

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

England & Wales · Charity number 1186863

Details

Status Registered

Legal form CIO

Registered 2019-12-10

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address 186 Alcester Road South
Birmingham
B14 6DE

Phone 07384 312840

Email info@midlandsparksforum.co.uk

Website www.midlandsparksforum.co.uk

Activities

Objects: 1. TO PROVIDE AND ENHANCE, AND / OR ASSIST IN THE PROVISION AND ENHANCEMENT OF, THE PHYSICAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT FOR THE USE AND ENJOYMENT OF THE PUBLIC IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT (INCLUDING, BUT WITHOUT LIMITATION, THE PROVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT, AND THE PROMOTION OF BIODIVERSITY) AND SHALL INCLUDE BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO PUBLIC PARKS, GARDENS, LANDSCAPED AREAS, WOODLAND, PLAYING FIELDS, PLAYGROUNDS, NATURE RESERVES AND RECREATIONAL SPACES; 2. TO ADVANCE THE EDUCATION OF THE PUBLIC IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT INCLUDING (BUT WITHOUT LIMITATION) WITH REGARDS TO THE HORTICULTURE, ARBORICULTURE, ECOLOGY, GEOLOGY, ARCHAEOLOGY, SUSTAINABILITY, HERITAGE AND LOCAL HISTORY; AND 3. TO PROVIDE OR ASSIST IN THE PROVISION OF FACILITIES, FOR RECREATION AND OTHER LEISURE TIME OCCUPATION IN THE INTERESTS OF SOCIAL WELFARE, WITH THE OBJECT OF IMPROVING THE CONDITIONS OF LIFE OF THE PUBLIC BY THE IMPROVEMENT OF PARKS AND GREEN OPEN SPACES IN THE AREA OF BENEFIT. IN FURTHERANCE OF THESE, THE CHARITY WILL PROVIDE AN UMBRELLA GROUP FOR OTHER INTERESTED ORGANISATIONS. IN THESE OBJECTS, THE AREA OF BENEFIT MEANS, THE LOCAL AUTHORITY AREAS WITHIN THE EAST AND WEST MIDLANDS.

Activities: Midlands Parks Forum operates as an umbrella organisation in the East and West Midlands, to help improve green spaces. We help to raise standards and share good practice through conferences, workshops and educational forums, to share and learn with green space practitioners from local authorities; agencies such as Natural England and LANTRA; charities, and corporate partners.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Environment/conservation/heritage, Recreation, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, Other Defined Groups, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout England

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-11-30	£36,813	£42,751	-	-
2023-11-30	£64,844	£34,570	-	-
2022-11-30	£34,385	£36,096	-	-
2021-11-30	£66,570	£43,250	-	-
2020-11-30	£71,526	£30,849	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Liz Stuffins MSc CMLI	Chair	2019-11-28
Angela Lewis		2019-11-28
Felicity Claire Hogg BSc		2022-12-20
Ishrat Karimi Fini M.A.		2019-11-28
JAMES DYMOND		2019-11-28
James Cairncross		2022-10-28
Richard Hunt		2021-06-30
Samantha Rae Village BA Msc		2019-11-28

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1186863

Accounts



Trustees' Annual Report for the period:

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	1	December	2023		30	November	2024

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name Midlands Parks Forum

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) 1186863

Charity's principal address

186 Alcester Road South
 Kings Heath
 Birmingham
Postcode B14 6DE

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Liz Stuffins	Chairperson		Existing Trustees
2	James Dymond	Joint Vice Chairperson		"
3	Sam Village			"
4	Ishrat Karimi Fini			"
5	Angela Lewis			"
6	Richard Hunt	Treasurer		"
7	James Cairncross	Joint Vice Chairperson		"
8	Fliss Hogg			"
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Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

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Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent examination	Graham Jones Dudley CVS	7 Albion St, Dudley DY5 3EE

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Alison Bate, Partnership Manager

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (e.g. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (e.g. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (e.g. appointed by, elected by)	The appointment of founding trustees was made following an invitation to Midlands Parks Forum subscribers. Other trustees have since joined the organisation. There has been no trustee recruitment during the period of this report.

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

<p>You may choose to include additional information, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees; • the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works; • relationship with any related parties; • trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them. 	<p>The organisation continues to develop partnerships with green space organisations and values the support of non-voting volunteers from the green space sector.</p> <p>The trustees have continued to undertake an annual Risk Management Assessment, to ensure that risks are minimised and mitigated or closed where possible. The risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management, Payroll, Income Policy, Budgeting Policy and Controls, Accounting and Audit. <p>A Business Continuity Plan has been developed to mitigate any risks associated with the daily management of the organisation, including any data breach. The organisation ensures that online protection and security software is in place.</p>
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Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

1. To provide and enhance, and / or assist in the provision and enhancement of, the physical and natural environment for the use and enjoyment of the public in the area of benefit including, (but without limitation) the provision and maintenance of facilities and equipment, and the promotion of biodiversity and shall include (but is not limited to) public parks, gardens, landscaped areas, woodland, playing fields, playgrounds, nature reserves and recreational spaces;
2. To advance the education of the public in the area of benefit including (but without limitation) with regards to the horticulture, arboriculture, ecology, geology, archaeology, sustainability, heritage and local history; and
3. To provide or assist in the provision of facilities, for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the public by the improvement of parks and green open spaces in the area of benefit. In furtherance of these, the charity will provide an umbrella group for other interested organisations. In these objects, the area of benefit means the local authority areas within the East and West Midlands.

All our trustees have completed a statutory declaration that they are eligible to stand as trustees.

Our charity's public benefit is:

What:

- General Charitable Purposes
- Education and training
- Environment, conservation and heritage
- Recreation
- Other charitable purposes

Who

- Other charities or voluntary bodies
- Other defined groups
- The general public/mankind

How

- Provide services
- Provide advocacy, advice and information
- Act as an umbrella or resource body

Where

Operates in England

A range of learning and training activities have taken place to facilitate the enhancement of the environment for the public. Three online webinars and 7 in person events took place throughout the year which are free for members. In addition, an annual conference encouraged wide participation from the sector with 104 delegates.

The charity continues to frame its learning events around the Skills and Competencies Framework which was commissioned to focus on the 60 skills and competencies required to manage green space. the organisation focuses on delivering learning opportunities within the framework, to ensure the best outcomes for parks and green spaces.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Webinars/online

Webinars featured a wide range of topics relevant to parks management. Topics included:

- Children's play facilities
- Access and inclusion in green spaces with The Parks Trust
- How a community garden raised a million pounds
- Green space quality
- The need for a green space strategy
- The benefits of using data to evidence use of open spaces.
- Cycling projects at Warwick
- The use of outdoor equipment accessible through box codes.
- The implementation of biodiversity net gain.

Learning Visits:

- Rewilding at Allestree Park, Derby
- Green space management at Markeaton Park, Derby
- Managing a visitor attraction at Victoria Embankment, Nottingham
- Purple Horizons with Natural England at Walsall
- National Trust 8 Hills Project at Clent Hills, Worcs.

Conference:

Growing hope for all green spaces – finding solutions to the crisis in urban parks: from skills to sustainability, health to heritage, and economy to environment. October 2024, The National Memorial Arboretum, Burton on Trent.

The information gained from these learning opportunities has enabled participants to transfer the knowledge, skills and learning from the topics covered into their parks and green spaces.

It has enabled members to acknowledge the challenges and hear from colleagues in the sector how innovation can lead to solutions when managing green space. Workshops provided practical ways in which organisations can begin to understand and react to local challenges through data assessment, and best practice.

A range of learning topics has been provided to enable members to better manage the land in their locality for nature.

All the presentations and recordings from the above are freely available to download from the web site, which received 12,007 unique visitors and 49,871 page views during this period.

The organisation issued 12 newsletters and weekly bulletins to our members which included funding information, policy, guidance, best practice and green space vacancies. X and LinkedIn accounts are used to share information, and help raise skills, knowledge and network in green spaces.

Sponsorship

The charity was fortunate to receive modest sponsorship from an organisation during the year, which supported the annual conference. In kind support was given from all speakers at or annual conference, none of whom requested a fee.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

The contribution made by volunteers during the year has been a vital part of our fifth year as a charity, through sharing expertise, hosting learning events, and contributing towards the learning of peers.

