





The Friends of Sandall Park

Annual Report January 2016 – December 2016



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The Friends of Sandall Park
Trustees' Annual Report

January 2016 – December 2016

1. Introduction

2016 has been a good year for the park and the group. New volunteers joined us and this instantly had an impact, introducing new energy and new ideas. Sustainability is key to the success of any group, and new members provide this.

The Friends of Sandall Park team¹ do a tremendous job working all year round in the park, and volunteering hours this year has been totalled up at 6555, that's 936 seven hour days. If that were paid at the minimum wage of £7.20 it would mean a wage bill of £47,196 per year.

This doesn't include the time and work the Sandall Park Angling Club has put in but does include:

- Writing reports, minutes of meetings and letters
- Litter picks
- Gardening/planting
- Maintenance tasks
- Maintaining and cleaning the toilet facilities – this has been completed on an almost daily basis and the toilets have remained spotless throughout the year
- Organising events (including preparation and clearing away afterwards)
- General volunteering in the park
- Liaising with other groups and organisations
- Organising tours of the park for other groups and organisations
- Arranging 'Volunteering Days' for other groups and supervising the same
- Attending the Doncaster GreenSpace Network & National Parks & Green Spaces Forums
- Dealing with email/telephone/Facebook/website enquiries
- Keeping Facebook pages (FoSP and Santa Dash); websites (FoSP and Santa Dash) and Twitter updated
- Treasurers bookkeeping
- Assisting the Angling Club
- Printing articles to keep the notice boards updated, and updating the same.
- Designing Christmas cards and distributing them to our supporters; sponsors; business partners
- Surveys of
 - trees for the tree trail;
 - points of interest for the Old Sandall Park trail;
 - Of other facilities with a view to applying for a Green Flag Award.
- Putting together funding bids
- Strategic Planning for the park
- Facilitating potential park users to organise events
- Attending seminars/conferences for related issues (health; green space; exercise)
- Attending meetings re the future development of the park

The results are clear to see, the park has a pleasant atmosphere, and the amount of visitors it receives - calculated at 370,000 per annum is evidence of its popularity and appeal.

¹ 'Friends of Sandall Park 'Team' includes the Neighbourhood Team (NHT) members who work with the group.

The accolades received by email and comments on Facebook and Trip Advisor are testament to the changes the park has gone through and the image it now has. The park was awarded a Certificate of Excellence 2016 by Trip Advisor.

2. Crime and Anti Social Behaviour in the Park

a. Crime and Anti Social Behaviour

Only minor irritations this year - a presence in the park and peer pressure retains our crime and anti social behaviour at a very low level. The only significant damage was an information panel on a lectern requiring a replacement at a cost of £40 – for the second time in two years.

The biggest offenders the park suffers from are the quad bikes that go in periodically. Several offenders have been visited and bikes seized, all as a result of the public coming together to provide information and have the issue dealt with for the good of the park and everyone who visits it. The situation this year was helped tremendously by a campaign by the Doncaster Free Press and it was subject of a PACT (Police and Communities Together) initiative.

b. Litter

1. Regular litter picks around the park have been performed by members of the group, including members of the Angling Club.
2. Costa Coffee staff from local branches did a morning litter pick and subsequently donated all their litter picking kit for the group's future use.
3. Clean for the Queen campaign was signed up to with a few members of the public joining in.
4. Remedi contacted us with a view to taking juvenile offenders to the park to litter pick. They were shown the Superbin and how to access it whenever they wanted to do any work.
5. Meetings with KFC and Enforcement team ensured litter was high on the agenda for the KFC team.
6. The Superbin (which we continue to 'trial' for Keep Britain Tidy – and which contains all the equipment volunteers need to litter pick in the park, contained in a coded accessible cupboard) has proved to be invaluable for our volunteers. We have promised an updated version to replace the prototype which has some design faults.

