

SPARK

**REPORT AND UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2023**

SPARK

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SPARK

LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

Name of charity	SPARK
Also known as	Southill Play Area Recreation for Kids
Registered charity number	1171214
Registered address	5 Sutcliffe Avenue Weymouth Dorset DT4 9SA
Board of Trustees	James Symonds [Chair] Pete Barrow Stacey Wilks Rachel Taylor David Harris Helen Lainsbury Sarah Polkinghorne
Accountants	N/A
Banker	Santander St Thomas Street Weymouth Dorset DT4 8EL
Lawyers	Porter Dodson Solicitors and Advisors 53 High West Street Dorchester DT1 1UX

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REPORT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2023

Objectives

The objectives of the charity are to promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Southill, Weymouth and the surrounding area the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of the said inhabitants.

Main activities

SPARK now has five teams and the work of each is outlined below.

i. SPARK Environmental

The Team is largely self-organising and SPARK's role is to support the group with any grants it might want to apply for and to provide governance. The Team's aim is to make improvements to the open spaces in Southill by carrying out a range of activities. These have included planting wild flowers along the new cycle path and replanting the flower bed outside the shops.

ii. SPARK Community Bus

Bus services in Southill have been an issue for years with many changes and reductions over time. This came to a head in July 2017 when DCC removed most of its bus subsidies and as a consequence Southill lost its bus service completely. As a way of mitigating the impact of the cuts, DCC offered grants to community groups who wished to set up and run community bus services. SPARK successfully applied for such a grant and we were awarded £2,000, which we matched with £2,000 of our own. Unfortunately we had to suspend the service during COVID and it has not yet restarted.

iii. SPARK Play Area

The local council have recently revamped the play area and installed some new equipment, which we are very pleased about. However, there are still many things we want to do to improve the play area further. We have carried out a survey of local children so we have a good idea of what they would like and we will be working towards providing their ideas. We are determined to make further improvements so we are continuing with our fundraising.

iv. SPARK Wellbeing Centre (WBC)

Dorset County Council closed all of its youth clubs, including Southill's, in 2016 and offered to lease the buildings to community groups who wished to use them for community purposes. SPARK submitted a business case to DCC suggesting that we could use the old youth club as a Wellbeing Centre, which local groups could use to provide healthy activities. The most important issue was that we had to prove that we could meet all the costs of operating the building. This unfortunately ruled out using the building as a youth club in the way it had been done previously as it just did not raise anywhere near enough revenue. Our business case was successful and we have now been running for over two years, with the main users being a dance school, a local musical group, and a local radio club. We have also been awarded a number of grants from DCC to improve the building. We are still looking for more groups who wish to use the building in the mornings.

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v. Events

We are not just about raising money to fund facilities; we are just as much about giving Southill residents the opportunity to get involved in community events. The SPARK in the Park events in the summer holidays and the annual Halloween walk are two examples of SPARK community events. We have also run a bingo session in the local pub and coffee mornings in the Church.

Public benefit

The Trustees have given due regard of the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. We believe that all the activities we engage in support our objects.

The environmental group provides an opportunity for people to engage in a healthy activity and at the same time to enhance the appearance of the area.

The community bus ensures that non drivers still have an affordable means of getting into town for essential visits, such as going to their GP. The bus also helps to prevent social isolation. Please see section ii on page 2.

The improvements to the play area will ensure children can gain all the proven health and social benefits that come from engaging in a good play experience.

The Wellbeing Centre provides facilities for people to engage in exercise and social activities.

SPARK community events provide an opportunity for residents to come together and socialise, helping to strengthen the community and reduce isolation.

All of our facilities are accessible to everyone who wants to use them, and all our activities are open to anyone who wishes to be involved.

All SPARK activity is carried out by volunteers who give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefit. SPARK is very lucky to have this support and we are very grateful for all they do. The more volunteers we have the more we can do. We would love more people to get involved if you would like to please get in touch via the Facebook page or our website.

