Friends of St Giles Hill Park

Winchester



Annual Report 2025-26

August 2026

Charity Reg No. 1202812

Approved: 13.08.2026

1. Overview

Friends of St Giles Hill Park was registered as a charity on 24 April 2023. Its objects are:

"For the benefit of visitors to and the inhabitants of Winchester and the surrounding area ('the area of benefit'), to provide or assist in the provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure-time occupation in the interests of social welfare with the object of improving the conditions of life for the inhabitants of the area of benefit, in particular but not exclusively by the preservation, promotion, support, assistance and improvement of St Giles Hill Park."

This is the charity's third annual report.

Our priorities during the year were:

1. To continue supporting the implementation of the St Giles Hill Park Management Plan through practical conservation and enhancement activities.
2. To strengthen our relationship with Winchester City Council (WCC) and establish a framework for long-term partnership working.
3. To increase public awareness, enjoyment and understanding of the park through events, walks, research and educational activities.
4. To further develop our organisational capacity, volunteer base and financial sustainability.

The Trustees are pleased to report that considerable progress has been made towards achieving these objectives. The charity is now recognised in our Partnership Agreement with WCC as an established stakeholder in the future of the park. During the year we continued to work constructively with Winchester City Council officers and elected members. The signing of a formal Partnership Agreement and regular meeting with a senior officer and a Cabinet Member has provided a strong basis for collaboration. We have now embarked on preparing a Strategic Framework Plan to guide the future development and management of the Park.

The Trustees believe that St Giles Hill Park is increasingly recognised not only as an important recreational resource but also as a site of considerable historical, landscape and ecological significance.

2. Governance

The Friends of St Giles Hill Park remains a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission under registration number 1202812.

The Trustees have continued to implement and refine the governance framework established during the charity's first two years. Policies and procedures relating to health and safety, volunteer management, risk assessment, data protection and financial management have been reviewed and updated as required.

The Trustees remain committed to operating in accordance with Charity Commission guidance and recognised good practice.

3. Friends and Community Engagement

The charity's Friends and supporter base continued to grow during the year, supported by regular newsletters, website content, social media activity and an expanding programme of public events.

Our annual Gathering of Friends provided an opportunity for supporters, local councillors and representatives of partner organisations to review progress, discuss future priorities and celebrate achievements.

Guided walks remained a particularly successful means of engaging local residents and visitors. Walks covering the history, heritage, landscape design and wildlife of the hill attracted strong interest and helped foster a wider appreciation of the park's significance.

The Friends also participated in local events and community initiatives, strengthening our profile within Winchester and encouraging greater public involvement in the care and enjoyment of the park.

Media coverage and online engagement continued to increase awareness of the charity and its work.

4. Volunteer Activities

Volunteer working parties continued throughout the year and remain at the heart of the charity's practical contribution. A major advancement was the approval to use power tools. Protocols were updated, essential training completed and a small set of electric tools acquired. Their deployment has significantly improved the productivity of our volunteers.

Regular sessions focused on habitat management, improvement of viewpoints, control of invasive vegetation, care of newly established trees and wildflower enhancement projects. Volunteers also assisted with litter clearance and the removal of graffiti where required.

Particular attention was given to improving biodiversity within the park through the establishment and management of native flora and the monitoring of habitats created in previous years.

The Trustees remain grateful for the commitment shown by volunteers, whose practical work has made a visible and positive contribution to the appearance and ecological value of the park.

In addition to practical conservation activities, volunteers contributed considerable time to administration, event organisation, research, communications and fundraising.

5. Research, Heritage and Biodiversity

Research and survey work continued to be an important part of the charity's activities.

During the year we expanded our programme of recording and monitoring the park's natural and historic assets. Survey work has helped to establish baseline information that will assist future management decisions and provide evidence of the impact of improvement projects.

Historical research has continued to improve understanding of the development of the park and its wider setting within Winchester. This work has contributed to public talks, guided walks, media coverage and online resources.