Volunteering from Trustees and non-trustees totalled over 600 hours which generated over £17,000 of in-kind support.

The investment policy continues to guide the charity to ensure there is sufficient daily funds for our regular activities with reserves invested to support delivery of our charity's purpose over time. The investments are under regular review.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The organisation continues to sustain a blended income from the following:

- Earned income: membership and conference income
- Sponsorship
- Donations

Our success has enabled us to continue to retain some savings/reserves to provide an additional income. This assists our business plan as a considerable amount of hospitality fees now has to be paid by ourselves instead of members.

We provide a service to all members, including

Monthly Newsletters and weekly bulletins

Webinars (The highest webinar attendance was 34).

We also collaborated with Parks for London on a webinar which attracted 39 attendees from the Midlands and London.

A Conference with academia, local authorities, sharing best practice – this year the theme was Growing Hope for Green Spaces

We also provide a service to the wider green space community, with all presentations and recordings free to access on our web site, which aids learning in the wider sector.

Evaluating our work

All of our in-person learning events, webinars and conferences are evaluated to enable us to continually tailor learning to meet the needs of our members.

Our learning events during this period achieved the highest score of 4.8/5 (with 5 being excellent and 4 being very good).

Our annual conference scored highly, with the majority of delegates believing that the presenters and venue were either excellent or very good.

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity's reserves policy requires unrestricted funding to cover six months of costs, which the charity holds. The policy allows the board to consider investment opportunities for the reserves.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The principal sources of funding have been through earned income (membership subscriptions, conference fees), donations and sponsorship:

During this period, our membership increased to 80 organisations.

A small sponsorship contribution of £250 was received from NS Print for promotion at our conference.:

Earned Income derived from:

- Annual membership fees
- Conference Fees

All expenditure during 2023/4 has been targeted towards improving the skills and competencies required by members, to enable them to better manage and develop their green spaces for public benefit, and towards the green space sector as a whole – with biodiversity and green heritage a key focus.

The key priorities of learning identified are heritage, biodiversity/climate change, community and volunteering and identifying sources of income/commercial opportunities. In addition, sharing information on inequality of provision, and campaigning for increased resources for parks.

Gaining skills and knowledge in these areas enables green space practitioners to replicate learning from peers enabling them to improve parks and green space facilities within their local area.

Having a supportive learning network of green space sector practitioners enables costs to be kept at a minimum.

The charity retains banking with an ethical banking organisation, which supports community activities. With reserves also placed into an interest earning account to support the charity's sustainability.

The charity directly employs a part time member of staff, and a small amount of additional administration is procured through a zero-contract arrangement to manage annual membership and conference processes. The employee is home-working which reduces all overheads.

Section F

Other optional information

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Section G Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	LIZ Stuffins	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date	28 th April 2025	

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2024

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the year ended 30th November 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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 2011 Act and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.



G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

21st May 2025

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2024

	£	£	£	£
	R	U	TOTAL	TOTAL 2023
INCOME				
Donation from West Midland Parks Forum (Dissolved)	-	-	-	24,896
Memberships	-	24,419	24,419	20,007
Training/Conference Income	-	8,985	8,985	7,863
Sponsorship	-	250	250	11,868
Bank Interest	-	3,134	3,134	210
Sundries	-	25	25	-
	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME	-	36,813	36,813	64,844
EXPENDITURE				
Salary Costs	-	27,550	27,550	25,602
Travelling Expenses	-	891	891	694
Insurance	-	317	317	295
Training, Mentoring, Conference Fees	-	11,122	11,122	3,799
Printing, Stationery, Advertising	-	564	564	2,226
Telephone and Postage	-	274	274	7
Repairs and Renewals	-	1,331	1,331	1,296
Professional Fees	-	390	390	390
Paypal Fees	-	147	147	149
Sundries	-	165	165	112
	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	-	42,751	42,751	34,570
Net -Deficit/Surplus for the Year	-	-5,938	-5,938	30,274
Balance at 30 th November 2023	-	92,560	92,560	62,286
	-	-	-	-
Balance at 30th November 2024	-	86,622	86,622	92,560

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2024

	<u>£</u>	2023 <u>£</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Current Account	1,155	12,560
Redwood Bank Deposit Account	38,105	35,000
Redwood Bank Short Term Bond Account	47,028	45,000
Paypal Account	334	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	86,622	92,560
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Represented by :		
Income & Expenditure Account:		
Restricted Funds	-	-
Unrestricted Funds	86,622	92,560
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	86,622	92,560
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Approved by the Management Committee on 21st May 2025 and signed on their behalf:

E.S. Studis

Name

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2024

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the year ended 30th November 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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.

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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 2011 Act and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.



G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

21st May 2025

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2024

	£ R	£ U	£ TOTAL	£ TOTAL 2023
INCOME				
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Memberships	-	24,419	24,419	20,007
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Sundries	-	25	25	-
	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME	-	36,813	36,813	64,844
EXPENDITURE				
Salary Costs	-	27,550	27,550	25,602
Travelling Expenses	-	891	891	694
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Printing, Stationery, Advertising	-	564	564	2,226
Telephone and Postage	-	274	274	7
Repairs and Renewals	-	1,331	1,331	1,296
Professional Fees	-	390	390	390
Paypal Fees	-	147	147	149
Sundries	-	165	165	112
	-	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	-	42,751	42,751	34,570
Net -Deficit/Surplus for the Year	-	-5,938	-5,938	30,274
Balance at 30 th November 2023	-	92,560	92,560	62,286
	-	-	-	-
Balance at 30th November 2024	-	86,622	86,622	92,560

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2024

	<u>£</u>	2023 <u>£</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Current Account	1,155	12,560
Redwood Bank Deposit Account	38,105	35,000
Redwood Bank Short Term Bond Account	47,028	45,000
Paypal Account	334	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	86,622	92,560
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Represented by :		
Income & Expenditure Account:		
Restricted Funds	-	-
Unrestricted Funds	86,622	92,560
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	86,622	92,560
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Approved by the Management Committee on 21st May 2025 and signed on their behalf:

E.S. Studis

Name

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1186863

Accounts



Trustees' Annual Report for the period:

Period start date		Period end date					
From	1	December	2022	To	30	November	2023

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any)

Charity's principal address

Postcode

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Liz Stuffins	Chairperson		Existing Trustees
2	James Dymond	Vice Chairperson		"
3	Sam Village			"
4	Ishrat Karimi Fini			"
5	Angela Lewis			"
6	Richard Hunt	Treasurer		"
7	James Cairncross			"
8	Fliss Hogg		20.12.22 onwards	
9				
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13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent examination	Graham Jones Dudley CVS	7 Albion St, Dudley DY5 3EE

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Alison Bate, Partnership Manager

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document <i>(e.g. trust deed, constitution)</i>	Constitution
How the charity is constituted <i>(e.g. trust, association, company)</i>	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods <i>(e.g. appointed by, elected by)</i>	The appointment of founding trustees was made following an invitation to Midlands Parks Forum subscribers. Potential trustees were interviewed online, and those who fitted the skillset required were appointed.

Commented [AL1]: Should we update this a bit - it sounds like it only refers to the Founding Trustees?
Commented [AB2R1]: Good idea.

