



Cabrera Trust Management Committee AGM

Thursday, 18 July 2024 at 2.30 pm

Committee Room - Civic Centre

Members of the Committee

Councillors: C Howorth (Chair), J Hulley (Vice-Chair), K Rowsell, Dr P Beesley, P Grobien, Biswas, Try and M Owen

In accordance with Standing Order 29.1, any Member of the Council may attend the meeting of this Committee, but may speak only with the permission of the Chair of the Committee, if they are not a member of this Committee.

AGENDA

Notes:

- 1) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- 2) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Democratic Services, Democratic Services Section, Law and Governance Business Centre, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425622). (Email: democratic.services@runnymede.gov.uk).**
- 3) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please contact democratic.services@runnymede.gov.uk. Tel: 01932 425622. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on www.runnymede.gov.uk.
- 4) In the unlikely event of an alarm sounding, members of the public should leave the building immediately, either using the staircase leading from the public gallery or following other instructions as appropriate.
- 5) Filming, Audio-Recording, Photography, Tweeting and Blogging of Meetings

Members of the public are permitted to film, audio record, take photographs or make use of social media (tweet/blog) at Council and Committee meetings provided that this does not disturb the business of the meeting. If you wish to film a particular meeting, please liaise with the Council Officer listed on the front of the Agenda prior to the start of the meeting so that the Chair is aware and those attending the meeting can be made aware of any filming taking place.

Filming should be limited to the formal meeting area and not extend to those in the public seating area.

The Chair will make the final decision on all matters of dispute in regard to the use of social media audio-recording, photography and filming in the Committee meeting.

List of matters for consideration

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Part I

Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection

1. **Minutes** 4 - 6

To agree and sign the minutes of the AGM held on 13th July 2023.
2. **Apologies for absence**
3. **Chairman's opening remarks**

Introductions

Purpose of the Annual General Meeting
4. **Annual report** 7 - 11

To receive the Annual Report to the year ended 31 March 2024.
5. **Annual inspection of the Trust land** 12 - 15
6. **Discussion forum**

This is an opportunity for the Management Committee to give information, and receive questions and comments on matters related to the Trust's funds and Trust land.

Runnymede Borough Council

Cabrera Trust Management Committee AGM

Thursday, 13 July 2023 at 2.30 pm

Members of the Committee present: Councillor C Howorth (Chairman), Dr P Beesley, P Grobien and M Owen.

Members of the Committee absent: Councillors D Coen, J Hulley (Vice-Chairman), T Ashby and H Lane.
T Ashby and H Lane

1 **Minutes**

The minutes of the last AGM held on Thursday 14th July 2022 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies of absence were received from Councillor D Coen, Councillor J Hulley, T Ashby and P Thomas.

3 **Chairman's opening remarks**

Councillor Howorth welcomed members of the public to the 2023 Annual General Meeting of the Cabrera Trust.

The Cabrera Trust was constituted by Deed of Trust, as amended by a scheme made by the Secretary of State for Education and Science, dated 24 March 1972, and was a registered charity. Runnymede Borough Council was the Trustee.

The Trust was responsible for the management of the open space playing area on Cabrera Avenue and approximately 52 acres of land alongside the River Bourne, known as the Riverside Walk. It was also responsible for the administration and use of the Trust funds.

The Trust Deed required that the Riverside Walk was maintained for the exercise, recreation and benefit of the inhabitants of Virginia Water and the neighbourhood, and the open space on Cabrera Avenue was to be used as a public recreation for the benefit of the same area.

The Management Committee had been set up by the Trustee to provide a clear local focus for the management of the Trust land. The Management Committee comprised of the three Virginia Water Councillors, together with two Council Officers, acting in the capacity of Honorary Treasurer and Honorary Secretary. In addition to this, the Committee had four co-opted members: Mr Ashby, Dr Beesley, Mr Grobien and Mrs Lane. The Chairman thanked the co-opted members for all their help and support over the past year.

4 **Annual report**

Honorary Treasurer's Annual Report

The Honorary Treasurer reported that during the last financial year the Trust had seen its investments fall because of the current financial climate, with funds predicted to last for a maximum of ten years. An Honorary Warden asked where the current rate of expenditure was occurring, and the Honorary Treasurer replied that around £4,000 was spent on tree care alone, although there was not a breakdown for the cost of these works.