3. Events ²

1. A 'Get Doncaster Walking' health walk took place with FoSP members and the Safer Communities Team.
2. Easter Activities
 - Our 'World Championship' Hook a Duck competition took place and needed no advertising – other than our banners on the fences.
 - The Easter Egg Hunt which was sponsored by Ready Steady Store, and which was free to enter was again a huge success. Despite the rainy weather over 700 eggs and dozens of sweets were handed out.
 - The tombola helped boost funds.
 - This event is proving so popular that it will need significantly more volunteers next year to cope with the demand.

² All conducted with the invaluable assistance of the Safer Communities Neighbourhood Team, and the Grounds Team.

- The Neighbourhood Team as always did a marvellous job in organising the Hook a Duck competition itself and the staff from Ready Steady Store provided a good workforce in administering the Egg Hunt.
 - It is an extremely popular and now recognised holiday event, especially with Mickey and Minnie Mouse attending, they were accosted by hordes of children as soon as they entered the park.
3. The eighth annual Fake Festival took place in May and was another huge triumph for the park and for Doncaster. It sold itself without much need for advertising and around 1200 people attended.
 4. A large music festival was planned - Summerfest – but was cancelled by the organisers. This did not do our group any favours as people looked to us to reclaim their ticket money and believed us to be involved. We had to work hard distancing ourselves from the organisation and retaining our reputation.
 5. The Music in the Park
 - Was held on the grass slope near the cafe again having proved to be a popular venue.
 - The Doncaster Concert Band, The Big Band from Herten and the Doncaster Senior Brass Group provided an afternoon of free musical entertainment for the community. They all put on a tremendous performance, which was well received by the open air audience.
 - FoSP organised a raffle and topped up the amount to make a donation to the Doncaster Concert Band.
 6. A presentation evening at the Mansion House saw the Anglers receive a Doncaster in Bloom Silver Gilt Award for their Sustainable Planters in the lake.
 7. The Santa Dash:
 - It was decided this year that the Santa Dash was becoming too much of a strain and it was put to St Leger Rotary of Doncaster that they could take it over as their flagship event. They accepted the proposal and took responsibility for ordering and paying for the Santa suits, antlers and medals, arranged the band, sound system and stage, organised the Dog and Buggy competitions of the day.
 - This year it was fully funded by Keepmoat Stadium; St Leger Homes; Weldricks Chemist; Hill House School; Taylor Bracewell Solicitors; St Leger Rotary Club and FoSP. This meant we were again able to give the participating charities all the entry fees from their supporters, and with FoSP not now financing the event, we became one of the recipient charities.
 - The event was entertained by Bramley Brass Band – arranged by Rotary Club.
 - FoSP volunteers organised the logistics of the day and marshalled the event, assisted by the Neighbourhood Team.
 - Our appreciation was extended to the staff of Ready Steady Store for taking entries and distributing Santa Suits since September, bringing their gazebo and helping to hand out the medals.
 - We were also assisted by Mrs Galaxy and Miss South Yorkshire Earth 2016 in handing out the medals.
 - Our thanks to The Neighbourhood Team as always, for providing equipment and help, and to all the marshals who did a valuable PR job as well as helping the event run smoothly.
 8. The Sandall Park Rangers JFC are going from strength to strength and incorporating more junior teams and organising more competitions.
 9. The parkrun, now in its fourth year is still going strong and encouraging more and more people to take up exercise many of whom had not previously undertaken exercise.
 10. Lots of reparation work has taken place - benches painted etc. work in progress.

11. A Boot Camp organised by DMBC was very well attended during July and was extended into October.
12. Funding for angling for disadvantaged and disabled children enabled several sessions to be run which was well received.
13. The Lions Fun Day, whilst not our event was attended by our volunteers who put on a tombola raising vital funds and awareness. It is an excellent event for the park and the participants who come from within and beyond the borough. This was joint funded by the Stronger Families Innovation and Aiming High Activity Fund.
14. Another event which was not organised by us, though we assisted them in going through the booking process, was a National Breastfeeding Week event which proved popular and was advertised nationally.