Wildlife recording and biodiversity monitoring also continued to develop. The charity's bat survey programme, alongside successful public bat nights, has begun to provide valuable information on species using the park and adjacent habitats.

The image archive established by the charity continues to grow and will become a valuable resource for research, interpretation and public engagement.

6. Partnerships

Partnership working remains central to the charity's approach and is at the core of our work in developing the Strategic Framework Plan. Our list of recognised stakeholders includes the Hampshire Gardens Trust, the City of Winchester Trust, CPRE, HIWWT and the local resident's groups of Highcliffe, Winnall and St Giles Hill Residents Association as well as WCC officers and local Councillors and a range of other community organisations such as the Community Police Team and local charity Youth Options who all share an interest in the park and its future.

These partnerships have enabled the sharing of expertise, the development of new ideas and the strengthening of support for the conservation and enhancement of St Giles Hill Park all of which are being built into the new Strategic plan.

The Trustees are grateful for the positive relationships that have developed and look forward to building upon them in future years.

7. Finance

The charity remains in a sound financial position.

Income during the year was derived from donations, supporter contributions, fundraising activities, grants and events. Expenditure was directed towards equipment, insurance, volunteer support, communications, events and other costs directly associated with the delivery of the charity's objectives.

Greatly appreciated grants from Winchester and Hampshire Councils helped fund our investment in Power Tools.

Generous funding from Savills enabled a strong financial base to support operations and along with many supporter contributions ambitions can now be increased to fund the Strategic Plan which in turn we hope will lead into major fundraising to begin to tackle the infrastructural improvements needed.

The Trustees continue to manage the charity's finances prudently and seek opportunities to diversify income sources to support future projects and activities.

A summary financial statement is included in Appendix 1.

8. Looking Forward

The Trustees believe that the charity has now successfully moved beyond its establishment phase and entered a period of greater influence and effectiveness.

Priorities for the coming year include:

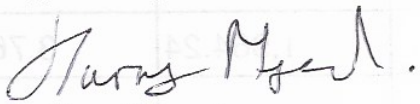
- Continuing practical conservation and enhancement work.
- Supporting the delivery of the St Giles Hill Park Management Plan.
- Expanding biodiversity monitoring and habitat improvement projects.
- Increasing our Friends and volunteer participation,
- Developing educational and heritage activities.
- Strengthening partnership working with Winchester City Council and other organisations.
- Delivering a Strategic Framework plan for the long-term future of the Park.
- Securing additional funding for future projects.

The Trustees remain committed to ensuring that St Giles Hill Park continues to be valued, enjoyed and protected as one of Winchester's most important public spaces.

Acknowledgements

The Trustees want to thank all Friends, volunteers, donors, supporters, councillors, partner organisations and officers of Winchester City Council for their support during the year. Their enthusiasm, generosity and commitment continue to make a significant contribution to the preservation and enhancement of St Giles Hill Park for the benefit of present and future generations.

Approved by the Trustees and signed on their behalf.



Dr Harry Mycock
Chair of Trustees

Date: 13.08.2026

Charity Reg No. 1202812

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Appendix 1: FOSGHP Financial Summary Statement

Period 06/04/2025 to 05/04/26	2024/25	2025/26
Bank (CAF) balance at year-start	925.00	835.00
Income		
Donations via web-site and CAF direct	1,611.15	1,420.99
Other Donations	261.70	452.00
Grant from Winchester City Council	0	2,290.00
Grant from Hampshire County Council	0	500.00
Sponsorship from Savill's	0	1,000.00
Interest	1.56	2.46
Total Income	1,874.41	5,665.45

Expenditure		
Gatherings	48.00	75.00
Insurance	157.00	379.78
Trees & Plants	693.92	224.38
Working Party Consumables	478.52	153.32
Power Tools	0.00	2,317.00
Bank Fees	55.00	60.00
Office Expenses incl IT	22.80	62.52
Web Marketing	100.00	367.20
Other Costs	409.00	130.00
Total Expenditure	1,964.24	3,769.20
Bank (CAF) balance at year-end	**835.17**	**2,731.25**