The Honorary Treasurer reported on the last financial year for the Trust. It was noted that interest in internal investments had contributed £203 to the Trust's income, giving it a total income of £7,114 when added to the dividends from the Trust's external investments, which was an increase on last year's £6,358. This was seen to be a positive change. It was noted that expenditure had increased from £15,932 in 2021/22 to £20,813 in 2022/23 mainly due to the £3,900 of one-off coppicing works agreed at a previous meeting. It was also noted that the Trust's investments had decreased in value by £7,990. The fund balance as of 31st March 2023 was £125,389.

It was agreed that the newly-established Friends of Cabrera Trust Group would therefore be vital in establishing an alternative income stream for the Trust. Discussion then centred around the current financial strategy around the Friends' Group. It was established that the Group had already raised just over £2,000, with £500 coming from the Virginia Water Community Trail. It was clarified that this money was made up of both subscriptions and donations.

The Friends' Group had a current target to raise £5,000 for the current financial year ending March 2024, and it was hoped that if fifty families could be persuaded to donate £100 per annum, then this target would be achieved.

A member of the public stressed the importance of building an income stream through encouraging local businesses to contribute regularly to the Trust's work. Councillor Howorth expressed his support for this and was happy to lobby local businesses for the cause. The Green Spaces Manager also wondered if the Council's Communications department could support in this venture.

The Honorary Treasurer clarified that money raised could be used in any form – as cash or investments - and it was agreed that establishing a scheme of works would make it more desirable for local businesses to invest. The Green Spaces Manager would come up with a scheme of works, stating that there was a plethora of tree work and coppicing to carry out.

A member of the public also stated that it may encourage further public donations if those who donated were invited to the AGM and be given a vote on how the money was spent.

Action: The Green Spaces Manager to come up with a scheme of works and liaise with the Council's Communications department to see what links could be made with local businesses

Action: Councillor Howorth to lobby local businesses to support the Friends Group

5 Annual inspection of the Trust land

Councillor Howorth apologised for all three councillors being unable to attend the annual inspection.

Officers reported on several actions that had taken place since the annual inspection.

- The graffiti had been cleared
- It was assumed that the mattress and bedding had been cleared as they could no longer be located
- The nettles obscuring a sign had been dealt with on the day by the Tree Officer

It was agreed to discuss the trees in the waterways in the second part of the meeting.

An Honorary Warden wished for it to be minuted that special thanks should be given to Pam Thomas for organising the clearing of the area, and to the Tree Officer for carrying out the work. He noted that a lot of the holly and the Himalayan balsam had now been cleared, and that the remaining holly would be cleared in the near future.

The Green Spaces Manager noted the difficulty in removing items from the water. Whilst the Environment Agency would remove items from the water, it would not remove it from the land. It was down to the Council to arrange for its disposal, either through agreements with other councils, or the depot.

6 Discussion forum

Discussion centred around maintenance of the grass. Councillor Howorth noted that the Council's move from outsourcing the cutting of the grass to completing it in-house had experienced some teething problems in sourcing the correct equipment. However, the Green Spaces Manager now confirmed that the Council now had a WAM (wide angled mower) and that such delays should lessen over time. Councillor Howorth also clarified that Surrey County Council was now responsible for verge cutting, so they should be the first point of contact for such concerns, not Runnymede Borough Council.

There was some debate over whether to continue filling in holes that were believed to be created from placing football goals on the land. Whilst some Members felt that it may be more sustainable to leave the holes, Councillor Howorth reminded members that the Council would be liable if their continued presence resulted in an injury.

Members also considered the playground that is on Trust land. Some Members felt that maintenance of a playground was no longer within the Trust's original intentions or financial capabilities, especially considering its dwindling reserves. It was asked whether it would be possible for the playground to be placed under Council jurisdiction. However, Councillor Howorth reminded the Trust that the Council's Assets and Legal Teams would need to be consulted to clarify the Trust's responsibility towards the playground, and the Honorary Treasurer reminded members that the Council may be unwilling to take on the responsibility of playground maintenance for similar financial reasons. It was agreed that Councillor Howorth would look into the playground's position in relation to the Trust and further discussion around the playground would occur at the next meeting.

