

Friends of Preston Park

Annual report November 2014 to November 2015

This report briefly summarises the work and activities of the Friends of Preston Park for the last 12 months and sets out the committee's aspirations and challenges for the year ahead.

Events

- A successful Christmas wreath making event was held in December 2014. This was very well attended, with City Parks providing the 'green' materials and the committee providing the refreshments and encouragement.
- On Easter Sunday, our ever popular Easter Egg hunt and quiz was held. There was a good turnout of intrepid children and their parents, and the weather was kind to us.
- In the late spring and early summer we organised a number of guided walks and talks. These were hugely successful and included the history of Preston Park, birds of the park, trees and flora, and bats of the park and churchyard.
- At the end of October, we held a hugely popular Halloween event, enjoyed by over 300 children and their families.

Communications

- We have produced four ??? newsletters that keep 'Friends' up to date with news and views around the park.
- A number of email updates have also been circulated, particularly when there is a 'hot' issue or news announcement to be made speedily.
- We communicate frequently and sometimes intensively with the council over issues of concern – for example traveller encampments, the need for urgent repairs or maintenance within the park, and to influence the annual management plan for the park.
- We have also played a major role in representing the views of park users in relation to Pride in the park and related issues.
- We have become consulted over the archaeological survey to take place in the park and will play a small role next year in an exhibition – 2,000 years of history in Preston Park.

- We were involved in the debate over how best to refurbish the cycle track and attended the committee meeting where the decision was made to provide over £130k of funding.

Aspirations for the coming year

- Easter and Halloween events for children, coupled with a range of nature focused events such as Bat, Bird and Tree walks. All of which subject to more help from local residents and park users (see below).

Challenges for the coming year

- A new chair of the Friends of Preston Park needs to be recruited within the next six months so that there can be a timely and supportive handover of responsibilities.

Thanks are due to my hard working committee, City Parks staff, local councillors, and the numerous volunteers and sponsors who help out in so many important ways. Thanks to all of you, the park is still a place to be enjoyed and treasured.

Tony Benton – Chair – 28 November 2015