

FRIENDS OF SANDALL PARK
ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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The Friends of Sandall Park

Annual Report January 2020– December 2020 Trustees' Annual Report



	Page
Content:	
Introduction	3
AGM 2020	3
Additional Contributing Factor	3
Café Development	4
February FoSP Meeting	5
The Year in Sandall Park	5
Volunteers	5
Angling Club	8
Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour	9
Coronavirus: The Impact	10
Caring Hands Memorial	11
The Management & Maintenance Plan	11
Toilet Facilities	12
Changing Place	12
Finances	13
Park Future	14
In Conclusion: Statement from the Chairman	14
Trustees & FoSP Members	15
Appendix A	17
Appendix B	18

FoSP = Friends of Sandall Park
SPAC = Sandall Park Angling Club
SCT = Safer Communities Team
Cllr = Councillor

Introduction

Well, 2020 was a year like no other! It follows that the Annual Report has taken on a new look for this year with no major events to report on. That is not to say there has been nothing happening – far from it. Something of a negative start to the year but stay with us – it did get better!

Sandra,
Chairman

AGM 2020

It started at the AGM with the resignation of Sandra as Chairman, and Don as Comms Manager, a culmination of repeated frustrations with progress for the park being hindered at seemingly every turn, the continual delaying of the café development was the final straw. Sandra felt she could no longer continue working within the park when the council hierarchy were not supportive of advancement and development, and continually put obstacles/inaction in the way of progress. Support at ground level was without exception exemplary and never in question.

It was not a decision taken lightly, and much thought and research had gone into it. The group had been advised prior to the meeting of the intentions.

The meeting was an emotional and one highly charged, it had a major impact on other group members. Some members had intentionally abstained from attending such was their distress at the prospect of what was to be discussed.

The consensus was that the group was likely to fold, and that perhaps a final decision could be deferred until after the Planning Dept site meeting and a further Committee meeting, and also for the group members to consider how to deal with the group's future, or its winding up if that were the way to proceed. It would actually be easier to carry on than to disband the group: the dispersal of assets would not be without its problems for example.

It was suggested by Neil (SCT) that the group could 'hibernate' for a time until a final decision was reached, everyone was supportive, and no-one wanted to see the group disbanded. The decision of the Chair to resign was already affecting the group's morale.

Additional Contributory factor: Paws Park in derelict nursery

In November 2018 FoSP were invited to a meeting with two Heads of Service regarding the repeated delays to the café development, and the conversation eventually moved to discussing the use of the old nursery and bringing it back into green space use.

We immediately agreed that it could be utilised and came up with a plan to turn it into an inclusive Paws Park, with a dog agility facility capable of being used by dog owners with disabilities, and their pets.

Much discussion ensued (emails, meetings, telephone conversations). A costed plan was submitted immediately, a Spacehive funding application was completed (including a video appeal by two junior rangers) and numerous site visits were attended with Assets and the Safer Communities Team. The Chairman was continually 'chasing' to see what was happening.

This went on for some time, along with many emails and phone calls, and is not likely to ever come to fruition. The Chairman was due to have another site meeting with Assets on 13th January but cancelled her attendance due to her frustrations and impending resignation. This plan had been on the table for 15 months and was still no further forward: the council would not commit to progressing the plan, citing lack of funds for the site clearance. To date the

nursery is still derelict with no decisions having been made. That is not to say there was not support from other council departments – far from it. Safer Communities and Street Scene were exceptionally supportive, helpful and did their utmost to progress the plans.

Café Development

The ultimate deciding factor for resignations was the reluctance to allow the café to progress. This was the culmination of 4 years of the developers attempting to satisfy every condition that DMBC kept referring the plans back for (before it even got to Pre-Planning Application), with several changes of DMBC staff, and the subsequent ‘starting afresh and familiarisation of the project and players involved’, delaying the process repeatedly.

We, the voluntary group, were asked to conduct surveys in the park, over several days (which we were asked to contemporaneously record) as to whether people objected to the café taking up some green space. The Chairman was later asked to write and sign a statement stating

- a. We had actually asked the people we said we had asked,
- b. We had asked the questions we said we had asked, and
- c. We had pointed out the exact amount of green space that would be lost!

She did not write a statement.

Not satisfied with the result, which was all positive for a new café, we were then asked to conduct yet another survey over several days asking the same questions. Around 50 hours of volunteer time all told.

The final straw was when the planning application was again rejected - for a site visit - with the planning committee councillors showing a major lack of support, albeit the Planning Officers were in approval.

The Chairman felt that it was one barrier after another preventing the development of the park and that her role was no longer viable. After much soul searching and evaluation, the decision was made to resign.

Café Planning Committee

The resultant Planning Committee meeting (following the site meeting) held on 4th February saw two ward councillors representing on behalf of the park and the FoSP Chairman spoke to the meeting for her allotted 5 minutes¹. The message was that without a new café, incorporating public toilets, the development of the park could not progress. After a two-hour hearing, the application was approved, all members supporting except one who abstained.

