

Item 3.

THE FRIENDS OF THE SCRUBS

Registered Charity Number 1187120

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

25 June 2024

Abbreviations used in this Report

"The Friends" the Friends of the Scrubs

"HS2" High Speed Rail Network 2

"LCS" Linford Christie Stadium

"LBHF" London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, also "the Council"

"OPDC" Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation

"WSCT" Wormwood Scrubs Charitable Trust

The Trustees (* Elected AGM 4 May 2023)

Stephen Waley-Cohen , Chairman (SW-C)

Smita Dave, Treasurer (SD)

Carmel McLoughlin, Secretary (CM) *

Sarah Johnson *

Faye Thomas (FT)

Ben Novak

Jack Perschke (resigned during the year)

Emma Ranson

Sarah Abrahart *

Joaquim Pereira (co-opted during the year)

Meetings (CM)

The Trustees have met several times during the year to deal with a variety of issues and the Minutes of those meetings are available on the Friends' website www.friendsofthescrubs.uk and are mostly summarised in this Report. In addition to multiple submissions to OPDC and LBHF and participating in all WSCT meetings by our two co-opted trustees SW-C and FT, the Trustees have had multiple contacts with Councillors and Officers on behalf of FOWWS to help ensure the proper management and protection of the Scrubs.

WSCT Committee

The WSCT exists to ensure that this much valued area of open space is used for the exercise and recreation of Londoners. The affairs of the Trust are managed by the

WSCT Committee currently chaired by Councillor Alexandra Sanderson. There are 5 members of the WSCT Committee – 3 voting members and 2 non-voting members, SW-C and FT, who are both trustees of the Friends charity. One or both of our representatives have attended all meetings. We also provide summaries of the meetings of the WSCT on our website. The financial position of WSCT is quite healthy, due to the continuing income from the Kensington Aldridge Academy facilities on site, and the significantly lower maintenance and management contract cost.

HS2 Works

As was reported last year, the relocation of the Stamford Brook Sewer works were completed by HS2 in 2022 and the reinstated land was handed back to LBHF in Summer 2023. The UTX site will remain with HS2 until completion of the Old Oak Common Station. HS2 reassured LBHF and us that they would return the land once they'd completed their work, with no money changing hands for its purchase or return. However, it has proved impossible to get HS2 to put these assurances in any legal form. In late 2023 HS2 requested additional access to a strip of land 30m x 5m adjacent to the UTX site, which necessitated a licence from the WSCT. It was unanimously agreed at the WSCT December 2023 meeting, with strong support from FT and SWC, that this request should be used to encourage HS2 to focus on finalising the legal agreement for the return of the UTX site. This was also the position with the HS2 undertaking of Soil Resistivity testing, using the Scrubs as having very similar soil structure to below the station, and although there seems to be little reason to object to permitting this, it was agreed it should be used as leverage for the satisfactory completion of the legal agreement on the return to WSCT of the UTX site. It would appear that progress has now been made on this and a satisfactory situation has been agreed subject to review on completion of the station.

In February we became aware of a new document from OPDC/HS2 consultants Mott MacDonald about pedestrian and cycle routes to the new Station, which is of some importance given the great length of time it seems likely to be the London terminus for HS2, inter-connecting with the Elizabeth Line. There are plans for an Eastern Access Route, from Scrubs Lane, entirely north of the Scrubs, but also references to a Southern Access Route, with a bridge over the railways just east of the embankment and running between the central copse and the football fields down to the north-west corner of Linford Christie Stadium. We have ALWAYS opposed any such route, because of the damage that large numbers of walkers or cyclists, not there because of the Scrubs, might do to the 'more wild than tamed' nature of the Scrubs. The (slightly) better news is that the rationale for such a route is the possible development of LCS into a football or entertainment venue, projects which we believe (and hope) now seem unlikely; we are continuing our efforts to achieve formal confirmation from LBHF/WSCT that these are no longer realistic possibilities.