Achievements and performance

Youth Club

Unfortunately, our plans to develop the disused pre-school into a youth club have failed. The KidsRUs pre-school ceased trading several years ago and the building has been unused ever since. The limited amount of money set aside for the youth club plan will be transferred to the Play Area funds. Shortly after the preschool closed SPARK approached the council to see if we could take over the lease and run a youth club from the building. The aim was to have a dedicated youth club run by young people for young people. We planned to engage the services of a qualified youth worker to ensure the Club was run in a safe and legal manner and to ensure it provided worthwhile opportunities for young people. Negotiations with the council went on for over a year, but eventually they agreed to give us a lease and also a grant of £15k to help us make the building fit for purpose, £15k being our initial estimate of the work required.

However, by the time the decision to grant us a lease was agreed the building had been unoccupied for a long time and had deteriorated further. This was made much worse following serious flooding due to freezing pipes. Following a survey, it was established that about £30k now needed to be spent and SPARK could not afford to put in £15k.

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We then came up with an alternative plan which was to clear the site and provide a range of recreational facilities for community use. This would include a tea cabin with a small kitchen, small inside seating area and toilets. This would be a facility families could use when visiting the play area and it could support community events. The intention was to have a key pad entry system allowing anyone to be able to access the facilities as long as they had prior agreement. The tea cabin would also have a decked area with seating and a roof to provide outdoor seating for families visiting the play area and again to support community events. The rest of the site was to be suitably surfaced for use as a recreational area and there was a plan to install some small skate ramps suitable for beginners at one end. So, we went back to the council with the plan and we got as far as established a demolition cost of some £20k, but again nothing happened for a long time.

In the meantime, we were contacted by a group who provide day care for adults with autism who expressed an interest in the building and we met them to see if we could come up with a joint plan. It became apparent that the building would suit them very well and that they had funds to do the work required. It was also the case that we could not come up with a joint plan. Unfortunately, this did fall through.

The reorganisation of the councils, which happened on 1 April 2019, has made it very difficult to get any decisions made so we are continuing to progress this. We are keen to see the KidsRUs site improved because it's such an eyesore.

Registered charity

In order to ensure we have good governance, to improve our chances of successful grant applications and to be able to enter into contracts such as leases, we applied for charitable status. We were delighted when our application was approved and we became a registered charity in January 2017.

The environmental group continues to make improvements that enhance our environment.

The community bus continues to be well used and so far, has needed very little in the way of

subsidy. The play area remains well used. See section ii on page 2.

The Wellbeing Centre is well used and is covering its costs. We have been occupying the WBC on a tenancy at will basis for over two years whilst we have been working with the council to obtain a full lease, we are very pleased that this is now resolved and we have been granted a full lease by the council.

SPARK community events have included a bingo session in the local pub, two coffee mornings in the church, a litter pick of the area and a Halloween walk.

Financial review

We operate a risk assessed approach to our reserves. This means we identify the likelihood and impact of any financial risk and hold a reserve commensurate with the risk. The outcome is that our reserves should be adequate without being excessive. Thus, ensures we have the ability to spend as much as we safely can on achieving our objects.

Our main ongoing source of revenue is from letting the Wellbeing Centre and from fundraising. We have also received a number of significant grants from DCC to enable us to improve the Wellbeing Centre and to support the community bus. These are unlikely to be repeated.

Almost all our current expenditure has been on improving and running the Wellbeing Centre. This will change over time as we seek to make progress with our other activities.

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Year end fund balances:

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds					Total Funds
		WBC	Community Bus	Play Area	Youth Club	Environment	
Brought forward	27,267	-	3,900	4,400	-	-	35,567
Income	11,284	-	-	-	-	-	11,284
Expenditure	(12,943)	-	-	-	-	-	(12,943)
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Carried forward	<u>25,609</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>3,900</u>	<u>4,400</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>33,909</u>

The trustees have chosen to designate some of the unrestricted funds for specific projects leaving £6,000 as general funds. The remaining unrestricted funds have been split as follows:

Wellbeing Centre	8,230
Play Area	19,327
Environment	<u>351</u>
	27,909
General funds	<u>6,000</u>
Total unrestricted funds	<u>33,909</u>

Structure, governance, and management

The governing document is based on the Charity Commission's model constitution for a "Charitable Incorporated Organisation with voting members other than its trustees".

