

# Independent examiner's report on the accounts

## Section A

## Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

South Oxford Adventure Playground (SOAP)

On accounts for the year  
ended

31 December 2024

Charity no  
(If any)

1157509

Set out on pages

1 & 2

**Respective  
responsibilities of  
trustees and examiner**

The charity's trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The charity's trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 (the Charities Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the Charities Act,
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission (under section 145(5)(b) of the Charities Act, and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

**Basis of Independent  
examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair' view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

**Independent  
examiner's statement**

- In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention
1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the requirements:
    - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; and
    - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act have not been met; or
  2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:



Date:

28 October 2025

Name:

R Smith

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(If any):

Address:

5 The Ley

Woodstock

Oxon OX20 1UX

**Section B**

**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material problems.

# **South Oxford Adventure Playground (SOAP)** **Balance Sheet at 31st December 2024**

	2024	2023
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash	£0.00	£0.00
Balance at Barclays	£38,502.51	£31,469.30
Balance in Paypal account	£0.00	£0.00
Balance in Zettle account	£676.39	£923.85
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>£39,178.90</b>	<b>£32,392.70</b>
<b>Debtors</b>		
Brownies Invoice BRN-AUT-23		£550.00
Zurich Insurance Claim		£1,417.20
<b>Total Current Debtors</b>		<b>£1,967.20</b>
<b>Creditors</b>		
SOAP Hire Refund Bloxham		£120.00
Kai Tabacek Expenses	£65.71	
Naomi Waita Expenses	£307.14	
FIRST AID ACADEMY	£720.00	
DEC Electrical	£96.60	
Wages and NI (Dec 24)	£247.33	
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>£1,436.78</b>	<b>£120.00</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>£37,742.12</b>	<b>£34,239.90</b>
<b>Represented by:</b>		
<b>Accumulated Fund</b>		
Balance b/fwd	£34,239.90	£37,233.93
Surplus/Deficit (-) of Income over Expenditure	£3,502.21	£2,994.03
<b>Balance c/fwd</b>	<b>£37,742.11</b>	<b>£34,239.90</b>

## **Memorandum**

<b>Restricted Funds</b>		
Summer Playscheme 2025	£12,000.00	
<b>Designated Funds</b>		
Reserves	£3,000.00	£3,000.00
Building & Grounds Contingency Fund	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Contingency Fund	£4,000.00	£4,000.00
<b>Total Designated Funds</b>	<b>£12,000.00</b>	<b>£12,000.00</b>
<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>£13,742.11</b>	<b>£22,239.90</b>
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>£37,742.11</b>	<b>£34,239.90</b>

**Restricted Funds:**  
Summer Playscheme 2025 [OVCA Well Together grant](#)

**Designated Funds:**  
**Reserves**  
Building & Grounds Contingency Fund  
Contingency Fund

To cover the utilities, services and winding up costs that would be required if SOAP were to cease its activities.

To cover any repairs or improvements to the premises and grounds.

To protect the organisation against predicted reductions in funding, particularly (but not exclusively) to be spent on payroll to protect core activities.

**South Oxford Adventure Playground (SOAP)**  
**Income and Expenditure Account**  
**for the year ending 31st December 2024**