February FoSP Meeting

As a result of the café application having been approved, and after much discussion, the Chair advised that she would not be proceeding with her plans to resign. She remained in post and as a Trustee, having discussed the position and having it confirmed by the Charity Commission. The Comms Manager remained in post as a group member and Trustee but stated he would be withdrawing from any substantial involvement with the park. His frustration and annoyance at the lack of support from the council at Director level remained.

As had been proposed by the Treasurer at the AGM, involvement with other groups and corporate volunteering would be scaled back and workload in the park vastly reduced. The future of the group was discussed at length with it being left on a positive note.

¹ The presentation is at Appendix B

The February meeting was to be the last physical meeting for the year, the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic prevented any further contact and all communication within the group continued via our group Facebook page, email and working in the park.

The Year in Sandall Park

Volunteers

This year has been extremely challenging in terms of volunteering. We have several members who are no longer fit enough for one reason or another to be hands on with the work. Our secretary, and founder member of the group has indicated his desire to retire as secretary due to ill health. One of our three key volunteers moved out of the area leaving her 'co-worker' on her own, but this has ended on a positive note with another person volunteering in her stead.

Sustainability is key to the success of any group, and we continue to strive to attract new members, though this is becoming increasingly difficult. We do not need to be a large group, and in fact on paper we are 'wealthy' in terms of numbers, but additionally we do need people who can spend the time in the park to maintain the excellent facility that it is now, they are fundamental to the success of FoSP.

We do have group members doing valuable ad-hoc work as required/requested but our 'mainstays' (in the park on a daily basis) have reduced down to three: two FosP'ers and one SPAC/FoSP'er. All credit to all of them, they work tremendously hard.

The volunteers have been the eyes and ears in the park, keeping an eye on things, reporting things that are not right, keeping the public informed and generally ensuring the park is developed and nurtured to a high standard. As an asset for DMBC they are invaluable.

We also have the added advantage of many members of the public becoming involved by doing litter picks and reporting issues that need addressing. So, in addition to our group members, we have a great many 'unofficial' volunteers.

The Friends of Sandall Park team do a tremendous job working all year round in the park. This includes:

- Writing reports, minutes of meetings, letters
- Reporting remedial work required to council
- Litter picks
- Gardening/planting
- Clearance, planting, maintenance, and development of the lake by the Angling Club
- General volunteering in the park
- Liaising with other groups and organisations
- Dealing with ASB, crime, offenders, and reparation of damage
- Arranging Junior Ranger activities and membership
- Participating in the Doncaster Greenspace Network Forums via online meetings
- Dealing with email/telephone/Facebook/website enquiries
- Keeping Facebook pages (FoSP; FoSP Volunteering Group/Suppawters Group/Junior Rangers Group); websites and Twitter updated
- Treasurers book-keeping
- Printing articles to keep the notice boards up to date and updating all three noticeboards in the park.
- Working towards retaining the Green Flag Award.
- Putting together funding bids
- Strategic Planning for the park

- Research/communications with organisations for related issues (health; green space; exercise/mental health)
- Attending meetings/online meetings re the future development of the park
- Quiet Garden planning and development
- Projects promoting health, well-being, and Mental Health Awareness

Projects/Work Undertaken

- General maintenance undertaken throughout the year.
- Bulb planting, tending the rockery and planting new plants; tending Marshall's Garden; the Jubilee Garden; and the new planters around the park continues an annual basis on numerous days.
- Numerous shrubs, plants and trees which have been donated by volunteers and members of the community have been planted.
- Fencing around the islands to deter Canada Geese from laying eggs
- New wooden fishing signs erected at the Pegs
- The Quiet Garden: for those people who want to sit and reflect, or just have a quiet moment is continually being developed and had a magnificent show of wildflowers this year. More Crocus were donated by Rotary Club St Leger (to promote their eradication of polio in children campaign) were planted, along with numerous other seeds and bulbs. A wildflower meadow was created. A bird feeding station was constructed so people can watch the wildlife, and the concrete duck painted rainbow colours to brighten up the area.
- Cabins painted.
- Rockery reconstructed.
- Fences/bins/benches painted.
- Topiary garden maintained and planted.
- Hedgerow reinstated along top of bog pond, and fenced off for protection
- Bird boxes painted and put up along sensory trail.
- A volunteer again used the transformed plastic bottles litter-picked from the park and transformed into poppies to create a Poppy display on the topiary garden transforming one of the figures into a soldier with 'Lest we Forget' Lots of knitted poppies were also reused from last year.
- The 'garden birds' feeders on the sensory trail are filled up on a regular basis by volunteers.
- The anglers worked long hours keeping the existing water treatment systems in working order.
- Overhanging trees were trimmed.
- A hedgehog hotel was created within the Jubilee Garden and a purpose built one installed with nearby water dishes.
- A hand mower and path sweeper were purchased to enable our volunteers to complete tasks that were not being undertaken by council due to COVID-19 crisis.
- The Covid Memorial (mentioned later).
- A Doggy Drinking Station has commenced with the installation of the tap: awaiting completion – delayed due to weather conditions.

