

Richmond Walking and Book Festival

Charity Commission Annual Review 2022

This review is the annual report that the Trustees of Richmond Walking and Book Festival are legally required to make to the Charity Commission. It covers the period 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022.

Governance

Richmond Walking and Book Festival (the Trust) is a charitable incorporated organisation with limited liability. The Trust's only voting members are its charity trustees (foundation model constitution). It is governed by its constitution and was registered as a charity by the Charity Commission for England and Wales on 7 October 2020 – registration number 1191688. The Trust's registered office is:

17 New Road
Richmond
DL10 4QS

Objectives and Activities

The objects of the Trust are:

- (1) The advancement of education in the arts for the public benefit, in particular the art of literature, by the provision of an annual book festival in and around Richmond, North Yorkshire.
- (2) The promotion of community participation in healthy recreation by providing guided walks with the aim of offering opportunities for exercise and access to the countryside, local history, the physical and natural environment, flora and fauna through the medium of an annual walking festival in and around Richmond, North Yorkshire.

Public Benefit Statement

The objectives of the Trust are set out above. The Trust has fulfilled these objectives by providing a walking and book festival from 16th to 25th September 2022 plus a small number of events outside of this period. In making decisions and exercising its powers the Trust has had due regard to the Charity Commission Guidance on Public Benefit.

Organisation

The Trust is managed by a Board comprising all of the Trustees. Some operational decisions are delegated to subgroups for walks, book events, and marketing. The Board of Trustees is assisted in its roles by some volunteers but there are no paid employees. It is estimated that over 50 people helped with the 2022 Festival.

Friends and Supporters

The only members of the Trust are the Trustees. The Trust has a Friends scheme but Friends have no voting rights. There are currently 51 Friends (2021 – 36) including 4 Friends for life and 8 Trustees. We have a supporters email list of 467 (388 in 2021) people.

The Trustees

The Trust constitution requires that there should be a minimum of three trustees. There were eight trustees during the year and at the year-end.

Barbara Gravenor	Chair
Susan Young	Book Events Subgroup
Geoff Wall	Walk Coordinator
Jane McLennan	Minute Secretary & Book Events Subgroup
Brian Benson	Walk Subgroup
Judith Clark	Book Events Subgroup
James Gravenor	Treasurer & Book Events Coordinator
Karen Wyndham-Webb	Sponsorship & Friends Coordinator

Links to other organisations

The Trust has no formal partnerships with other organisations but maintains close links with Richmond Town Council, a number of non-profit making bodies, providers of venues and accommodation, local businesses and local schools. The Trust is a member of Original Richmond Business and Tourism Association and is affiliated to the Swaledale Outdoor Club.

Risk Management

The Trust identified a number of risks in providing both guided walks and book events and reviewed these risks during the year and implemented appropriate measures to reduce and manage those risks. The Trust also took out relevant insurance.

The 2022 Festival

The Walking & Book Festival 2022 ran from the 16th to 25th September. There were book events outside of this period on February 4th and October 14th. The Festival was a success judged both financially and by the respondents to a survey we conducted: 100% of those who responded said they would recommend the Festival to a friend. Customer comments were overwhelmingly positive. 335 people participated in the 24 walks provided and 790 tickets were issued for 15 book events. 2 children book events were cancelled because of lack of sales and 4 walks and 2 book events were cancelled because of the national day of mourning for the Queen. The Festival also included a celebration of children's writing which was displayed in Richmond Library. The strong partnership with Richmond School continued with school pupils previewing and reviewing talks and producing posters. Free tickets were given to some pupils. We were able to secure funding from Richmondshire District Council to support the Festival. We offered a 50% reduction on the ticket price for people on income related benefits or in full time education or accompanying carers, for all walks and for book events. Excluding Georgian Theatre Royal events 48 concessionary tickets were sold (compared to 19 in 2021).

The Speakers

Feedback from the speakers who gave talks at the Festival was very positive.

Independent Review of Educational Content of Festival

The Trust commissioned an independent review of the Educational content of the Festival from Delphine Ruston, former Head of English at Richmond School and Sixth Form College. This review is attached in full as appendix 1 to this report.

Finances

In 2022 sponsorship and advertising income paid for the promotion costs. The walking events produced a surplus of £644 after donations were made to the National Trust, the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust and the Ramblers. The book events produced a surplus of £3,676 after donations to Richmondshire Refugee Support Group and the Buzz Project in Huddersfield. After deducting administration expenses the Festival made a surplus of £5,179 (£9,033 in 2021) which when added to our balance brought forward means that we carry forward a balance of £17,384 as at 31 December 2022 to underwrite future Festivals. £3,240 of this balance is reserved for the potential repayment of grant to Richmondshire District Council should the Festival be discontinued in future years.

This leaves a "free" reserve of £14,144 as compared to the Trust's aim to maintain reserves of £15,000.

Statements of Receipts and Payments and Assets and Liabilities are attached as Appendix 2.