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

<p>You may choose to include additional information, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees; • the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works; • relationship with any related parties; • trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them. 	<p>The organisation continues to develop partnerships with green space organisations and values the support of non-voting volunteers from the green space sector.</p> <p>A successful conference was held with representatives from Natural England, University of Leeds, Fields in Trust, Make Space for Girls, Disability Champions and other leading Access and Inclusion Champions. The organisation continued to deliver practical workshops around Biodiversity Net Gain.</p> <p>The trustees have continued to undertake an annual Risk Management Assessment, to ensure that risks are minimised and mitigated or closed where possible. The risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Management, Payroll, Income Policy, Budgeting Policy and Controls, Accounting and Audit. <p>A Business Continuity Plan has been developed to mitigate any risks associated with the daily management of the organisation, including any data breach. The organisation ensures that online protection and security software is in place.</p>
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Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

<p>1. To provide and enhance, and / or assist in the provision and enhancement of, the physical and natural environment for the use and enjoyment of the public in the area of benefit including, (but without limitation) the provision and maintenance of facilities and equipment, and the promotion of biodiversity and shall include (but is not limited to) public parks, gardens, landscaped areas, woodland, playing fields, playgrounds, nature reserves and recreational spaces;</p> <p>2. To advance the education of the public in the area of benefit including (but without limitation) with regards to the horticulture, arboriculture, ecology, geology, archaeology, sustainability, heritage and local history; and</p> <p>3. To provide or assist in the provision of facilities, for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the public by the improvement of parks and green open spaces in the area of benefit. In furtherance of these, the charity will provide an umbrella group for other interested organisations. In these objects, the area of benefit means the local authority areas within the East and West Midlands.</p>
<p>All our trustees have completed a statutory declaration that they are eligible to stand as trustees.</p> <p>Our charity's public benefit is:</p> <p>What:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• General Charitable Purposes• Education and training• Environment, conservation and heritage• Recreation• Other charitable purposes <p>Who</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Other charities or voluntary bodies• Other defined groups• The general public/mankind <p>How</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide services• Provide advocacy, advice and information• Act as an umbrella or resource body <p>Where</p> <p>Operates in England</p> <p>A range of learning and training activities have taken place to facilitate the enhancement of the environment for the public. A total of 10 online and in person events took place throughout the year which are free for members. In addition, an annual conference encouraged wide participation from the sector with 104 delegates.</p> <p>A new skills and competencies framework was commissioned which identified over 60 skills and competencies required to manage green space. the organisation focuses on delivering learning opportunities within the framework, to ensure the best outcomes for parks and green spaces.</p>

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Webinars/online

- Naturalising Road Verges with Plantlife
- Naturalising traffic islands with RudgeWood Horticulture
- Filling our streets with trees – Trees for Cities
- British Cycling
- Sustrans Together
- Green Social Prescribing

Learning Visits:

- Developing Strategies and Management Plans at Arrow Valley Country Park, Redditch.
- Biodiversity Net Gain at Ryton Country Park
- Biodiversity Net Gain at Rushcliffe Country Park
- Managing a Heritage Site and Green Flag Heritage Award at Coombe Abbey Country Park
- Developing a Heritage Project, and Heritage Fund Strategy at Great Linford Manor Park
- Managing visitors and habitats, including grazing, at Beacon Hill, Leicestershire.
- Country Park Accreditation with Natural England at Beacon Hill, Leicestershire.
- Developing a Green Heritage Visitor Facility, West Smethwick Park, Sandwell.
- Creating Cycle Routes, Sandwell Valley Country Park, Sandwell.

Conference:

Access, Inclusion and Safety – a path to a greener future.
Partnerships and collaborations with speakers and workshops
November 2023, The Chester House Estate

The information gained from these learning opportunities has enabled participants to transfer the knowledge, skills and learning from the topics covered into their parks and green spaces.

It has enabled members to understand the wide range of access and inclusion challenges facing community's access to green space. Workshops provided practical ways in which organisations can begin to understand and react to local challenges through data assessment, and best practice.

A range of learning topics has been provided to enable members to better manage the land in their locality for nature.

Other webinars focused on sharing the aims of our organisation and how we support green space, with the Landscape Institute and Historic England at their joint webinar which reached a national audience. We ran a comprehensive webinar on health, sport and well-being opportunities in green space, which included presentations from

- Caroline Thomas, Health & Environment Lead Advisor (East Midlands), **Natural England**
- Sarah Paine, Midlands Regional Lead, Thriving Communities – **National Academy for Social Prescribing**

- Amanda Chambers **Nottingham Green Social Prescribing** Programme Manager
- **British Cycling** – Nick Barr, Regional Manager, West Midlands Central and Tommy Morrisroe (Community Programme Manager)
- **Sustrans** – Ruth Cumming, Project Officer on behalf of Ridhi Kalaria, Partnerships Manager – West Midlands
- **The Lawn Tennis Association** – Anna Hart, Parks Investment Delivery Partner, LTA.

All the presentations and recordings from the above are freely available to download from the web site, which received over 32,000 visits during the 12 months.

The organisation issued 12 newsletters and frequent bulletins to our members which included funding information, policy, guidance, best practice and green space vacancies. X and LinkedIn accounts are used to share information, and help raise skills, knowledge and network in green spaces.

Sponsorship

The charity was fortunate to receive sponsorship from three organisations during the year, all of whom support the improvement of green space, through play, data and training.

Donations

A donation was received, which is detailed under financial management.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

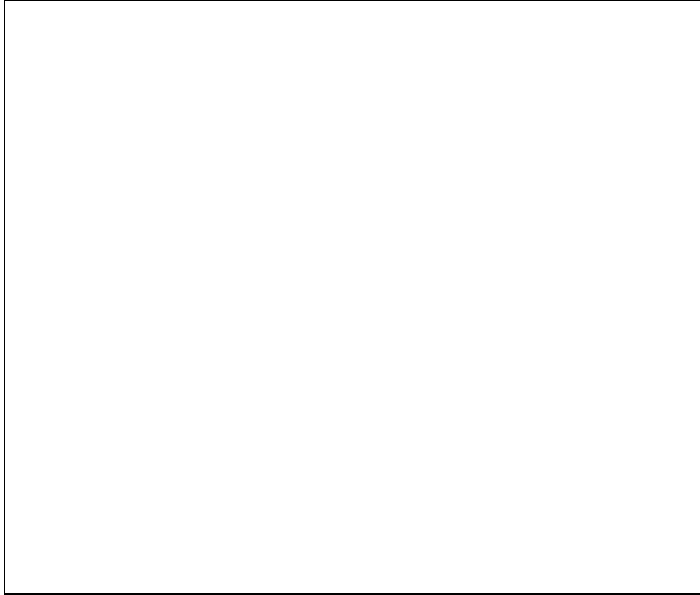
You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

The contribution made by volunteers during the year has been a vital part of our third year as a charity, through sharing expertise, hosting learning events, and contributing towards the learning of peers.

Volunteering from Trustees and non-trustees totalled over 658 hours which generated around £20,000 of in-kind support.

The investment policy continues, with reserves invested to support delivery of our charity's purpose over time. The investments are under regular review, and the policy guides the charity to ensure there is sufficient daily funds for our regular activities.



Section D *Achievements and performance*

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The organisation continues to sustain a blended income from the following:

- Earned income: membership and conference income
- Sponsorship
- Donations

Our success has enabled us to continue to retain some savings/reserves to provide an additional income.

We provide a service to all members, including

Monthly Newsletters and weekly bulletins
Webinars (Average webinar attendance was 24).

A Conference with academia, local authorities, sharing best practice – this year the theme was access and inclusion.

We also provide a service to the wider green space community, with all presentations and recordings free to access on our web site, which aids learning in the wider sector.

Evaluating our work

All of our in-person learning events, webinars and conferences are evaluated to enable us to continually tailor learning to meet the needs of our members.

Our learning events during this period achieved a scoring of 4.3 (with 5 being excellent and 4 being very good).

Our annual conference scored an overall satisfaction rate of 3.9 (with 3 being good and 4 being very good).

Commented [AL3]: Was this definitely 4 or should it be 5?

Commented [AB4R3]: Yes 5 is excellent. It dropped this year below a 4 for the first time, I think due to the chilly start

Section E Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity's reserves policy requires unrestricted funding to cover six months of costs, which the charity holds. The policy allows the board to consider investment opportunities for the reserves.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The principal sources of funding have been through earned income (membership subscriptions, conference fees), donations and sponsorship:

A legacy donation was received from West Midlands Parks Forum (WMPF) – the voluntary organisation which ran for over 30 years, and which evolved into the Midlands Parks Forum. Through consultation with members, and the executive committee of WMPF, it was agreed that the donation of £24,896.31 would be ring fenced towards an investment in training; used as match funding for future grants, and a proportion invested to provide future income.

