



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Trustees' Annual Report

Charity name: The Thomas Gifford Trust

Charity registration number: 1155669

For the period from 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

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This report has been prepared following guidance in the [Charities Statement of Recommended Practice \(SORP, FRS-102 second edition\)](#). SORP references in this report refer to the relevant paragraph of that guidance.

1. Objectives and Activities

SORP requirement	Commentary
<p>Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document</p> <p><i>SORP para 1.17</i></p>	<p>To provide and maintain a recreation ground (The Playing Close) for the benefit of the inhabitants of the parish of Charlbury and the surrounding area.</p> <p>To promote such other charitable purposes for the benefit of the inhabitants of Charlbury and the surrounding area as the Trustees shall think fit.</p>
<p>Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.</p> <p><i>SORP para 1.17 and 1.19</i></p>	<p>During the year the Thomas Gifford Trust (TGT) managed the Charlbury Community Centre in its sixth full year of operation on a not-for-profit basis. TGT also managed The Playing Close, a public green space at the heart of Charlbury.</p> <p>The Community Centre incorporates sports, leisure and community facilities, a café and a branch of Oxfordshire County Council's library. As such it provides a much-needed facility for the town and surrounding communities.</p> <p>The Playing Close is a historic green space in the town centre, valued by residents and visitors for its amenity. It also serves as a venue for a range of community events.</p> <p>The charity's income from grants resulted from energetic fund-raising by Trustees and especially the Community Centre's Executive Director, securing access to money from local councils, central government and other sources.</p> <p>TGT does not have any employees: the Centre provides contract employment for a small number of local residents, helping to strengthen the town's community and economy.</p> <p>In addition to contracted staff who manage and run the Centre, the Trustees record their gratitude to all the volunteers who support the Centre with their time and other resources to ensure that it runs successfully.</p>
<p>Statement confirming that trustees have regard to guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit</p> <p><i>SORP para 1.18</i></p>	<p>The Trustees are mindful of the Charities Act 2011 'public benefit requirement' in all of their activities.</p>

Additional information (optional)

SORP requirement	Commentary
Policy on grant making <i>SORP para 1.38</i>	TGT is reliant on donations and income from grants and Community Centre activities in order to help cover running costs and long-term maintenance requirements. Consequently, TGT is not in a position to offer grants to other organisations.
Contribution made by volunteers <i>SORP para 1.38</i>	<p>TGT is always heavily reliant on a substantial pool of volunteers from the town and surrounding area.</p> <p>A Trustee-led management group of volunteers freely provides time and expertise to undertake routine and non-routine maintenance tasks in the building, the surrounding grounds and on the Playing Close.</p> <p>The Trustees unreservedly thank all of those people who provided their skills, expertise and time to the Community Centre and TGT's other responsibilities during 2023-24.</p>

2. Achievements and Performance

SORP requirement	Commentary
Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole. <i>SORP para 1.20</i>	<p>In its regular activities, the charity has fulfilled its commitments to the community through the successful management of both the Community Centre and The Playing Close. Both facilities are available for all to use, in many cases free of charge.</p> <p>Some highlights of the Trust's key areas of business throughout the year follow.</p> <p>FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY</p> <p>In addition to information provided in the financial accounts accompanying this report, the following points illustrate the sound financial management undertaken during 2023-24.</p> <p>TGT's 2023-24 accounts show that a total of £19,952 was attracted in donations and grants. Sources are detailed in the Annual Accounts and summarized in Section 3 below.</p>

