

# Spark (Burntwood) CIO

Annual report for year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022

**Spark (Burntwood)** is a CIO established in July 2019, charity registration number 1184253. Its address is Spark Springhill, Mossbank Avenue, Burntwood, WS7 4UN.

It has a **Board of Trustees** who are its only members:

Linda Hood (Chair)

Roderick Campbell

Stephanie Edwards (since September 2021)

Suzanne Kirk

Sarah Lucas

Andrew Twyman (since January 2022)

Spark has a **Senior Management Team** comprising a Chief Executive Officer, a Chief Operating Officer, and a Chief Financial Officer, all employed on a part-time basis, plus a Volunteer Co-ordinator and others employed to do specific administrative and group-leading tasks. It also has a fantastic team of volunteer helpers who provide support with leading groups, administrative tasks and whatever needs doing. There are approximately 50 regular volunteer helpers as at August 31<sup>st</sup> 2022. Volunteers provide on average approximately 120 hours a week of volunteer time which equates to around 2.4 hours per volunteer.

Its **charitable purposes** are:

- To enhance the development and education of children in Burntwood and the surrounding areas
- To advance education and training for children, carers and residents, to promote volunteering and to relieve unemployment
- To advance education of parents, families and local organisations in relation to childcare, play, education and early learning services and activities

In order to achieve these purposes, Spark set its **objectives** for the year ending August 2022: *to provide a setting and staffing (paid or voluntary) for groups aimed mainly, but not exclusively, at supporting families with pre-school children.*

It has achieved these through:

- Midday Mayhem (young parents' support)
- Breastfeeding Support
- Sparky's Den (after-school tea club)
- World Wide Women International Women's Group
- Dads and male carers group

- Chasewater Strollers (Buggy/Sling walk)
- Grandparents' Group (for grandparents caring for pre-school children)
- Art Groups (for children and adults)
- Baby Bank (supporting families and children of all ages with donated clothing and equipment)
- Use of the newly-developed garden area for outdoor play i.e. mud kitchens, physical development, nature sessions

In partnership with West Chads Moor Family Centre, Spark also ran the Bright Beginnings Project (funded by the Big Lottery Fund) which employed two part-time family support workers and an Intervention Worker, together with administration and management staff. This Project (running for three years from September 2020 to August 2023) added more opportunities such as:

- Baby Peep
- Toddler Peep
- Toddle Waddle
- New baby support group
- Supportive play session
- A crèche to allow parents to undertake courses and support groups
- Early intervention work with families needing additional support

Spark also provides a setting for external providers to run activities and support services for families:

- Health Visitor clinics etc.
- Music and foreign language classes
- In addition it has been a partner with Burntwood Be A Friend (set up in response to Covid), offering practical support to local families
- During the school summer holidays in July/ August 2022, Spark partnered with Burntwood Town Council in providing play activities and refreshments for two Play in the Park sessions, attended over the two days by around 1300 people.

In October 2021 Spark was awarded a grant from the National Lottery to run the **Grow and Thrive Project**, which extends the reach of activities through wellbeing, financial resilience, volunteering and community connections support.

The aims of Grow and Thrive are:

#### **People Aims**

To enable those in greatest need in our community to both grow and thrive in their lives despite the difficulties which they may be facing, through:

- establishing routes to help service users grow in independence
- improving accessibility and removing barriers

- enabling peer support relationships, enabling people to help themselves and others
- improving wellbeing and enabling people to live healthy and active lives

#### Organisational aims :

- continue to facilitate joined-up working between charities locally to strengthen our community offer and organisational resilience
- secure and strengthen delivery from Spark
- build capacity to strengthen long term volunteering to have greatest impact

This allowed Spark to:

- Link up with local organisations to visit the Spark centre to provide drop ins to help the local community
- Expand and develop forms of family support
- Develop our volunteering offer
- Expand and develop new sessions
- Signpost, advocate and join up services more effectively to support families

#### **Financial review**

During the year we received funding from various sources. Some was fees paid by people attending groups and rent for use of the premises; some was donations from local councils; some through being a nominated charity for local stores which held collections. The largest amount was from the National Lottery Community Fund for the Bright Beginnings Project, and also the initial stages of the Grow and Thrive Project. These projects required the appointment of more staff, and this means that the largest demand on funds is for staff salaries and associated costs, paid through the grant funding, with some support from Lichfield District Council.

During the coronavirus pandemic, Spark acted as a holding account for Burntwood Be A Friend which is in the process of registering as a charity in its own right (completed in September 2022).

