



THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

CHARITY NUMBER 1071096

www.brambles-kenilworth.com

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**THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024**

Reference and administrative information

Thorns Community Trust (TCT) is a registered charity, no. 1071096. TCT trades under the name Brambles Pre-School and Out of School Club (Brambles). Brambles is located on the site of Thorns Community Infant School (Thorns), and continues to maintain close links with the school. Its principal location is c/o Thorns Community Infant School, Blackthorn Road, Kenilworth, CV8 2DS.

TCT is overseen by a committee of Trustees. There are three types of trustee:

- Ex-officio - the head teacher of Thorns Community Infant School
- Nominated - Trustees who are appointed by the governing body of Thorns Community Infant School, and
- Co-opted – Trustees who have been appointed by the TCT committee of Trustees as a consequence of their particular professional skills.

TRUSTEES WHO SERVED DURING THE YEAR		
Name	Position	Type of Trustee
Jonathan Wright	Chair	Co-opted
Liz Bradbury	Ex-officio	Ex-officio
Simon Morris	Trustee	Nominated
Michelle Andrews	Trustee	Nominated
Victoria Lancaster	Trustee	Nominated
TRUSTEES MANAGING TCT AT THE TIME THIS REPORT IS SIGNED		
Name	Position	Type of Trustee
Jonathan Wright	Chair	Co-opted
Liz Bradbury	Ex-officio	Ex-officio
Michelle Andrews	Trustee	Nominated
Victoria Lancaster	Trustee	Nominated

Structure, Governance and Management

TCT is governed by a constitution, which was written in January 1998 and supplemented by a further deed of the same year. An amendment to the constitution was made by way of Deed of Variation dated 23rd March 2011.

In 2023-24, the Trustees met as a formal Board on four occasions- on 26 September 2023, 6 December 2023, 6 March 2024 and 2 July 2024. During trust meetings all Trustees had the right to speak and to be heard. Decisions were made by consensus.

The day-to-day management of Brambles is delegated to the manager of Brambles, who is supported by a deputy manager. TCT also contracts a direct employee who is responsible for day to day administration and business management. Operational reports are made by the Brambles manager and the business manager (who is responsible for finance) at most Trustee meetings.

Objectives, activities and performance

The main aim of TCT is to provide high quality child care to young children between the ages of 2 years and eleven years through the provision of a Pre-School, Out of School Club and Holiday Club.

In effect, Brambles fulfils the obligation of Thorns Community Infant School by way of its extended hours provision.

Public benefit

Brambles is a pre-school, out of school club and holiday club setting that provides reasonably priced childcare and educational benefits to the local community. The Trustees always seek to bear in mind that TCT is a charity and that they have a responsibility to act in the public interest. At the time of signing this report all serving Trustees had read the guidance published by the Charities Commission on public benefit.

The Trustees believe that the aims and resulting benefits of TCT are clear and that the benefits obtained from TCT's activities are derived from its aims. In addition, the benefits are focused on a section of the public, namely pre-school and primary age children and their parents/carers, and within this range, no section of the public is unreasonably restricted.

Due to its location the children who attend Brambles tend to live within the Thorns' catchment area. The admissions policy does not however exclude children from attending who live outside of this area. The Trustees still consider that the prices are competitive and would not regard the inability to pay fees as a bar to entry.

Pre-school

During the financial year, the Brambles Pre-School was open for five morning and lunchtime sessions as well as a number of afternoon sessions per week during term time.

Brambles Ofsted registration allows 30 children to attend per session. It is TCT policy to not fill each session so that the educational experience for each child is optimised.

The vast majority of the Pre-School children moved from Brambles Pre-School up to Thorns at the end of their pre-school year.

Out of School Club

During the financial year, the Out of School Club was also only open during term time, with a good number of children registered, split across the three year groups at Thorns. The Out of School Club opened both before school, from 8am, and then again after school, from 3pm to 6pm.

Holiday Club

During the financial year, the Holiday Club was open during a good number of school holidays and offered a variety of sessions, within the timeframe of 8am to 6pm.

The number of children attending Holiday Club varied between holidays. In common with previous years, a good proportion of the children who attended holiday club were pupils at Thorns or Park Hill. These were supplemented by children that attended other schools in Kenilworth.

Risk Review

The Trustees regularly consider the risks to which TCT is exposed at the Trustees' meetings and, where appropriate, measures are taken to ensure existing systems and procedures are strengthened to mitigate these risks as far as possible. During the year, some new policies were approved and other improvements were made. This is necessary to ensure good governance and manage risk so as to maintain the high standards for the setting.

The Trustees are mindful that changes in Government Policy as far as the free provision of childcare for nursery age children could alter the risk profile for the setting.

In order to further mitigate risk, the Trustees have established a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and transferred the undertaking of the Charity to that CIO on 31 August 2024.

