

Friends of Ellington Park CIO – 1185399

(Referred to variously as “the Charity”, “the Friends”, “FoEP” “CIO” hereafter)

Report January – December 2024

Previous reports have 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 was due to be completed by December 2023 but a few parts were still in progress and the final sign off by the NHLF was in March this year. At this point the contract with the Lottery-funded Activity Officer (A/O) was due to end but there are some funds remaining and she has advised that she is keen to continue working with the Friends on a voluntary basis.

The NHLF project has certainly had a very positive impact on the park and its users and it is at once noticeable that there has been an increase in daily visitors to the park to enjoy nature, exercise, dog walk etc. but also now to use the café and the new children’s play area.

In conjunction with FoEP and the A/O there are several groups of various backgrounds, ages and abilities that are using the café and park regularly and this has continued to build over the last year.

The A/O has liaised with many specialists/creative artists/performers that have offered their services at reduced rates or even for free! These contacts continue to grow and we have enabled regular presentations such as local history talks, archeology, tree and nature walks, local author readings and book signings, choirs, painting and crafting sessions etc. to take place in the park.

We are proud to announce that Ellington Park retained the prestigious Green Flag award and also Green Heritage Site accreditation for a third year – making it the only park in our district to have received these accolades. We are most grateful to all of our hardworking volunteers who help to maintain the park to keep it at its best. Two of our trustees were accompanied by two local councillors to the awards ceremony in London, which helped to highlight what a prestigious award this is and to encourage other green spaces in our area to go in for it. See additional info below.

In 2024 we held the following events: Easter Fun Day, Family Picnic in the Park for families to come and enjoy the park and listen to music on the bandstand, Young Minds Wellness day which was attended by many charities and organisations providing help and advice for young people and their families, in September, as part of the annual English Heritage Open Days, we had a display detailing the history of the park. Unfortunately, we were unable to arrange our largest annual event, the May Fayre, which brings in a lot of income via stall fees and donations so this has had an impact on our receipts this year. We hope that we will be able to return to arranging this popular event again next year.

Our A/O traced a local historian who researched the history of the park and produced scripts and also made outfits for a new costumed walk. This is all performed by volunteers – the Ellington Park Players - and they were able to do three walks during the summer when the weather permitted. They hope to expand next year and possibly do some indoor slide show presentations.

Also, after many years of support, our membership secretary retired and so we no longer have a regular income from this, although many long-term supporters still pay.

Therefore, this year our main income was from our second-hand book shop which is run solely by volunteers with all the books being donated so all of the profit goes directly to the Charity. This is an important community asset and we continue to have discussions with the local Council (who is the landowner), on how we can expand the space so that the stock doesn't need to be carried in and out each time and we can be open all-year and not be weather dependent.

The Charity's free reserves at the end of the reporting period was £28,637. From this we need to ring fence a certain amount for necessary expenses including the annual contract for the defibrillator, website support, insurance and other professional fees along with the costs involved to support events and activities in the park such as portaloos, first aiders, the entertainment etc. which for this year were £7367.

We also need to build the Charity's resilience to enable it to further its objectives now that the NHLF project is complete.

We have helped enable other charities and community organisations, to host events in the park including: those that attend the mental health awareness day; the Power of Women Festival who held a family fun day for International Women's Day, the Pan European Choir which brought singers from several countries together to perform on the bandstand and Festival of Sound who put on a family fun day and evening cabaret. Local schools regularly come for nature walks and some have also set up litter picking sessions. We have helped many young people achieve their Duke of Edinburgh awards through volunteering activities within the park.

We were able to fund additional equipment for the children's play area (at approx £3500), and have plans to refurbish the old play area so that it will encourage more use. At the end of the year we were pleased to have been awarded a grant of £2000 from the local Community Lotto fund and this is to go towards developing a seated garden area next to the café with views looking across the park.