Income	2024	2023
Grants		
Oxford City Council	£500.00	£2,000.00
OCVA	£12,000.00	
Woodward Trust		£750.00
Doris Field		£667.25
Lettings of Site	£12,438.70	£32,636.50
Onsite donations	£1,003.33	
Online donations	£8,947.91	£9,415.21
Institutional donations	£2,700.00	
Event sales and Miscellaneous	£12,586.43	£9,085.40
Zurich Insurance Claim		£1,417.20
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£48,176.37</b>	<b>£55,971.56</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Staff		
Wages and Employer's NI	£26,314.23	£28,452.08
Pensions	£59.59	£257.93
Payroll	£511.00	£615.30
Staff Training	£1,006.00	£712.85
DBS Checks	£116.00	£73.00
Site rental and maintenance		
Insurance (includes employee and public liability)	£3,315.95	£2,991.77
Equipment	£1,885.74	£423.27
Refuse Collection	£0.00	£385.78
Telephone	£18.48	£119.69
Electricity	£806.22	£1,892.83
Rates	£262.52	£349.92
Rent	£5.00	£5.00
Hut and site expenses	£2,542.94	£16,348.15
Materials (play & domestic)	£333.92	£1,329.40
Activities	£298.66	£199.69
Website	£147.67	£435.00
Fundraising costs	£6,483.43	£3,518.60
Account charges	£315.78	£293.50
Refunds	£150.00	£290.00
Sundry payments	£101.03	£271.83
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£44,674.16</b>	<b>£58,965.59</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit (-) of Income over Expenditure</b>	<b>£3,502.21</b>	<b>-£2,994.03</b>



## **South Oxford Adventure Playground**

**Annual Report 2024 (January – December 2024)**

**CIO Reg Number: 1157509**

**Address:** Whitehouse Road, Oxford, OX1 4QH

### **INTRODUCTION**

South Oxford Adventure Playground (SOAP) is a local charity run by volunteers that provides a well-loved adventure playground that is used by locals and those who live further afield. It is free for all children during the school holidays from Easter to the end of October and after school during this period. SOAP also runs a popular weekly youth club for 11-15 year olds. Sessions are overseen by a team of trained play workers or youth workers, and are open access, meaning children & young people can come and go as they please.

**Trustees on date when the report was approved:** Naomi Waite, Megan Douthwaite, Phil Doubtfire

**Committee on date when report was approved:** Naomi Waite (Chair), John Appleby-Alis (Treasurer), Kai Tabacek, Sophie Bowell, Megan Douthwaite, Cath Unia

**Reserves policy:** £3,000 shall be kept in reserve, for emergency repairs/renovations and to cover 3 month's running costs for utilities and services.

**The charity's trustees have had due regard to the Commission's guidance on public benefit.**

**Purpose according to SOAP's constitution:** To provide or assist in the provision of facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation or other leisure time occupation of children and young people in the St Ebbe's, Grandpont and New Hinksey area of the city of Oxford who have need of such facilities with the object of improving their conditions of life.

