



## Annual Report 2025

### **Summary of the Year's Achievements**

- Free holidays provided in 2025 for 60 disadvantaged local children (15% increase)
- Progressive fundraising created the opportunity to increase from 2 to 3 weeks
- Extensive recruitment provided extra camp staff, including trained sports coaches

### **Administration of the Charity**

CHAOS was started in 1976 by 3 school friends after graduating from Leyton County High School in East London. They acknowledged their own good fortune and wanted to do something to help those who were less fortunate. So they decided to do something to help bring about change and started raising funds for their first summer camp in 1977.

CHAOS is managed by a committee of trustees, and holds general meetings, presided over by a Chairperson. Finances are managed by the Treasurer in accordance with best practice, and an external auditor oversees its accounts. Specialist teams, managed by elected trustees, co-ordinate liaison with agencies such as schools and family welfare units. It is mandatory for all CHAOS staff working directly with children on summer camps to lodge an enhanced DBS check with the Welfare Officer and all must attend safeguarding training prior to engaging in each year's camp.

### **Staffing and Recruitment**

Involvement in CHAOS is considered a great way for young adults to understand the needs of those less fortunate and a great first step to careers involving children. The charity is especially keen to encourage past beneficiaries of camping holidays to volunteer as adult staff members and appreciates their participation in all its activities. CHAOS membership is open to all who share in its ideals and want to play an active part in achieving them. Members volunteer time and energy on a purely voluntary basis, often on top of work, family and study commitments. We are grateful for the many hours volunteers spend in fundraising or organising and running the summer camps.

### **Finances**

CHAOS has ambitious aims to support the needs of the local community and has taken steps to increase its fundraising in order to expand the number of camps from 2 to 3 weeks. It's a tough climate, and we were grateful to be favoured with donations from private individuals, and income from crowd funding and trust funds. This helped us achieve our goal of running 3 well-structured, action-packed camps. Our fundraising also serves to inform the public of the charity's aims within the community. In addition to holiday expenses, there was a requirement to fund external storage as the garage we use has substantial leaks and was therefore unusable.

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## **Child Referrals**

Over the years, our Referrals Team has developed longstanding relationships with a range of partner schools and we received applications for children from the boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Newham, Redbridge and Waltham Forest. Some of these referring schools are based in neighbourhoods which are rated in the government's Indices of Multiple Deprivation as being within the 10% most deprived in the country.

All referring agencies are required to complete a detailed written application for every child, and this allows our camp coordinators to ensure each child's suitability and to conduct a risk assessment prior to each camp. We initially found that the number of camping places on offer was oversubscribed, as in previous years, and family visits were soon arranged to offer holidays to fill the number of places available in our minibuses.

Unfortunately, an unexpected news story emerged on 31<sup>st</sup> July, just days before the start of our camps (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cq58lgnvvypp>). The organiser of a charity that provides summer camps for disadvantaged children in Leicestershire was arrested on suspicion of administering poisoning. This understandably caused fear and a lack of confidence in many of the families we had already visited, and consequently resulted in them withdrawing their children from our camps. Despite our best efforts, schools had closed, and there was insufficient time to arrange new referrals. Sadly, we also experienced a large number of no-shows on the day, the net result being empty minibus seats and wasted expenditure.

## **Summer Camps**

Three camps were run at our usual site in East Runton, near Cromer, providing holidays for a total of 60 children. A wide range of activities was arranged for the children in our care, both on and off site. We also incorporated a range of sporting activities including football, dodgeball and cricket, making good use of the great sandy beaches of the North Norfolk coast. Craft activities, such as beads, drawing and painting, were also arranged to satisfy and encourage the children's creative aspirations.

UK weather sometimes throws unseasonal challenges for our summer camps and we therefore make suitable preparation, washing spare clothes, towels and sleeping bags, and purchasing gaz, batteries, and replacement torches. We do our best to improve our environmental credentials by reducing our reliance on gaz by making use of solar lighting.

## **Week 1 Report**

On this week, we were able to take 19 children aged 10 to 11 (from a planned group of 24) on a six-day holiday in beautiful Norfolk near the seaside. We camped in a farmer's field, so the kids got to spend their time outside in nature and away from the busyness and noise of East London.

On the campsite, we played games as a group, and focused on our core values of kindness, consideration and respect, as we learned to work together and include everyone in our activities.

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Without any of the usual pressures of inner-city life, the kids had a chance to flourish in a new environment and explore the benefits of looking after each other and themselves, as well as learning invaluable skills about how they can do this.

The kids on Week 1 will be going into secondary school either this year or next, so the opportunity to meet new children of their own age and form positive friendships is especially helpful to build confidence in themselves as they prepare for this step. The staff were so pleased to see them all making the most of it, learning to take responsibility for their behaviour and, best of all, recognising their own ability to have a positive impact through their own words and actions and discovering their own unique ways of doing this.

Away from the campsite, we had a jam-packed schedule, including swimming, a theme park (complete with live seal and parrot shows!), a roller disco, an outdoor activity centre, a boat trip in the sea to see seals in the wild, and a visit to the circus, amongst other things. We were able to provide a range of activities these kids had never had the opportunity to do before (they were so excited just to go on the boat, even before we got to see all the seals!) and we loved to see them all enjoying being on holiday – the amount of smiles, jokes and sheer joy were worth it by themselves!

They also had the chance to challenge themselves in some of these activities – especially the climbing activities at the outdoor centre where they were in harnesses high up in the air, and the roller disco where many of them had not been on roller skates before. By providing a safe, supportive environment and encouraging the kids to explore what they were capable of, we were able to witness each and every one of them exceed their own expectations and have the chance to experience just how brave they can be and how much they can do. These types of life lessons are so valuable and stay with them when they go home just as much as the memories of how much they enjoyed their holiday. It was incredibly gratifying to see them all learning skills and growing more into themselves as capable, enthusiastic young people, whilst also having a great holiday.

