



# THE FRIENDS OF CHARNWOOD FOREST



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President: Mrs Janie Martin

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21 November 2020

Dear Trustee,

## MANAGEMENT OF BRADGATE PARK

The Friends of Charnwood Forest is a society dedicated to protect Charnwood Forest. Formed in 1986, we have about 150 members, and are run by an elected Committee. Our activities include scrutiny of any activity we consider detrimental to Charnwood Forest, an educational programme of well-attended talks and outdoor meetings, and fund-raising to provide enhancements to the Forest; these include:-

- Planting oaks on Anstey Green
- Providing trees for Martin's Wood off Dean's Lane
- Providing explanatory boards at two nature reserves in the Forest, and a Notice Board in Woodhouse Eaves
- Providing finance for the "Stag's Head" outside Newtown Linford.

We regard Bradgate Park as the "Jewel in Charnwood Forest's crown" and we wrote to each Trustee on 11 September 2019 asking for their views on the adverse publicity resulting from the resignation of Peter Tyldesley; however, all we got was a polite, but dismissive, note from the Secretary to the Trustees, the Leicestershire City Barrister and Head of Standards, who recommended that you did not respond.

We are very disappointed that you decided to follow this advice; we believe that engaging with the local community is an important role of the Trustees of such an important place as Bradgate Park.



[www.focf.org.uk](http://www.focf.org.uk)

We also believe that a formal complaint was made to the Charity Commission about the Trustees' behaviour. Although you stated that the complaint had been rejected<sup>1</sup>, our understanding was that, nevertheless the Commission provided<sup>2</sup> "helpful advice". We believe it to be in the public interest for these words of advice to be publicly available; if you do not feel able to make this information available we at least believe that you should publicly state what changes you are making in response to the Commission's advice.

Since then Steve Palethorpe was appointed "Interim Director" in January 2020<sup>3</sup> for 6 months, although for the first half of this he was part-time, and although we understand that his term has subsequently been extended we believe that he is still "interim" rather than substantive.

Friends of Charnwood Forest are concerned that no substantive appointment to the role of Director has been made. We believe it appropriate that a place as important as Bradgate Park to the people of Leicester and Leicestershire, with an annual turnover in excess of £1.5M, deserves to have a full-time dedicated manager. We do not believe that the advent of coronavirus should prevent this happening. Perhaps you could let us know what steps you are taking to make a permanent appointment?

### Summary

In short, we are concerned about the (lack of) communication from Bradgate Park Trustees and Management. The letter from Kamal Adatia referred to above included the words "the Trustees see it as a high priority to communicate effectively with staff, visitors, volunteers and other stakeholders over the events of the [2019] summer and the direction of travel going forward". We do not believe such communication has actually occurred; indeed, in our opinion communications have significantly worsened over the last year. Please could you let us know what steps you are taking to rectify the position.

Paul Day  
Chairman,  
Friends of Charnwood Forest.

PTM 19 Nov 2020

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<sup>1</sup> Newsletter to Volunteers, December 2019.

<sup>2</sup> From Charity Commission website.

<sup>3</sup> Newsletter to Volunteers, January 2020.

