Friends of St John's Wood

Annual General Meeting – 20th November 2025

Annual Statement

Interpretation Boards

2025 has been a successful year for Friends of St John's Wood (FoSJW).The highlight of our year has been the fundraising, design and installation of the interpretation board for St John's Wood at the Boothfields entrance. FoSJW approached local designer Leann Stainton to support us with the design. We were keen for a family friendly map alongside images of the commonly found flora and fauna in the Woodland. We were successful in applying for grants from Knutsford Town Council and Manchester Airport. This allowed us to fund a large, robust sign with features that help prevent lasting graffiti. FoSJW accepted the offer from Knutsford Town Council to ask the Town Ranger to install the sign. Since its installation we have received notable positive feedback from the community.

Our plans for 2026 include a similar board(s) for St Helena's Ancient Monument covering its history and status today.



Town Rangers with Interpretation Boards



Fundraising at Picnic in the Park

Fundraising

For a second year we participated in the Knutsford Town Council Picnic in the Park, held on the St Helena's fields. We held a tombola, a blind auction and "Guess the name of the teddy". Furthemore, a Trustee was able to apply for matched funding from his Employer Barclays which doubled our total from £373 to £746.

We have been invited to participate again in the joint "Friends" stall organised by Adam Keppel-Green at the Sunday Christmas markets. We enjoyed this immensely in 2024 and look forward to 2025.

Litterpicks

We are proud of our Spring and Autumn litterpicks, each one restoring the woodland to a litterfree state. While we continue to see the woodland affected by flytipping and occasional den building using discarded furniture, the levels of litter and waste are much lower than in 2019 when the first community litterpick was held. We thank our all of our volunteers, Knutsford Town Council and ANSA for their help and support. We did note an instance of rough sleeping near St Helena's monument and communicated with KTC and authorities as appropriate.

Engagement within Knutsford

At the end of 2024, we provided input into the study commissioned by Knutsford Town Council into the effectiveness of the council.. A follow up session in October 2025 allowed us to submit follow up observations.

Knutsford Town Council undertook a community engagement around proposals for St Helena's field which included hedgerows, an orchard, reduced mowing and paths. A representative attended our monthly meeting where we provided broad support but with caution around investing in new paths without plans for maintenance.

In 2024, FoSJW raised objections to the proposed housing development at Longridge which we believe will impact St John's Wood and St Helena's monument. We have not pursued in 2025 due to the decisions taken by the relevant authorities.

Woodland Management

Our Masterplan identifies the non native species within the Woodland and during the summer we mapped the locations of Rhododendron and Snowberry. A risk assessment for cutback of Rhododendron has been produced and shared with landowners. We hope to begin towards the end of 2025.

We will review our Masterplan in 2026 following this first activity and consider our priorities. This includes minor tasks which may be undertaken by FoSJW and more significant tasks requiring ANSA or other organisation. We will look again at bulbs and/or wildflowers. We also have new ideas around the monitoring of wildlife to consider.

Charity Administration

We have made progress in the day to day running and administration of the charity. This includes:

- Continuing our regular monthly meetings
- Continuing with structured, secure, online shared space for charity documents
- Formal submissions to the Charity Commission
- Launch of the full operational website www.fosjw.org.uk
- Continuing with insurance and production of risk assessments for our public events

- Ongoing presence on social media

November 2024 to October 2025

Starting Balance: £644.19

Income		**Expenditure**	
Grants		**Running costs**	
Manchester Airport	£1,000.00	Public liability insurance	£139.87
Knutsford Town Council	£626.00	Sign damage insurance	£18.67
		Web site hosting	£15.59
Fundraising			
eBay sales of donated items	£56.02	**Sign for St. John's Wood**	
Blind Auction (Nov 24)	£101.00	Sign design and manufac	£1,772.54
Christmas Market	£375.00	Thank you gift for map de	£38.00
Picnic in Park (Sept 25)	£198.00		
Blind auction (Sept 25)	£175.00		
Barclays Match Funding	£373.00		
Donations			
Previous FoSJW group	£885.67		
Total income:	**£3,789.69**	**Total expenditure:**	**£1,984.67**

Ending balance: £2,449.21