

Friends of Handsworth Park

Charity Number: 1177786

{For Charitable Incorporated Organisation}

Trustees' Annual Report and Financial Statements for the Period 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

3rd November 2025

Reference & Administration Details

Charity name: Friends of Handsworth Park

Charity number: 1177786

Charity's operating address: Sons of Rest, Handsworth Park, Birmingham, B20 2BY

Names of the Charity Trustees who Manage the Charity

	Trustee Name	Office (if any)	Appointed	Retired
1	Theo Daniel		2.4.2025	
2	Surinder Guru	Treasurer	26.11.2022	
3	Kalpana Joshi		16.5.2022	
4	Karim Shah		16.5.2022	
5	Natascha Rohde	Secretary	26.11.2022	
6	Ed Freshwater		16.5.2022	
7	Eleanor Hoad		2.4.2025	
8	Mabowunje Harrison		2.4.2025	

Names & Addresses of Advisors

	Name	Address & Postcode
Bank:	Lloyds Bank, Box 1, BX1 1LT	

Structure, Governance & Management

Description of the Charity's Trusts

Type of Governing Document: Constitution

How the Charity is Constituted: Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Trustee Selection Methods: Trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting. Local people with an interest in the park are approached to join the committee.

How New Trustees are Inducted and Trained: Prospective trustees are asked to attend a meeting before they commit. They meet with the Chair who explains the history and the role of the charity.

Objectives & Activities

Summary of the Objects of the Charity as set out in its Governing Document

The objects of the CIO are for the benefit of the inhabitants of Handsworth and surrounding areas, 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 Handsworth Park.

Summary of the Main Activities Undertaken for the Public Benefit in Relation to the Charity's Objects

The charity organises events to educate and inform local people about the park and its benefits. It also manages the Community Garden which provides free gardening sessions and specialist workshops about fruit, vegetables and herbs.

FOHP also monitors the upkeep of the park by the Council and feeds back comments from local people to the Council Parks Team.

Achievements & Performance

Statutory Declaration

The trustees declare that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the commission in exercising their powers or duties.

Summary of the Main Achievements of the Charity for the Year – Chair's Report

FOHP Annual Report 2024-2025

2024 was a busy year for the Friends of Handsworth Park. We focussed on delivering activities in the park for local people in a range of ways.

Tea and Social, our weekly free community hot meal in the Sons of Rest building continued, celebrating 2 years of weekly delivery in 2024-2025. We were given an additional £4000 of funding from the Warm Welcome scheme which was used to buy ingredients, new furniture and kitchen equipment. Weekly around 60 people are fed and people from a diverse range of backgrounds attend. We have had several special lunches this year including our own Eden project "Big Lunch" in June, a summer picnic in the Community Garden, a visit by the Birmingham Opera Company, a Christmas singalong with Handsworth Community Choir in December and we even opened on Christmas Day and New Years Day.

Forest School weekly sessions led by Eleanor Hoad from Crafting Community continued on Wednesdays and were very well attended with a huge range of nature play activities offered. This project secured 2 years worth of funding from The National Lottery to continue into 2025-2026. There are plans for a feasibility study into the potential for this to run from the woodland adjoining the park in partnership with the Friends.

Our Handsworth Park Community garden continued to run weekly sessions on Fridays growing fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers. Our Wednesday women's sessions with Saheli Hub also restarted in 2024. Sadly, our sun guardian bear sculpture was damaged but will hopefully return repaired in 2025. We secured 2 years of funding (£12,300) for the gardening sessions and our weekly Tai Chi

sessions from The National Lottery Community Fund. This also funded a wonderful Autumn Celebration Day with a seed swap, nature crafts, music and food followed by a Lantern parade evening with Crafting Community. Lantern making workshops were held in the Sons of Rest building.