Wormwood Scrubs Ecological Masterplan

This is the plan for the immediate future of the Scrubs and is funded by HS2 under their agreement with LBHF. It includes funds for a ten-year management plan which will also cover existing woodland and meadow land areas. Some of the works to be carried out require planning permission from the OPDC (the planning authority for the Scrubs, except for Linford Christie Stadium). A planning application was submitted in March by LBHF to the OPDC and is yet to be determined and is currently scheduled for consideration by OPDC on July 31st. The Trustees presented several suggestions for improvements to the Masterplan some of which were not accepted. These included moving the pond from the open area north of the prison, which will require a borehole and considerable management if it is to avoid becoming a semi-derelict unusable eyesore and placing it in the northwest corner, traditionally a wet area. The trustees also suggested the hardstanding adjacent to the pond was excessive; better design and locations for the swales; and fewer hard paths. These were not accepted and have not been included in the Masterplan planning application submitted. As a result, the trustees have - with valuable help from our ecology adviser Tilly Collins and planning adviser Henry Peterson - submitted formal objections to the application to the OPDC and expressed their views to the officers and councillors at LBHF who sit on the WSCT. This can be seen on our website. The Friends have also been encouraged to object if they agree with us or have other objections; many of you have done so, and those who have not yet written are encouraged to do so now, to planningapplications@opdc.london.gov.uk before July 31st.

Grounds Maintenance

The contract for GM at Wormwood Scrubs has been in place since 1st February 2022. It is a specific contract for the Scrubs and Id Verde are the contractor. As part of the Id Verde team, Kate McVay is the Ecology Manager. She has been actively engaging with stakeholders and volunteers on ecological improvements over the last year to increase biodiversity at Wormwood Scrubs. She has led volunteer groups in hedgelaying, litter picking and scrub/bramble clearance late last year and early this year. There was a flurry of activity in Jan/Feb when, due to underperformance by Id Verde in meeting the contract requirements for scrub/bramble clearance on the Scrubs in the first 2 years of the contract, LBHF engaged contractors to carry out works prior to the start of ground-nesting season and the trustees engaged with the WSCT Trust manager, Osama El-Amin, for proper management of these works, some of which were not well executed including damage to the recently built hedge between the meadow and the model airplane field. Several Trustees of the Friends and representatives of Id Verde and LBHF have met during the last year to discuss the work programme and how to achieve the best for the Scrubs through the GM contract.

LNR designation of the Meadow

The central grassland (meadow) was not within the Scrubs LNR and some time ago the Trustees made a formal request for LBHF to pursue this. We are pleased to report that there has been progress. A submission has been made to Natural England and a period of consultation recently ended. FT queried the status of the LNR at the

WSCT meeting in March. it was confirmed that the designation has been delayed deliberately, to ensure that when granted, this designation could be properly managed, with two elements highlighted – firstly the ability of Id Verde to fulfil their necessary responsibilities, given that they were only just doing so at present, and, secondly, the willingness of certain users to accept requests to show respect for the needs of the new LNR, particularly professional dog-walkers in terms of both the numbers of dogs being walked and their ability to control them. It was noted that despite the best efforts of the Law Enforcement Team, a number of professional dog-walkers disregarded the terms of the PSPO (see below) limiting to 4 the number of dogs permitted to be in a group, regardless of the number of dog-walkers accompanying them. **The timing of the LNR application is likely to be reviewed in the autumn.** The designation should assist with its protection at sensitive times, such as bird nesting/breeding season (Feb-August).

Baseline Survey and Scrubs Watch

One of the initiatives encouraged by the Friends was to have a greater understanding of what is on the Scrubs including the flora and fauna, and this led WSCT to commission a Baseline survey, led by Kate McVay of IdVerde and RSPB. **The Survey was published towards the end of May and is available on the Friends website.** This work will be crucial in developing the way in which the Masterplan works are implemented.

LCS

The Friends submitted a formal proposal early last year for the future of LCS. This has encouraged LBHF and WSCT to undertake properly planned, comprehensive and unified approach to modernising the facilities provided within LCS to the benefit of all residents of LBHF and its neighbouring boroughs at a time when formal and informal leisure and sporting activities are of prime importance to well-being, particularly as new property developments continue to bring new residents on all sides of the Scrubs and with them, new pressures on the 'more wild than tamed' essence of the non LCS parts of the Scrubs. These works are now underway on the track and lighting replacement, later for the demolition of the changing rooms and temporary portacabin replacement. Track replacement will begin after Thames Valley Harriers final athletics fixture on 14 July and is expected to take 4-6 weeks. FOWWS Trustees believe that this is the right way forward for LCS to fulfil LCS purposes, the objectives set out in the Wormwood Scrubs Act of Parliament, and to protect LCS, and the Scrubs, from any future inappropriate over-development.