We are always trying to attract new trustees which can be difficult, as it appears to be for many charities. Many of the original group that came together and helped with the NHLF bid and have been supportive from the beginning have now stepped down. We are keen to attract possible new trustees with various expertise ranging from administrative skills for all the behind the scenes paperwork, event organisation, nature and gardening knowledge and working with volunteers etc. We are extremely grateful that one of our long-standing volunteers with a wealth of experience has provided the Charity with solid advice and guidance.

The board is working on plans for the future to further enhance the enjoyment of and involvement with the park for the whole community and we very much appreciate all of the hard work and support we receive from volunteers and our local town and district councils. We look forward to building on this for 2025.

Treasurer

Friends of Ellington Park CIO

Taken from the Council press release for Green Flag award July 2024

Ellington Park wins a prestigious Green Flag Award® for the third year

Ellington Park has been awarded a prestigious Green Flag Award® for the third year running. The Green Flag Award® scheme recognises and rewards well-managed parks and green spaces. It sets the standard for the management of recreational outdoor spaces across the United Kingdom and around the world.

Ellington Park has also achieved the Green Heritage Site Accreditation, supported by Historic England, for the management and promotion of its historic features.

In 2021 Ellington Park was restored by a partnership between The Friends of Ellington Park and the local District Council. The National Lottery Heritage Fund supported the restoration with £1.8million from its 'Parks for People' programme.

The project was a sympathetic regeneration of the park, ensuring its important heritage remained at its heart. The park features a multipurpose café and toilet building, along with a children's playground. The park's historic pathways, flint terrace and balustrade were restored, as was the 120-year-old bandstand.

Local Councillor and Council Cabinet Member for Cleansing and Coastal Services said, "For the third year running, Ellington Park has received a Green Flag Award, which is fantastic news. The ongoing recognition of the park's high standards is down to the hard work and dedication of council officers, the Friends of Ellington Park, and the brilliant community volunteers who keep it looking at its best. Ellington Park is a fabulous asset to the local area, and it's great that each year we see it going from strength to strength."

The Friends of Ellington Park said, "We are delighted that Ellington Park has received a Green Flag Award, for the third year. It is an amazing achievement and recognises the commitment that goes into making the park a beautiful open space for everyone to enjoy."

Commenting on the announcement of this year's winners, **Keep Britain Tidy's Green Flag Award Scheme Manager** said: "I would like to congratulate everyone involved at Ellington Park on achieving a Green Flag Award.

"Ellington Park is a vital green space for communities to socialise, enjoy nature, for children to play safely and it provides important opportunities for park users to improve their physical and mental health.

"We know that staff and volunteers work tirelessly to ensure that it maintains the high standards of the Green Flag Award, everyone involved should feel extremely proud of their Achievement.

"It is important that our free to use spaces are maintained to the Green Flag Award standard, making them accessible for all members of the community while ensuring the environment is protected."

Ellington Park

Ellington Park really is the perfect place to be during the fine summer months.



Just relax and enjoy the beautiful space, play in the children's areas, walk through the wildlife area, browse at the bookshop (which is open now until October – Saturday and Wednesday 12noon – 4pm, weather permitting), or take refreshments at the café (open Tuesday – Sunday 10am – 4pm).



We were so pleased that one of the Ramsgate Ravens stopped off on the trail to visit us. As part of The Ramsgate Cultural Programme eight raven sculptures were decorated with designs by local youth organisations and located about the town.

Have you seen them all yet? Ours is called 'Wildflower' and was designed by Liberty Training whose students regularly help in the park and the café.



Working with the Open Spaces Team at Thanet District Council, we have been able to provide funds for some new equipment in the children's area - two 'springers' made from sustainable Robinia wood, which have now been installed and being enjoyed by younger children.

There are other areas in the park including the old children's area, the garden space next to the café and the ongoing development of the wildlife area that we are also in discussion about.

LOOK OUT FOR BUMB-ELLI BEE!

A group of our volunteers have formed The Elli Park Players and co-ordinated by a local historian who has researched, written and even made the costumes, have devised a costumed walk about the history of the park introducing many characters associated with it during the ages.



