

Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs



Annual Report 2023

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Chair of Trustees Report

For the third year running I am delighted to be able to present my Annual Report to the Trustees, our supporters and users. Once again it has been a very busy year with our numbers of users increasing as well as the number of visitors repeating their visits to us after enjoying the experience of the freedom of the beach. This is a bonus for us and also a benefit for the town of Fleetwood, the Town Council of which continues to support us in many ways and is represented through our Trustees.

In last year's report I indicated that our service is becoming a "Benchmark" service and this has been evidenced by the start-up of schemes in Wirral and a projected scheme in Lytham St Annes. We have been advising both on equipment and processes to assist them to offer a service to those with various disabilities.

We continue to add to our stock of equipment and had a grant from our local ASDA store at Fleetwood which enabled us to purchase more specialist support cushions and other items of equipment. We turn over our stock quite quickly as the use of some items is necessarily restricted, and cleaning and sanitisation of stock does reduce the working life of some items. We are constantly in need of funds for such equipment and the fact that we are a free service to the users means we must work hard for charitable funds.

We do give presentations to groups and organisations and this does generate a small contribution to our funds, but we are eager to spread the word and talk to any groups that would like to hear our story of development from an idea to a service.

Our service has been recognised once again with the award of the Wyre Business Award for Innovation and we were shortlisted for the BBC Make a Difference Awards for which we received Highly Commended and were finalists in the Lancashire Tourism Awards. Whilst we are not seeking to gain awards, the fact that we have achieved so much in such a short time reflects the quality of the service provided by our volunteers.

The impact of the Covid Crisis now seems to be reducing although it has cost us in terms of volunteers and sadly some users. However, we still have a fine team of volunteers to assist us and we continue to recruit and train more.

The summer saw a very busy time for us with a full service being offered throughout the hot weather. On several occasions we had all ten chairs on the beach at the same time which is a wonderful thing to see. This does put a strain on our volunteers, though, who need to track the chairs and then clean them and sanitise them as well as having a quick turn-round on occasions.

The winter months were not so kind to us and we suffered a major pipe burst in the week before Christmas which left us flooded at our Wheel Base for several hours and required a lot of drying out. Fortunately, we managed to save all our “soft” and fabric items which were removed, washed and dried. It was not until March that we could return the items and replace our shelving and consider a return to operations. Our first user of the year was on the beach on 11th March 2023. Our landlord, Wyre Borough Council, recompensed us for our losses and has granted us a 3-month rent rebate as well.

Since my last report we have achieved a total of 382 visitors on the beach, and in the sea on many occasions, and information about our service is continuing to spread. Our reputation is such that visitors now frequent the area to enjoy the benefit of our service.

A major issue which had concerned us since our opening was the provision of a fully serviced “Changing Places” facility. We provided as part of our equipment “floor-changing” facilities which, whilst helpful to users, was a far from satisfactory solution. Our lobbying and support from Fleetwood Town Council has resulted in a comprehensive “Changing Places Unit” being constructed in the building adjacent to us in the same block. This considerably adds to our desire to see a “hub” being established on this section of the promenade for people with disabilities to use and enjoy. The Unit will open in time for the summer and coincide with the various school holidays that help to bring visitors to the Town.

Once again this has been a very successful year and marks our third year on the beach. We must now look possibly to replacing some of our older stock of chairs and getting new and more up-to-date equipment. Our chairs are guaranteed for ten years, but that is for “normal use” some of our chairs are used three times in a day so we must seriously consider the wear on the equipment and act accordingly.

I and the Trustees and volunteers thank our followers, users and supporters for their continued goodwill and assure them of our best quality of service for the future and coming years.

Michael Gray

Chair of Trustees, Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs

March 2023

Volunteer Officer's Report

Although we have 25 personnel on our volunteers list, there are only 12 people who volunteer regularly and can be relied upon to help. In addition to this, we also have 4 people who help our charity in different ways i.e. collecting donations, or cleaning the chairs and obviously their help is invaluable.

I believe we are not alone in this predicament. Many clubs, charities and societies are also struggling to get volunteers, and the question is "How do we address this issue?"

It concerns us that the better weather is just around the corner and if we are as busy in Summer 2023 as we were in Summer 2022, then we are really going to struggle to maintain our service.