Sponsorship was received from:

- Sutcliffe Play
- Natural England
- Proludic
- LANTRA
- Info Point

Earned Income derived from:

- Annual membership fees
- Conference Fees
- Sponsorship of Conference

All expenditure during 2022/3 has been targeted towards improving the skills and competencies needed by members, to enable them to better manage and develop their green spaces for public benefit, and towards the green space sector as a whole – with biodiversity and green heritage a key focus.

The key priorities of learning identified are heritage, biodiversity/climate change, community and volunteering and identifying sources of income/commercial opportunities. In addition, sharing information on inequality of provision, and campaigning for increased resources for parks.

Gaining skills and knowledge in these areas enables green space practitioners to replicate learning from peers enabling them to improve parks and green space facilities within their local area.

Having a supportive learning network of green space sector practitioners enables costs to be kept at a minimum.

The charity retains banking with an ethical banking organisation, which supports community activities.

The charity directly employs a part time member of staff and a small amount of additional administration to manage annual membership processes. The employee is home-working which reduces all overheads.

Section F Other optional information

Section G Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	<i>E.S. Stuffs</i>	
Full name(s)	LIZ Stuffsins	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date	4 th May 2023	

Commented [AL5]: Should this be 2024?

Commented [AB6R5]: Yes I'll put this years date in when I can upload, I have to do it all in one go when the independent examination is complete.

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2023

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the year ended 30th November 2023.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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 2011 Act and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.



G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

15th May 2024

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2023

	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
	R	U	TOTAL	TOTAL 2022
INCOME				
Donation from West Midland Parks Forum (Dissolved)	-	24,896	24,896	-
Other Grants	-	-	-	6,000
Memberships	-	20,007	20,007	20,517
Training/Conference Income	-	7,863	7,863	7,096
Sponsorship	-	11,868	11,868	772
Bank Interest	-	210	210	-
	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL INCOME	-	64,844	64,844	34,385
	-----	-----	-----	-----
EXPENDITURE				
Salary Costs	-	25,602	25,602	25,425
Travelling Expenses	-	694	694	490
Insurance	-	295	295	278
Training, Mentoring, Conference Fees	-	3,799	3,799	7,584
Printing, Stationery, Advertising	-	2,226	2,226	426
Telephone and Postage	-	7	7	61
Repairs and Renewals	-	1,296	1,296	-
Evaluation/Research Fees	-	-	-	1,224
Professional Fees	-	390	390	510
Paypal Fees	-	149	149	69
Sundries	-	112	112	29
	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	-	34,570	34,570	36,096
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Net Surplus/-Deficit for the Year	-	30,274	30,274	-1,711
Balance at 30 th November 2022	-	62,286	62,286	63,997
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Balance at 30th November 2023	-	92,560	92,560	62,286
	-----	-----	-----	-----

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2023

	<u>£</u>	2022 <u>£</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Current Account	12,560	42,286
CAF Deposit Account	-	20,000
Redwood Bank Deposit Account	35,000	-
Redwood Bank Short Term Bond Account	45,000	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	92,560	62,286
	<hr/>	<hr/>

Represented by :

Income & Expenditure Account:		
Restricted Funds	-	-
Unrestricted Funds	92,560	62,286
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	92,560	62,286
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Approved by the Management Committee on
on their behalf:**

2024 and signed



Name ...

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2023

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

Independent Examiner's Report

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G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

15th May 2024

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2023

	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
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MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2023

	<u>£</u>	2022 <u>£</u>
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	<hr/>	<hr/>
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Represented by :

Income & Expenditure Account:		
Restricted Funds	-	-
Unrestricted Funds	92,560	62,286
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	92,560	62,286
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**Approved by the Management Committee on
on their behalf:**

2024 and signed



Name ...

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1186863

Accounts



Trustees' Annual Report for the period:

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	1	December	2021		30	November	2022

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name	Midlands Parks Forum		
Other names charity is known by			
Registered charity number (if any)	1186863		
Charity's principal address	186 Alcester Road South		
	Kings Heath		
	Birmingham		
	Postcode	B14 6DE	

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Liz Stuffins	Chairperson		Existing Trustees
2	James Dymond	Vice Chairperson		"
3	Sam Village			"
4	Ishrat Karimi Fini			"
5	Angela Lewis			"
6	Richard Hunt	Treasurer		"
7	James Cairncross		Appointed 28.10.22	"
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

--	--	--

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent examination	Graham Jones Dudley CVS	7 Albion St, Dudley DY5 3EE

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Alison Bate, Partnership Manager

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	The appointment of founding trustees was made following an open meeting of all Midlands Parks Forum subscribers. The trustees were all nominated and seconded at the inaugural meeting. The appointment of additional trustees was made following open advertisements via our newsletters, expression of interest were submitted and interview followed.

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

<p>You may choose to include additional information, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees; <input type="checkbox"/> the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works; <input type="checkbox"/> relationship with any related parties; <input type="checkbox"/> trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them. 	<p>Two new Trustees were appointed as part of succession planning, following a recruitment process in Autumn 2021. The two new trustees undertook online training and had an induction with the Partnership Manager. Two trustees ended their terms of office in October 2022.</p> <p>The organisation continues to develop partnerships with green space organisations and value the support of non-voting volunteers from the green space sector.</p> <p>A successful conference was held with representatives from Natural England, University of Sheffield, Leeds and Birmingham City Councils and The Historic Coventry Trust. An online seminar with Natural England and APSE was also held on Biodiversity Net Gain.</p> <p>The trustees have continued to undertake an annual Risk Management Assessment, to ensure that risks are minimised and mitigated or closed where possible. The risks include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Management, Payroll, Income Policy, Budgeting
--	--

Policy and Controls, Accounting and Audit.

A Business Continuity Plan is being developed to mitigate any risks associated with the daily management of the organisation.

Section C

Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

1. To provide and enhance, and / or assist in the provision and enhancement of, the physical and natural environment for the use and enjoyment of the public in the area of benefit (including, but without limitation, the provision and maintenance of facilities and equipment, and the promotion of biodiversity) and shall include but is not limited to public parks, gardens, landscaped areas, woodland, playing fields, playgrounds, nature reserves and recreational spaces;
2. To advance the education of the public in the area of benefit including (but without limitation) with regards to the horticulture, arboriculture, ecology, geology, archaeology, sustainability, heritage and local history; and
3. To provide or assist in the provision of facilities, for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the public by the improvement of parks and green open spaces in the area of benefit. In furtherance of these, the charity will provide an umbrella group for other interested organisations. In these objects, the area of benefit means the local authority areas within the East and West Midlands.

All our trustees have completed a statutory declaration that they are eligible to stand as trustees.

Our charity's public benefit is:

What:

- General Charitable Purposes
- Education and training
- Environment, conservation and heritage
- Recreation
- Other charitable purposes

Who

- Other charities or voluntary bodies
- Other defined groups
- The general public/mankind

How

- Provide services
- Provide advocacy, advice and information
- Act as an umbrella or resource body

Where

Operate in England

A range of learning and training activities have taken place to

enhance the environment for the public. A total of 10 online and in person events took place throughout the year which are free for subscribers. In addition, an annual conference encouraged wide participation from the sector with 104 delegates.