4. Projects/Work Undertaken

1. Planting:
 - Bulb planting, tending the rockery and planting new plants, tending Marshall's Garden; the Jubilee Garden and the new planters around the park continues on an annual basis by FOSP volunteers on numerous days. Numerous shrubs which have been donated by volunteers and their neighbours have also been planted. The main flower beds were planted by DMBC.
 - Four additional new square planters have been donated by the Grounds Team, plus fence planters, which are now planted up and tended by a volunteer.
 - To celebrate Le Tour de Yorkshire inaugural event, a decorated cycle bedecked with flowers, representing the Tour, was again mounted on the fence and which remained there all summer.
2. 'Pongy corner' (The end of the lake where all the rubbish and silt gathers is) requires continual work to keep it clear of debris.
3. The Tree trail was launched. This is a free downloadable (TiCL) app which identifies all the trees in the park, their location and information about each tree. All the information was inputted by a FoSP volunteer who then had to upload all the background information.
4. Old Sandall Park trail was launched at the same time and shows how the park is currently and what was in that location originally. Again, all the information was inputted manually.
5. Volunteer Days (general maintenance undertaken).
6. Green Tree Inn staff did a days volunteering.
7. Running of the toilet facilities:
 - The toilets were opened in time for Easter and remained open all summer. They were closed for the winter at the end of October, and then re-opened in November to remain open all year as a result of a public campaign for them to stay open.
 - FoSP members to monitor weather conditions and if there is a threat of frozen pipes, to close the facilities and drain the system.
 - FoSP volunteers have undertaken to keep the toilets clean and tidy as a supplement to the cleaning performed by the council - they are cleaned on a daily basis and re-stocked as necessary.
 - The supply of all the items for the toilets has proved expensive but has provided the park visitors with a commendable facility. Sandall Park Café contributed to the winter opening costs.
 - Due to council staff shortages, the cafe staff continue to close the toilets. This in fact enabled them to remain open longer during the light evenings.
 - The staff were sent a letter of thanks.

8. Another memorial bench was installed opposite the Adventure Trail play area. This is the last bench FoSP will be installing due to a new council policy on Memorial Benches.
9. As a result of a parkrunner collapsing during a run, a campaign was launched by parkrun organisers and a defibrillator was purchased from donations. This is now located on the wall of the toilet block.
10. Also as a result of the above, a free CPR kit was applied for by FoSP from the British Heart Foundation. It has provided training for the parkrun organisers and is available for any group to use. It is a kit which will prove useful for many groups who want to train their volunteers or supporters.
11. The car park markings are re-painted twice a year.
12. 'Don't be a Loafer' campaign was launched as a result of the lake being polluted by excessive amounts of bread and more geese suffering from Angel Wing. A donation of a substantial amount of bird seed by B & Q enabled us to give free seed to park visitors and embark on a campaign of changing feeding habits. This was picked up by the local press and was reported in national press. The donation of seed also supplied our bird feeders, and supplied groups from the Doncaster GreenSpace Network.
13. FoSP made a donation to parkrun of radios and a loud haler following on from the tragic death of a runner.
14. An additional 5 pieces of Fitness equipment were installed having acquired £10,000 from the Tesco Bags of Help Fund. The scheme was officially launched by Ben Parkinson and Rosie Winterton MP.
15. The fence in front of the ladies toilet was rotten and was taken down by DMBC, who on request provided large planters to provide a barrier. These were subsequently planted up by volunteers.
16. Fence planters were donated by DMBC and planted up by volunteers.
17. The Civic Trust have donated 10 mature trees, these are to be planted by Pleveys at the appropriate time.
18. The 'garden birds' feeders on the sensory trail are filled up on a regular basis.
19. Real Junk Food project took some of the apples from the bog pond area but not all, so the bog pond suffered large amounts of fallen apples again.
20. Bikes supplied by the NHT were painted and planted up in support of Tour de Yorkshire again.
21. The fountain fell into disrepair and work undertaken could not rectify it. Funds have been found by DMBC to have another one installed.

