



Chair's Report 2021

The Heritage Lottery Fund works continued on the regeneration of the park, although progress was hampered by covid-19 affecting both the contractor's staff, TDC staff and our trustee board.

Unfortunately, due to the amount of plant and machinery moving around within the park between 20/9/20 and 19/9/21, the Friends were unable to offer any events, workshops, or public engagement on site. The social gathering on Thursdays continued, but at a separate venue.

Our treasurer also had issues opening a bank account for the CIO, which was eventually achieved on 19/09/21. Up to that time, we continued using the Friends of Ellington Park community account for financial activity.

It was agreed by the board that the café [built under the auspices of the HLF project] would be registered as a not-for-profit limited company, with all profits being given to the CIO at the end of the first financial year. The café was handed over to the Friends of Ellington Park in mid-July 21 and started operating on the 5th of August.

Funds held in the community account were transferred to the Café account as items had to be purchased to enable the operating of the café and at that time, the expenditure was unknown. After the setup was almost complete, the café transferred an initial £8,000 to the CIO to ensure it was able to operate financially.

Events and workshops started quickly, despite there still being some building works being finished off. The Festival of Sound held three events in the park, and we held a Ukulele demonstration and workshop. This was followed by a Halloween children's event and a Christmas Fayre. Both the latter events both attracted large numbers of attendees and raised funds for the CIO.

Two staff (job sharing managers) are employed in the café, with all other roles are covered by a bank of volunteers who work one or two half-day shifts, six days per week. The café was very busy from the first, and is very popular with local residents. Three groups use the café weekly and local community groups use the café space in the evenings for meetings [at no cost to them].

The Friends are recruiting an employed Activity Officer (paid for by the HLF project) who will be organising workshops and activities until December 2023.

At this date, it is impossible to predict how covid-19 will affect both the CIO and café business, but we are hopeful things will return to normal and that our endeavours will not be disrupted in any major way. Thus, we remain hopeful that we will meet all our Aims and Objectives for many years to come.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "B. Perkins", is placed on a light blue rectangular background.

Beverley Perkins
Chair of the Friends of Ellington Park