Action: Councillor Howorth to clarify the playground's position with the Council's Legal/ Assets Teams for further discussion next meeting.

(The meeting ended at 3.32 pm.)

Chairman

CABRERA TRUST **Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2024**

1. Background to the Trust

- 1.1 The Cabrera Trust is constituted by Deed of Trust as amended by a Scheme made by the Secretary of State for Education and Science dated 24th March 1972 and is a registered charity, No. 305020. Runnymede Borough Council is the Trustee. The registered address of the charity is the Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone, Surrey, KT15 2AH.
- 1.2 The Trust is responsible for the management of the open space playing area on Cabrera Avenue and approximately 52 acres of land alongside the River Bourne known as the Riverside Walk. It is also responsible for the administration and use of the Trust funds. The Trust Deed requires that the Riverside Walk is maintained for the exercise, recreation, and benefit of the inhabitants of Virginia Water and the neighbourhood, and the open space on Cabrera Avenue is to be used as a public recreation ground for the benefit of the same area.
- 1.3 A Management Committee has been set up by the Trustee to provide a clear local focus for the management of the Trust land, with the benefit of professional advice. The Management Committee comprises the three Virginia Water Ward Councillors together with two Council Officers appointed annually by the Community Services Committee of the Council.
- 1.4 During the year the membership of the Committee was:

The three Virginia Water Ward Members of Runnymede Borough Council:-
Councillor C Howorth
Councillor J Hulley
Councillor D Coen

Runnymede Borough Council Officers

Honorary Secretary: Open Spaces and Community Development Manager
(Chris Swatridge)

Honorary Treasurer: Corporate Head of Financial Services
(Paul French)

- 1.5 The objectives adopted by the Management Committee in the management of the Trust land are to maintain the playing area to a proper standard and, in relation to the Riverside Walk, to retain the major part of the land as an area of natural woodland providing a habitat where a variety of animal and plant species can flourish with part having well marked and maintained footpaths for public access.
- 1.6 In January 2019 the Management Committee adopted a mission statement to reflect these objectives 'To protect and enhance nature conservation interests at the Riverside Walk while promoting safe public access to parts of the site and to provide a well-maintained public recreation ground at Cabrera Avenue'

2. The Past Year

- 2.1 Several site meetings have been held during the last year to seek advice on how the site could be managed going forwards. The Council's Biodiversity Officer (Andi Roy) and Chris Swatridge first met with Forestry England in November 2023 to discuss the various woodland management options for the site alongside any potential stewardship applications. This was followed up with a site visit by the Woodland Trust in June 2024. Both visits proved fruitful with various ideas put forward by the woodland experts, though this did tend to reinforce the views of Andi and Chris. It was suggested that a management plan could identify works going forward but this would need to be done with the support of Runnymede Green Space Officers to understand their capacity. It is not likely that stewardship funding is going to be overly game-changing but could prove more lucrative if combined with other woodland sites and management prescriptions going forward. Further site visits with the Environment Agency are planned for the summer to understand the hydrology and river conditions which will further lead to management guidance for the site.
- 2.2 During the year there were a number of site visits and an inspection of trees. This highlighted various incursions and fly tips which Runnymede officers took away to pursue. The winter inspection of the river highlighted a need to carry out tree works to the northern and western boundary of the site which would now be carried out early in the 2024/25 financial year.
- 2.3 The coppicing tree works that had been carried out in February 2023 had been successful and as a result there was now an increase in understorey species including Red Camion and Dog's Mercury.
- 2.4 The Trust agreed to co-opt a member of the newly formed group, The Friends of Cabrera Woods (FCTW), onto the committee. The FCTW has been set up to help manage the site through volunteer sessions, work with external bodies on funding applications and to raise funds for specific projects on the site
- 2.5 The Trust would like to thank the co-opted members – Mr P Beesley, Mr P Grobien and Mrs M Owen for their continued support in managing the Trust's land.