5. Funds

1. The 100 Club continues to raise funds on a monthly basis.
2. Easyfundraising and EasySearch continue to add to the funds albeit only small amounts.
3. Purple Penguin donated in-kind by doing work on the web site Pay Pal facility for the Doncaster Santa Dash
4. BT MyDonate as a means of donating on-line has proved useful
5. For the first time this year FoSP was a charity for the Santa Dash and should realise some income from it.
6. Full financial report to be presented by Treasurer at the AGM.
7. The Treasurer announced in June his intention to retire from the post at the AGM. An appeal was put out and a successor came forward almost immediately. The new member was welcomed to the group, and co-opted as a Trustee in order for the signatories to be changed over prior to the AGM.

6. Grants applied for – unsuccessful

1. Greggs for angling plants.
2. Mayors fund £30,000 match funding for the WREN application.

7. Grants/donations received

1. A FoSP member, an employee of Lloyds Bank, received match funding for organising fund raising events
2. Lloyds Foundation also provide additional donations for the volunteer hours put in by that employee.
3. Donation by FakeFestivals
4. Donation of bowls equipment which was sold via Facebook
5. Donation of knitted items which were sold via Facebook
6. Donation of a limited edition print which is to be auctioned
7. Ready Steady Store have again donated a large amount of capital to the Easter Egg Hunt and in-kind donation of storage space at their facility for all our equipment.
8. Financial contributions have been made by a FOOSP member and her brother who lives in Berkshire, in support of the group, along with donations from members of the public.
9. Purple Penguin donated in-kind by doing work on the Pay Pal facility for the Doncaster Santa Dash web site.
10. Donation of £4995 from DMBC Mayor's Fund for the Woodland Adventure Play application to WREN
11. Donation from Asda

8. Publicity/Communications/Networking

1. The notice boards remain very popular and a good source of information for park users.
2. We again purchased Christmas cards to send to our business partners, sponsors and funders. Calendars were not purchased this year as funds were spent on major projects, and it was considered too time consuming preparing a calendar with all other projects ongoing.
3. Flyers are printed for music events and distributed locally and via the Tourist Information Office in Doncaster.
4. Banners and flags displaying our logo are used at displays and on the park fence in agreement with council, to advertise events in the park.
5. Trip Advisor received more comments this year, mostly good and generally 5* ratings. Certificate of Excellence received – 4 stars.
6. Advertising of FoSP and the Santa Dash is in the programmes at Aurora events.
7. Our events and meetings are advertised on CVS E-News; the DMBC web site and newsletters and the SNT e-newsletters as well as local media.
8. Several radio interviews were given by 3 FoSP members, on general issues to do with the park, at the Santa Dash and parkrun; about gardening projects in the park; the bread campaign; the new fitness equipment. Some of the interviews were live.
9. A closed Facebook page was set up just for FoSP volunteers, so they can see what is happening and what needs doing in the park.
10. Lots of photos of the park are sent in to us via Facebook.
11. Article in You magazine about Chairman and volunteering in Sandall Park
12. FoSP members attended the Doncaster Place conference/launch
13. Four FoSP members attended the Love Parks Awards at Nottingham. FoSP were Love Your Park Award runners up; Group of the year were awarded Outstanding Achievement Award (runners up); Volunteer of the Year Award – commended.
14. Two FoSP members continue to attend the National Parks and Green Spaces Forum in Birmingham.