**Changes to the management committee & trustees in 2024:** Tom Currie stood down from the Management Committee.

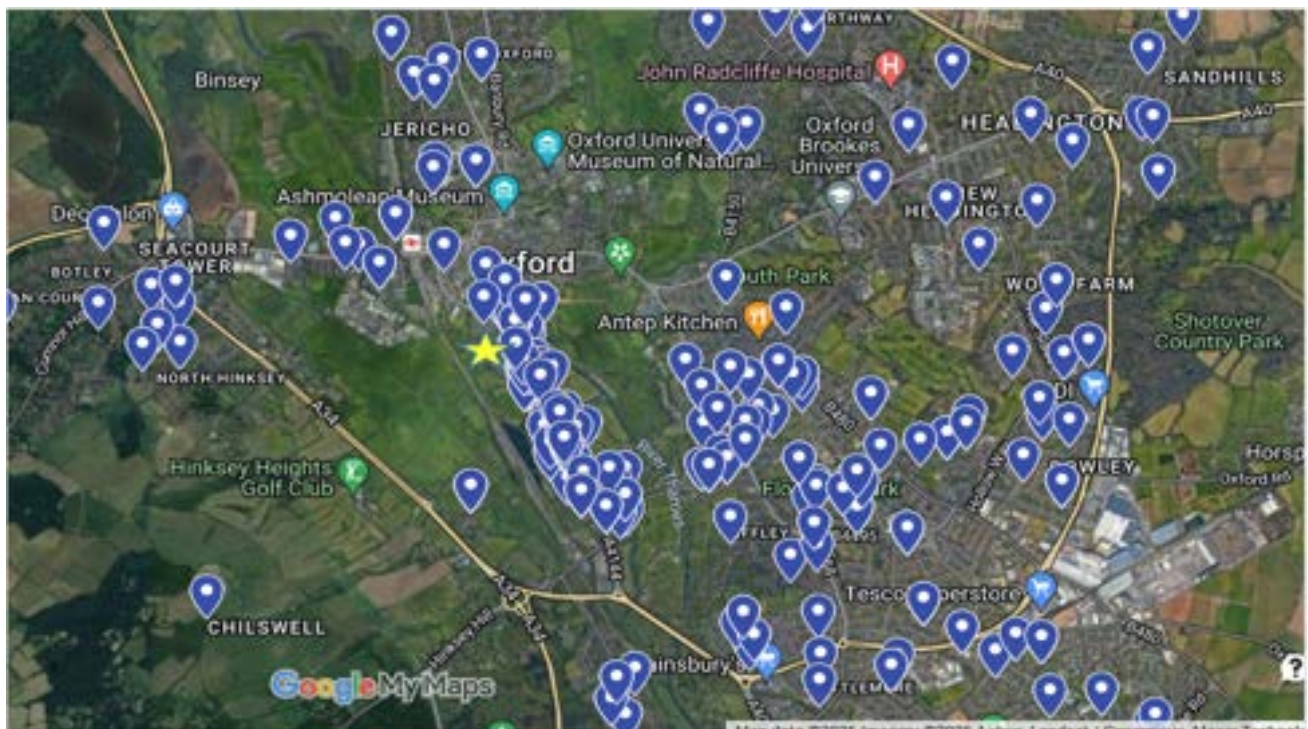
### **USE OF SOAP IN 2024**

SOAP provided free, inclusive, supervised, adventurous outdoor play and activities for a total of 90 days in 2024. Four hundred and forty two children aged 7 and above registered through the year, and in total there were 3,500 child visits. Forty-two percent were by unaccompanied children aged 7+ years; a quarter were by 7+ year olds accompanied by a parent or carer; and a third were by children under 7 years accompanied by a parent/carers. Young people came from across Oxford, Oxfordshire and the United Kingdom as the visuals below show.

Most sessions fell between April and October, but Youth Club for Year 7s and upwards ran year round. SOAP opened on Thursdays and Fridays after school throughout the season and ran holiday playschemes in the



Easter Holidays (4 days), Summer Half Term (3 days), Summer Holidays (20 days), October Half Term (2 days). The Parasol Project used SOAP on Mondays through the summer holidays.



### **Oxford City Schools & Community groups:**

SOAP has provided Oxford City schools within the ring road free access to the site since 2018. We continued this through 2024 and 6 city primary schools were able to take advantage of this, booking 14 visits in total. The schools were St Nicholas, New Hinksey, Larkrise, St Barnabas, St Ebbes and East Oxford Primary. Other organizations with regular or one off paid sessions at SOAP included the Guides, Home Education, Oxford Legal Walk, Parasol, Mabel Prichard School, South Oxford Family Room, Kennington Youth Club, OASIS,

Meadowbrook School, Bloxham Grove School, Kingfisher School Abingdon and West Oxford Elfins. This represented a significant increase in day time hires from previous years.

#### **Weekend and evening private hire:**

There were 70 weekend and after school private hires between March – October. This compares with 103 in 2023, 124 in 2022, 70 in 2021 and 105 in 2019. Poor weather may partially explain the reduction from the previous two years. Cath Unia continued management of the party hires and a growing number of day time hires supported by some volunteer party checkers.

