

FRIENDS OF ST. GILES HILL PARK

England & Wales · Charity number 1202812

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2023-04-24

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address St. Giles Hilltop
Northbrook Close
Winchester
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Activities

Objects: FOR THE BENEFIT OF VISITORS TO AND THE INHABITANTS OF WINCHESTER AND THE SURROUNDING AREA ('THE AREA OF BENEFIT'), TO PROVIDE OR ASSIST IN THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR RECREATION AND OTHER LEISURE TIME OCCUPATION IN THE INTERESTS OF SOCIAL WELFARE WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS OF LIFE FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THE AREA OF BENEFIT, IN PARTICULAR BUT NOT EXCLUSIVELY BY THE PRESERVATION, PROMOTION, SUPPORT, ASSISTANCE AND IMPROVEMENT OF ST. GILES HILL PARK.

Activities: Works for the benefit of visitors to and the inhabitants of Winchester by organising volunteers and raising funds to help preserve, promote, support, and assist in the improvement of St. Giles Hill Park to provide facilities for recreation, social welfare and information for the general public.

Classification

- **How:** Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** Environment/conservation/heritage, Recreation
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Hampshire

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-04-05	£1,874	£1,964	-	-
2024-04-05	£2,519	£1,590	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Dr Harry MacDonald Mycock CHort	Chair	2023-03-04
Cllr Dominic Charles Alan Hiscock MSc MBA		2023-03-04
John Howard Cooper		2026-01-09
Maxwell Illis		2025-08-05
Michael James Biden FRSA		2023-03-04
Rebecca Smith		2024-06-05
Sheena Margot Smith		2025-08-05

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Friends of St. Giles Hill Park

Winchester



Annual Report 2024-25

June 2025

1. Overview

Friends of St. Giles Hill Park was registered as a charity on 24th April 2023. Its objects are: -
“For the benefit of visitors to and the inhabitants of Winchester and the surrounding area (‘the area of benefit’), to provide or assist in the provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants of the area of benefit, in particular but not exclusively by the preservation, promotion, support, assistance and improvement of St. Giles Hill Park.”

This is our second annual report. This year our priorities have been: -

1. To continue assisting in the maintenance of the St. Giles Hill Park in accordance with the 5-year Management Plan agreed by the Town Forum in March 2023.
2. To engage in dialogue with the local authority at all levels in order to develop our relationship.
3. To run events which build public awareness and support for our activities and give residents opportunities to experience the natural world on their doorsteps.

Our goal is to become a “Key Partner” as defined by the Parks Community on their ladder of engagement. Whilst welcoming the formation of the Friends, the local authority has initially limited our ability to make contributions. During the year they have increasingly taken note of our activities and at the year-end we have advanced drafts of both a legal Licence and an informal Partnership Agreement*. Once signed and implemented these will provide the framework for us to become a partner and enable us to make a much more significant contribution to the future management and development of the park.

2. Governance

The Friends of St. Giles Hill Park is a registered charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) with a standard CC constitution for a foundation CIO.

During the year we have continued to implement the Governance plan approved by the Trustees. Development has focused on the risk assessments and method statements for working parties of volunteers with a view to the future use of power tools and for internal and external events as the number and range of these events has expanded.

A Trustee Manual continues to develop in line with our activities. We do not work directly with minors or vulnerable adults in order to minimise the risk of any safeguarding issues.

3. Membership

Our main tools for increasing engagement are our web site and social media platforms. To maintain interest and attract people to visit the site we distribute a monthly Newsletter. This reports on and publicises our events and other activities.

In May 2024 we held our first Gathering of Friends and were joined by over 50 people including local Councillors and representatives of the Hampshire Gardens Trust and the CPRE Magnificent Meadows Project. This gave Friends the opportunity to learn more about our activities and plans and discuss these and other issues of concern.

We have been fortunate to receive support from the Mayor, Cllr Russell Gordon-Smith, who hosted a reception after our "Autumn Colours" walk and in January 2025 planted a commemorative tree to mark the 130th Anniversary of the extension to the park laid out by H.E. Milner in 1895.

During the year our Chairman, Dr. Harry Mycock led several walks around the park including two historical walks as part of the Heritage Open Days week in September, which were fully subscribed. These are opportunities to raise awareness of the long history and heritage of the park. An evening event to meet the local bats was fully subscribed and led to further interest and the start of a bat survey in Spring 2025.