We were concerned to hear that 5 beds in the park were to be turfed over due to cuts at Birmingham City Council's Parks department. We negotiated with the city to get permission to take over these beds as wildflower meadows. These were dug and sown with wildflower seed in the autumn by Friends volunteers and were an amazing sight blooming this spring and summer well into autumn. The wildflowers should self-reseed and with a little top up should be blooming again this coming spring. Our guardianship of the Sons of Rest building continued in 2024 and 2025 with a wide range of groups using the building for community events and meetings. These have included: the Simmer Down festival green room, Self-directed learning community, The Handsworth Heeras, Queer art club, the Latvian Theatre Company, Bunny Breads graphic art workshops, Bike Rides for Palestine, Birmingham Tree People Training, Arts trail walks and workshops with Handsworth Creative- (school and home education), Share and Repair workshops, The Blossom Festival with art and music, Handsworth Creatives family fun day, the clothes swap and free clothes rail, Handsworth Hood Poetry nights and community cleaning days.

In the spring of 2024, we were excited to work with Black Heritage Walks Birmingham to install a new mural on the Sons of Rest to celebrate the life of local hero Benjamin Zephaniah after his untimely passing. Artist Bunny Bread created the mural and we hosted a very well attended launch event.

We have also hosted a guided mushroom walk in autumn and a bug walk in spring with Lukas Large, the curator for Natural Sciences at Birmingham Museums Trust in the park. Both events were so popular that we have already agreed with him to be back for 2025/26, dates pending.

We were sad to see that budget cuts lead to our park warden of 16 years, Umar Khan being redeployed. We have seen some more anti-social activity in the park since then, including some damage to artworks. We have also seen Head of Parks Joe Hayden retire and look forward to working with Simon Needle in his new Parks management role. We continue to try to engage in ongoing discussions about the future of the buildings in the park with Birmingham City Council and have launched a number of petitions in 2024 including one to try and save the lodge house following its abandonment and subsequent fire.

The polluted small lake was finally emptied and cleaned by Severn Trent this year, it shows improvement with still some way to go! The Handsworth Wellbeing centre had roof repairs completed and further building repairs added.

We congratulate the Cricket club on a great season and on winning the county play Off.

We are pleased to see the park being well used by the general public as well as a range of groups notably Makki FC football club and the regular TAWS cycling sessions with large annual events this year including Eid prayers and the Simmer Down festival, which some of our trustees attended in the name of FoHP.

Our thanks also go to the excellent park maintenance staff led by Mike Currie for

keeping the park in such great condition despite the budget cuts and challenges faced by Birmingham City Council.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to all our trustees, committee members and volunteers for their hard work in 2024 and 2025.

Financial Review

Brief Statement of the Charity's Policy on Reserves

The charity does not intend to build up reserves as there are no employees and no capital assets to maintain.

Details of Any Funds Materially in Deficit

None

Statutory Notes to the Accounts

Particulars of Any Outstanding Guarantee Given by the CIO

Particulars of Any Outstanding Debt

Declaration

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report and the Annual Accounts.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees

Signature(s):



Full Name(s):


Natascha Rohde

Position(s):

trustee

Date:

3rd November 2025

 CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES	Friends of Handsworth Park		1177786		CC16a
	Receipts and payments accounts				
	For the period from	01/04/24	To	31/03/25	
Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestrict ed funds	Restricted funds	Endowme nt funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
BCC (Tea & Social)		5000		5,000	11614
BCC Community Garden					1260
Birmingham Open Spaces Forum	110			110	80
ARRAG	50			50	
Handsworth Creative					50
The National Lottery Fund		12300		12,300	
Make Good Arts	100			100	
Donation					167
BVSC					200
Crafting Communities					200
Latvian Cultural	440			440	
Sub total(Gross income for AR)	700	17,300	-	18,000	13,571
A2 Asset and investment sales.					
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	700	17,300	-	18,000	13,571

A3 Payments					
Community Garden		4199		4,199	2,169
Soho Rd Bid CIC		8352		8,352	2,763
Tai Chi		1785		1,785	1,575
Cinema				-	16
Forest School				-	1,120
Tea and Social		2921		2,921	2,172
Bench, tables, mural and sundries	1616			1,616	
Crafting Communities		2000		2,000	
BCC licence				-	70
Sub total	1,616	19,256	-	20,872	9,885
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	
Total payments	1,616	19,256	-	20,872	9,885
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 916	- 1,956	-	- 2,872	3,686
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	1649	17044	-	18,693	15,007
Cash funds this year end	733	15,088	-	15,821	18,693

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period				
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
		to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash in bank	733	15088	
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	733	15,088	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
		Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds
	Details	to nearest £	to nearest £	to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
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 liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities				