

FRIENDS OF THERFIELD HEATH & GREENS



ANNUAL REPORT
2023/2024



CHAIR'S REPORT

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude to have had the privilege of serving as Chair for a second term. It has been a period of continued growth, challenges and countless moments of celebration!

This year has been particularly remarkable due to the dedication and tireless efforts of our Committee, all volunteers who have given so much time into organising an exceptional array of events. From the enchanting Wildflower Wonderland to educational lectures and invigorating yoga sessions on the Heath, each event has not only brought our community together but also deepened our appreciation of the Heath.

Our monthly litter picks continued to be a cornerstone of our efforts, thanks to the unwavering support of volunteers who show up rain or shine to ensure the Heath remains clean and tidy.

As we look ahead, we will reaffirm our commitment to our charitable objects which guide our mission:

1. Promoting and encouraging the use and accessibility of Therfield Heath and Greens.
2. Raising awareness of the applicable bye-laws and regulations for Therfield Heath & Greens.
3. Fostering conservation, protection, and improvement of the physical and natural environment of Therfield Heath.

I am proud of all that we have accomplished this year and deeply grateful for your ongoing support.



HOLLY CHRISTIE

Chair

2023/2024 IN REVIEW

Throughout the year, the Friends have curated a diverse array of events, each designed to engage our community with Therfield Heath. These events not only celebrate the Heath's biodiversity but also fosters a deeper connection with its rich landscapes.

The year commenced with the **Wildflower Wonderland: A Journey of Colour and Discovery** on the Heath on Sunday 9 July 2023, led by Claire Beale, Conservation Ranger at Magog Down. Participants were treated to a captivating exploration of the Heath's diverse wildflowers, unveiling hidden botanical treasures and enriching our understanding of local ecology.

In August 2023, shutterbugs gathered for the **Landscape Photography Course** led by Peter Baker, renowned local photographer. The course not only imparted technical skills but also encouraged participants to explore new perspectives, capturing the Heath's scenic beauty in unique ways.

September saw the enchanting **Bat Walk**, guided by Chantal Helm from the Herts and Middlesex Bat Group. Under the starlit sky, participants delved into the nocturnal realm of bats, learning about their habits and the importance of preserving their habitats.

The **Yoga on the Heath** sessions throughout the year, including the Spring Solstice celebration on Wednesday 20 March 2024, offered serene moments amidst nature. Led by Aline, these sessions provided a tranquil retreat, harmonizing mind and body amidst the Heath's natural beauty.

This year marked a significant milestone as the Friends took over the management of the Royston Wildlife Group, embarking on a new era of exploration and conservation. The season opened with an inspiring talk by Keith Gypps on Tuesday 26 September 2023. Keith's captivating journey as a wildlife photographer showcased the local fauna and highlighted the beauty of natural landscapes, setting the stage for an engaging series ahead.

The **Friends Presentation Series x Royston Wildlife Group** enriched our understanding of global wildlife, highlighted by talks such as Wildlife of the Atlantic Islands by Doug Radford and Winter in Japan by Martin Johnson. These insightful presentations transported us across continents, showcasing diverse ecosystems and inspiring conservation awareness.

FRIENDS EVENTS IN 2023/2024



Jul-Sep 2023
En-Plein Air Art

July 2023
Wildflower
Walk

Aug 2023
Landscape
Photography
Course

Sep-Nov 2023
Royston Wildlife
Group

Sept 2023
Bat Walk
&
Yoga on the
Heath

Nov 2023
Fundraising
Meal at Thai
Rack

Mar 2024
Annual Quiz
&
Easter Egg
Hunt
&
Yoga on the
Heath

Jan-Feb 2024
Royston Wildlife
Group

June 2024
Fundraising
Meal at Thai
Rack
&
Yoga on the
Heath

May-Jun 2023
En-Plein Air Art



A highlight of our community engagement was the Fundraising Meal at Thai Rack on Wednesday 8 November 2023, where supporters gathered to enjoy a culinary delight while contributing to the Heath's preservation efforts.

We continued our commitment to environmental stewardship through ongoing initiatives like the Monthly Litter Picks. These efforts, supported by dedicated volunteers, ensure the Heath remains pristine and accessible for all to enjoy. In recognition of our shared responsibility for conservation, the Friends provided a grant to support emission-free tools for the Therfield Heath Ranger. This initiative underscores our dedication to sustainable practices and habitat management. As we reflect on the past year, each event and initiative has deepened our appreciation for Therfield Heath's natural wonders. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to our volunteers, supporters, and community partners who make these endeavours possible. Together, we look forward to further enriching our connection with the Heath in the years to come.