We rely heavily on our volunteers to keep the Wheelbase open. That said, we have managed very well over the last 12 months, and only needed to change one booking to an alternative date due to lack of volunteers.

We still have the strict rule that no volunteers operate alone. There is always a minimum of 2 on duty at any one time. There are a number of people who call in for a chat, so very often the Wheelbase is a social hub for both volunteers and clients. This seems to be increasing as we become more known in the local area.

Janet Simpson
Volunteer Officer

Thank You to Our Partners

We have several organizations to thank for the healthy and optimistic position we find ourselves in today ...

North Berwick Beach Wheelchairs & Beach Access North East

There are around a dozen locations in the UK offering beach wheelchairs, two groups in particular have been incredibly helpful and supportive in our journey. North Berwick, near Edinburgh is possibly the most well-established group and their officers have provided advice and practical support from the start – even sharing their logo with us! Whitley Bay-based Beach Access North East has also given us the benefit of their first-hand experience of setting up a beach wheelchairs service. We would not be where we are now without the assistance of both these wonderful organisations.

Rotary Club of Fleetwood

Our chair of trustees, Michael Gray, is a member of Fleetwood's proactive Rotary Club and from his initial presentation they have encouraged and supported him to research and establish the charity. The Club, together with Rotary District 1190, made a substantial donation towards the cost of a chair, and many Rotarians also volunteer their time and goodwill for Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs. This support is invaluable.

Fleetwood Town Council

A large donation from the Town Council's Community Fund supported the purchase of three chairs in our fleet. Two of our trustees are also local Councillors, passionate about making Fleetwood a better place to live, work in and to visit. The support of the Town Council ensures the charity is always closely linked to the community.

Healthier Fleetwood

The first organisation approached to get the idea off the ground was Healthier Fleetwood, a not-for-profit organisation with a remit to "connect the community". They helped form the initial steering group and much of the administration and marketing was overseen by David Gore of Healthier Fleetwood. He has now left the board of Trustees to concentrate on his professional work but still continues to give his support through Healthier Fleetwood.

Wyre Council

The Council has worked closely with us in leasing to us the 'Wheel Base' headquarters just a few metres from the Promenade. Officers of the Council have continued to provide their expertise and support despite throughout the pandemic.

Baxter Life Care Ltd

This family-run business provides a range of value-for-money social care services across the Fylde Coast. The company supports us with their expertise and advice, and has provided specialist equipment for the use of our visitors. We are also delighted to welcome Baxter Life Care Ltd as our website sponsors which will open up discussion with other potential partners.

Independent Examiners Report



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/
members of

Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs

On accounts for the year
ended

28th February 2023

Charity no
(if any)

1187870

Set out on pages

2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 28/02/2023

DD / MM / YYYY.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

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

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

Independent
examiner's statement

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached..

Signed:

Date:

14th April 2023

Name:

James Christopher Wight

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Address:

2 Leonards Place, Little Singleton,
Poulton Le Fylde. Lancashire FY6 7YZ

Financial Reports

Accounts 2022 – 2023

Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs

Charity Number: 1187870

Income & Expenditure

for the year ended

28 February 2023

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Income						
Donations	12,655	-	12,655	29,163	12,000	41,163
Grants	-	460	460	-	4,168	4,168
Interest	354	-	354	16	-	16
Total Income	13,009	460	13,469	29,179	16,168	45,347
Expenditure						
Advertising	568	-	568	425	132	557
Cleaning	202	-	202	82	-	82
Computer	201	-	201	265	-	265
Depreciation	1,091	5,922	7,012	1,091	2,529	3,620
Electricity	136	-	136	182	-	182
Equipment	697	-	697	339	371	711
Honarium	225	-	225	-	-	-
Hospitality	321	-	321	-	-	-
Insurance	1,436	-	1,436	456	-	456
Licences	20	-	20	40	-	40
Maintenance & Repairs	596	-	596	343	-	343
Office Equipment	301	-	301	414	-	414
Postage	16	-	16	7	19	26
Refreshments	91	-	91	430	-	430
Refund	-	-	-	9	-	9
Rent	1,625	-	1,625	1,086	-	1,086
Stationery	360	-	360	420	-	420
Sundries	169	-	169	15	-	15
Telephone	206	-	206	30	-	30
Travel	403	-	403	-	-	-
Wheelchair Equipment	1,616	460	2,076	2,900	738	3,638
Total Expenditure	10,280	6,382	16,662	8,505	3,790	12,295
Net Surplus/Deficit	2,729	- 5,922	3,193	20,674	12,378	33,051

