



Charity No 1185399

Friends of Ellington Park CIO - 1185399

Report March 2021 – February 2022

Our previous report advised that Ellington Park was undergoing major refurbishment and building works after being awarded a National Heritage Lottery Fund (NHLF), in partnership with our local council (the landowners).

This work is still continuing with the build of the new café and facilities and renovation work to the historic assets of the park such as the Bandstand and terrace area, as well as planting of new trees and plants.

During this time we have been unable to hold events or fund raising activities in the park as we were unsure of how long these works, and also the covid restrictions, would be ongoing for. During this time we also decided not to ask for membership subscriptions as we were unsure of when we would be able to start doing things again plus we were aware that some people were having financial issues during the lockdowns. This is why previous entry advised £0 for income and outgoings although we had the accumulated funds of approx £18k from the 8 years as the original Community Group (before we became a charity).

The original NHLF plans were modified re covid, supply issues and ever increasing costs. This affected some of our plans for additional amenities such as updating our shed area to make it more accessible for gardening groups and storage, additional planting to the wildlife area, expansion of our second-hand book shop so that volunteers do not have to carry the stock in and out each time it is open and also the long-term aim to raise funding for children's specialist play area equipment.

In addition, the budget paid by the NHLF for an Activity Officer (A/O who was appointed in October 2021), to work on our behalf to encourage local groups, schools and the wider community to use the park and café for their wellbeing and educational workshops was drastically reduced which has had a knock-on effect as to the amount and level of activities that can be arranged due to what funds are available but we have been very lucky that many specialists/creative artists/performers have offered their services at reduced rates or even for free.

The pandemic greatly delayed the completion and opening of the new café and facilities until the beginning of August 2021 but since its opening it has been well supported. It has some paid staff and a core of reliable volunteers. It is open 6 days a week selling hot

and cold food and drinks. In conjunction with FoEP and the A/O there are several groups of various backgrounds, ages and abilities that are using the café regularly and we are hopeful this will continue to develop as we work towards achieving our aims and objectives.

Originally there were delays by the bank with opening a new account for the charity which was finally resolved in September 2021. In the interim the funds that were held by FoEP when we were a Community Group were paid into the café account as we needed to start paying overheads and also to purchase additional equipment for the café to enable operating. The café has started to repay these funds to the CIO (£8k in Nov 2021). Once the cafe has been trading for a year (in August 2022), we can discuss the transfer of profits over to the CIO in line with the National Heritage Lottery project aims. The CIO and café are separate legal entities but currently have an overlap with CIO trustees also being directors of the cafe so as to work together towards these objectives.

Once the FoEP was able to start organising events again to help with fund raising we had our first Halloween Party in October 2021 and Christmas Fayre in December 2021 which were both well attended and we hope to make them annual events.

In February 2022 we started work on the wildlife area with a dedicated group of volunteers and a paid professional horticulturalist to do maintenance work and expand the area to include additional trees (including sponsored fruit trees), and a wild flower meadow. We were also aware of the work to be done to help support our application for a Green Flag award.

Going forward in 2022 we have the following events planned: Easter Fun Day, World Bee Day (with a presentation from our local beekeepers' association), the return after two years of our largest event the May Fayre, Queen's Jubilee celebrations and other events working with local groups including mental health awareness days to encourage people to come and enjoy our beautiful park and to show there are many organisations that can offer support and advice. Once the weather improves we will be able to open our book shop again (usually from April – October, weather permitting).

In addition to the future events planned we have now also begun collecting membership fees again and producing our regular newsletters. Excepting any further covid restrictions, we feel confident that we will have a busy and productive rest of the year.

Julie Wing

Treasurer Friends of Ellington Park

FRIENDS OF ELLINGTON PARK

INCOME SUMMARY March 2021 - February 2022

For Charity Commission Report

2021	Receipts	Payments	Balance
March	£62.00	£0.00	
April	£67.50	£282.84	
May	£40.00	£438.00	
June	£137.50	£5,040.00	
July	£32.00	£0.00	
August	£637.32	£0.00	
September	£438.07	£0.00	Move to CIO a/c
October	£3,286.17	£624.87	
November	£14,459.82	£1,216.69	
December	£1,713.00	£84.66	
Total 2021	£20,873.38	£7,687.06	£13,186.32
2022			
January	£1,070.50	£1,543.29	
February	£583.06	£2,472.37	
Total 2022	£1,653.56	£4,015.66	£-2,362.10
Total 2021 + 2022	£22,526.94	£4,015.66	£18,511.28

<u>Less ring fenced:</u>			
Nov 21-Feb 22	£5,950.00	£1,950.00	1st payment. National Lottery funding for Activity Officer
Total less ring fenced	£16,576.94	£2,065.66	£14,511.28