SORP requirement	Commentary
	<p>TGT secured full business rates relief from the District Council for 2023-24, allowing more of the Trust's funds to be used for community benefit and maintenance of the premises.</p> <p>Throughout the year Trustees agreed to keep setting aside money in a sinking fund (savings account) for long-term maintenance of the Community Centre and Playing Close.</p> <p>The Chair, Executive Director and the Trustee with lead responsibility for finance helped to embed financial planning in management of the Community Centre. For example, a move to monthly payments for most sports activities helped to even out TGT's budget forecast fluctuations over the year, and in July 2024 Trustees considered the potential for variable hire charges, stewarding and attendance limits as part of efforts to ensure financial sustainability.</p> <p>Finance processes were kept under review to ensure robustness. A new process for regular payments was agreed in November 2024 which strengthened control and assurance by requiring two people to have oversight of expenditure. A change of book-keeper during the year, including acquisition of new software, was expected to bring improvement and resilience to this aspect of the Trust's financial management.</p> <p>In May 2023 Trustees reviewed the rates of pay of those local residents who manage or provide services in the Community Centre. Wage increases were made within the agreed budget envelope, ensuring both appropriate reward and affordability.</p> <p>The contracting of a Trustee to manage the Community Centre's café led to a considerable increase in income from that source over the year.</p> <p>The Trust's Building Management Committee members continued to implement the findings of their 2022 review of Community Centre energy use. This was primarily driven by the need to manage the rising cost of energy bills, though lowering TGT's carbon footprint was also a factor. By year end the Community Centre was being run more energy-efficiently and with costs kept to a minimum.</p> <p>Trustees supported additional fund-raising and promotional activities during the year; for example, running a stall at</p>

SORP requirement	Commentary
	<p>Street Fair and managing a Pimms Tent at Charlbury Beer Festival. In September 2023 Trustees began considering a Friends of Charlbury Community Centre initiative with potential to attract funding, volunteers and a sense of ownership of the Community Centre in and beyond Charlbury. This remained an ongoing discussion at the end of the reporting year.</p> <p>SECURITY, SAFETY AND AMENITY</p> <p>Security and safety of TGT's customers and assets remained a high priority all year. Health & safety was added as a standing agenda item for Trustees' meetings from July 2023. A review of Community Centre policies and risk assessments relating to health and safety concluded that the following policies remained relevant: Lone Worker Policy, Visitor Policy, Safeguarding Policies and policies relating to activities run by TGT such as circuits sessions.</p> <p>Community Centre desk practices around safety risks and incidents were reviewed in July 2023. Safety record-keeping was emphasised as particularly important both as a way of both ensuring that risks are managed and evidencing that we have tried to uphold our responsibilities. Trustees also agreed to promote a process by which sports hall users can report accidents and near misses at times when CCC is unstaffed.</p> <p>A first aid course for Community Centre staff was held in September 2023. Trustees also considered first aid requirements at times when trained first aiders are off site and resolved to encourage club participants to designate a first aider. Trustees discussed first aid kit provision in the Community Centre, and issues of adequate supply, cost and liability for first aid equipment were given close thought and attention.</p> <p>An insurance claim for a fall in the car park in 2022-23 provided an opportunity to learn lessons and improve practices around the Community Centre, as well as prompting remedial works outside the Community Centre. The requirement to report the accident had led directly to a review and updating of TGT's Management of Health and Safety Policy.</p> <p>The Building Management Committee undertook a range of maintenance work to keep the premises and surrounding</p>

SORP requirement	Commentary
	<p>area as safe as possible, from gutter clearance to re-gravelling parking spots. A Trustee also undertook weeding and other care on the Playing Close.</p> <p>In January 2024 the Diocesan Safeguarding Lead agreed to take on the role of TGT's Safeguarding Lead, meeting a number of Trustees in March 2024 to review the Trust's safeguarding needs. As a result a new draft Safeguarding Policy, one-page Safeguarding Statement and Safeguarding Procedure were created which Trustees subsequently approved. Additionally, safeguarding training had been identified which would be promoted to all Trustees and staff.</p> <p>During the year Trustees liaised with local police to manage incidents of anti-social behaviour around the Community Centre which had put staff and other Centre users at risk.</p> <p>RANGE OF ACTIVITIES OFFERED</p> <p>The Community Centre continued to be the focus of a wide range of activities offered by the Trust or by those wanting to run sessions and activities there. Well-established sessions for circuits and pilates continued in popularity, as did walking football, pickleball, cricket and 5-a-side football. Cricket sessions attracted larger numbers during the year, including for Oxfordshire Pathway (an accessible and structured talent development programme for girls and boys aged 8 to 18). Youth basketball, netball and occasional volleyball were among the other sports on offer.</p> <p>Away from sports, the Community Centre continued to offer space for activities such as the regular Coffee Morning, parent and baby/toddler groups and the occasional quiz and meditation and gong bath sessions. A new regular booking for the History of Art Group also widened the Centre's offer, as did occasional activities such as children's runabouts in the sports hall.</p> <p>The TGT Youth Club successfully restarted in November 2023 with approximately 20 young people attending. A new youth worker role was recruited "to develop and deliver an engaging and inclusive youth programme, particularly for young people aged between 13 and 18 years old" which TGT would fund with additional contributions anticipated from other local organisations. In January 2024 Trustees considered a proposal for a Youth Ambassador, operating under a steering group including the Town Council, St</p>