15. The Doncaster GreenSpace Network (DGSN):
 - Founded by FoSP, the Countryside Ranger team have now taken over the organisation of it and continue to arrange meetings, speakers and provide the premises at Sandall Beat wood.
 - The recent areas for discussion have been Public Space Protection Orders, insurance cover for smaller groups, and the application to Tesco Bags of Help Fund for Superbins for groups who are members of the DGSN. This was successful and £10,000 was granted.
 - Despite setting up the DGSN, requests are still received to give talks to other groups. One such presentation was made to the gardening club at Edenthorpe, which resulted in them then coming for a tour of the park. They made a donation to FoSP funds in thanks.
16. The April Fool – this year of a giant fish – went viral on Facebook with 265,000 viewings. Months later people who had ‘shared’ it believed it to be a true image.
17. A poem written about the ‘Don’t be a Loafer’ bread campaign also went viral on Facebook reaching 65,000 viewers on Facebook.
18. Pokémon Go hit Sandall Park with a vengeance and brought many more visitors in, doing exercise without realising it!

9. Press releases

Included items such as:

- Fake Festival
- World Hook a Duck Championship/Easter Egg Hunt
- Music in the park
- Doncaster in Bloom awards
- Doncaster Santa Dash
- Arranging of networking events for voluntary/community groups involved in regenerating green spaces (DGSN)
- Volunteering days
- Double page spread on FoSP in Free Press

In several publications on numerous occasions:

- Doncaster Free Press
- Doncaster Star
- CVS E-news
- Posters in park; café and locales
- DMBC publications and web site.
- Facebook
- Twitter
- BBC Radio Sheffield, Sine FM and Trax FM
- The Arrow village magazines

10. Meetings

- With DMBC Programmes Team re funding for major projects.
- Numerous with Neighbourhood team (about all projects and plans; applying for Green Flag status).
- Fake Festivals, Community Parks and SNT staff regarding FakeFest.
- Live Lounge UK re new Music Festival (which didn’t materialise)
- By request, two FoSP members met with a Consultant re parks and healthy activities. He had already attended the park prior to the meeting.
- Grounds Team re jobs and projects in park
- Ready Steady Store re sponsorship and events

- Numerous with Charity Fundraising Staff and St Leger Rotary Club, relating to Santa Dash.
- Playground Team re projects in the park.
- With representative from Destination Doncaster (Doncaster Place)
- Doncaster GreenSpace Network, several meetings and tours of the park
- Party in the Park representatives (to be organised in 2017)
- Organisers of Doncaster parkrun
- Potential new volunteers
- Miss Earth South Yorkshire
- Anglers re angling club and lake developments
- Sandall Park Cafe and private investor re Sandall Park café and future plans for the park
- KFC and Enforcement Team re KFC litter in the park
- Various council officials for tours of the park
- Gardening Clubs – tours of the park
- Talk to Bentley groups
- A FoSP member assisted a group at Hexthorpe to enable them to organise their own park concert.
- Nat Fed in Birmingham attended. They wanted FoSP members to organise a Regional Network, which was declined.
- Civic Trust re trees for the park

11. Angling Club (Sandall Park Angling Club)

1. Three members now sit on the FoSP Group and attend the monthly meetings
2. On a daily basis members do litter picks of the park, lake and north bank,
3. Members check and assist with the cleaning of the toilets.
4. On behalf of a member, organised a Charity angling match and raised a substantial amount of funds for a cancer charity.
5. The Lake was re-stocked with fish.
6. An Under 7s match was organised and was well received.
7. New pegs were constructed.
8. Numerous plants installed to shore up the lake edging.
9. Are continually working to upgrade the lake and its surroundings
10. Organise and plan the bookings for anglers and maintain discipline in the booking of all pegs, including night fishing.

12. Football Club

1. Now have a member who sits on the FoSP Group and attends monthly meetings
2. They are going from strength to strength with more teams being introduced
3. Walking football was tried but didn't get the support to ensure it's viability
4. The cost of a strip for the under 7's was donated by FoSP
5. A new under 7 team is being planned
6. A regional competition was organised in June and attracted teams from all over South Yorkshire

13. Park Future

The park is continually developed in line with the components of the Business Plan, and in consultation with DMBC. There are major plans in the pipeline for the coming two years to take the park to a higher level and which will change its appearance substantially. The Management Plan currently being developed will be key to its sustainability.