Barbara Gravenor
Chair
Richmond Walking and Book Festival

Signed by:
Barbara Gravenor
Chair
Date: 03/02/2023



Jane McLennan
Minute Secretary
Date: 03/02/2023



Walking and Book Festival 2022

Education Report

The programme of walks and book events for 2022 continued the Festival's tradition of exploring not only the physical terrain of the northern region but also important environmental issues linked to it. Walk leaders included professionals from key organisations, for example a Yorkshire Dales National Trust Ecologist led a walk to learn about the peat bog of Upper Wharfedale; and the Yorkshire Dales River Trust hosted a walk along the Arkengarthdale Beck to explain recent work on natural flood management. Drawing on his books, 'Trees of Life' and 'Museum of the Wood Age', archaeologist and woodsman, Max Adams, presented a highly informative talk about how humans have used trees throughout history to make tools and shelter, for food, medicine and spiritual awareness; and how the sustainable management of trees is vital to the future well-being of life on earth.

History, ancient and modern, is an on-going theme of the Festival, with new material and insights arising from recent publications. The Festival opened with a talk by Dr Emma Wells about the Ph.D research which resulted in her book, 'Pilgrim Routes of the British Isles'. Such talks were complemented by historical walks, for example a walk created as part of a Yorkshire Dales Community History Project about the 'Dairy Days' of Coverdale; a walk to explore the history of the Rokeby Estate; and a new walk along the old Corpse Way in Swaledale. Further back in time, Toby Wilkinson's book 'Tutankhamun's Trumpet: the Story of Ancient Egypt in 1000 Objects' presented fresh perspectives on this famous site.

The Festival programme blends the local with the wider, global context. Writer and well-known TV presenter, Nicholas Crane, presented an illuminating evening about his work, 'Latitude – the Astonishing Adventures that Shaped the World'. Two 19C female explorers were celebrated, firstly by writer and explorer, Rosemary Brown, who talked about how she retraced the global journey of Nellie Bly in 'Following Nellie Bly'; and secondly by Jacki Hill-Murphy who talked about 'The Life and Travels of Isabella Bird'.

A particularly successful community event was the interview with Christy Lefteri, author of 'The Beekeeper of Aleppo' which was combined with a talk by Dr Ryad Alsous, on whom the novel is based. Christy Lefteri was unable to attend in person due to Covid, but the Festival organisers resourcefully prepared a recorded Zoom interview between Christy and Rosemary Brown. Christy spoke passionately about her background as the daughter of Cypriot refugees and how she has researched current, global issues concerning refugees, and domestic workers in the novel 'Songbirds'. Dr Ryad Alsous's unique life story was an education in itself: how he left Damascus and rebuilt his life in England, setting-up the second largest apiary in the country and pursuing his mission to educate others in bee keeping as well as giving advice in how to set-up a business. Among the audience were Syrian families recently settled in Richmond who provided home-baked 'Middle-Eastern' biscuits for interval refreshments.

There were various other community-engagement events which appealed to a cross-section. Local writers had an opportunity to share their work in an open mic poetry evening.

For the first time, there were two practical book binding workshops offered where participants learned about the ancient craft of bookbinding and made their own notebooks to take away.

Unfortunately, six events were cancelled in respect of the Queen's funeral; these included one of the author events for children. However, children were involved in the Festival in other ways: through designing posters and writings on the theme of 'A Day in the Life of...' which were exhibited at Richmond Library. Students received complimentary tickets for three events and subsequently wrote reviews; one student was inspired to contact Rosemary Brown.

The Festival programme supports not only physical health through its range of walks graded from Easy, Moderate to Hard, but also continues to raise awareness of mental health and well-being. In this context, Oliver Condry, musician and editor, engaged in conversation with well-known broadcaster James Naughtie about his work, 'Symphonies for the Soul: Classical Music to Cure Any Ailment'; while Annabel Streets talked about '52 Ways to Walk: the Surprising Science of walking for Wellbeing and Joy, One Week at a Time'.

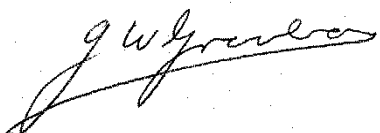
The ten days of the Festival provide a rich diet of walks and talks. There is much to learn from the specific focus of discrete events – whether geography, environment, history, the arts, health, or social issues – but the overall coherence of the programme also indirectly invites participants to make their own connections from new knowledge and invigorated awareness.

Delphine Ruston

07.10.2022

Richmond Walking & Book Festival Accounts 2022		
	1 January - 31 December 2022	1 January - 31 December 2021
Receipts and Payments	£	£
Receipts		
Grants	4,600	1,000
Donations	80	3,090
Friends scheme	420	495
Gift Aid	97	1,344
Sponsorship and advertising	2,100	2,050
Quiz night & coffee morning	395	0
Book events	10,385	10,858
Book sales	2,884	1,965
Bar	152	197
Bag sales	26	74
Walks	2,223	2,513
Sub-Total	23,362	23,586
Payments		
Book events - speaker & related expenses	8,802	7,628
Book purchases	2,450	1,486
Bar supplies	116	69
Purchase of bags	0	168
Walk expenses	1,643	659
Bank charges & commission	762	336
Advertising, promotion & website	3,189	3,169
Other expenses	1,220	1,038
Sub-Total	18,182	14,553
Surplus for Year (unrestricted funds)	5,179	9,033
Statement of assets and liabilities at 31 December	2022	2021
Cash in Bank	17,384	12,205
Represented by Unrestricted Funds	17,384	12,205

Signed by James Gravenor Treasurer



Date: 31 December 2022