SORP requirement	Commentary
	<p data-bbox="517 264 1382 371">Mary's Church and other local bodies to develop Charlbury's youth offer. As the reporting year drew to a close, preparations were being made to recruit to that role.</p> <p data-bbox="517 412 1382 703">A significant element of Trustees' activity in 2022-23 – the project to develop a new gym at the Community Centre – continued apace in 2023-24. Current provision remains that gym equipment is set up in either the Thomas Gifford Room or the Sports Hall. While adequate for low levels of demand this misses the opportunity to satisfy local demand and generate additional income for TGT's ongoing provision of community use facilities.</p> <p data-bbox="517 743 1382 1070">The 'new gym' project was taken forwards with professional rigour, informed by test digs, detailed surveys and public consultation resulting in the submission of a planning application for the gym which was approved in principle on 24 July 2023. Detailed drawings for the new gym strove to complement the existing building and neighbouring site, while indicative interior layouts included the equipment suggested by public consultation, set out with the input of the Community Centre's own principal fitness coach.</p> <p data-bbox="517 1111 1382 1402">Trustees were given multiple opportunities to engage with the detailed gym proposals during the year, duly discussing issues including the entrance and access at unstaffed times, connections with the neighbouring Football & Sports Club and a range of matters concerning the building's design, fabric and construction. The gym project remains a significant undertaking for the Trustees and optimism is high that the work will come to fruition in the near future.</p> <p data-bbox="517 1473 900 1500">SUPPORT FOR NEIGHBOURS</p> <p data-bbox="517 1523 1353 1662">Throughout the year TGT sought to be a good neighbour, both to those nearby on the Nine Acres site in the town centre and to any of the town's clubs and charities seeking assistance.</p> <p data-bbox="517 1706 1369 1886">Trustees engaged supportively with the creation of a new neighbour: Charlbury Community Workshop was developed with TGT assistance during 2022-23 and ultimately opened in May 2023 in a new building constructed on TGT land alongside the Community Centre.</p> <p data-bbox="517 1926 1359 1993">The Workshop (inspired by the "Men's Shed" mental health and community skills movement) included a Trustees'</p>

SORP requirement	Commentary
	<p>representative on the working group, both for practicalities such as the building and its operation and for the process of establishing the Workshop as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.</p> <p>Various organisations including TGT supported the Community Workshop build. TGT leased the base building to the Workshop, for which others then provided the capital to fit it out in lieu of a loan which TGT had offered for this purpose. TGT also provided access to power, water supply and insurance.</p> <p>Following Trustees' discussions it was agreed that a new community noticeboard near the traders' spaces (in the Community Centre car park) would be constructed by the Community Workshop.</p> <p>SUPPORT FOR THE WIDER COMMUNITY</p> <p>Charlbury is a market town, with its market charter first granted in 1256. During the year Trustees agreed that a renewed Charlbury Market could be held in the Community Centre car park, offering a group of stallholders the opportunity to sell fruit, vegetables, bread and other products to local residents on a weekly basis. Trustees also subsequently agreed that the Charlbury Farmers' Market – already well-established on the Trust's Playing Close in the centre of town – could be held in the Community Centre car park if wet weather made the usual Playing Close unsuitable.</p> <p>The Community Centre car park also hosts a number of traders – vans selling takeaway food – on a weekly basis. A lead Trustee liaises directly with the owners to ensure good relations and sustainable operations. Trustees made continual efforts to ensure that designated parking bays remained available for traders to use despite private car owners repeatedly parking in those bays. Information notices, signs and ultimately large wooden planters have been deployed to help protect this valuable commercial and catering asset.</p> <p>In May 2023 some Trustees, staff and volunteers assisted in the Big Help Out, an event run by the Lord Lieutenant to connect local people with voluntary organisations.</p>