#### **50th Anniversary Celebrations:**

SOAP celebrated it's 50th Anniversary in 2024. Kai Tabacek researched and produced an exhibition to look back at the history of the playground. It was unveiled at SOAP's Birthday Party on 29 June and then went on tour to New Hinksey School, St Ebbes Primary School, the South Oxford Community Centre and Oxford Westgate Library. Tamar Shirley led on organising the Birthday Party which was a wonderful occasion bringing back people who had been involved with SOAP throughout its 50 year history including past staff, management and founders. The Exhibition provided a focal point for the celebration along with BBQ, bar, games, arts & crafts, live music, speeches and an amazing SOAP cake.

#### **FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT**

- Our annual ROSPA inspection didn't bring up any significant issues. Megan Douthwaite dealt with the necessary repairs throughout the year with support from local volunteers.

#### **STAFFING**

- Management of the playschemes throughout the year continued to be fulfilled by Michelle Keeler and over the Summer playscheme this was shared with long time playworker and local resident Saskia Cookson. Both were trained as Designated Safeguarding Leads to ensure there was always an onsite safeguarding lead.
- We took on some good new playworkers, many of whom were local residents, and were pleased to have a good number of staff returning from previous years. New staff included: Oskar Cookson, Alfie Weaver, Ella Franklin-Fraiture, Queen Awojobi, Benjamin Miley-Smith, Izzy Franklin, Francesca Colonnese, Rosie Sangiorgio, Anns Eugene, Bryan Kidd and Rebecca Silk.
- Staffing the after school sessions continued to be challenging.

#### **FUNDRAISING**

- A fundraising campaign took place around the 50th Anniversary with funds raised both by an online fundraiser and the successful delivery of SOAP's 50th Birthday Party
- SOAP sold Christmas Trees for the first time and hosted a (very wet and windy) christmas fair on the same day.
- Grant funding came from: Oxford City Council
- Donations from: Christ Church, St John's, All Souls, Trinity, Jesus, New College, Magdalen
- Income from site lettings and party hire including an increased number of schools and community groups

## **CONSIDERATIONS AND LEARNING**

- Learn from the experience of having two Managers running the scheme and continue to nurture staff to ensure there is a good pipeline of future Senior Playworkers and Managers.
- Continue to develop and fine tune the registration app and SOAP's shared drive and calendar
- Continue to develop the use of the wood and consider how it can be incorporated more fully into the wider site.
- Continue to regularly monitor the proportion of unaccompanied children, those aged 7+, children accompanied by adults, and the proportion under 7.
- Explore options to better serve priority target groups, including strategies to increase access for over 7s. This should include how to improve the quality of age appropriate child-led free play and activities.
- Consider how to raise money for significant future capital costs in the event that the play equipment and/ or hut becomes unusable.
- Consider how to attract a wider range of active volunteers to the committee and make sure the position of secretary is filled.
- Consider how to ensure grant fundraising returns to normal levels or explore additional streams of income to safeguard SOAP's future.
- Consider how to ensure ODS continue to fulfil the work we need them to on site repairs and maintenance in the light of changed staffing and more pressure on budgets.

## **THANK YOUs**

Thank you to our community, donors, and to all the volunteers who have made SOAP work this year with particular mentions for Megan Douthwaite, Phil Doubtfire, John Appleby-Alis, Kai Tabacek, Sophie Bowell, Tom Currie, Emily Sharp, Tamar Shirley, Cath Unia, Graham Cowgill.





### Rainy holidays? Try den building at South Oxford Adventure Playground

20th April 2020



### Playground reopens after £90,000 revamp

10th April 2020



### Climbing kids make the most of adventure playground

10th August 2019



## Oxford Mail

### On target for fun at South Oxford adventure playground

10th April 2020



While Picture 6, taken in 1975, shows more ambitious youngsters tackling a high cat walk at South Oxford adventure playground off Abingdon Road.

1 Comment



Take it easy

By John Chippenfield

1 Comment

SOUTH Oxford adventure playground was just the place to go if you had lots of holiday energy to burn in 1974.





THEN & NOW

1970's

soap  
southoxford  
ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

2024