SPARK is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (entered onto the register on 19 January 2017).

The Trustees were all appointed as part of the registration process in January 2017 and retired at the AGM in 2018. They were all re-elected at the AGM in 2018. Rachel, Stacey and James were all appointed at the AGM in 2019 as additional trustees.

As the charity grows the trustees will continue to develop the policies of the charity.

SPARK is governed by an overarching Committee which makes all significant decisions. The members of the Committee are elected at the AGM. There are five working teams that report to the Committee and they cover the five main areas of activity these being:

- Play Area
- Wellbeing Centre
- Community Bus
- Events
- Environment

The charity has no paid staff and all volunteers give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefit.

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SPARK has no formal relationships with any other organisation. However, we do work closely with a range of organisations who support our objects:

- Dorset Council (who we lease the Wellbeing Centre from)
- Weymouth Town Council

We face a number of risks and these are managed through standard risk management methods. Identified risks are recorded on the risk register and are given a scoring based on current controls. Where necessary additional controls are developed to reduce the risk and then the risk is rescored. We have taken out insurance policies in line with our broker's advice.

The main risks are: -

- Insufficient income to cover running costs. There is a risk of a sudden and significant reduction in Wellbeing Centre letting income should we lose one or more major hirers and this could give rise to a cash flow problem where we would be unable to pay the Wellbeing Centre and other bills. Therefore, we will keep a financial reserve that is sufficient to enable SPARK to meet its running expenses for twelve months to give time to find new hirers.
- Along with most voluntary organisations SPARK finds it difficult to recruit sufficient volunteers, we will continue to use a number of ways to try and rectify this.
- Local government reorganisation. The reorganisation of all Dorset's councils will require a transfer of assets and the land and buildings we operate from will be included. This creates some uncertainty about future support for our Charity.

Statement of trustees' responsibilities

The Board of Trustees is responsible for preparing the report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the Board of 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 of its income and expenditure for that period.

In preparing these financial statements the Board is required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume 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, the applicable Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations, and the provisions of the constitution. The trustees 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.

Approved by the Board on 1st November 2021

Signed on the behalf of the Board:

James Symonds
Chairman

SPARK
RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS ACCOUNTS
FOR YEAR ENDED 31 JANUARY 2023

Section A Receipts and Payments					
	Unrestricted Funds (nearest £)	Restricted Funds (nearest £)	Endowment funds (nearest £)	Total funds (nearest £)	Last Year (nearest £)
A1 Receipts					
Lettings income	8,433	-	-	8,433	6,145
Grants	2,730			2,730	
Donations	104	-	-	104	4,397
Interest	17	-	-	17	1
Sub Total	11,284	-	-	11,284	10,543
A2 Asset and investment sales					
Sub Total	-	-	-	-	-
Total Receipts	11,284	-	-	11,284	10,543
A3 Payments					
Utilities	6,251	-	-	6,251	2,245
Council - grass cutting/refuse	1,007	-	-	1,007	829
Building works	3,499	-	-	3,499	408
Insurance	583	-	-	583	517
Internet	374	-	-	374	355
Legal fees	-	-	-	-	840
Fundraising Related Expense	495	-	-	495	-
Music Licencse	485	-	-	485	-
Environmental	-	-	-	-	-
Grant split	250			250	-
Sub total	12,943	-	-	12,943	5,194
A4 Asset and investment purchases					
De-Fib	-			-	1,237
Sub Total	-	-	-	-	1,237
Total Payments	12,943	-	-	12,943	6,431
Net of receipts/payments	- 1,659	-	-	- 1,659	4,112
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	27,267	8,300		35,567	31,455
Cash funds this year end	25,609	8,300	-	33,909	35,567
Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period					
	Unrestricted Funds (nearest £)	Restricted Funds (nearest £)	Endowment funds (nearest £)		
B1 Cash funds					
Current Account	21,739	-	-		
Savings Account	3,869	8,300	-		
Total Cash Funds	25,609	8,300	-		
Agree balances with receipts and payment accounts	Yes	Yes	Yes		

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

Signature: S. Wilks

Print Name: Stacey Wilks

Date approved: 08 April 2024