The main areas of expenditure were staff salaries (for the Senior Management Team, Volunteer Co-ordinator, Family Support & Session leaders, Admin Time); the development of outdoor play areas; the provision of resource materials and costs of running the various groups.

#### **Potential risks and uncertainties**

##### Financial:

It is likely that grant-making bodies may re-assess their priorities, and local-authority bodies may face cutbacks in the availability of funds. However, because Spark draws on a mix of funding sources, statutory, charity, local and national, it is not anticipated that there will be

a large cut in income. The Trustee board regularly checks exposure to different funding streams to ensure that there is not over-reliance on any individual source. We have a Reserves Policy which addresses various potential scenarios and provides for a 3-6 month cushion in case of short-term decreases in funding.

Operational:

- Spark works closely with its landlord, Springhill Academy, to ensure that there are no issues over use of the premises.
- There are staff employed by Spark on part-time contracts, and also staff who provide services as freelancers; there is a policy of recruiting internally when possible, perhaps turning volunteers into paid staff, so there is continuity and it is not anticipated that future staffing changes will cause operational issues.
- The group leaders have worked extremely hard to create new ways of working, taking sessions out of doors for example and using local parks and other community facilities. This means that even if the building should be unavailable for a time, we can continue to provide services.
- Because Spark works closely with other local groups and charities, it has good standing in the local community and there is little likelihood of its activities being curtailed, because it is clearly meeting local needs.

**Future plans**

- Bright Beginnings activities including parenting courses and support – now on a sub-contract basis to simplify communication and reduce time spent by staff on travelling between the two centres
- Grow and Thrive Project, reaching more families
- The provision of new groups
- Developing links with more community groups (i.e. local Care Homes for inter-generational work), and using local amenities.
- Increasing the number of volunteers, offering training and development to build self-confidence and encourage volunteers to look at paid employment as a future goal.

## **Independent examiner's report to the trustees of SPARK (Burntwood) CIO Trust**

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the SPARK (Burntwood) CIO Trust (the Trust) for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022.

### **Responsibilities and basis of report**

As the charity trustees of the Trust you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

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

### **Independent examiner's statement**

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Trust as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

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.

Signed: *D Wellecomme*

Name: Deborah Wellecomme

Relevant professional qualification or membership of professional bodies (if any): FMAAT

Address: Support Staffordshire, Stafford Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford ST16 3AQ

Date: 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023

## **Financial Report**

SPARK (Burntwood) CIO


Income and Expenditure Account

For the period 1 September 2021 to 31 August 2022

		<b>Unrestricted Funds</b>	<b>Restricted Funds</b>	<b>Total £</b>
	<b>Notes</b>			
<b>Income</b>				
Sales		3,837	-	3,837
Business Room Hire		2061		2061
Party Hire		440		440
Interest Received		66		66
Donation		4,687	-	4,687
Grants		11,844	196,111	207,955
Entertainment for Staff			1,508	1,508
Volunteers Event		100	-	100
General Refunds		118	-	118
Cash Paid In		430		430
<b>Total Receipts</b>		<b>23,583</b>	<b>197,619</b>	<b>221,202</b>

<b>Expenditure</b>				
Business Rates		220	220	440
Centre Resources		1,870	2,660	4,530
Cleaning		2,836	1,545	4,381
Donations made		129		129
Entertainment		1,300	1,813	3,113
Pension Contributions		409	7,315	7,724
Good & Materials		538	2,475	3,013
Insurance		658		658
IT Costs		1,306	542	1,848
Payroll Service			488	488
Phone Costs		391	1,228	1,619
Refund (Volunteers Socials)		35		35
Rent			7,988	7,988
Repairs & Renewals		1,000	1,904	2,904
Salary Payments		13,638	112,633	126,271
Session Leader Payments		1,049	591	1,640
Staff Expenses		2,810	1,506	4,316
Stationery			1,524	1,524
Sundry Expenses			403	403
Tax & NI to HMRC		2,169	14,463	16,632
Training		262	2,896	3,158
Volunteer Coordinator		31	2,674	2,705
Volunteer Expenses		1,690	4,011	5,701
Website & Software		590	638	1,228
Total payments		32,931	169,517	202,448
<b>Net Income/(Payments)</b>		<b>(9,348)</b>	<b>28,102</b>	<b>18,754</b>
Cash Funds at the Start of this period		27,857	(991)	26,866
<b>Cash Funds at the end of this period</b>		<b>18,509</b>	<b>27,111</b>	<b>45,620</b>

This Trustees' Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to CIOs. This report was approved by the Trustees of the charity on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023 and signed on its behalf by

Signed.....  
Linda Hood                      Chair