A new skills and competencies framework was commissioned which identified over 60 skills and competencies required to manage green space. The organisation focuses on delivering learning opportunities within the framework, to ensure the best outcomes for parks and green spaces. These have included:

Webinars/online

- Mental Health Awareness Training – LANTRA
- Allotment State of the Market Survey – APSE
- The Southwark Allotment Guarantee – Southwark Borough Council
- Rugby Borough Council Allotment Case Study
- Role of Allotment Site Representatives: The National Allotment Society
- Equality in Play – Make Space for Girls
- Community Green Grants – West Midlands Greener Together
- West Midlands Violence Reduction Unit
- Play Inclusivity and Accessibility – Play England
- Technician qualifications/apprenticeship – the Landscape Institute
- The role of parks in nature’s recovery – Ian Jelley, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust
- DICE Training – Diversity Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality -Directory for Social Change
- Seminar on Biodiversity Net Gain with Natural England and APSE

Learning Visits:

- State of UK Parks 2021
- Worcester Natural Networks – improving biodiversity in rivers, waysides, verges and meadows – Worcester City Council
- Green Social Prescribing – Natural England
- Natural Flood Management – Forestry Commission
- Urban Buzz Project – Grassland Strategy – Leicester City Council
- Saving the Saffron Brook – Leicester City Council
- Saltwells National Nature Reserve, Past Present and Future, Dudley Council.
- Community Green Space Management – Training Day at St Ann’s Allotments, Nottingham
- Trees and Woodland Day with The Tree Council at Bradgate Park, Leics.
- Parks for People and Green Heritage Visit to Victoria Park Stafford, Stafford Borough Council
- Management and organisation of commercial, environmental and social aspects of Nene Park, Peterborough – the Nene Park Trust

Conference:

The Secret of Successful Parks Partnerships
Partnerships and collaborations with speakers and workshops in
November 2022, Midlands Arts Centre

The information gained from these learning opportunities has enabled participants to transfer the knowledge, skills and learning from the topics covered into their parks and green spaces.

It has enabled members to understand and react promptly to implement management techniques related to the management of parks POST-Covid, and to understand the complex processes related to The Environment Act and Biodiversity Net Gain which will be embedded in legislation in 2023.

A range of learning topics has been provided to enable members to better manage the land in their locality for nature, including carbon reduction, and opportunities to increase biodiversity, such as creating naturalistic planting, green corridors for nature, and sharing information on how members have created natural flood management, slowing the flow for people and wildlife.

Other webinars and training focused on community green space management, including allotments and community gardens.

All the presentations and recordings from the above are freely available to download from the web site, which received over 32,000 visits during the 12 months.

The organisation issued 12 newsletters and frequent bulletins to our members which included funding information, policy, guidance, best practice and green space vacancies. Twitter and LinkedIn accounts are used to share information, and help raise skills, knowledge and network in green spaces.

Successful funding applications were made to

British Tourism, Arnold Clark, Postcode Lottery, The Blakemore Foundation, Cobb Charitable Trust and The Co-operative Bank.

Sponsorship was also received from T H White.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

The contribution made by volunteers during the year has been a vital part of our third year as a charity, through sharing expertise, hosting learning events, and contributing towards the learning of peers.

Volunteering from Trustees and non-trustees totalled over 658 hours which generated around £57,400 of in-kind support.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The organisation continues to sustain a blended income from the following:

- Earned income: membership and conference income
- Sponsorship
- External funding: funding bodies, such as national lottery, grants and foundations.

Our success has enabled us to place a modest sum into savings reserves.

We provide a service to all members, including

Monthly Newsletters and bulletins

Webinars with a range of partners including Green Flag, National Allotment Association, Association of Play Industries, Natural England, The Tree Council, and a wide range of other organisations to share best practice. (Average webinar attendance was 24).

Free training on Mental Health resilience and Diversity, Inclusion, Cohesion and Equality.

A Conference with academia, local authorities, sharing best practice on partnerships and collaborations.

We also provide a service to the wider green space community, with all presentations and recordings are free to access on our web site, which aids learning in the wider sector.

Evaluating our work

All of our in person learning events, webinars and conferences are evaluated to enable us to continually tailor learning to meet the needs of our members.

Our learning events achieved during this period achieved a scoring of 4.2 (with 5 being excellent and 4 being very good). Over 305 green space practitioners attended learning events during this period.

Our annual conference scored an overall satisfaction of 4.55 (with 5 being excellent and 4 being very good).

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity's reserves policy requires unrestricted funding to cover six months of costs, which the charity holds.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The principal sources of funding have been

- British Tourism £2400
- Arnold Clark £1000
- Postcode Lottery £500
- The Blakemore Foundation £100
- The Cobb Charitable Trust 1000
- The Co-operative Bank £1000

Total £6000

Earned Income

- Annual membership fees
- Conference Fees
- Training Activities
- Sponsorship of Conference
- Sponsorship of Learning Visit

All expenditure during 2021/22 has been targeted towards improving the skills and competencies required by members, to enable them to better manage and develop their green spaces for public benefit, and towards the green space sector as a whole - with biodiversity and green heritage a key focus.

The key priorities of learning identified are heritage, biodiversity/climate change, community and volunteering and identifying sources of income/commercial opportunities. In addition, sharing information on inequality of provision, and campaigning for increased resources for parks.

Gaining skills and knowledge in these areas enable green space practitioners to replicate learning from peers enabling them to improve parks and green space facilities within their local area.

Having a supportive network of learning from green space sector practitioners enables costs to be kept at a minimum.

The charity has selected an ethical banking organisation, which supports community activities.

The charity directly employs a part time member of staff and a small amount of additional administration to manage annual membership processes. The employee is home-working which eliminates all overheads.

--

Section G Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	<i>E.S. Stuffs</i>	
Full name(s)	LIZ Stuffs	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date	4 th May 2023	

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2022

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the year ended 30th November 2022.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

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G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

27th April 2023

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2022

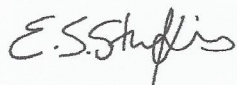
	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
INCOME	R	U	TOTAL	TOTAL 2021
NLRH Grant	-	-	-	9,760
National Lottery – Community Green Spaces	-	-	-	10,000
William A Cadbury Grant	-	-	-	10,000
Other Grants	-	6,000	6,000	4,500
Memberships	-	20,517	20,517	18,384
Training/Conference Income	-	7,096	7,096	13,926
Sponsorship	-	772	772	-
	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL INCOME	-	34,385	34,385	66,570
	-----	-----	-----	-----
EXPENDITURE				
Salary Costs	6,450	18,975	25,425	23,010
Travelling Expenses	41	449	490	74
Insurance	-	278	278	532
Training, Mentoring, Conference Fees	1,759	5,825	7,584	9,318
Printing, Stationery, Advertising	-	426	426	361
Telephone and Postage	-	61	61	30
Repairs and Renewals	-	-	-	221
Evaluation/Research Fees	-	1,224	1,224	8,584
Professional Fees	-	510	510	770
Paypal Fees	-	69	69	-
Sundries	-	29	29	350
	-----	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	8,250	27,846	36,096	43,250
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Net Surplus/-Deficit for the Year	-8,250	6,539	-1,711	23,320
Balance at 30 th November 2021	8,250	55,747	63,997	40,677
	-----	-----	-----	-----
Reserves at 30th November 2022	-	62,286	62,286	63,997
	-----	-----	-----	-----

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2022

	<u>£</u>	2021 <u>£</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Current Account	42,286	63,997
CAF Deposit Account	20,000	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	62,286	63,997
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Represented by :		
Income & Expenditure Account:		
Restricted Funds	-	8,250
Unrestricted Funds	62,286	55,747
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	62,286	63,997
	<hr/>	<hr/>

NB: Restricted Funds above are all in respect of the National Lottery Community Green Spaces Grant.

Approved by the Management Committee on 27th April 2023 and signed on their behalf:



Name

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2022

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the year ended 30th November 2022.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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 2011 Act and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.



G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

27th April 2023

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2022

	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
INCOME	R	U	TOTAL	TOTAL 2021
NLRH Grant	-	-	-	9,760
National Lottery – Community Green Spaces	-	-	-	10,000
William A Cadbury Grant	-	-	-	10,000
Other Grants	-	6,000	6,000	4,500
Memberships	-	20,517	20,517	18,384
Training/Conference Income	-	7,096	7,096	13,926
Sponsorship	-	772	772	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL INCOME	-	34,385	34,385	66,570
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
EXPENDITURE				
Salary Costs	6,450	18,975	25,425	23,010
Travelling Expenses	41	449	490	74
Insurance	-	278	278	532
Training, Mentoring, Conference Fees	1,759	5,825	7,584	9,318
Printing, Stationery, Advertising	-	426	426	361
Telephone and Postage	-	61	61	30
Repairs and Renewals	-	-	-	221
Evaluation/Research Fees	-	1,224	1,224	8,584
Professional Fees	-	510	510	770
Paypal Fees	-	69	69	-
Sundries	-	29	29	350
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	8,250	27,846	36,096	43,250
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net Surplus/-Deficit for the Year	-8,250	6,539	-1,711	23,320
Balance at 30 th November 2021	8,250	55,747	63,997	40,677
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Reserves at 30th November 2022	-	62,286	62,286	63,997
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2022

	<u>£</u>	2021 <u>£</u>
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Current Account	42,286	63,997
CAF Deposit Account	20,000	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	62,286	63,997
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Represented by :		
Income & Expenditure Account:		
Restricted Funds	-	8,250
Unrestricted Funds	62,286	55,747
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	62,286	63,997
	<hr/>	<hr/>

NB: Restricted Funds above are all in respect of the National Lottery Community Green Spaces Grant.