We continue to strive for more - and younger - members to ensure sustainability and for the group to progress and develop. This year has seen valuable new members join and we hope to build on that.

14. The Charity's Policy on Reserves

The annual running costs for the charity are as shown and this amount should remain ring-fenced for the charity to be able to continue its current activities throughout the year. This equates to:

Web Site maintenance/hosting	-	£ 90
Printing cartridges	-	£101
Photo paper for notice boards	-	£140
Insurance	-	£196
Postage	-	£ 27
Gaming Licence renewal	-	£ 20
Phone cards for mobile phone	-	£ 20
Toilet facilities: sundries	-	£495
Total:	-	£1089

15. In Conclusion: A statement from the Chairman

There have been two issues affecting the group, and indeed other groups throughout Doncaster which were taken up by a FoSP member.

The first was the purchase of equipment by DMBC for installation in parks – thereby negating the expense of groups paying VAT for products for parks. It had been done unofficially in the past but needed formalising. The resolution was arrived at after months of discussions, a decision agreed and a protocol put in place with the conditions being:

- The product would be paid for from existing budgets;
- Paid back in full
- Owned by DMBC
- Gifted to DMBC by the voluntary group
- And a document signed to that effect

This was put into effect for the Tesco grant and was acceptable to the funders

The second was the direction for parks and green spaces within the Borough. It was felt that there was no ambassador for parks and green spaces. This was resolved by the appointment of a Green Space Officer, who has been doing great work within the short space of time he has been appointed, with groups such as FoSP and the DGSN. As a group FoSP look forward to a long and lasting relationship with the Green Space Officer.

There is a national interest in parks being utilised to the full for the health and well being of the nation, and Sandall Park has this at its heart along with family recreation. Work has been going on to encourage people to exercise in the park.

Nationally, there is also concern amongst Green Space Forums about parks being sold off for building development. This is something as a group we are aware of but not concerned about for Sandall Park, though we are keeping our eye on the national forums and political developments.

The new £50,000 Woodland Adventure Play, funded by WREN should start to materialise early in the New Year and this will take the park to a new level. The Management Plan currently being progressed in partnership with the Green Space Officer and Neighbourhood Team will ensure that the park is developed to its full potential and ensure it's sustainability for the future.

Thanks are due, as always, to the to the Neighbourhood and Grounds Teams who have answered our every request, responded promptly to problems that have presented themselves and been forthcoming with donations of planters and other sundry items. The

Neighbourhood Team leader in particular has been incredibly resourceful in tackling issues that needed a solution sooner rather than later.

I will finish off by saying a heartfelt thanks to our team of dedicated volunteers, especially those who visit the park day in day out thus ensuring the park remains at it its best, and without whom the park would not be as pleasant, attractive and as well populated as it is today.

There's lots to look forward to in 2017, it's going to be a great year for the park!

Sandra Crabtree

Sandra Crabtree, Chairman 2016

26.12.16

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

16. Current FoSP Committee Members:

Sandra Crabtree (chairman)*	Moira Hood	Carol Burton
Ron Ketley (secretary)*	Jean Ketley	Carolyne Burton
Neil Gethin (treasurer)*	Will Gethin	Barbara Senior
Wendy Barclay (vice-chair)*	Alex Barclay	Frank Woolley
Sarah Stokes*	Derrick Bewell	Scott Holland (SPAC)
Don Crabtree*	Marianne Downing	Jane Kidd (Cllr)
Mairaid Smith*	Eva Hughes (Cllr)	Neil Marshall (SNT)
Lee Stanley-Gonsales (SPAC)	Les Jones (SPAC/FoSP)	Colwyn Pugh (SPAC)
Kristen Ismay-Johnston*	Sam Cummins	Mike Keegan (SPRJFC)

- = Trustees