We collaborated with a local tourist guide in her preparation of an on-line self-guided walking tour of the St. Giles Hill which we both promote.

Our activities have continued to attract press coverage and Friends online registrations continue to increase our number.

4. Volunteer Activities

Regular working parties have been held throughout the year. We hold two per month, one on the first Wednesday and the second on the last Saturday. Activities included planting of cowslips and bluebells, primula and daffodils (all wild natives) and trial sowing of ransoms and yellow rattle to enhance the wild flower meadow and tree habitats. Other works have included nurturing the trees planted in December 2023 and removing invasives and other undesirable vegetation in the Milner enclosure, where Winchester City Council (WCC) have joined us in an extra effort to complete the works in the 5-year Management Plan.

Regular removal of graffiti has improved the appearance of the park.

Some 204 hours of time has been spent in practical gardening work by volunteers during the year, a disappointing reduction on our first year. This was a direct consequence of contractors unfortunately destroying bio-diversity planting made by the previous volunteer group in 2013, which led to a number withdrawing their time.

Our nature walks and outreach events have been well received. A considerable investment continues to be made in research including surveys in the park and historical research. Surveys completed this year include ones on memorial trees and steps. These will aid future planning of maintenance and improvement projects and allow us to measure our impact.

We are building an image archive which is proving very informative.

When these activities and administrative time are included we estimate a total volunteer contribution of more than 1500 hours for the year.

5. Finance

We launched an appeal for Friends to become “Supporters” by making a regular annual or monthly donation at the Gathering held in May 2024. This met a positive response and monthly donations have since provided the income needed to sustain our activities and meet our costs over the year.

Fund-raising appeals and grant applications are on hold until the relationship with the local authority is resolved and we can agree improvement projects or have other reasons to justify the need for additional finance.

Our main administrative expenses are insurance and IT services. Minor expenditures have included some disposables, safety gear, more tools and planting materials such as plants, seeds, bulbs, trays and compost. Accounts are shown in Appendix 1

6. Other Activities

We continue to develop our relations with a wide range of local organisations. We attend meetings of local community associations and work with similar volunteer groups active within the Winchester area to share resources and expertise.

Co-operation with WCC saw a rapid response to anti-social activities with restoration works at the viewpoint and our relationship continues to develop. They completed a major project on slope stabilisation and made further progress with tree works, including re-opening an important view. Two old benches were re-instated and a new bench installed at our request.

During the year we started collaborating with the Hampshire Bat Group on a bat survey and renewed our support for the CPRE in a grant application for their Bar End Wild Ways project. We are developing our relations with the City of Winchester Trust due to the importance of the park to the landscape setting of the City. We continue to liaise with the Hampshire Gardens Trust and others and on discovering the history of the park and Victorian development East of the River Itchen.

**NB Post end of year a Licence Agreement was formally agreed with Winchester City Council on 24th May 2025 giving permission to use power tools and hold events and a further Partnership Agreement was signed on the 3rd of July.*

Front cover: Photo of Winchester Mayor, Cllr Russell Gordon Smith, Lady Mayor, Chairman Dr. Harry Mycock and Friends at the commemorative tree planting to celebrate 130th Anniversary of the laying out of the park extension donated by the Earl of Northbrook by the celebrated Victorian landscape designer H.E. Milner.

APPENDIX 1**Summary Financial Statement****FSGHP Summary Financial Report****Period 06/04/24 to 05/04/25**CAF balances as at 06/04/24 925**Income**

Donations via CAF (see details seperately)	1611.15
Tap donation via Square	261.70
Interest	1.56

Total Income **1874.41****Expenditure**

Workgroup equipment	478.52
Logo development	100.00
Bank fees	55.00
Insurance 24/25	157.00
AGM venue	48.00
Office equipment	22.80
Brush-cutter training	40.009
Trees & seeds	693.92

Total Expenditure **1964.24**CAF Balance as at 05/04/25 835

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Winchester



Annual Report

May 2024

1. Overview

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“For the benefit of visitors to and the inhabitants of Winchester and the surrounding area (‘the area of benefit’), to provide or assist in the provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants of the area of benefit, in particular but not exclusively by the preservation, promotion, support, assistance and improvement of St. Giles Hill Park.”