Approved by the Management Committee on 27th April 2023 and signed on their behalf:

E.S. Stuplis

Name

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1186863

Accounts



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	1	Decemb er	2020		30	November	2021

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name	Midlands Parks Forum
Other names charity is known by	
Registered charity number (if any)	1186863
Charity's principal address	186 Alcester Road South
	Kings Heath
	Birmingham
Postcode	B14 6DE

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Liz Stuffins	Chairperson		Existing Trustees
2	Sally Orton			"
3	James Dymond	Vice Chairperson		"
4	Sam Village			"
5	Ishrat Karimi Fini			"
6	Angela Lewis			"
7	Richard Hunt	Treasurer		
8	Gemma Gregory			
9	Kristina Causer		28 th November 2021 to 19 th January 2022	
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

--	--	--

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent examination	Graham Jones Dudley CVS	7 Albion St, Dudley DY5 3EE

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Alison Bate, Partnership Manager

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	The appointment of founding trustees was made following an open meeting of all Midlands Parks Forum subscribers. The trustees were all nominated and seconded at the inaugural meeting. The appointment of additional trustees was made following open advertisements via our newsletters and via Reach Volunteering

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

<p>You may choose to include additional information, where relevant, about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees; <input type="checkbox"/> the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works; <input type="checkbox"/> relationship with any related parties; <input type="checkbox"/> trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them. 	<p>Three new Trustees were appointed as part of succession planning, following an open recruitment process in June 2021. The three trustees undertook online training with a specialist provider in September and October 2021. However, one trustee resigned her role on 19th January 2022.</p> <p>Three existing trustees have extended their terms of office by a further three years.</p> <p>The organisation continues to develop partnerships with green space organisations and value the support of non-voting volunteers from the green space sector.</p> <p>A successful conference was held with National Lottery Heritage Fund, Historic England, The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC), and Keep Britain Tidy.</p> <p>The trustees have continued to undertake an annual Risk Management Assessment, to ensure that risks are minimised and mitigated or closed where possible.</p>
--	--

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

1. To provide and enhance, and / or assist in the provision and enhancement of, the physical and natural environment for the use and enjoyment of the public in the area of benefit (including, but without limitation, the provision and maintenance of facilities and equipment, and the promotion of biodiversity) and shall include but is not limited to public parks, gardens, landscaped areas, woodland, playing fields, playgrounds, nature reserves and recreational spaces;
2. To advance the education of the public in the area of benefit including (but without limitation) with regards to the horticulture, arboriculture, ecology, geology, archaeology, sustainability, heritage and local history; and
3. To provide or assist in the provision of facilities, for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the public by the improvement of parks and green open spaces in the area of benefit. In furtherance of these, the charity will provide an umbrella group for other interested organisations. In these objects, the area of benefit means the local authority areas within the East and West Midlands.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

A range of learning and training activities have taken place to enhance the environment for the public. A total of 13 events throughout the year to enhance the quality and accessibility of parks and green spaces have focused on:

- Skills and Competencies in the Green Space Sector and available training - The Landscape Institute
- Improving access to Green Space - Director of Public Health
- Creating renewable energy in Green Spaces - Park Power
- Carbon reduction in buildings and machinery
- Education outdoors - Learning through Landscapes
- Outdoor Learning - North Northamptonshire Council
- Informal Community Education during Covid - Parks for Nottingham Project
- Future Parks Accelerator Programme - Nottingham City
- Parks Management Forum - Campaigning for Parks
- Dogs in the Outdoors - Steve Jenkinson
- National Lottery Funding Presentation -sourcing parks capital and revenue funding

Learning Visits and Conferences included:

Snibston Colliery Park -Midlands Green Heritage
Six speakers and four workshops looked in detail at how resources are required and applied to protect parks heritage and continue funding high quality, high value parks and green space.

Learning visits to Solihull and Worcester City focused on improving connectivity and biodiversity within landscapes, and developing large scale wildflower schemes, and improving watercourses for biodiversity.

Subsidised, accredited Introduction to Parks Management training, and Advanced Parks Management Training for 23 members was provided by APSE on behalf of the organisation.

The information gained from the aforementioned interactive learning sessions has enabled participants to transfer the knowledge, skills and learning from the topics covered into their parks and green spaces. It has enabled members to understand and react promptly to implement management techniques related to the management of parks during Covid, and the risks and benefits of enabling children's play areas to re-open swiftly post lockdown.

Sharing vital information during Covid-19 and having debate and discussion on the opening of green spaces was essential for parks management. Through regular liaison with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and leading parks authorities, the Forum provided guidance and information on all Covid-19 related topics such as events management, managing parks and play areas, cleansing, opening cafes and the cleansing of parks buildings and other facilities.

A range of learning topics have been provided to enable members to better manage the land in their locality for nature, including carbon reduction, and opportunities to increase biodiversity, such as creating naturalistic planting, green corridors for nature, and sharing information on how members have created natural flood management, slowing the flow for people and wildlife. Natural England provided guidance on how organisations will be required to manage projects for biodiversity net gain (policy, metric & standards), with examples that can be replicated by members in the future.

Other webinars have included allotments management, the importance and benefits of protecting green spaces through Fields in Trust, and exploring a barometer of Green Space Access, to ensure that local authorities are aware of whether they provide sufficient green space access for residents.

Webinars during Covid welcomed organisations such as the National Federation of Parks to share best practice in supporting volunteers in green spaces, which is vital to the ongoing management of spaces.

During Covid-19, the charity also contributed to a key document 'Managing Parks during Covid-19', which was accessed by hundreds of organisations. Working closely with the Association of Play Industries enabled the charity to share vital information across the Midlands regarding the re-opening of play areas for the public.

The charity has prepared Case Studies demonstrating best practice in Midlands green space, including studies of heritage features, events management, geology, and developing a country park. All the case studies are freely available to download from the web site.

The charity continues to manage a web site - which received 20,468 visits, an increase of 44% from the previous year's visits of 14,243.

The organisation issued 12 newsletters and many bulletins to our members which includes funding information and green space vacancies. Twitter and LinkedIn accounts are used to share information, and help raise skills, knowledge and network in green spaces.

Successful funding applications were made to William A Cadbury, D S Smith, National Lottery Community Fund, Marsh Christian Trust, and The Southall Trust for funding to sustain the charity's work. The final 10% of a National Lottery Heritage Fund Grant was also received.

Sponsorship was also received which contributed towards a successful conference.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

The contribution made by volunteers during the year has been a vital part of our second year as a charity, even though face to face activities did not take place due to the pandemic.

Publications

1. Report of Parks People Counters was undertaken to share learning.
2. Six case studies were completed which detailed the restoration and management of heritage landscapes and buildings; developing naturalistic landscapes, promoting geology; use of technology by Friends of Parks; and managing events during the Covid 19. The document brings together the diverse heritage, cultural and environmental achievements from parks
3. A research document focused on areas of the Midlands and asked whether there was a relationship between deprivation and investment? and a relationship between deprivation and green space quality? The research identified that opportunities for learning, engagement in order to develop new projects were impacted in areas where little funding or investment had been applied.

In-kind contribution from Community First Partnership provided project and pro-bono consultancy worth an estimated £17,826

Volunteering from Trustees and non-trustees increased from 500 hours in 19/20 to 746 hours in 20/21 which generated almost £37,300 of in-kind support.