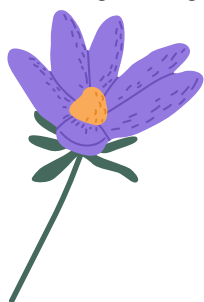
WITH THANKS

The Friends owes its success to the unwavering commitment and enthusiasm of our volunteers. Their dedication is the heartbeat of our organisation, driving us forward in our mission to preserve and enhance Therfield Heath. We extend our deepest gratitude to all those who have played a part: from our devoted Committee Members, past and present, to the diligent litter pickers who ensure the Heath remains pristine; from the knowledgeable leaders of our educational walks and talks to the generous donors of goods and services. Your invaluable contributions have truly transformed our community, and we are profoundly thankful for your support.

THE FUTURE

The Friends have an exciting roadmap for the future, encompassing the following goals:

1. We are steadfast in our commitment to providing a diverse range of opportunities for learning, engagement, and active involvement with the Heath.
2. We aspire to expand and diversify our Membership, fostering a vibrant community of individuals who share a deep appreciation for the Heath.
3. Enhance both the quantity and regularity of grants for the Heath, working with the Conservators, we aim to enhance the resources they may need to continue their valuable work of safeguarding and nurturing the Heath.



THANK YOU

The Friends of Therfield Heath & Greens Committee:

Holly Christie, Chair
Ray Munden, Treasurer
Ann Smith, Secretary
Dave Bubbins
Jane Dottridge
Sally Marchant
Bryony May
Sarah Ramsay
Sarah Jones

Every litter picker who has come along on their Sunday and kept the Heath litter-free.

And every person who has donated their time, goods and services:

Bow Books
Cat Wright
Claire Beale
Doug Radford
Dr Chantal Helm and the Herts and Middlesex Bat Group
Ensum Brown
Heath Cafe
Janet Rossignol-Bubbins
Joan Munden
Keith Gypps
Lesley Glover
Martin Johnson
Mia Caro
Pam Wright
Pete Butchers and the Herts & Middlesex Badger Group
Royston Army Cadet Force
Shepreth Wildlife Park
Tesco
Thai Rack
Tom Downie
Willmotts Gym
Yoga with Aline



FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

Accounts for year 01.07.2023 - 30.06.2024

Treasurer's Report

The financial status of the Friends of Therfield Heath is very healthy. Our total income for the year was just over £6528, which includes £809.23 transferred from the Royston Wildlife Group following the merger of the two groups during the year. Fundraising events produced a net income of £2207.98 (total income £3464.60, expenses £1256.62), which for the first time marginally overtook membership fees and associated extra donations, at £2168.00, as the biggest contributor to income. This success is attributed to the imagination and hard work of committee members in organising a diverse series of events. However, it is ultimately successful due to the support of our members, to whom the committee are very grateful.

The largest single expenditure was £1517.50, made as a grant to the Conservators to buy tools needed to help maintain the Heath. Operating expenditure was higher than last year at £1376.53, which included the purchase of a new gazebo (£494) for use at fundraising events, printing brochures (£347) promoting the Heath, public liability insurance (£194), software fees (website and membership, £174), and printing membership leaflets (£79.90).

The Friends of Therfield Heath now have a total cash balance of just over £11,000, which means that we will be able to provide substantial help whenever the Conservators request it.

Income	£
Membership and Donations	2,168.00
Events	3,464.60
Grants and Donations	974.24*
Interest from bank	1.52
TOTAL INCOME	6,608.36

Expenditure	£
Operating Costs	1,376.53
Fundraising & Communications Costs	1,256.62
Grants & Projects	1,567.50
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	4,200.65

Profits for year **2,407.71**

Balance brought forward 8,719.95

Cash balance 11,127.66

Balance in treasurer a/c at 30.06.2024 9,723.81

Balance in RWG a/c at 30.06.2024 810.76

Balance in PayPal a/c at 30.06.2023 507.09

Cash float 86

Total	11,127.66
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Reserves

General Funds - The Committee require the Friends to maintain readily accessible assets sufficient to fund not less than 6 months of running cost, at all times. In 2023/2024 this equated to £750.

*Includes transfer of £809.23 from the Royston Wildlife Group after the merger.



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Registered charity number 1192972

