



**CHARITY COMMISSION**  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

## Trustees' Annual Report for the period

**From:** 01/10/23 **Period start date**      **To:** 30/09/24 **Period end date**

**Charity name:** FRIENDS OF RIDLEY PARK (FORP)

**Charity registration number:** 1177588

## Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<b>FORP was set up to:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• help the inhabitants of Blyth and its surrounding area by providing or assisting in the provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation.</li><li>• improve the conditions of life for the inhabitants in the area of benefit by the preservation, promotion, support, assistance and improvement of Ridley Park.</li></ul>
Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.	Para 1.17 and 1.19	<b>Park entrance project to improve the main entrance to make it more attractive to the local community.</b> Funding was received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• One Lottery</li><li>• Pavilion hire donations</li><li>• Bank interest</li><li>• Easyfundraising</li></ul> <b>Nature projects to improve and promote biodiversity in the park.</b> Funding was received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Co-op Community Fund</li></ul> <b>Picnic bench to provide additional seating and disabled access around the play areas.</b> This was completed in August 2024 but full funding was received during 2022/23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Northumberland County Council Community grant</li><li>• Private donation</li></ul>

		<p>No funding was required for the following activities.</p> <p><b>Heritage activities to promote and record the past of the park characters.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bill &amp; Ben mascots</li> <li>• FORP CONNECT newsletters</li> </ul> <p><b>Public Engagement to promote Ridley Park and the activities of Friends of Ridley Park to the wider community.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thriving Together Network Event</li> <li>• Northumberland Wildlife Trust &amp; Natural England Green Social prescribing event</li> <li>• Blyth Library Green Living Day</li> <li>• Blyth Town Carnival parade</li> <li>• Northumberland County Council “Love your Park” promotion</li> <li>• Visit from Friends of Astley Park</li> <li>• Blyth Library Skills Share Day</li> <li>• Blythfest “stained glass” window display</li> </ul> <p><b>Training/awards:</b> FORP contribute to the award by their community involvement in Ridley Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green Flag award 2024 - 2025</li> </ul>
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	The trustees have observed the Commission’s statutory guidance on public benefit to improve facilities and activities within Ridley Park.

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	<p>Treasurer: 2.5 hours weekly (130 hours)  Secretary: 2.5 hours weekly (130 hours)  Trustee: 1 hour weekly (70 hours)  Accounts auditor: 8 hours  Weekly Jobs in the Park: 306 hours per year  Community event attendance: 70 hours  <b>Total for year: 784 hours</b></p>

Other		
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## Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.	Para 1.20	<p><b>Park entrance</b> During this financial year FORP has continued to liaise with Northumberland County Council who will project manage the works. FORP transferred the sum of £24,000 as its contribution towards the new park entrance to Northumberland County Council in August 2024. By 30 September 2024, the commission award letter was prepared and waiting for finance panel final approval. All approvals for the project are now in place.</p> <p>FORP fundraising efforts for the park entrance continued through One Lottery ticket sales, bank interest and pavilion hire donations. This is to build up and ring fence a maintenance fund for this project which will substantially enhance and promote the park to the community. The park entrance has been driven forward by community involvement. It was designed by students from The Blyth Academy with the aim of giving young people pride in a local feature.</p> <p><b>Nature projects</b> This financial year saw the continuation of nature projects started during 2022 - 2023 (Asda funding of £400 received in the previous year) and the new projects undertaken upon receipt of Co-op funding (£1874.11) received in November 2023.</p> <p>Completed projects: bug hotel planting; purchase of two monkey puzzle trees and perennials, support for bird screen and nest boxes project, purchase of bat detector and garden tools, pollinator posters for the pavilion and bird screen poster of birds in the park were designed by members, one large bed of perennial plants purchased for an area near the rose garden.</p> <p>These have contributed to raising awareness of biodiversity to members and the general public by explaining the planting strategies in the park. The purchase of equipment has allowed</p>

		<p>members to participate more easily in nature activities within Ridley Park.</p> <p>With the remaining balance from the nature funding project, members have agreed to contribute £700 to a new wooden pergola in the rose garden and £160 for climbing roses. This is due to be completed late 2024.</p> <p><b>Picnic bench</b> A grant of £500 was received in 2022 - 2023 financial year from the Northumberland County Council to buy a picnic bench made of recycled materials with wheelchair access. A private donation was received to make up the balance of funding.</p> <p>This bench was installed in August 2024 and provides a wheelchair accessible picnic table for the general public. It is situated close to the toilets and entrance to the park. This bench replaces a wooden bench previously vandalised and makes good use of existing hardstanding.</p> <p><b>Other achievements</b> These relied on volunteer time and minimal or no financial input from FORP. Members bring a positive presence to the park to improve the park for all the community. Some members work together on creative projects, while others are active on engagement with groups in the wider community:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>JOBS IN THE PARK</b> (weekly session) Activities include litter picking, deadheading roses, bird-screen and pavilion maintenance, light gardening, window displays, nest box audit and report, RSPB bird survey, Blyth Rotary crocus planting for World Polio Day. Members provide a welcoming and positive presence in the park. Visitors frequently comment how beautiful and well-kept Ridley Park is and appreciate the activities carried out by the volunteers.</li> <li>• <b>FORP CONNECT</b> - 4 digital editions of the newsletter were produced. This helps charity trustees stay in touch with Ridley Park, especially those with an underlying health condition, living alone or socially isolated. The newsletter</li> </ul>
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		<p>started during COVID-19 and has continued to be well-received. It is also considered a valuable archive resource for FORP.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><b>BILL &amp; BEN FORP MASCOTS:</b> volunteers took them to the official opening of the new Co-op store in Blyth, the Easter event in Ridley Park and Blyth Town Pirate Carnival Parade. Bill &amp; Ben mascots are beautifully decorated throughout the year and provide a delightful link with the park's past. A member has produced a history book and timeline of Bill &amp; Ben for the general public to enjoy.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>CREATIVE PROJECTS</b> - Christmas tree decorations were handmade by members for the annual tree festival; Stained glass images of flora and fauna of the park were made for the pavilion windows as part of Blythfest. This has allowed the creative talent of members to come together and produce something for all the community to enjoy.</p> </li> <li> <p><b>PAVILION USE</b> - different groups and individuals from the wider community have used the space throughout the year. In addition, Blyth Town Council used the pavilion as a base during park events and Northumberland County Council used the pavilion for their Green Spaces team and first aid training sessions. The pavilion benefits from its location in a park and is suitable for a variety of community uses.</p> </li> </ul>
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Achievements against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	
Other		

## Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	<p>Expenditure continues to be carefully monitored. The bank balance has decreased substantially this year due to the payment of FORP's contribution of £24,000 to the new park entrance. Funding received for other specific projects has now been used and the projects either completed or remaining funds allocated.</p> <p>The insurance premium has increased year on year which can put pressure on cashflow for smaller projects and overheads.</p> <p>New income has been generated this year by an interest paying account linked to the current account.</p>
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	Friends of Ridley Park aim to hold £1000 in reserves as this will ensure we can cover our Public Liability insurance costs which continue to increase each year.
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	£1000.00
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)	Para 1.47	
Investment policy and objectives including any social investment policy adopted	Para 1.46	
A description of the principal risks facing the charity	Para 1.46	
Other		

## Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	Appointed by Charity Trustees of Friends of Ridley Park

### Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	Safeguarding Policy Data Protection Policy Health & Safety Policy Equality and Diversity Policy Volunteer Policy Social Media Policy
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	
Other		

## Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Friends of Ridley Park
Other name the charity uses	
Registered charity number	1177588
Charity's principal address	4 Park View Blyth NE24 3AY



**Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity**

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Fiona Gibson			Trustees of Friends of Ridley Park
2	John Young	Treasurer	November 2023 - present	Trustees of Friends of Ridley Park
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**Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved**

Director name		

**Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity**

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

## Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

### Additional information (optional)

#### Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

#### Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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## Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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## Other optional information

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## Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	Fiona Mary Gibson	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Trustee	
Date	27 November 2024	

# **FRIENDS OF RIDLEY PARK**

Wensleydale Terrace, Blyth, NE24 3HF

Charity Commission Number: 1177588

## **Statement of Accounts**

For the Year Ended

30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

**FRIENDS OF RIDLEY PARK**

Charity Commission Number: 1177588

**RECEIPTS & PAYMENTS ACCOUNT - YEAR ENDED 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024**Total Funds at 1st October 2023

29,719.68

**RECEIPTS**Donations

Donations - Pavilion Use	665.00	
Donations - One Lottery Prizes	384.72	
		1,049.72

Grants & Awards

Co-op Local Community Scheme	1,874.77	
		1,874.77

Other Receipts

Easy Fundraising Receipts	101.56	
One Lottery Ticket Sales Refunds	1,022.00	
Lloyds Bank Savings Account Interest	301.39	
		1,424.95

TOTAL RECEIVED DURING THE YEAR

4,349.44

34,069.12**PAYMENTS**Miscellaneous Project

Insurance - Combined Policy	388.50	
NCC - Gaming Licence for One Lottery	20.00	
Flowers for Member	41.50	
Gardening Equipment	14.75	
1st Aid Kit Refill	19.74	
Gift Voucher for Retiring Trustee	50.00	
Bill & Ben Maintenance	16.50	
Postages	1.95	
Craft Materials	20.00	
		572.94

Park Entrance Project

Contribution Towards NCC Park Entrance Costs		24,000.00
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Bird Screen & Nest Boxes Project

Bird Food	42.00	
Bird Screen Poster	18.00	
Nest Boxes Maintenance	9.00	
		69.00

Nature Project

Trees	48.00	
Bat Detector	78.99	
Garden Tools	34.00	
Posters	35.00	
Plants	928.85	
		1,124.84

Seating Project

NCC - Clifton Picnic Table		837.91
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TOTAL PAID DURING THE YEAR

26,604.69

Total Funds at 30th September 2024

7,464.43

34,069.12

## STATEMENT OF MEMBER'S FUNDS AS AT 30TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Assets & LiabilitiesAssets

Cash at Bank &amp; In Hand:

Balance at Lloyds Bank

7,450.36

Cash in Hand

14.07

Total Assets

7,464.43

Liabilities

Total Liabilities

0.00

7,464.43

Represented By:-

Member's Funds:

Miscellaneous Project

939.30

Park Entrance Project

5,174.22

Bird Screen &amp; Nest Boxes Project

413.66

Nature Project

875.16

Seating Project

62.09

7,464.43Signed on behalf of all Trustees:Signature

(Trustee)

Name

FIONA M GIBSON

Date

23/11/24

Signature

(Trustee)

Name

JOHN YOUNG

Date

23/11/24

# FRIENDS OF RIDLEY PARK

Accounts for the Year Ended 30<sup>th</sup> September 2024

## Independent Examiner's Report

Having examined the accounts of "Friends of Ridley Park", the receipts and payments are, to the best of my knowledge, a true and accurate record.

Signed: Joan A Dearden

Name: Joan Dearden

Date: 6/11/2024

Address: 27 FORSTER STREET  
BLYTH  
NORTHUMBERLAND  
NE24 3BG,

Phone: 07926 522553

Charity Commission Number: 1177588