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

The organisation continues to sustain a blended income from the following:

Earned income: membership and conference income
Sponsorship

External funding: funding bodies, such as national lottery, grants and foundations

We provide a service to all members, including

Monthly Newsletters and bulletins

Covid-19 Parks Management Guidance;

Webinars with a range of partners including Green Flag, National Allotment Association, Association of Play Industries, Natural England, The Tree Council, and a wide range of other organisations to share best practice. (Average webinar attendance was 24).

Subsidised training from national body APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) to members based on 2 levels, Introduction to Parks Management and Advanced Parks Management.

A Conference in partnership with Leicestershire County Council included contributions and collaborations with Snibston Heritage Trust, Historic England, Keep Britain Tidy, National Lottery Heritage Fund and The Landscape Institute.

All presentations were recorded and are free to access on our web site.

The charity worked with Community First Partnership to complete research on accessibility of quality green space in the Midlands region, which highlighted 'cold' areas, where there is limited amount of high-quality green, high value space. We also published six case studies which help improve knowledge, skills and competencies around green space, and included:

Events in Covid

Restoration of Heritage

Community Green Space Parks Projects

Parks for People restoration

A new Heritage Country Park

Wildflower Meadow Creation

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity's reserves policy requires unrestricted funding to cover six months of costs, which the charity holds.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The principal sources of funding have been

- Remainder of a National Lottery Resilient Heritage Grant
- £3000 Grant Southall Trust
- £10,000 Community Lottery Fund
- £1000 DS Smith
- £2400 Visit Britain Grant
- £10,000 Cadbury Fund
- £500 Marsh Christian Trust

Earned Income

- Annual membership fees.
- Conference Fees
- Training Activities
- Sponsorship of Conference

All expenditure during 2020/21 has been targeted towards improving the skills and knowledge gaps identified by members, to enable them to better manage and develop their green spaces for public benefit, and towards the green space sector as a whole - with funding and heritage a key focus.

The key priorities of learning identified are heritage, biodiversity/climate change, community and volunteering and identifying sources of income/commercial opportunities. In addition, sharing information on inequality of provision, and campaigning for increased resources for parks.

Gaining skills and knowledge in these areas enable green space practitioners to replicate learning from peers enabling them to improve parks and green space facilities within their local area.

Having a supportive network of learning from green space sector practitioners enables costs to be kept at a minimum.

The charity has selected an ethical banking organisation, which supports community activities.

The charity now directly employs a part time member of staff, who has been TUPE'd over to MPF. The employee is based at home, to reduce future overheads.

Section F

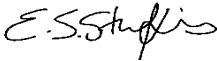
Other optional information

--

Section G Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)		
Full name(s)	LIZ Stuffs	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
Date	12.04.22	

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2021


	£	£	£	£
	R	U	TOTAL	TOTAL 2020
INCOME				
Transfers from previous entity:				
- NLRH Funds in hand	-	-	-	10,137
- Match Funding	-	-	-	5,025
- Memberships	-	-	-	2,599
NLRH Grant	9,760	-	9,760	39,040
National Lottery – Community Green Spaces	10,000	-	10,000	-
William A Cadbury Grant	-	10,000	10,000	-
Other Grants	-	4,500	4,500	-
Memberships	-	18,384	18,384	14,725
Training/Conference Income	-	13,926	13,926	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL INCOME	19,760	46,810	66,570	71,526
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
EXPENDITURE				
Salary Costs	18,080	4,930	23,010	23,058
Travelling Expenses	-	74	74	424
Insurance	272	260	532	-
Training, Mentoring, Conference Fees	6,650	2,668	9,318	3,775
Printing, Stationery, Advertising	124	237	361	1,523
Telephone and Postage	20	10	30	7
Repairs and Renewals	89	132	221	-
Evaluation/Research Fees	8,584	-	8,584	1,326
Professional Fees	770	-	770	660
Sundries	350	-	350	76
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	34,939	8,311	43,250	30,849
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Net -Deficit/Surplus for the Year/Period	-15,179	38,499	23,320	40,677
Balance at 30 th November 2020	23,429	17,248	40,677	-
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
Reserves at 30th November 2021	8,250	55,747	63,997	40,677
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2021

	£	2020 £
CURRENT ASSETS		
Bank Current Account	63,997	40,677
	_____	_____
Represented by :		
Income & Expenditure Account:		
Restricted Funds	8,250	23,429
Unrestricted Funds	55,747	17,248
	_____	_____
	63,997	40,677
	_____	_____

NB: Restricted Funds above are all in respect of the National Lottery Community Green Spaces Grant.

Approved by the Management Committee and signed on their behalf:



.....

NameElizabeth Stuffs.....

Date ...5.5.22.....

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the year ended 30th November 2021.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.


Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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 2011 Act and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Acthave 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.


G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

24TH MARCH 2022

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2021

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the year ended 30th November 2021.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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 2011 Act and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.



G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

24TH MARCH 2022

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

England & Wales - Charity number 1186863

Accounts



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

	Period start date				Period end date		
From	28	November	2019	To	30	November	2020

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name Midlands Parks Forum

Other names charity is known by

Registered charity number (if any) 1186863

Charity's principal address

186 Alcester Road South
 Kings Heath
 Birmingham
Postcode B14 6DE

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Liz Stuffsins	Chairperson	28 th November 2019 to 27 th November 2023	Existing Trustees
2	Sally Orton		28 th November 2019 to 27 th November 2022	“
3	James Dymond	Vice Chairperson	28 th November 2019 to 27 th November 2021	“
4	Sam Village		28 th November 2019 to 27 th November 2021	“
5	Ishrat Karimi Fini		28 th November 2019 to 27 th November 2021	“
6	Angela Lewis		28 th November 2019 to 27 th November 2021	“
7				
8				
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11				
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13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
Independent examination	Graham Jones Dudley CVS	7 Albion St, Dudley DY5 3EE

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Alison Bate, Partnership Manager

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	The appointment of founding trustees was made following an open meeting of all Midlands Parks Forum subscribers. The trustees were all nominated and seconded at the inaugural meeting.

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

Trustees were provided with induction and training at a meeting in January 2020 by Dudley Council for Voluntary Services.

Trustees have also been provided with electronic training documents from Small Charities Coalition.

A Forward Planning meeting took place at Nottingham on 20th July 2020 with four trustees attending the meeting in person, and 2 trustees attending virtually. The purpose of the meeting was to update the organisation's business plan following the Covid-19 impact.

The trustees continue to develop partnerships with green space organisations and value the support of non-voting volunteers from the green space sector.

Partnerships have been developed with the Landscape Institute and Association for Public Service Excellence with whom joint events and training have taken place. The Trustees have also been supported with mentoring from Greenspace Scotland representatives.

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

1. To provide and enhance, and / or assist in the provision and enhancement of, the physical and natural environment for the use and enjoyment of the public in the area of benefit (including, but without limitation, the provision and maintenance of facilities and equipment, and the promotion of biodiversity) and shall include but is not limited to public parks, gardens, landscaped areas, woodland, playing fields, playgrounds, nature reserves and recreational spaces;
2. To advance the education of the public in the area of benefit including (but without limitation) with regards to the horticulture, arboriculture, ecology, geology, archaeology, sustainability, heritage and local history; and
3. To provide or assist in the provision of facilities, for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare, with the object of improving the conditions of life of the public by the improvement of parks and green open spaces in the area of benefit. In furtherance of these, the charity will provide an umbrella group for other interested organisations. In these objects, the area of benefit means the local authority areas within the East and West Midlands.

A range of learning and training activities have taken place to enhance the environment for the public, including the promotion of biodiversity, parks, nature reserves, playgrounds, and heritage.

Due to Covid restrictions, the charity held 11 interactive 'learning experiences via Webinar, along with a conference and vocational workshops during this financial year, which included numerous 'webinars', some of which attracted up to 47 Midlands green space organisations, such as trusts, local authorities, charities and community green space forums. All webinars are recorded and freely available on the web site. 84% of members say these are helpful to their role. However over 80% say they will welcome future face to face meetings when they are allowed.

The information gained from the aforementioned interactive learning sessions has enabled participants to transfer the knowledge, skills and learning from the topics covered into their parks and green spaces. It has enabled members to understand and react promptly to implement management techniques related to the management of parks during Covid, and the risks and benefits of enabling children's play areas to re-open swiftly post lockdown.