Please look out for details of the dates and booking information for the walks and presentations.

We hope that many of you have attended and enjoyed the various events put on in the park so far this year by the Friends, the Café team and other local organisations including Power of Women Family Day, Easter Trail, May Fayre, Pan European Choir with singers coming from several countries to perform on the bandstand, Picnic in the Park, Young Minds Wellness Information and support day and the ever popular Festival of Sound.



The next event is part of English Heritage's Open Days, and we will be in the park on Sunday September 8, 11am - 3pm, sharing information about the history and heritage of the park with a chance to meet our costumed characters.

ALL EVENTS ARE FREE TO ENTER AND EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

This year the miniature steam railway had to close for some essential repairs and we hope

that these have now been completed and the trains are running again. For more information, please contact Ramsgate and District Model Engineering Club at www.radmec.co.uk

As always, none of this is possible without the hard work of an amazing group of volunteers who work in the park, bookshop, café, at events and behind the scenes and we have some young people's groups who have kindly done litter picking and planting from Priory Infants School Eco-Team, Liberty Training and Pie Factory plus many doing their Duke of Edinburgh awards. A HUGE thank-you to everyone for helping to make Ellington Park the beautiful, welcoming place it is!

For further information or to get involved please contact us on friendsofellingtonpark@gmail.com or see our Facebook pages and website: www.ellingtonpark.org.uk

For the café see their Facebook page or website: www.ellingtoncafe.co.uk

Written by: The Friends of Ellington Park CIO



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name

The Friends of Ellington Park CIO

No (if any)

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

Period start date
01/01/2024

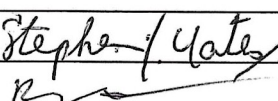

To

Period end date
31/12/2024

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					
TDC Funding - for Salary	-	-	-	-	17,700
RTC Grant - for Petanque Court	-	-	-	-	-
Bookshop Sales	5,805	-	-	5,805	7,426
Profit from Café	-	-	-	-	-
Loan repaid from Cafe	-	-	-	-	-
Community Events	1,097	-	-	1,097	6,602
TDC Community Lotto Fund - for Friends Garden	-	2,000	-	2,000	-
Subscriptions & Donations	355	-	-	355	1,788
Other Income	146	-	-	146	40
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	7,403	2,000	-	9,403	33,556
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	7,403	2,000	-	9,403	33,556
A3 Payments					
Salary to Activity Officer	-	6,520	-	6,520	12,542
Admin Costs	1,221	-	-	1,221	1,629
Accountancy	540	-	-	540	540
Wildlife Garden Expenses	-	93	-	93	1,093
Community Events	3,238	-	-	3,238	6,720
Workshop	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance	1,436	-	-	1,436	1,394
Defibrillator Rental	456	-	-	456	438
Property Maintenance	336	-	-	336	1,547
Annual Inspection	134	-	-	134	-
Kent Bat Group Membership	6	-	-	6	-
Training Expenses	-	-	-	-	410
Refund to RTC - Grant not used	-	2,626	-	2,626	-
Sub total	7,367	9,239	-	16,606	26,313
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Playground Equipment	3,336			3,336	
Two Printers	-	-	-	-	129
Cabinet for Defibrillator	-	-	-	-	752
Improvements to Notice Board	-	-	-	-	250
Sub total	3,336	-	-	3,336	1,131
Total payments	10,703	9,239	-	19,942	28,309
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 3,300	- 7,239	-	- 10,539	7,243
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	31,937 #	11,704	-	43,641	36,398
Cash funds this year end	28,637	4,465	-	33,102	43,641

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 Balance	28,497	4,465	-
	Cash Held	140	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	28,637	4,465	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK
B2 Other monetary assets	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds 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)
	Accountancy Fee	unrestricted	540	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees		Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		 	STEPHEN YATES REBECCA BULLIVANT	18/9/25 18/9/25