

FRIENDS OF MOUNT EDGCUMBE COUNTRY PARK (FOMECP) (CHARITY NO. 295261)

Report to The Joint Committee, November 2022

This paper provides an overview of the FOMECP vision and Executive Committee structure and an update on membership, finances, priorities, events and future plans for the FOMECP.

Our Vision

To work in partnership with the Park Management by funding – jointly or independently – mutually agreed projects.

To continue to support the Park, as set out in our constitution: ‘to preserve, or assist in the preservation and enhancement of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park, Cornwall, for the benefit of the public, as a place of historical, botanical, horticultural, architectural and natural beauty’.

FOMECP Committee

Officer Posts:

- Chairman – Ged Edgcumbe.
- Vice Chairman – Alan Drummond.
- Treasurer – Carol Drummond.
- Membership Secretary – Post remains vacant – Ged Edgcumbe will cover until the post is filled.
- Secretary – Glenis Edgcumbe.

Committee Posts:

- Neil Rugg, Steve Creese, Anne Creese, Teresa Tong, Harry Vosper, Janet Vosper and Rozanne Griffiths-Woodcock.
- Two new members have recently joined the committee: Ben Church and Shane Perry
- One Officer post (Membership Secretary) and one Committee post remain vacant.

On 13 October a Service of Memorial was held to commemorate the life of Tony Hutchings who sadly passed away on 15th September. Tony was a staunch, dedicated and well-respected member of the FOMECP committee, serving 5 years as Membership Secretary, 2 years as Treasurer and 3 years as editor of the FOMECP journal. Members of the FOMECP committee and several members of Mount Edgcumbe Country Park staff including Chris Burton and David Marshall attended the memorial.

Membership

Over the past 2 years FOMECP membership figures have been lower than previous years and the number of new members being signed up was extremely sporadic. During the Covid lockdown period, FOMECP membership numbers dipped as low as 550. However since the easing of the lockdown measures in May 2021 numbers have steadily increased. On the 31st October 2022, membership of the FOMECP stood at 695, which is an extremely encouraging number that reinforces a continued support for the FOMECP and the work it does at Mount Edgcumbe.

Financial Update of The Year to Date

The FOMECP financial year runs from 1st January to 31st December each year. Thus far in 2022 the FOMECP have committed to support 6 significant projects; bedding plants (£3,500), an Education Shelter (up to £7,500), resurfacing of the road adjacent to the Barrow Centre (£20,000), the repair of 2 statues (Athena & Diana the Huntress) located close to Mount Edgumbe House (£10,000), refurbishment of a traditional Cornish Hay Wagon (£3,000) and the refurbishment of the toilets at the Orangery (£40,000) – a total of £74,000.

- **Education Shelter & Road Resurfacing:** The bedding plants, resurfacing of the Barrow Centre road and Education Shelter have all been completed.
- **Statue Repairs:** A works order for the repair of the statues (Athena & Diana the Huntress) has been agreed and the contractors are scheduled to start work in February 2023. This is Phase 1 of a project FOMECP hope to continue in the future – subject to the availability of funds - to repair as many of the statues in the Park as we can.
- **Cornish Hay Wagon:** The refurbishment of the traditional Cornish Hay Wagon is an in-house project - i.e. work undertaken by Park staff – and will be conducted over the autumn/winter months. Once complete, the Hay Wagon will be moved to enhance an outdoor seating area directly behind the Barrow Centre buildings that is currently being refurbished by Park staff.
- **Orangery Toilets:** The FOMECP have engaged an architect to undertake the first phase of the Orangery toilets refurbishment, which is the planning/listed building application, building regulations application construction design details, the construction tender process and contract management. At the end of the first phase, a design for the refurbished toilets will have been agreed (by the FOMECP and the Park Manager) and companies will be invited to tender to undertake the work.

Matters of Importance to Raise with The Joint Committee

1. Park Funding

The FOMECP is well aware of the strain on both Plymouth City and Cornwall County Councils budgets and the FOMECP also applauds the enormous efforts by the Park Manager and his staff in achieving zero-funding for the Park's budget.

Notwithstanding the above, the FOMECP remains concerned at the lack of support/funding to enable proper investment in restoring and maintaining the many historic/listed buildings in Mount Edgumbe Park – some of which are already in a critical state - and we are keen to understand if funds could be made available in the future to assist in this matter.

2. Volunteers

Despite a number of requests using different mediums/forums, the FOMECP struggles to generate sufficient volunteers to assist in the running of the events it holds aimed at generating much needed funds that helps to support the Park.

The FOMECP would be keen to understand if there are any Plymouth City or Cornwall County Council run controlled forums/processes that could be used by the FOMECP to promote the Charity and assist in generating support from the public to volunteer at FOMECP/Park events.

FOMECP Events

The FOMECP assisted by Park staff, manage/run 3 main events per year; an Easter Egg Hunt (March/April); a Summer Fair & Classic Car Rally (August) and a Halloween Trail (October). The Easter Egg Hunt and the Classic Car Rally were both extremely successful in terms of the money raised, the enjoyment for the people who attended and the exposure of the House/Park to the general public. Unfortunately, due to an inability to generate sufficient volunteers to enable the FOMECP to run the Halloween trail in a safe and controlled manner, the event had to be cancelled.

Plans are in place to hold all 3 events in 2023.

2022/23 Actions in Discussion

1. Continuing to support the Park and work in a collaborative manner with the Park Manager and his team on mutually agreed projects.
2. Working on a list of projects the FOMECP would like to support in 2023 and presenting the list to the Park Manager.
3. Recruiting for the vacant posts on the Executive Committee and a volunteer(s) to run and manage the FOMECP online presence – e.g. FOMECP website, Facebook etc.
4. Encouraging our existing FOMECP members and local visitors to become active volunteers for all events held in the Park.
5. Continuing to promote and support traders in the Park.

Prepared 28 October 2022

Ged Edgcumbe - FOMECP Chair