Sharing vital information during Covid-19 and having debate and discussion on the opening of green spaces was essential for parks management. Through regular liaison with Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and leading parks authorities, the Forum provided guidance and information on all Covid-19 related topics such as events management, managing parks and play areas, cleansing, opening cafes and the cleansing of parks buildings and other facilities.

A range of learning topics have been provided to enable members to better manage the land in their locality for nature, including carbon reduction, and opportunities to increase biodiversity, such as creating naturalistic planting, green corridors for nature, and sharing information on how members have created natural flood management, slowing the flow for people and wildlife. Natural England provided guidance on how organisations will be required to manage projects for biodiversity net gain (policy, metric & standards), with examples that can be replicated by members in the future.

Other webinars have included allotments management, the benefits of protecting green spaces through Fields in Trust, and exploring a barometer of Green Space Access, to ensure that local authorities are

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

aware of whether they provide sufficient green space access for residents.

Webinars during Covid welcomed organisations such as the National Federation of Parks to share best practice in supporting volunteers in green spaces, which is vital to the ongoing management of spaces.

During Covid-19, the charity also contributed to a key document 'Managing Parks during Covid-19', which was accessed by hundreds of organisations. Working closely with the Association of Play Industries enabled the charity to share vital information across the Midlands regarding the re-opening of play areas for the public.

The charity has partnered with leading training organisations to deliver high-quality training on Parks Management to participants, and has partnered with the Landscape Institute to run a two-day virtual conference: Future of Parks: Skills, Innovation and Creativity for C21st Challenges, which was free for charitable/voluntary members. The conference attracted over 112 delegates and included Keynote speakers such as Neil McCarthy, CEO, World Urban Parks and Sue Manns, President of the Royal Town Planning Institute.

The charity has prepared Case Studies demonstrating best practice in Midlands green space, including studies of heritage features, events management, geology, and developing a country park. All the case studies are freely available to download from the web site.

The charity has developed a web site, monthly newsletters, and a Twitter account to regularly share information, and help raise skills, knowledge in and around green spaces.

Applications have been made to trusts, foundations and National Lottery for funding to sustain the charity's work.

Business planning support from the Heritage Trust Network enabled the charity to update its business plan to include a Covid impact assessment and begin a visioning activity for the charity post heritage funding.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

The contribution made by volunteers during the year has been a vital part of our first year as a charity.

Community First Partnership have offered business advice, and individuals, organisations and Friends of Parks have assisted in preparing case studies, contributing to presentations and webinars and providing responses to members' enquiries.

The valuable 'in-kind' contribution has provided over 500 hours of volunteering to the organisation, with a value in excess of £26,000.

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grantmaking;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

Section D

Achievements and performance

Section D

Achievements and performance

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

Since its formation in November 2019, the charity has provided the following, which has been wholly funded from the National Lottery Resilient Heritage Grant:

Monthly Newsletters, Frequent bulletins and Covid-19 Parks Management Guidance; nine Webinars with a range of partners including Green Flag, National Allotment Association, Association of Play Industries, Natural England, The Tree Council, and a wide range of other organisations to share best practice.

Subsidised training from national body APSE (Association of Public Service Excellence) to members based on 2 levels, Introduction to Parks Management and Advanced Parks Management.

Partnership working with The Landscape Institute resulted in a joint conference: C21st Skills in Parks, looking at skills, equality, access to training to improve community facilities. We also provided access for members to the LI's learning portal which contains a range of presentations on green spaces and landscape management.

A website has been created where all webinars and case studies will be accessible.

The charity contributed to a National Document 'Managing Parks During Covid-19', which has been downloaded over 6000 times.

Collaboration with six green spaces in the Midlands resulted in Case Studies on heritage, geology, managing events in parks, improving biodiversity, developing a country park and a parks restoration programme.

Expansion of the charity into the East Midlands, and gaining a small increase in membership from West Midlands organisations, has increased overall membership in 2020 by 67%. This contributes towards the charity's sustainability goal of becoming sustainable, and has enabled the charity to support more organisations throughout the Covid challenges; sharing good practice and engaging with the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government, and helping prepare practitioners for the challenges post lockdown. The charity's first staff member was employed through a third party on a fixed term contract to deliver the Resilient Heritage project, and to undertake the charity development.

The charity is currently undertaking an evaluation of the National Lottery Resilient Heritage funding with members, which is focusing on how the organisation has promoted a greater understanding of the heritage of parks, and how the organisation has become more resilient.

The charity's aims for 2021 are to publish research on accessibility of quality green space along with six case studies which help improve knowledge, skills and competencies around green space; to provide mentoring, meet ups, policy and newsletters and to collaborate and develop partnerships to help improve and promote the green space sector and green space facilities

Section E

Financial review

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The charity's reserves policy requires unrestricted funding to cover six months of costs, which the charity holds.

Details of any funds materially in deficit

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The principal sources of funding are a National Lottery Resilient Heritage Grant and annual membership fees.

All expenditure during 2019/20 has been targeted towards improving the skills and knowledge gaps identified by members, to enable them to better manage and develop their green spaces for public benefit.

The key priorities of learning identified are heritage, biodiversity/climate change, community and volunteering and identifying sources of income/commercial opportunities. In addition, sharing information on inequality of provision, and health and safety during Covid.

Gaining skills and knowledge in these areas enable green space practitioners to replicate learning from peers enabling them to improve parks and green space facilities within their local area.

Having a supportive network of learning from green space sector practitioners enables costs to be kept at a minimum.

The charity has selected an ethical banking organisation, which supports community activities.

The charity now directly employs a part time member of staff, who has been TUPE'd over to MPF. The employee is based at home, to reduce future overheads.

Section F

Other optional information

Throughout the first year, the organisation has received mentoring from Julie Proctor CEO at Greenspace Scotland, from Dudley CVS and received Heritage Trust Network funding to undertake an update of the business plan. The charity has become a member of the Small Charities Coalition and the Foundation for Social Improvement, both of whom offer free or low-cost training and support.

Pro bono legal advice was also provided by K&L Gates LLP through the Law Works Charity.

Section G

Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	<i>E.S. Stuffins</i>	
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Full name(s)	LIZ Stuffins	
---------------------	--------------	--

Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair	
--	-------	--

Date	29.03.21
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MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

Independent Examiner's Report

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the period ended 30th November 2020.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the 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 you as 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 2011 Act and
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 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.



G. M. JONES
ACCOUNTANT
DUDLEY CVS
7 ALBION STREET
BRIERLEY HILL
DY5 3EE

22ND MARCH 2021

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2020

	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
INCOME	R	U	TOTAL
Transfers from previous entity:			
- NLRH Funds in hand	10,137	-	10,137
- Match Funding	5,025	-	5,025
- Memberships	-	2,599	2,599
NLRH Grant	39,040	-	39,040
Memberships	-	14,725	14,725
	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL INCOME	54,202	17,324	71,526
	-----	-----	-----
EXPENDITURE			
Salary Costs	23,058	-	23,058
Travelling Expenses	424	-	424
Training, Mentoring, Conference Fees	3,775	-	3,775
Printing, Stationery, Advertising	1,523	-	1,523
Telephone and Postage	7	-	7
Evaluation Fees	1,326	-	1,326
Professional Fees	660	-	660
Sundries	-	76	76
	-----	-----	-----
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	30,773	76	30,849
	-----	-----	-----
Net Surplus for the Period	23,429	17,248	40,677
	-----	-----	-----

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
AS AT 30TH NOVEMBER 2020

	<u>£</u>
CURRENT ASSETS	
Bank Current Account	40,677

Represented by :	
Income & Expenditure Account:	
Restricted Funds	23,429
Unrestricted Funds	17,248

	40,677

NB: Restricted Funds above are all in respect of the National Lottery Resilience Heritage Grant.

Approved by the Management Committee and signed on their behalf:



Name ...Liz Staffins.....

Date ...22nd March 2021.....

Independent Examiner's Report

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Basis of independent examiner's report

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DUDLEY CVS
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MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

PERIOD ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2020

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM
REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

Independent Examiner's Report

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22ND MARCH 2021