3. Finances

- 3.1 The Charities Act 1993 requires charities with income or expenditure over £25,000 to be subject to an independent examination. The Trust's income and expenditure fell below this threshold in 2023/24 and accordingly no independent examination has been undertaken.
- 3.2 The Statement of Financial Activity showed a deficit for the year of £1,052 before variations in the valuation of investments. All investments held by the trust are with M&G Charifund, this year's accounts recorded a deficit in the market value of £2,242.
- 3.3 As at the 31 March 2024, the value of the holding in the M&G Charifund Shares was £120,513. These are held as long-term investments and provide a regular income stream. The dividend income received from M&G Charifund for the year was £7,118.
- 3.4 The Balance Sheet shows an overall fund balance of £122,096 as of 31 March 2024, a decrease of £3,294 from the previous year. It is the Trust's aim to

maintain balances at a level that will provide sufficient investment income to cover the annual running costs.

- 3.5 Given the Trust's aim, the Members of the Trust committee were advised during the year that the continual withdrawal of the Trust's funds to pay for ongoing revenue expenditure was not sustainable as each investment withdrawal reduces the amount of dividend income available to pay for annual expenses.

Chair of the Cabrera Trust Management Committee
18 July 2024

CABRERA TRUST

Statement of Financial Activity for the year ended 31st March 2024

2022/2023		2023/2024	Notes
Actual		Actual	
£		£	
	Income		
6,911	Dividends from M&G Charifund Shares	7,118	
0	Other Income	0	
203	Interest on Internal Investments	103	
<u>7,114</u>	Total income	<u>7,221</u>	
	Expenditure		
211	Playground Maintenance	216	
474	Maintenance of Recreation Ground	450	
351	Maintenance of Riverside Walk	620	
9,366	Tree works at Riverside Walk	<u>0</u>	
		1,286	
711	Administrative expenses	197	
	<u>Management and administrative recharges</u>		(2)
7,000	Supervision of Sites	4,090	
1,700	Committee Services Recharge	1,700	
1,000	Financial Services	<u>1,000</u>	
		6,790	
<u>20,813</u>	Total expenditure	<u>8,273</u>	
(13,699)	Net outgoing resources before other recognised losses	(1,052)	
	Other recognised losses		
(7,990)	Increase/(Decrease) in valuation of investments	(2,242)	
0	Recall of Investment income	0	
<u>(21,688)</u>	Net movement in funds for the year	<u>(3,294)</u>	

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

31 March 2023		31 March 2024	Notes
Actual		Actual	
£		£	
	Investments		
122,755	Investment in M&G Charifund	120,513	(3)
	Current Assets		
2,634	Cash at Bank	1,583	
<u>125,389</u>		<u>122,096</u>	
	Unrestricted income funds		
147,078	Fund balance at 1 April	125,390	
(21,688)	Net movement in funds for the year	(3,294)	
<u>125,390</u>	Fund Balance at 31 March	<u>122,096</u>	(4)

CABRERA TRUST

Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024

- (1) The Statement of Financial Activities has been prepared on an accruals basis.
- (2) Supervision of Sites relates to the day to day management of the sites, organising, overseeing and carrying out works and liaising with Trustees
- Committee Services relate to the time spent arranging, managing and clerking Trust meetings
- Financial Services represents the costs of financial administration, advice, budgeting, accounting, monitoring and paying and issuing Trust invoices
- (3) The Trusts Investments in the M&G Charifund are shown on the balance sheet at market value.
- (4) All the funds held by the Trust at 31 March 2024 are unrestricted and are available to discharge any of the charitable objectives of the Trust.

INVESTMENTS - MARKET VALUE AT 31ST MARCH 2024	
<u>Market Value compared with book cost</u>	£
Holding	8,276.51
Book Cost	120,500.00
Price @ 31.03.24	14.56
Value @ 31.03.24	<u>120,512.61</u>
<u>Change in value 2023/24</u>	
Carrying value @ 31.03.23	122,754.71
Additions at cost	0.00
Disposals at carrying value	0.00
Add net gain / (loss) on revaluation	<u>(2,242)</u>
Carrying value @ 31.03.24	<u>120,512.61</u>

The annual inspection of the Trust land took place on Thursday 13th June.

In attendance were - Councillors C Howorth, K Rowsell.

Honorary Wardens - P Grobien and M Owen

Representative from Friends of Cabrera Trust Woods (FCTW)-
G Biswas

Representatives from Runnymede Borough Council – C Swatridge,
A Roy, C Fitzpatrick and C Holehouse.

Apologies were received from: Councillor J Hulley and Dr P Beesley.

