



# Trustees' Annual Report for the period

<b>From</b>	Period start date			<b>To</b>	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 <sup>th</sup> November 2021 to 19 <sup>th</sup> 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

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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 (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)

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.

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 19<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

Three existing trustees have extended their terms of office by a further three years.

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

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.

The trustees have continued to undertake an annual Risk Management Assessment, to ensure that risks are minimised and mitigated or closed where possible.

## 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**

## 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**

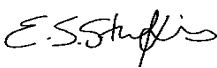
**Other optional information**

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 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021**

	£	£	£	£
	R	U	TOTAL	TOTAL 2020
<b>INCOME</b>				
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	-
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>19,760</b>	<b>46,810</b>	<b>66,570</b>	<b>71,526</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>				
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
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>34,939</b>	<b>8,311</b>	<b>43,250</b>	<b>30,849</b>
<b>Net -Deficit/Surplus for the Year/Period</b>	<b>-15,179</b>	<b>38,499</b>	<b>23,320</b>	<b>40,677</b>
Balance at 30 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	<b>23,429</b>	<b>17,248</b>	<b>40,677</b>	-
<b>Reserves at 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021</b>	<b>8,250</b>	<b>55,747</b>	<b>63,997</b>	<b>40,677</b>

**MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM**  
**REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863**  
**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**  
**AS AT 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021**

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

**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:**

*E.S. Stuffs*

.....

**Name .....Elizabeth 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 30<sup>th</sup> 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

24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022

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**MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM**

**REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863**

**ACCOUNTS**

**YEAR ENDED 30<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2021**

**Independent Examiner's Report**

I report on the attached accounts of Midlands Parks Forum for the year ended 30<sup>th</sup> 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.

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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

24<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022