Financial Reports

Balance Sheet

Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs

Charity Number: 1187870

Balance Sheet

for the year ended

28 February 2023

	2023			2022		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets						
Beach Wheelchairs	4,504	23,545	28,049	4,504	9,976	14,480
Introduction of Assets	0	0	0	0	13,569	13,569
	<u>4,504</u>	<u>23,545</u>	<u>28,049</u>	<u>4,504</u>	<u>23,545</u>	<u>28,049</u>
Accum Depreciation	1,091	2,529	3,620			
Depreciation	1,091	5,922	7,012	1,091	2,529	3,620
	<u>2,323</u>	<u>15,094</u>	<u>17,417</u>	<u>3,413</u>	<u>21,016</u>	<u>24,429</u>
Current Assets						
Bank	33,693	0	33,693	29,896	0	29,896
Prepayments	766	0	766	759	0	759
	<u>34,459</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>34,459</u>	<u>30,655</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>30,655</u>
Current Liabilities						
Accruals	0	0	0	16	0	16
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>16</u>
Net Current Assets (Liabilities)	<u><u>36,782</u></u>	<u><u>15,094</u></u>	<u><u>51,876</u></u>	<u><u>34,053</u></u>	<u><u>21,016</u></u>	<u><u>55,069</u></u>
Capital Account						
Balance BF			55,069			22,018
Net Surplus/Deficit			-3,193			33,051
Balance CF			<u><u>51,876</u></u>			<u><u>55,069</u></u>

Photo Gallery

These images say far more than any words can about the benefits of our service and the simple joy of being on the beach.



Creating





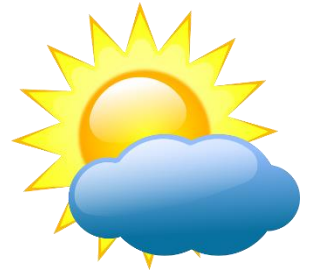
Memories





That last





Forever.....



Feedback

News of our work has travelled far in so much as that in February 2022 our Local MP Cat Smith tabled an Early Day Motion No 947 in the House of Commons, acknowledging the work that Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs does and the awards they have received. This was a very proud moment for Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs.



These are some of the comments about the service we provide and our wonderful volunteers, made by our visitors/service users within the last year. They have been obtained from feedback forms completed by our visitors/service users and also from social media.

"Thanks so much for today. We had a lovely stroll along your beautiful breezy beach. Your service is nothing short of perfect. Jane and Lesley were so knowledgeable and accommodating on getting it right for individual needs. Making a visit not just good but spot on! Thank you."

"It was an amazing experience and my Mum loved it! Thanks for the first- class customer service."

"Never Fail to enjoy The Fleetwood Beach Wheelchairs. The Volunteers are so helpful and friendly. Thank you."

"Absolutely lovely day. Both boys enjoyed the experience. Thank you so much."

"Staff absolutely excellent. The experience was amazing and my Mum was made up"

"The pleasure on my little girls face was priceless. Thank you so much."

"Absolutely fantastic opportunity to access areas that otherwise wouldn't be able to. Wonderful service from Steve and Margaret."

"Brilliant service, brilliant staff. Well done everyone."

"Thank you so very much. My child experienced the beach and sea for the first time. The staff were so lovely. Thank you all."

Trustees & Officers

Chair & Trustee:	Michael Gray
Vice-Chair & Trustee:	Lorraine Beavers
Treasurer & Trustee:	Julie Sandham
Secretary & Trustee:	Alan Dickinson
Volunteer Officer & Trustee:	Janet Simpson
Trustee:	Cheryl Raynor
Trustee:	Karen Murdoch
Trustee:	Reece Slater
Trustee:	Stephen Ireland

Charity Registration & Contacts

Registered charity:	No. 1187870
Registered address:	48 Rossall Promenade, Thornton Cleveleys, FY5 1LP
Freephone:	03000 111 003
E-mail address:	fleetwoodbeachwheelchairs@outlook.com
Website:	www.fleetwoodbeachwheelchairs.co.uk
Facebook:	@FleetwoodBW
Twitter:	@FBWheelchairs