Meetings

- Potential new volunteers
- Anglers re angling club, lake developments and FoSP projects
- Numerous about Sandall Park Café; private investor re Sandall Park café and future plans for the park
- Doncaster Green Space Network (latterly via Microsoft Team Meetings)

- Visitor Economy Group (latterly via Microsoft Team Meetings)
- Re Mindfulness Walking Project

The Junior Rangers

The introduction of the Junior Ranger Scheme, bringing with it the families of Rangers, has assisted greatly in the upkeep of the park. We have encouraged others to become involved, and although not always 'recorded' as volunteers, they help greatly in the park often in their own time.

We appointed a Head Ranger, and another Lead Ranger to help with the running of events and the sisters did an amazing job of it. They have both done a great deal of PR work for the group this year.

Neil (SCT), in accordance with the plan to reduce the workload, offered at the AGM for the SCT to take over the running of Rangers. This was to relieve some pressure from the Chair, it no longer being viable for her to run the system on her own.

The scheme was immediately taken over by the Safer Communities Team and their first event, which was a resounding success saw 18 Rangers attending which included the recruitment of Armthorpe Cubs and other new members. They did a litter pick and looked for wildlife with information sheets as they went round.

The SCT have run several successful events throughout the year and hope to extend the scheme to other groups. Without their intervention, the Rangers scheme could not have continued.

The Junior Ranger Notice Board is updated regularly and was committed to giving thanks to NHS; and then for Halloween decorations.

Club Foundation Doncaster

Whilst we have reduced our involvement in Corporate Volunteering (it is time intensive for us: preparing for the day; gathering equipment and materials; supervising the day etc) we were pleased to accept a team from Club Foundation Doncaster.

The teenagers and their two supervisors worked extremely hard over two days and completed a tremendous amount of work that would have taken our volunteers a great deal longer to achieve. We are grateful for the effort they put in, and they are to be commended for their community spirit.

FoSP Volunteer Hours worked included:

1. One Member of Angling Club:
 - For FoSP 'on site' hours: 480; FoSP off site: 150 (research/design etc).
 - For Angling Club: 100 on site; 50 off site
2. Two volunteers: gardener/maintenance/litter picking: 425
3. Three ad-hoc volunteers gardening/maintenance/bird boxes 100
4. Additional hours by Chairman, Comms Manager; Treasurer; Secretary; other volunteers and Junior Rangers have not been calculated
5. Joint hours worked (between all volunteers) for the Covid Memorial approximately 250

In addition to all the work FoSP do, we have an excellent working partnership with the Safer Communities Team and Street Scene and between us, the park is well looked after. The comments on social media and reviews are testament to the results.

International FoSP²

Whilst not available to volunteer – we now have an international branch of FoSP (IFoSP) with members in America, the Netherlands and Australia. We are followed on Twitter by them - a fan group of Louis Tomlinson. As a result of being fans of his, they follow ‘all things Doncaster’ and began following FoSP.

They designed our Quiet Garden logo and have contributed financially and with material items such as memorial trees for the Quiet Garden and decorated stones for our Covid Memorial.

(In 2018 one member of the group, whilst visiting Manchester, made a special trip to Doncaster just to visit the Quiet Garden and see her tree, planted on her behalf in memory of a loved one).

Angling Club (Sandall Park Angling Club)

- One member sits on the FoSP Group and is involved in all aspects of work.
- Members do daily litter picks of the park, lake, and north bank,
- Members check and assist with the maintenance of the toilets.
- Are continually working to upgrade the lake and its surroundings with reed cages; work to control flooding and work to shore up the lake edge
- Organise and plan the bookings for anglers and maintain discipline in the booking of all pegs, including night fishing and restrictions as a result of Covid.
- Have maintained the status quo in dealing with the lake crisis due to botulism and blue algae contaminating the lake and birds (which occurred in 2018). Many hours were spent by the anglers on dealing with this issue and continue to do so there is not a repeat of the problems
- Steps being taken to limit the number of eggs laid and raised by the geese.
- Fencing on the lake and along top side of the bog pond (shrubs planted)
- New fishing signs
- Planters installed on fencing near lake and planted up
- 100 specific bog plants installed in ‘boggy’ bog garden next to disabled fishing area
- ‘Pongy corner’ (The end of the lake where all the rubbish and silt gather,) requires continual work to keep it clear of debris.

Events

All public events this year were cancelled due to the Pandemic. The Doncaster Santa Dash, with all credit to Curly’s Athletes, was conducted as a virtual event.

We ran a painting competition to remember the Café as it is now. The three winners received a goody bag, VIP invitation to the opening of the new art gallery (yet to take place) and Purple Voucher books.

Isiasha ran another fitness class in the Quiet Garden, then restrictions hit again to curtail any further events.

Cycle training twice a week has continued throughout the year.

Publicity/Communications/Networking

- The notice boards remain immensely popular and a good source of information for park users.
- Suppawters page – a Facebook page for all the dog lovers who come to the park

² See Appendix A

- 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.
- Trip Advisor received more comments, mostly good and generally 5* ratings:
- Certificate of Excellence received – 4 stars again.
- We have been a member of Welcome to Yorkshire for several years and have our own page on their website.
- Our events and meetings are advertised on the DMBC web site and newsletters and the SCT e-newsletters as well as local media.
- The closed Facebook page which was set up just for FoSP volunteers, so they can see what is happening and what needs doing in the park continues to be especially useful in sharing ideas and work undertaken.
- Lots of photos of the park are sent in via Facebook by park users.
- The Doncaster Greenspace Network – DGSN – (Founded by FoSP) continues to be organised by the Countryside Ranger team, arranging meetings, speakers and provide the premises at Town Field Pavilion. They have continued to develop the Network for the benefit of all Doncaster's Groups and have done an excellent job in ensuring it is continuity. FoSP is represented at all the meetings.
- The international group IFoSP remain good friends and allies.
- The Head and Lead Junior Rangers did four photo shoots and videos for Yorkshire Television; Welcome to Yorkshire and two for Visit Doncaster – one welcoming people in Sign Language.
- Chairman did several interviews about the park and litter with Yorkshire TV and Look North
- The Head and Lead Junior Rangers feature on the Rotary Club website planting their crocus for World Polio Day

Press releases

Have been much reduced this year due to a lack of events but included items such as: Gates for the park; promotional videos by Junior Rangers for tourism.

In several publications/outlets:

- Doncaster Free Press
- Posters in park; café and locales
- DMBC publications and web site.
- Facebook
- Twitter
- FoSP web sites
- BBC Radio Sheffield, Sine FM and Trax FM
- The Arrow village magazine
- The Echo village magazine
- YTV

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

In the greater scheme of things Sandall Park suffers relatively minor crime and ASB in comparison to other parks, but it is always acted upon immediately when it occurs. Our volunteers react straight away to put incidences of damage right and where necessary inform DMBC who complete repairs that the volunteers cannot undertake. All incidents and crimes are reported to the police and the council.

The presence of our volunteers and members of the public who are willing to challenge unacceptable behaviour goes a long way to preventing offending in the park we believe.

This is the known crime and anti-social behaviour for this year:

- A dog killed a gosling – very emotive and caused much discussion on social media about dogs being on leads and PSPO's.
- Two trees were snapped off and fence posts stolen. It was believed the trees were snapped in the process of stealing the posts.
- The sign on the fence on Wheatley Hall Road and one on Barnby Dun Road, depicting the facilities were snapped in half. New signs were purchased, and the damaged ones removed immediately (broken windows syndrome).
- Dog fouling remains a problem throughout the park, though the Dog Waste Bag Dispenser is well used. Most dog owners are responsible, but it only needs one or two to create the problem. A second dispenser was installed by DMBC on the old golf course. The leaving of grass long in places created a haven for the offenders.
- Numerous plants and shrubs were stolen from the café garden and rockery a few times during the year.

Litter

Regular litter picks around the park have been performed by

- Members of the group
- Members of the Angling Club
- Carers and their charges
- Cub scouts
- Visitors to the park – of their own volition
- Junior Rangers – independent of the group and with the group
- The Superbin (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 and others.
- DMBC empty the bins regularly and litter pick.

Several organisations have been shown how to access the Superbin and bring their volunteers to the park on a regular basis to litter pick.

As a result of all the above – litter is at a minimum in the park.

The main areas for regular litter are the car parks where night-time visitors drop their litter from their cars, including numerous nitrous oxide gas bottles on a regular basis and used condoms.

Prosec UK, who follow our group, have a keen interest in assisting with the park and the volunteers and liaise with us on a regular basis, noted that we were having problems with the night-time ASB. They offered to purchase, install, and monitor CCTV in the area, and lock the gates at night – opening them again in the morning – to prevent this behaviour.

Several meetings took place between FoSP, Prosec UK and the council and an agreement to this end reached. The council installed the gate and repaired the existing one at no cost to us.

The ASB will be drastically reduced if not prevented completely when the gates are locked at night (*to take effect in 2021 when discussions have been concluded*) and the CCTV installed.

Corona Virus: the impact

You will have noted that the events section is empty this year, due to all the cancellations caused by the Pandemic. This has had a major impact on our financial situation and group membership numbers. We had had no meetings since February, until our December one, all communication having been done by email or on our Facebook Volunteers Group.

Several members have had to isolate due to the Covid virus, and others have had other illnesses and disabilities.

Despite all the uncertainty, lockdowns, and isolations our volunteers who are committed and dedicated, managed to maintain a presence in the park and continue with the vital work, albeit with a much-reduced workforce.