SORP requirement	Commentary
	<p>The Community Centre continues to host Oxfordshire County Council's library, run by a combination of Council staff and local volunteers. TGT's Building Management Committee and Community Centre staff also played supportive roles in running the library.</p> <p>PREMISES</p> <p>As well as routine maintenance of a well-presented Community Centre and Playing Close, Trustees – and in particular the Building Management Committee with its group of local volunteers – worked to ensure the sustainability of those two property assets.</p> <p>The Building Committee's efforts to understand and reduce the Community Centre's energy use were very successful. Following a review and adoption of revised building management methods (largely turning off air handling units and using natural air circulation) consumption of electricity and gas was reduced by 18% and 32% respectively in April 2023 compared with the same period in 2022. The resulting cost savings were in the order of £900 per month.</p> <p>In addition to routine maintenance and ongoing implementation of the Trust's 5-year Maintenance Plan, Building Committee gravelled the five remaining unpaved car parking spaces and serviced the car park lights to reduce the risk of tripping in that area.</p> <p>Contractors continued to be engaged to provide care for the large trees on the Playing Close. Repair to the Playing Close access railing was also undertaken by a local blacksmith.</p> <p>In March 2024 a new Trustee was appointed with responsibility for establishing the Trust's Net Zero journey. Issues to be considered would include improved provision for rooftop solar power and associated battery storage with a view to removing the gas supply and decarbonising the Community Centre, and other elements such as the potential for electric vehicle charging points to be installed in the car park.</p>

3. Financial review

SORP requirement	Commentary
<p><i>Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period</i></p> <p>SORP para 1.21</p>	<p>2023-24 was a healthy year in financial terms.</p> <p>Operating income of £ 244,879 in 2023-24 compares favourably with the £212,163.31 generated in 2022-23. The rise in income is primarily due to higher café sales, achieved through volume and without significant price adjustments, along with increased revenue from sports hall rentals.</p> <p>A significant line of income in 2023-24 (£19,952) was grants and donations. Sources of grants received included West Oxfordshire District Council, Charlbury Town Council, JA Pye Charitable Settlement, Charlbury Beer Festival and Sustainable Charlbury.</p> <p>Total expenditure of £184,017 in 2023-24 was more than the £179,461.60 incurred during the previous financial year, reflecting increased energy costs, but also an increase in wages.</p>
<p><i>The charity must explain any policy it has for holding reserves and state the amounts of those reserves and why they are held</i></p> <p>SORP para 1.22</p>	<p>For some years it has been TGT policy to build a fund that will help to provide for the long-term maintenance requirements of the Community Centre. This is achieved by setting aside surplus cashflow specifically for this purpose. At the end of March 2024 the fund contained £60,760.</p>
<p><i>Reserves held</i></p> <p>SORP para 1.22</p>	<p>At the end of March 2024 TGT held cash reserves totalling £244,630 (compared with £196,226 in March 2023)</p>
<p><i>Details of fund or subsidiary undertaking materially in deficit</i></p> <p>SORP para 1.24</p>	<p>No debts have been incurred during the year.</p>
<p><i>Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern</i></p> <p>SORP para 1.23</p>	<p>There are no uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.</p>

Additional information (optional)

SORP requirement	Commentary
<i>The charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising)</i> SORP para 1.47	<p>The charity's main source of funds during the year was income from the operation of the Community Centre.</p> <p>The Trustees would also like to express their thanks for the generosity shown by individuals and organisations from whom grants were received during the year.</p>
<i>A description of the principal risks facing the charity</i> SORP para 1.46	<p>The Trustees are confident that the charity will be able to manage the risks it faces.</p>

4. Structure, governance and management

SORP requirement	Commentary
<i>Type of governing document</i> SORP para 1.25	Constitution
<i>How the charity is constituted</i> SORP para 1.25	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
<i>Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions</i> SORP para 1.25	<p>Of the 12 trustees, 6 are nominated as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• three by Charlbury Town Council• three by the councillors representing Charlbury at West Oxfordshire District Council (2 councillors) and Oxfordshire County Council (1) <p>Six trustees are appointed by agreement of the trustees</p>

Additional information (optional)

SORP requirement	Commentary
<i>Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees</i> SORP para 1.51	<p>New Trustees are given the opportunity to attend Trustees' meetings as an observer before they are appointed.</p>

