



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			"
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

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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

<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. 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.</p> <p>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.</p>
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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.

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. 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

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 30th 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/>
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	<hr/>	<hr/>

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

E.S. Studio

Name

MIDLANDS PARKS FORUM

REGISTERED CHARITY NO. 1186863

ACCOUNTS

YEAR ENDED 30TH NOVEMBER 2024

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E.S. Studio

Name