Covid has had a major impact on the park and its visitors:

- The public toilets were closed for 16 weeks at the onset of the first stringent lockdown.
- The Outdoor Gym was closed, as were play areas; All fenced off.
- Toilets were eventually reopened with a specific cleaner; 'one in one out' system; notices; 2m marks were put up; and we purchased hand sanitisers and refills from FoSP funds.
- An 11year old girl and her mother created rainbow-coloured bows and attached them to the fence for the whole perimeter of the park, as thanks to all the Key Workers. They were a huge hit with everyone that saw them, and many messages were received to say how they had brightened their day.
- A FoSP member created two banners to go on the fence thanking key workers and NHS staff.

Caring Hands Memorial

50% contribution via Doncaster Community Fund Elected Ward Members Budget and 50% from FoSP funds. What started out as a simple sculpture grew into the Caring Hands Memorial with decorated stones, rainbows, and meaningful plaques.

A well worded document by Neil of SCT acquired us the necessary planning permission without a hitch and our volunteers worked tirelessly to construct the memorial. (Still to be completed).

A great deal of volunteer time has been committed to the Memorial, and time was donated by a local nail technician (Dawn's Beauty Room) to do the nail art.

1200 crocus, another donation by the Rotary Club St Leger to mark World Polio Day, were planted at the Covid Memorial by our Head Junior Ranger and Lead Junior Ranger.

The Management Plan

The Management Plan was developed four years ago in partnership with the Green Space Officer and Safer Communities Team to facilitate an application for Green Flag status. It sets the parameters for the maintenance and development of the park by both DMBC and FoSP and is a living document - designed to ensure that the park is developed to its full potential and is sustainable for the future. Both FoSP and DMBC have signed up to it, and all our plans for the park are developed in line with this.

Our own Business Plan is also a living document which aims to develop the park over the course of the next five years, it is revisited every year. This, in conjunction with our own Maintenance Plan sets out our agenda for the work and projects we undertake. Our monthly meetings (with the exception of this year when we have hardly had any) are set out as per our Business Plan.

Issues currently requiring attention in accordance with the plan include:

The maintenance of the footpaths to the disabled access picnic benches and fitness equipment on the old golf course. The plan does not appear to be working in this respect as requests have to be made for the work to be carried out. The Service Level Agreement is still to be reviewed having been delayed by the pandemic.

Remedial work on the stone steps to the football pitches. This is still to be tackled and carries forward each year. Nothing has been progressed for this issue as yet.

The park footpaths were resurfaced in their entirety the year previous. Unfortunately, having done an excellent job of repairing the paths, the contractors failed to reinstall a drain at the 'old boathouse' site, and this left a legacy of problems which was eventually rectified this year after a lot of work by volunteers and the council had failed to resolve it.

The drain at the edge of the grass roundabout unfortunately also was not replaced and this too floods the path. This issue is currently being looked into by Streetscene and they are planning for it to be rectified.

Other issues and plans are added as they become apparent. For example: As an alternative to the Paws Park, an enclosed area for dogs to be able to run free without danger of escape is being considered for the old golf course. On instruction from DMBC, surveys are currently being completed. A fundraising campaign would provide for the capital needed.

Grass Cutting

Some grass areas being left to grow wild met with varied responses. It is deemed to be beneficial for wildlife. The golf course provided thought-provoking discussions and the paths created interest. Others believe it looked a mess and it certainly encouraged irresponsible dog ownership in that dogs foul the area, and the owners do not clean up; it also collects rubbish that's dropped/blown in. Another issue that has been highlighted recently is that with the winter weather, the paths created are restricting the area for walkers and turning the paths into a muddy, slippery mess. This has been reported to the council.

We purchased a hand mower and manual path sweeper; the park could not be kept to the standard it had been used to due to council staff being redirected elsewhere during the crisis. Our volunteer was not happy with the situation and image of the park and completed a lot of the tasks herself.

The park was again awarded Green Flag Status – a proud moment for DMBC staff, FoSP and all the park visitors - and another Certificate of Excellence by Trip Advisor. The Green Flag Award ceremony could not take place this year, instead the Flag was presented at the park.

Toilet Facilities

Due to our volunteer situation, it was necessary for the council to take over the cleaning of the toilets completely. This was changed with the onset of the Covid Crisis which saw the toilets closed for the first lockdown, until it was eased. We no longer have any responsibility for the toilets. The café staff continue to close them in the afternoons.

When the café closed for lockdown for the second time, the closing of the toilets was also taken over by the council.

Changing Place³

The Changing Place campaign continues to remain on hold. Much work has gone on in the background to rectify this and have one installed in the park. Meetings and seminars have been held with Safer Communities Staff and elected members with a view to taking this forward. There has been much positivity from all concerned.

³ Changing Places are purpose-built toilet and appropriate changing facilities for disabled children and adults

The proposal for a Changing Place in the park was initially, dependent on the new café being built. The intention being at that time to refurbish and redesign the gents toilet into a Changing Place.