Financial Review

For the year ending 31 August 2023, TCT made a surplus of £8,282. This increased the overall level of reserves to £148,663 at the end of the financial year.

The continued challenge faced by TCT is in ensuring that the PreSchool is kept full and that numbers at the Out of School Club are sustained (as the latter largely cross-subsidises the first). The disparity has become even more acute during the financial year in question, albeit the Trustees are aware of this and are working hard to make the PreSchool more sustainable without the subsidy. The financial performance depends to a large extent on these factors being maintained.

There are no restricted or designated funds held by the Trust. From time to time the Trustees may budget to spend certain monies on certain projects, but these funds remain at all times part of the general accumulated fund of the Trust. However, the Trustees believe that an adequate level of reserves of four to six months' running costs should be maintained at all times to enable TCT to continue operating for a term should all external funding cease.

The Trustees observe that the present cash balance held is materially in excess of the stipulated four to six months' running costs. Given the age of the temporary building and the maintenance liabilities that accrue annually, it remains the stated intention of the Trustees to look to those surplus funds (with the addition of grant monies) to either refurbish or replace the current temporary building.

Future Events

Fees continue to be reviewed annually. The Trustees will continue to keep both fees and expenditure under close review so as to ensure that the Trust continues to generate a surplus and therefore maintain adequate levels of reserves to remain viable into the future.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

Charity law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to assume that the charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity, and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed on behalf of the TCT's Trustees:

Jonathan William Emlyn Wright
Chair

19 June 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

I report on the accounts of Thorns Community Trust ('the Trust') for the year ended 31 August 2024 which comprise the Statement of Financial Activities, the Balance Sheet, and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of the report

As the Trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). You are satisfied that the accounts of the Trust are not required by charity law to be audited and have chosen instead to have an independent examination.

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act. In carrying out my examination I have followed the general Directions given by the Charity Commission for England and Wales under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with my examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the 2011 Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with those records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Michelle Larkin
Chartered Accountant

FILAN Accountants
57 Ely Street
Warwickshire
CV37 6LN

19 June 2025

THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

	Notes	2024			2023		
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		Fund	Funds	Funds	Fund	Funds	Funds
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Income from:							
Donation	3	-	-	-	1,000	-	1,000
Charitable activities	4	177,295	-	177,295	173,374	-	173,374
Other trading activities	5	196	-	196	11	-	11
Investments	6	2,110	-	2,110	790	-	790
Other	7	-	671	671	290	-	290
Total		179,601	671	180,272	175,465	-	175,465
Expenditure on:							
Charitable activities	8	171,319	671	171,990	167,663	-	167,663
Total		171,319	671	171,990	167,663	-	167,663
Net (expenditure)/income		8,282	-	8,282	7,802	-	7,802
Reconciliation of funds:							
Funds brought forward		140,381	-	140,381	132,579	-	132,579
Funds carried forward		148,663	-	148,663	140,381	-	140,381

THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 AUGUST 2024

		2024		2023	
	Notes	£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible fixed assets	11		6,598		8,253
Current assets					
Debtors	12	4,669		5,146	
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>144,025</u>		<u>129,423</u>	
		148,694		134,569	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	13	<u>(6,629)</u>		<u>(2,441)</u>	
Net current assets			142,065		132,128
Net assets			<u>148,663</u>		<u>140,381</u>
Represented by:					
Accumulated funds:					
General fund	14		<u>148,663</u>		<u>140,381</u>

These accounts were approved by the Trustees on 19 June 2025 and are signed on their behalf by:

JWE Wright
Chair

THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024

1. Status

Thorns Community Trust is an unincorporated association; it is also a registered charity (registration number 1071096) whose activities are intended to be for the public benefit. Its principal location is c/o Thorns Community Infant School, Blackthorn Road, Kenilworth, CV8 2DS.

2. Accounting Policies

Basis of preparation

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 and the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Charities Act 2011 and UK Generally Accepted Practice as it applies from 1 January 2015.

The accounts (financial statements) have been prepared to give a 'true and fair' view and have departed from the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 only to the extent required to provide a 'true and fair view'. This departure has involved following Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014 rather than the Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice effective from 1 April 2005 which has since been withdrawn.

Going concern

After making enquiries, the trustees are not aware of any material uncertainties that cast doubt on going concern and have a reasonable expectation that the Charity will be able to continue its activities for the foreseeable future, and at least twelve months from the date of approval of these accounts. Accordingly, they have continued to adopt the going concern basis in the financial statements.

Income

Income is recognised as incoming resources to the extent that the charity has provided the services in question.

Expenditure

Costs of activities in furtherance of the charity's objects comprise those costs incurred by the charity as a result of the delivery of its service. Governance costs comprise those costs incurred by the charity in meeting its constitutional and statutory requirements.

Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are included in the balance sheet at cost less depreciation. Depreciation is generally calculated so that the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value are written off over their estimated useful lives. The following depreciation rates apply:

- Fixtures, fittings and equipment - 25% reducing balance.

THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024 (continued)

3. Donations

	2024	2023
	Unrestricted £	Total £
Donations	-	1,000

The donation received in 2023 was an Unreserved Grant from Waitrose.

4. Income from charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Out of school club fees	93,070	88,754
Holiday club fees	22,501	22,936
Preschool grant	56,732	48,798
Preschool fees	4,992	12,886
	177,295	173,374

5. Other trading activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Contributions from Public	196	-
Contribution from Trustee Simon Morris	-	11

6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£
Interest receivable on bank deposits	2,110	2,110	790

7. Other income

	2024	2023
	£	£
Best Practice Network	671	
Grant Received from WCC County Fund for Breakfast Club	-	290

THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024 (continued)

8. Expenditure on charitable activities

	2024			2023
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	
	£	£	£	£
Staff costs	142,601	-	142,601	140,242
Insurance	2,500	-	2,500	2,160
Materials	4,278	-	4,278	5,068
Electricity	3,120	-	3,120	1,393
Training	936	-	936	918
Printing postage and telephone	1,068	-	1,068	934
Depreciation	2,199	-	2,199	2,751
Rent	4,000	-	4,000	4,333
Rates	155	-	155	244
Repairs	483	-	483	291
Cleaning	1,760	-	1,760	2,138
Professional fees	1,091	-	1,091	922
Nursery IT and software	-	-	-	188
Bank charges	61	-	61	71
Storage & Archiving	1,854	-	1,854	952
Sundry	4,157	-	4,157	4,098
Grant Expenditure - Restricted	-	671	671	-
	<u>170,263</u>	<u>671</u>	<u>170,934</u>	<u>166,703</u>

Governance costs:

Trustees' remuneration and expenses	-	-	-	-
Independent Examiner's fees	1,056	-	1,056	960
	<u>171,319</u>	<u>671</u>	<u>171,990</u>	<u>167,663</u>

9. Trustees remuneration and expenses

Ms Michelle Andrews, a trustee, received £0 (2023: £40) for reimbursed expenses during the year.

10. Staff remuneration and numbers

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	138,116	137,149
Employers National Insurance	2,177	1,069
Pension contributions	2,308	2,024
	<u>142,601</u>	<u>140,242</u>

The average monthly number of employees paid during the year was 2 full time (2023:3) and 10 part-time (2023: 12) who worked between 3 and 25 hours per week.

THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024 (continued)

11. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures & fittings £	Equipment £	Property Improvements £	Total £
Cost				
As at 1 September 2023	26,537	11,070	7,003	44,610
Additions	-	544	-	544
As at 31 August 2024	<u>26,537</u>	<u>11,614</u>	<u>7,003</u>	<u>45,154</u>
Depreciation				
As at 1 September 2023	24,142	9,645	2,570	36,357
Provided in year	599	492	1,108	2,199
As at 31 August 2024	<u>24,741</u>	<u>10,137</u>	<u>3,678</u>	<u>38,556</u>
Net book value				
As at 31 August 2024	<u>1,796</u>	<u>1,477</u>	<u>3,325</u>	<u>6,598</u>
As at 31 August 2023	<u>2,395</u>	<u>1,425</u>	<u>4,433</u>	<u>8,253</u>

	2024 £	2023 £
12. Debtors		
Trade debtors	3,267	4,231
Prepayments	1,402	915
Other debtors	-	-
	<u>4,669</u>	<u>5,146</u>

13. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	69	-
Taxation and social security	850	901
Other creditors and accruals	<u>5,710</u>	<u>1,540</u>
	<u>6,629</u>	<u>2,441</u>

Included within Other Creditors is £5,162 (2023: nil) which is a Grant received from Best Practice Network. £5,833 was received in the year and £671 was used to cover costs of a staff member on placement.

THORNS COMMUNITY TRUST

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS YEAR ENDED 31 AUGUST 2024 (continued)

14. Movement in funds

Name of fund	Opening £	Incoming resources £	Outgoing resources £	Closing £
Restricted fund: Best Practice Network	-	671	(671)	-
Unrestricted fund: General fund	140,381	179,601	(171,319)	148,663
Total of all funds	140,381	180,272	(171,990)	148,663

15. Fees for examination of the accounts

	2024 £	2023 £
Independent examiner's fees	1,056	960
Fees paid to the independent examiner - payroll costs	871	922
Fees paid to the independent examiner - bookkeeping costs	180	-
	2,107	1,882

FILAN Accountants carried out payroll duties at a cost of £871 (2023 :£922) in the year. Filan Accountants also provided bookkeeping training of £180 (2023: nil) which is included within Training. Separate departments carried out this work to ensure independence was maintained.