Meanwhile the planned works by Kensington Dragons on the pitches at LCS is paused whilst LBHF decide on funding available and the configuration of their pitches.

Discussions around improvements by TVH to their clubhouse to provide a café and toilet facilities have paused. There may be public toilet facilities provided as part of

the portacabin replacement for the changing rooms, and WSCT has approved plans to trial a coffee van facility.

Your trustees are supportive of other community use options including an ecology education centre.

PSPO

A Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) was introduced by LBHF on the Scrubs in the Autumn last year. This primarily deals with the control of dogs and dog walking on the Scrubs. The PSPO is enforced by the LET on the Scrubs but there continues to be flagrant breaches particularly by professional dog walkers, whether walking together, with more than four dogs, and poor control of the dogs.

Dog Show

On Sunday 30th July 2023 our second Dog Show was held on the Scrubs and again was a huge success despite worsening weather throughout the day! Local businesses got involved in sponsoring the event, and there was a great response from the local community with good entries for every category and great prizes available. We also had a dance display and food stalls, etc. It will be held again this year on Sunday 28th July, and has received a grant from WSCT towards the costs. This looks like becoming an annual event!

Finances (SD)

Membership of the Friends continues to be free for all to join. Many activities are organised or promoted for the members and these include bird watching, butterfly searches and walks. All are encouraged to participate in the maintenance of records of flora and fauna. Our constant aim is to protect the Scrubs as 'more wild than tamed' and to promote a greater understanding of the Scrubs, its rich biodiversity and history to help maintain the precious wilderness and woods as well as sports grounds for all to enjoy. Donations raised are used for website hosting and ongoing printing costs of posters and notices to promote activities and events.

A second dog show, following in the footsteps of the first one organised by Fowws last year took place in July 2023 and this was a great success in spite of much rain!

Local arts community took part in dance performances, Councillors Alex Sanderson and Wesley Harcourt as well as the Rt Hon Andy Slaughter MP were present to award prizes for the dogs. We gained some more members and some funds were raised at this event via ticket sales and donations.

Donations were also made via Just Giving website set up in 2021:
<https://www.justgiving.com/friendsofthescrubs>.

The Friends is registered as a charity with HMRC allowing tax on donations to be claimed back through gift aid.

The Charity has funds of £9,188 as of 5th April 2024. Total outgoings for the year are £1,743.00 which included ongoing costs as well insurance and other costs for the organisation of the dog show.

Donations raised amounted to £1,046.40, which included a generous amount from a trustee for the amount of £400. Gift aid received via JustGiving was £31.40.

The Friends remain grateful for all donations.

Opening bank balance: £9,593.72

Total Income incl gift aid: £1,338.20

Total outgoings: £1,743.00

Closing bank Balance: £9,188.92

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature Name Secretary/Chair Date



Receipts and payments accounts

For the period from	Period start date 06/04/2023	To	Period end date 05/04/2024
------------------------	---------------------------------	----	-------------------------------

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					
Donations incl gift aid	1,046	-	-	1,046	-
		-	-	-	-
Cash sales for dog show	292	-	-	292	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	1,338	-	-	1,338	-
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	1,338	-	-	1,338	-
A3 Payments					
	-	-	-	-	-
Dog show costs refunded	1,356	-	-	1,356	-
refunds for trustee costs	80	-	-	80	-
donation to Mayhew Dogs charity	150	-	-	150	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Insurance	157	-	-	157	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	1,743	-	-	1,743	-
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	1,743	-	-	1,743	-
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 405	-	-	- 405	-
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	- 405	-	-	- 405	-

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	current bank balance	9,189	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	9,189	-	-

(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))

Agreement Error

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)
	-	
	-	
	-	
	-	
	-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature

Print Name

Date of approval