Due to café situation being delayed further and further by the pandemic, we looked again at the alternative plan to install an independent pod instead – we had already been quoted for this at the outset, as an alternative. FoSP are confident the capital can be raised, but the council are reluctant to commit with regards to ongoing costs. Several different options have been mooted but are not being progressed. The Council are not forthcoming at this time due to financial restraints, though we have been advised that a group has been formed to look at Changing Places across the Borough in the future when things eventually return to normal. We (FoSP) are not confident that Sandall Park will be considered for a Changing Place.

The amount of severely disabled people who visit the park and would benefit from such a facility is not in dispute. Several surveys have been carried out and support this need. It just needs a commitment to make it happen. We have the commitment; we just do not have the power.

Finances

- The 100 Club continues to raise funds on a monthly basis.
- Give as You Live on the website raises funds for us via Gift Aid.
- Full financial report to be presented by Treasurer for the AGM.

Details for Charity Commission Return

<i>A1 Fundraising Events (income)</i>	<i>£1,609.60</i>
<i>A1 Donations, Legacies and Grants (income)</i>	<i>£1,993.68</i>
<i>A3 Cost of Fundraising Events (Expenditure)</i>	<i>£974.27</i>
<i>A3 Cost of Repairs and Maintenance (Expenditure)</i>	<i>£4,939.19</i>
<i>A3 Management Costs (Expenditure)</i>	<i>£162.34</i>
<i>A3 Insurance (Expenditure)</i>	<i>£0.00</i>
<i>A3 Printing, Postage, Stationer and Computer Supplies (Expenditure)</i>	<i>£0.00</i>

The Charity's Policy on Reserves

The annual running costs for the charity are as shown and this amount should remain ringfenced for the charity to be able to continue its current activities throughout the year:

Insurance	£260
Marketing/stationery/computer	£590
Management/organisational	£600
Gardening/repairs	£1,200
Total	£2,650

Grants/donations received

1. Donation of knitted items which were sold via Facebook.
2. Ready Steady Store again sponsored the Easter Egg Hunt but as it did not take place, all the eggs and sweets were distributed to schools which remained open for key worker's families. RSS also give in-kind donation of storage space at their facility for all our equipment.
3. Grant from Elected members Community Fund towards Covid Memorial.
4. Donation from resident ice cream man.

5. A memorial seat, a substantial (memorial) Lime Tree and the Doggy Drinking Station were all made possible by donations to a loyal friend to the park who died this year – a victim of Coronavirus.
6. Sponsorship of our Mindfulness Walk leaflet by Biscuit Billys of Doncaster (a town centre pub).
7. Donations received as a result of Santa Dash.
8. Donations from Group Members and our Lead Junior Ranger.
9. Marquees Executive Travel sponsored 4 boat planters – created and installed by a new volunteer.
10. The mosaic designed and created by Sainsbury's staff using recycled bottle tops was collected and is awaiting installation, it is on the 'to do' list.
11. A young autistic boy painted a bird box and donated it for the Sensory Trail
12. A FoSP'er created and donated Christmas decorations made of wood to create a trail for the children round the park.
13. Many donations of plants trees and shrubs: including
 - a van load collected from a donor at Sheffield;
 - another van load delivered to the park by a donor from Epworth,
 - plants from our most recent volunteer
 - and a local shop where she purchased them from
 - As a result of the damaged trees, FoSP purchased two replacements and in the interim, and two other trees and trays of plants were donated by a parkrunner.

All the above were planted by our volunteers;

Park Future

Doncaster council and FoSP work together to ensure the viability of the park, working within the Management Plan devised to ensure its sustainability and appropriate development.

The main issue for FoSP is a new café facility which is paramount to the success of the park. "A loo, a brew, a view and something to do" being the watchwords. The public toilet situation is not sustainable and neither FoSP nor the park can survive without toilets (a vital component for any day out) which would be included in the new build. The development is currently in abeyance due to the Covid Crisis.

The addition of a Changing Place is the way forward for all our disabled and special needs visitors – of which there are many. This is a major issue which is letting the park down. Having a Changing Place would make Sandall Park **the** place to go to for a day out for families with disabilities. This is something that needs addressing sooner rather than later and an issue we are working hard to rectify, with support from Ward Members and some Officers within DMBC. Unfortunately, it is not high enough on the agenda in terms of council expenditure for ongoing costs and maintenance.

In Conclusion: A statement from the Chairman

Sandall Park is everyone's back garden. Never has this been truer than throughout this year when people have been restricted in their access to places to go. The outdoors and green spaces have been vital for mental health and general well-being. Our Quiet Garden has proved invaluable for peace, quiet and reflection, and this has been evidenced by the feedback we have received.

The park is in constant use every day of the year by dog walkers; runners & walkers; for fitness; cycling; angling; mental health, playing; picnics and events. It is a great value for money destination – because it is all free. There is a national interest in parks being utilised

to the full for the health and well-being of the nation – the ‘Green Lungs’ of the community - and FoSP has this at its heart.