SORP requirement	Commentary
<p><i>The charity's organisational structure</i></p> <p><i>SORP para 1.51</i></p>	<p>Trustees who undertake the roles of Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary are noted in section 6 below.</p> <p>All Trustees undertake duties in line with the charity's needs and their own capacity, interests or skills.</p> <p>Day to day management of the Community Centre is undertaken by the Executive Director, who is not a Trustee but who attends all Trustee meetings.</p>

5. Reference and Administrative details

SORP requirement	Commentary
<i>Charity name</i>	The Thomas Gifford Trust
<i>Registered charity number</i>	1155669
<i>Charity's principal address</i>	The Thomas Gifford Trust Charlbury Community Centre Enstone Road Charlbury Oxfordshire OX7 3PQ
<i>Name of any chief executive officer or senior management personnel to whom the trustees delegate day-to-day management of the charity</i> <small>SORP para 1.52</small>	n/a
<i>Names and addresses of any other relevant organisations or persons providing banking services or professional advice to the charity, including its solicitors, auditor and investment advisers.</i> <small>SORP para 1.52</small>	n/a

6. Names of Trustees who managed the charity in 2023-24

Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for a whole year	Name of body entitled to appoint this trustee
Christopher Potts	Chairman		OCC/WODC councillors
Matthew Scott			OCC/WODC councillors
Steven Fairhurst Jones	Secretary		OCC/WODC councillors
Eileen Kenrick			Charlbury Town Council
Tanya Stevenson		To 8 Nov 2023	Charlbury Town Council
Arne Kuehl			Charlbury Town Council
Erica Benka		From 2 Feb 2024	Charlbury Town Council
Stuart Duff	Vice-Chair		The Trustees
Kim Harrison		From 10 May 2023	The Trustees
Edward Wigzell			The Trustees
Ashley Beighton			The Trustees
William Robinson			The Trustees
Catherine Ball			The Trustees

Corporate trustees at the date the report was approved

Director name	Dates acted if not for whole year
n/a	

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year
n/a	

Names and addresses of advisors

Type of advisor	Name	Address
n/a		

Names and addresses of Chief Executive and senior staff

Position	Name	Address
n/a		

Exemptions from disclosure with reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

n/a

7. Declarations

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's Trustees

Signature

Full name

STUART DUFF

Position

VICE-CHAIR

Date

29/01/2025

Signature

Full name

STEVEN FAIRHURST JONES

Position

SECRETARY

Date

29/1/2025



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Thomas Gifford Trust

No (if any)

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2023

To

31/03/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations Grants	19,952	-	-	19,952	14,739
Fund generation	94,457	-	-	94,457	74,410
Interest on deposits	2,353	-	-	2,353	535
Members subscriptions	14,600	-	-	14,600	3,332
Hire of hall and equipment	113,517	-	-	113,517	119,148
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	244,879	-	-	244,879	212,163
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	244,879	-	-	244,879	212,163
A3 Payments					
Cost of charitable activity	304	-	-	304	1,296
Bought in goods for fund generation	20,600	-	-	20,600	18,340
Wages	88,378	-	-	88,378	81,644
Rent / hire of rooms	1,570	-	-	1,570	1,570
Insurance	5,204	-	-	5,204	4,229
Facilities maintenance, utilities, cleaning	55,326	-	-	55,326	60,973
IT telephone post stationery	10,728	-	-	10,728	9,474
Bank charges	1,906	-	-	1,906	1,901
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	184,017	-	-	184,017	179,427
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Capex for Gym	12,458	-	-	12,458	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	12,458	-	-	12,458	-
Total payments	196,475	-	-	196,475	179,427
Net of receipts/(payments)	48,404	-	-	48,404	32,737
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	-	-	-	-	-
Cash funds this year end	48,404	-	-	48,404	32,737

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Santander Current Account	74,537	-	-
	Santander Savings Account	60,760	-	-
	Nationwide Savings Account	109,334	-	-
	Cash float	-	-	-
	Total cash funds	244,630	-	-
(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))		Agreement Error	OK	OK



	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use	Gym planning drawings - Ridge and Partners	1812	-	-
	TGT Community Workshop	10076	-	-
	Office equipment	570	-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	ARNE KUEHL	25/01/25
	STUART BUFF	29/01/25