In the first year of existence the Trustees have focused on establishing the charity and commencing its primary activity of assisting in the maintenance of the St. Giles Hill Park in accordance with a new 5-year Management Plan agreed by the Town Forum in March 2023.

The charity is an independent organisation which works in close collaboration with WCC, local community associations and third parties with similar or over-lapping interests.

Priorities have been the promotion of the charity, recruitment of Friends and volunteers and putting in place the necessary governance procedures to begin working in the Park.

2. Governance

The Friends of St. Giles Hill Park is a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission (CC) and has adopted a standard CC constitution for a foundation CIO with the Trustees as the voting members. The Trustees accepted advice and guidance from the CC in regards to its foundation and governance and confirmed this in a letter to the CC on 19th April 2023.

A Governance plan was approved by the trustees and sub-committees are progressing the necessary work to put in place appropriate governance practices as recommended by the CC. Priorities have been data protection, safeguarding, financial and internal risk management and the risk assessment and method statement for working parties of volunteers. A web site and bank account were established and insurance cover purchased in accordance.

A Trustee Manual is in the course of preparation.

3. Membership

Presentations to local community associations, a web site, free and paid-for guided walks and local press coverage were used to launch the charity and 136 Friends had been recruited by the end of our first year. Our first event was a litter pick on Monday 8th May as part of the Coronation Big Help Out. This was organised under standard Winchester City Council (CC) guidelines.

During the summer our Chairman, Dr. Harry Mycock led a number of walks around the park to give Friends the opportunity to learn more about the history of the site, landscape design and heritage, the Management Plan and the main issues and gave an opportunity to discuss these. Two historical walks of the area by local guide Patrick Craze were ticketed and made a useful contribution to our start-up funds.

Our web site is hosted on Wix which provides a secure data environment for information collected from Friends and supporters. This supports our mailings of newsletters and the promotion of our events. We also have a Facebook page.

4. Working Parties

The start of working parties to assist in the maintenance of the park was our first goal. Our Risk Assessment and Method Statement were approved by WCC in August and the first working party was held on the 23rd August 2023. An immediate impact was made on the appearance of the park around the principle viewpoint and good progress has been made since. This has been very well received by park users.

In December our volunteers assisted WCC in the planting of 100 new trees which included a diverse range of native species which will contribute to the biodiversity within the park and provide blossom displays and valuable wildlife food resources.

Some 254 hours of time has been spent in practical gardening work by 46 volunteers during the year, but when the litter picks and administrative time invested in setting up and promoting the charity is included a total volunteer contribution of in excess of 2000 hours is estimated.

5. Finance

An account with the Charities Aid Foundation Bank was opened in June. We registered with HMRC in July and our Insurance cover with Zurich began in August. Initial funds were provided by donations from each of the Trustees. Subsequently small grant applications were made to the local councils and grants of £1,000 from WCC and £500 from Hampshire County Council (HCC) were received. These funded the purchase of tools, safety items and disposables and a secure tool shed for storage.

The historic walks by Patrick Craze in the summer of 2023 raised £168. In early 2024 we began to ask Friends to become supporters and by year end £179 had been donated. A summary financial statement is in Appendix 1.

6. Other Activities

The charity is developing a network of third party organisations and individuals to further our objectives and access more specialist knowledge and advice. Our intention is to work in partnership with nature and other organisations. During the year we collaborated with the Hampshire Gardens Trust on researching the history of the park and have supported CPRE in a grant application for their Bar End Wild Ways project on neighbouring sites from which we hope to learn valuable lessons.

APPENDIX 1**Summary Financial Statement****Period 01/06/23 to
05/04/24**

	£ In	£ Out	£ Balanc es
CAF balance as at 01/06/23			0
Income			
Trustees donation	670		
Other donations via CAF	179		
WCC & HCC Grants	1500		
Profit from Historic walks	168		
Interest	1.44		
Total	2519		
Expenditure			
Volunteers equipment		1107	
Web license & hosting (to 03/25)		240	
Bank fees		45	
Insurance (renews Aug 24)		157	
Office charges		39	
Expenditure Total		1590	
CAF Balance as at 05/04/24			929