We continue to promote the park for fitness and mental health, and our Mindfulness Walking project was intended to assist in this endeavour. Leaflets (also containing details of several helplines and organisations) have been distributed to numerous organisations including the Tourist Information Office in Doncaster and local GP surgeries. It has a dedicated page on our web site which also contains details of support organisations.

The residents of Doncaster and beyond, who are regular visitors to the park, have played a tremendous part in maintaining the park’s upkeep and status quo. Never before has the ‘Friends of’ group been so all encompassing to include park patrons. They have all contributed in one way or another to ensuring the park’s cleanliness and upkeep. I hope this continues and grows, as I am sure it will. Thank you to each and every one of them.

Thank you too to all the volunteers of parkrun, who would normally attend week in week out to provide the marvellous facility for free exercise (Coronavirus unfortunately put paid to the organised runs for this year). Without all these people, the park would not be as pleasant, attractive, and as well populated as it is today.

The Woodland Adventure Play has proved to be a complete hit with families, encouraging them to participate in outdoor exercise through play, without even realising it. We hope to increase the size of the Woodland Adventure Play area: WAP3) to make it even more of an attraction for the park.

Our vision is for a park for all to enjoy. Inclusivity is the key to the success of everything we do and strive to achieve. FoSP will, as always, continue to work diligently and with energy and enthusiasm to ensure that Sandall Park thrives and grows for future generations to enjoy.

I will finish off by saying thank you to the teams we work with at DMBC, to all our supporters, sponsors, donors, and ad hoc volunteers. A heartfelt thanks to our own team of dedicated FoSP and SPAC volunteers, especially those who visit the park day in day out. They ensure the park remains at it its best. **Thank you!**

Sandra Crabtree

Sandra Crabtree, Chairman 2020

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

Current FoSP Committee Members

Sandra Crabtree* (Chair)	Kristen Rawson* (Treasurer)
Ron Ketley* (Secretary – retiring at AGM)	Don Crabtree*
Sarah Stokes*	Mairaid Smith*
Barbara Senior*	Carin Stoddart
Jean Ketley	Eva Hughes (Cllr)
Wendy Barclay	Neil Marshall (SCT)
Frank Woolley	Colwyn Pugh (SPAC)
Archie Wright (JR)	Matthew Pickering
Aimee Pickering	

Emma Pickering (JR)
Victoria Stokoe

Katie Pickering (JR)
Margaret Richards

Non committee FoSP members

Les Jones
Derrick Bewell
Carol Burton
Paul Wray (Cllr)
Paul Atick
Peter Poppy

Brian Greathead
Marianne Downing
Bernadette Greenan
Jane Kidd (Cllr)
Jayne Atick
Scott Holland (SPAC)

International FoSP

Noelle Finn (Westville New Jersey, USA)
Ester Schrijent (The Netherlands)
Kimberley Van Cleve (Fort Lauderdale Florida USA)
Amanda Browning (Fredericksburg, Virginia USA)
Tabitha Fenton (Wagga Wagga, Australia)

Key

* = Trustees:

SCT = Safer Communities Team

JR = Junior Ranger

SPAC = Sandall Park Angling Club;

Cllr = Councillor;

FoSP = Friends of Sandall Park

Appendix A

Website article for January 2020: Letter from America

This was sent from America but did not make it to the Free Press this week. Noelle (New Jersey) explains herself.

“I’m writing on behalf of our group, International Friends of Sandall Park. (IFoSP)

Our back story, we are a group friends who met on Twitter because of our love and respect for Louis Tomlinson. Louis is proud of his roots and always talks about his wonderful memories of growing up in Doncaster.

We first came across the FoSP account when we were researching the history of Doncaster. We read about the story of their handicapped accessible playground. The volunteers helped to raise almost 15k to cover the costs. We’ve followed their account ever since. Over the past year We’ve watched so many projects, programs and community events being held at the park. We were amazed by the strong support of all the Volunteers.

In March of 2019, our IFoSP group was formed. We are five women; Noelle, Kimberly, Amanda (All American), Tabitha – Australia, Ester – Netherlands. We wanted to plant a tree in Louis’ hometown to help us channel our grief into something positive. We were so honored and moved when Sandra surprised us by purchasing a cherry blossom tree on her own, for us. The volunteers took great care in planting it in The Quiet Garden of the park. Our group decided that we wanted to continue with supporting the efforts of the park and its volunteers. We have purchased five additional cherry blossom trees that are now planted, by the volunteers, surrounding the original tree. We decided it would be a lovely way to honor our loved ones that have passed. We all plan to visit Doncaster, not only to spend tourism dollars but to visit Sandall Park and our trees. One of our members has already been welcomed with open arms when she made the journey a couple months ago, another will be visiting in May of this year.

The Quiet Garden is a place to promote and support mental health awareness. The volunteers have transformed the space into a beautiful place for reflection. Volunteers built an archway leading into the garden and planted wisteria around it. Benches were also built by the volunteers.

