another year ROC has continued to evolve and grow in its community reach. We have welcomed new trustees to the team which has helped bring fresh ideas and energy to build on the great team we have. We have continued our focus on sustaining our wonderful local environment and building on the community strength

Trustee Update

We welcomed, Heather and Michael Thwaite along with Judy Dyer to the team. Vicky Hughes stepped down as secretary after 14 years in the role however remains as a trustee. The secretary role is now being shared by trustees. Heather has led as a very effective external communication lead. Peter extended his term as a trustee for another three years. We continue to operate without a formalised chairperson however the team pull together. We are grateful to our Treasurer Martin who continues to ably lead us financially.

Pond Area Update

Our beautiful pond area continues to be our central focal point, where passers-by stop to admire the fountain, smell the roses and relax in peace and tranquillity. We work hard to maintain the area with the support of our gardener Kasia.

In early 2024, the Trustees obtained grant funding from the Duchy of Lancaster to pay for a professional clearance and cut-back of the pond area. This will enable us to maintain the space ourselves more easily in the coming months and years.

Woods Area Update

When we originally set out on our ROC journey our vision was to get the woods area to a position where our community of all ages could enjoy the area. This also would naturally discourage any anti-social behaviour we have experienced for a number of years. In 2023 we took a very exciting step forward as we launched our first Forest School. Colin led the way on this, working closely with Laura who provides during school holidays the opportunity for local children to take part in the school set in our woods. Activities include fire building, food preparation and cooking and tent building. This has been very popular and has returned on a number of school holidays. Our plan is to continue to work with Laura to provide this great opportunity for the children in our community.

The charity continues to host “woods clean-up” days, encouraging the local community to enjoy and take pride in the woods, helping us cut them back and picking up litter.

Longer term, the Trustees have taken professional advice on how best to manage the woods, which has experienced generations of neglect and is visibly in decline – with overgrown, dying trees and poor visibility. The resulting woodland management plan has been submitted to the Forestry Commission by the ROC trustees for consideration. If approved, this plan would enable us to care for and develop the woods in a more strategic way, protecting it for future generations by taking action now.

Wild Flower Meadow

This year we decided to manage our wild flower independently, in order to save money and to experiment with different approaches. We enlisted the help of a local farmer who ploughed part of the meadow and seeded the area. The result was not as spectacular as previous years but we had lot of learnings for future years.

Play Area

Our play area remains popular with children of all ages. Our local residents maintain the area, including organised events to cut it back, tidy it up and keep it safe. Longer term this is an area we would like to look at developing further with some landscaping work to be done.

Events

We had our usual Easter Egg hunt lead by Grace which as always was engaging for all ages.



Halloween fun was had with the best dressed house competition. Christmas was the best ever - with our first community Christmas Party held by our wonderful pond area, which had been decorated with incredible lights beforehand by a happy task force of local supporters. This consisted of great carols, pizza

supplied by Gavin's Mobile Pizza Oven, and a mobile bar supplied by the Dog House Pub in Wavertree providing refreshments, plus a craft stall to support our charity fundraising. Members of the community joined us and it was most enjoyable, and helped strengthen relationships within the community.

Heather and Michael organised for another local charity who provide a Christmas Float to drive through the estate to give our younger residents a sneaky view of Santa whilst we supported a collection for the floats chosen charity.

Finance and Fundraising

In 2023/24 we have worked hard to stabilise and improve the charity's immediate financial position and long-term sustainability. This has been achieved in no small part by working with a local supporter to cut the grass on our fields at a far lower cost. The healthier reserves we have been able to build up already will enable us to confront those unforeseen 'rainy day' costs, like the urgent felling of dangerous trees, with more confidence. It will also allow us to invest in capital expenditure such as tools and kit, and to pay our deposit shares on future grant funding for larger-scale projects.

In October 2023 the Trustees held a special meeting to identify and rank our long-term fundraising priorities – one-off items that need attention, and funding, with varying degrees of urgency. The Trustees will use this list to decide which grant opportunities we may wish to take advantage of, and in what order, in addition to managing our bread-and-butter local fundraising efforts.

Regular giving from local supporters remains limited and challenging - however the Trustees have been working hard over social media and newsletters to communicate the charity's ongoing funding needs. They have also set up a SumUp account and card reader in order to diversify and simplify the ways in which local supporters can donate.

Future

Hopefully this annual report highlights the charity's growth and community involvement. Our trustee team are incredibly passionate about the future of the charity and making the right choices to continue to deliver our mission of *creating community and caring for the environment*.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
River Oaks Charity

No (if any)
1175908

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date
	01/04/2023		31/03/2024



Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
General donations	8,136	-	-	8,136	8,269
Donations box	104	-	-	104	126
Amazon	42	-	-	42	59
Events & fundraising	246	-	-	246	-
Gift Aid	-	-	-	-	-
Woodland pathway	-	-	-	-	12,924
Pond clearance	-	4,630	-	4,630	-
Wildflower meadow	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	8,528	4,630	-	13,158	21,378
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	8,528	4,630	-	13,158	21,378
A3 Payments					
Garden & pond maintenance	1,945	-	-	1,945	1,360
Fields maintenance	2,406	-	-	2,406	199
Woods & trees maintenance	4,252	-	-	4,252	4,550
Events & fundraising	289	-	-	289	-
Printing & postage	185	-	-	185	65
Energy	260	-	-	260	178
Insurance	951	-	-	951	930
Equipment	284	-	-	284	-
Website	57	-	-	57	48
Sundry	48	-	-	48	84
Play area	-	90	-	90	284
Woodland pathway	-	-	-	-	12,931
Pond clearance	-	4,778	-	4,778	887
Jubilee event	-	-	-	-	1,400
Wildflower meadow	-	4,800	-	4,800	2,679
Sub total	10,677	9,668	-	20,345	25,595
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	10,677	9,668	0	20,345	25,595
Net of receipts/(payments)	(2,149)	(5,038)	0	(7,187)	(4,217)
A5 Transfers between funds	0	0	0	0	0
A6 Cash funds last year end	4,850	8,486	0	13,336	17,552
Cash funds this year end	2,701	3,448	0	6,149	13,335

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Bank account	2,701	3,448	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	2,701	3,448	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
B5 Liabilities	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	PAT KENNICK	10/1/25
	MARTIN FOSTER	10/1/25