

Friends of Cabrera Trust and Woods Chairman's Report.

The Friends of Cabrera Trust and Woods (FCTW) was formed a year ago at an inaugural meeting where a group of volunteer officers were agreed. This committee includes the following members, George Biswas: Chair, Peter Try: Treasurer, Jeff Turner: Secretary, Freda Larham, Phillip Beesley, Jane Broadbent.

This committee met 7 times during the year and members communicate regularly to undertake the business of FCTW. We would welcome anyone who is interested to put themselves forward to join the committee.

The constitution of the group can be found in detail on our website and one central purpose is fundraising, recognising the depletion of the original Cabrera Trust Fund. We complement the Volunteering Group and have membership on the Cabrera Trust Management Committee.

Membership of the FTWC is obtained by the payment of a membership fee of at least £10 each year. As we are a community group we did not wish to preclude anyone who could not afford more and set the bar at a modest level, whilst hoping for the generosity of those who could afford it. This hope has been realised. Thanks to all who have joined.

During the year the FCTW has engaged in activities to provide a foundation for the future. We wished in particular to establish a membership base of people willing and able commit to regular donations to enable a sustainable income flow. With the support of Cllr Jonathan Hulley - thanks very much indeed for this support Cllr Hulley - we have been able to gather resources that enable us to make people aware of our existence and encourage membership. These 'pump-priming' resources include advertising, advertising banners and a variety of leaflets that have been distributed and the help of a professional designer.

We have built a website: <https://friendsofcabrera.co.uk>

We had a presence at the Virginia Water Trail in 2023 (and hope to do so again this year).

We have advertised in the Virginia Water Magazine and had a short article in the Runnymede Magazine.

Our emphasis this year has been on building a foundation of community members and we are grateful to all of those who have contributed generously, both in terms of their membership payments and donations and in terms of their time and expertise.

On the basis of these efforts we will transfer £3,000 to the Cabrera Trust Management Committee.

In the coming year we hope to consolidate and expand our community membership but also start to build a base of Corporate sponsors in order to increase the capacity of our fundraising. Having spent more time assessing the needs of the Trust and taking into account inflation, it is clear that we need a more ambitious annual fundraising target than that we anticipated last year. Our current aim is to build a base of community members and commercial sponsors who provide recurring donation income that will ensure the remaining trust funds are maintained. This year the reduction of the fund was £12,500 so a target of £15,000 pa is perhaps reasonable. This target may take more than a year to reach but we wish to be both ambitious and also realistic.

We are grateful for your support, open to your ideas, happy to have your engagement and welcome any involvement you might wish to have.

George Biswas
Chairman FCTW,
1st March 2024.