We were saddened to hear that Sandra and Don had resigned from their positions at FoSP. We stand behind them in their decision due to the unfortunate, continued delays in the final ‘go ahead’ approval from council for the new cafe.

We sit with a heavy heart wondering what the future will hold for the park that has been so beautifully cared for and improved out of the love and dedication of its volunteers. If the FoSP group is dissolved, where does that leave one of Doncaster’s largest all-inclusive parks? Who will put all the love and care into maintaining and preserving the fifteen years the volunteers put into the park? We hope there is a positive outcome for the future of FoSP and the community”.

Footnote: Noelle designed our “Love Grows Here” logo for the Quiet Garden.



Appendix B

Presentation to the Café Planning Application Committee

I am representing Friends of Sandall Park, a voluntary charity community group formed in 2004, who are proud, passionate, and unpaid.

Our group comprises teachers, retail staff, nursery owner, retired police officers, a retired Home Office Crime Reduction specialist, project managers, elected members, and school children. In 2010 we were awarded the Queens Award for voluntary service, the result of transforming the park from a crime ridden den of anti-social behaviour into a well-loved family park which is packed every weekend and school holiday.

Please do not confuse volunteers with Amateurs, we continually put words and vision into action – our dedication to Sandall Park has proved we are not playing at this! Since our formation we have drawn investment of over £700,000.00 into the park. We created a Junior Ranger Scheme to ensure young children become actively involved in looking after THEIR park, they are the volunteers of the future.

Our first major project, working with DMBC, was to reclaim the old golf course and use our professional experience as Police Officers to rid the park of crime. Importantly, an additional 20 acres of greenspace that had been abandoned, was re-introduced back to park life. The toilet in the park had its own website for illegal sexual activity!!! Again, using our professional background, we eradicated that crime, even with the council objecting to crime reduction measures.

The proposed café/restaurant that is open into the evenings will help to prevent anti-social behaviour returning to the park during the evenings and complements our crime reduction strategy.

As a result of our successes, we have provided crime reduction presentations and training courses to community groups, councils, and greenspace representatives from across the whole of the UK including some London Parks and Keep Britain Tidy Group. We founded the Doncaster GreenSpace Network to bring all the community groups together, and we attend National Conferences.

Our next major project – if the new café is built – is to turn the redundant men's toilet block into a Changing Place. This is a purpose-built facility where children and adults with disabilities can use the toilet and be changed, in a dignified manner. Currently they have to be laid on the dirty toilet floor or go to Lakeside. And we have hundreds of visitors with disabilities every week.

If this café doesn't go ahead, the Changing Place cannot go ahead. We have had this plan on the table for three years and we have no doubt that we can raise the external funds for this.

The proposed Café/Restaurant is due to be built on the current tarmac car park of the current café, the tiny amount of greenspace it will take up (0.05%), becomes almost totally irrelevant, particularly when you consider the overall 69 acres of Sandall Park itself.

In 2008, we returned over 3 acres of derelict land adjacent to the nursery back to greenspace. This area is now a plantation of 1500 trees.

FoSP were asked by the council last year if we could utilise the derelict Nursery area of 2.6 acres, and we produced a detailed plan to return this to public green space as an inclusive dog agility Park. 15 months later, it is still derelict.

Parking Problem? There is not a parking problem. There are already 141 extra parking spaces in the laybys and Ash car park Barnby Dun Road that have not been accounted for.

FoSP always maintain that we positively manage the reputation of DMBC. A quarter of the working population of Doncaster drive past Sandall park twice a day. They look across and see magnificent new play areas and fitness equipment and an extremely popular family park with events taking place, not the wreck of a park it was 15 years ago. And it is not just a local park, visitors come from every Ward in Doncaster. We would like them to see a Gateway restaurant/café, that will be the envy of every single park in the country.

The council don't have a plan, or a vision for what the park will look like for the next generations. FoSP do. It does include as a minimum – refreshment facilities and toilets for families – the park users of Doncaster and beyond deserve nothing less.

When this current café building is condemned: because it IS falling down – who will pay for a new building? DMBC said they do not have the funds to replace the café for the tenant. This is why we have battled for the last six years, painstakingly, working closely with DMBC, the tenant, various professionals and putting together an agreement with DMBC that allows a win for all. Additionally, we asked over 500 individuals their thoughts on the scheme, all without a single negative comment.

If this multi-million scheme does not go ahead, in the coming years when Sandall Park is a wreck again I can sleep easy and honestly say that FoSP did everything within their power to preserve the park's future.

Make no mistake the, next, significant, stage, for the positive growth and management of the future of Sandall Park, is at stake here and will be decided this afternoon, by the people in this room.

I hope you make a decision that will take the park forward for future generations to enjoy so that it doesn't become abandoned as it was in the early 90's when all the other facilities were removed – and nobody knows who made THAT fateful decision. Today we can make the right decision and move Sandall Park forward

Thank you