During the inspection, the following points were noted:

Riverside Walk

- Nettles around the entrance sign needed clearing by the Green Space team
- There was a camp instiu which needed removing by the Green Space team. Holes surrounding the camp also need to be filled by the Green Space team as these made the area unsafe.
- The Group discussed the benefits of chemical sampling of the river. Officers were happy to pursue this if the Committee felt this would be beneficial.
- Officers advised the group that the Environment Agency (EA) would be visiting the site in July. The EA would give Officers a good idea of how the site should be managed going forward.
- There were several dumped Christmas trees on the site. It was noted that the encroachment letters discussed at the Committee in January had not been sent out. Councillor Howorth wanted Officers to deal with this directly, there was no expectation on the volunteers to distribute the letters when written.
- The fence on the broad walk at the Eastern end of the site (near the station) was unsafe. A report from Officers for the meeting would need to be prepared so the Committee could consider getting it replaced/repared. It was believed a quote had already been obtained for this.
- The parameter of the site along the station path had been brush cut by the Open Space Team. The arisings had been left which could potentially fall into the river and cause flooding.
- The entrance from the station footpath was very overgrown and needed cutting back. The overgrown nettles etc. covered the sign onto the site.

- There was a loose railing on the footpath from the station path that needed to be reattached to ensure safety
- There was a large area of skunk cabbage. It was suggested that use of an herbicide would be the best course of action. Noting that certain herbicides were safe to use near watercourses
- There were also areas of Himalayan Balsam. The FCTW had previously cleared areas of this. It was noted that a member of staff from RBC (Runnymede Borough Council) in a supervisory role was needed for insurance purposes.
- The large bridge at the Western end of the site needed repair, quotes would need to be obtained for this and a report presented to the Committee for consideration.
- The next bridge had some loose railings.
- The possibility of installing a bin outside of the site under the main sign was raised. This would be raised under AOB at the meeting.

Cabrera Open Space

- As noted last year the grass and weeds were abundant around the parking spaces in front of the open space. These needed cutting back by the Runnymede Green Space Team.
- As noted last year the Green Space was left with long grass around trees, the play area and boundary areas. These areas needed strimming when the mowing took place.
- There was an area of graffiti on one piece of play equipment which needed to be removed.

Cabrera Trust Walkabout 13th June 2024

issue identified 13th June 2024	allocated to	proposed action	Action taken 26th June 2024
Nettles by the entrance	Grounds Maintenance (GM) team	Strimming to take place	Work scheduled for June
Campsite	Green Spaces Team	clear camp and litter, move logs and fill holes	The camp has been cleared and holes filled.
Water sampling	Community Development	Environment Agency to visit in July Officers to liaise with EA re results	
Dumped Christmas Trees - east area of site	Green Spaces team/ Grounds Maintenance team and Legal services	Trees to be removed and letter drafted for distribution to residents	Discussions with Legal have taken place and the legal service has agreed to draft an incursion letter to be distributed as required.
Bridges unsafe and need repairs - nearest car park and western end	Green Spaces	Quote for committee from Sarum Hardwoods	Green Spaces have requested a quote
Strim paths internally - railway line already done.	GM team	strim paths to clear	Work scheduled for June
Loose railing on the footpath near station path needs to be reattached	Task force operative DSO	site visit to assess and repair	The Direct Services task force operative has assessed the railing
Skunk Cabbage needs herbicide treatment	GM team / Community Development	GM team to treat	This will take place outside the grass cutting season
Himalayan Balsam	FCTW with supervision from GS	FCTW have volunteered, Green Spaces to supervise as per insurance requirements.	
unsafe bridge at Western end	GS - Franco	Green Spaces to seek quote from Sarum Hardwoods	Quote awaited from Sarum Hardwoods
Bridge with lose railings next to broken bridge	Task Force Operative DSO	Visit to assess if this can be repaired in house.	Repairs completed
Possibility of bin at entrance	DSO Street Care	The teams agreed that this would not be recommended as the bin was likely to attract fly	NFA

		tipping and litter waste can not be recycled.	
Grass and weeds in the car park	GM team	strim to take place	Work scheduled for June
Long grass around trees boundaries of play areas	GM team	strim to take place	Work scheduled for June
Graffiti on the play equipment	DSO - cleansing team	Graffiti to be removed	Specialist removal wipes to be procured.



Camp before and after pictures 17th June 2024.