The unique CHAOS combination of fun, challenge and time spent with their peers in nature, as well as the attention and input of our wonderful staff – who, as always, really went the extra mile to give each child the best experience they could - made for a truly fantastic holiday for everyone.

## **Week 2 Report**

The second week's camp was a resounding success, filled with fun, learning, adventure, and friendship. Set in beautiful countryside near Cromer, the campsite provided a scenic and secure backdrop for the week's activities, allowing us to create an exciting and safe environment for 20 children aged 9 to 10 (the plan was for 24, but this reduced due to drop outs), supported by a dedicated team of 11 adult volunteers.

Tents were set up in clusters to foster a sense of community, and mealtimes were enjoyed together inside our marquee, offering us protection, come rain or shine! The atmosphere throughout the week was inclusive, energetic, and supportive.

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Our programme was designed to be the best of both worlds! Whilst on-site, we fired up the children's imagination with creative experiences that engaged every child and helped build confidence, cooperation, and lasting memories. We also packed in a variety of outdoor activities and off-site trips, which helped soak up some of the children's energy and add to their learning.

**Campfire Singing:**

Each evening ended with songs and storytelling around the campfire. Children enthusiastically led rounds of songs, and the warm, communal atmosphere became a nightly highlight.

**Sports:**

A wide range of team sports and friendly competitions were held, including football, rounders, dodgeball and archery, all designed to promote teamwork and physical activity.

**Arts & Crafts:**

Daily sessions gave children the chance to get creative with painting, collage making, nature crafts, and designing their own camp T-shirts (with some very exciting logos) and friendship bracelets.

**Talent Show:**

For an end-of-week highlight, the children put on a spectacular talent show, showcasing their unique skills - from singing and dancing to stand-up comedy. Every child had the opportunity to perform, and be cheered on and applauded, by their peers and volunteers.

**Circus Visit (Great Yarmouth Hippodrome):**

A fun and thrilling day out watching live acrobats, jugglers and motorbike stunt-riders at a unique traditional seaside circus, followed by a round of crazy golf. For many children, it was their first time at a circus and left a lasting impression.

**Thrigby Hall Wildlife Park Visit:**

Children got up close with a variety of animals and learned about their habitats, diets, and conservation. We had a great day out which was both educational and entertaining.

**Trampolining & Swimming:**

A high-energy morning at a local trampoline park was followed by an afternoon swim session. Children loved bouncing and diving into foam pits, and cooling off later in the pool. We also had another two swimming sessions later in the week where the children were coached to build their water confidence and develop their swimming skills.

**Seal-Watching Boat Trip:**

An exciting adventure on the water to spot the seals at Blakeney Point. Children observed the seals in their natural environment and asked insightful questions about marine life.

**Beach Day:**

Spent at a local beach in Cromer, the day included sandcastle competitions, paddling, games, and a picnic. The weather was perfect, and the children thoroughly enjoyed the coastal experience.

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**Volunteer Staff Team:**

Staff played an essential role in the smooth running of the week. From supervising activities and ensuring safety to leading crafts and comforting homesick children, their commitment and care were evident. Their teamwork and enthusiasm set a positive tone for the whole camp. We extend our sincere thanks to all volunteers, organisers, and supporters who made this week possible.

Feedback from both children and volunteers has been overwhelmingly positive, confirming that it was a vibrant and enriching experience for all involved. Many children reported that this was the 'best week of the summer,' and several expressed interest in returning next year or applying as junior leaders in future camps. With a mix of adventure, creativity and community, it succeeded in offering children a week of growth, laughter, and unforgettable memories.

**Week 3 Report**

Another successful CHAOS Summer Camp, this final week of our camping season was for the youngest children, aged 8 to 9 years old. We met a little earlier on the Saturday morning to allow sufficient time for latecomers to arrive, which was done partially to help compensate for the alarming news story that had dampened families' confidence for our earlier weeks. Travel and a new environment is always a challenge for the younger children, but they soon settled in, and the camp turned out to be an exhilarating and exciting experience for the 21 kids and 10 staff members who took part.

The programme on Week 3 had been designed to suit the younger age group, and included lots of creative play and games. Supported by our amazing staff team, we planned and delivered an exciting agenda which included seal watching at Blakeney Point, a visit to Thrigby Hall Adventure/Nature Park, plenty of swimming, and one of the highlights - watching the famous Hippodrome Circus and many more fun activities. We also spent a morning at an Outdoor Pursuits Centre, giving the children the opportunity to test their confidence on new activities to the full. Our action-packed week ensured all children remained fully engaged, and learned new skills focused on team work, communication, and being confident and inquisitive by asking questions, whilst having fun in a safe environment. Night times were spent around the campfire, where children were encouraged to talk about the exciting things that had done that day. Some of the more adventurous children chose to read out poems or songs that they had written themselves, which was a real pleasure for the staff to experience!

All in all, a fun week with great experience for all children supported by amazing staff! None of this would have happened without the kind support of all our donors, for which we as CHAOS are super grateful.

The Trustees have pleasure in presenting the Accounts of CHAOS (registered charity number 281609) for the year ending 30th September 2025

Approved on:

Approved by:

Jack Bacon

Chair

Handwritten signature of Jack Bacon in black ink.

Stuart Ludlow

Treasurer

Handwritten signature of Stuart Ludlow in blue ink.

Norman Haynes

Secretary

Handwritten signature of Norman Haynes in blue ink.

**Income and Expenditure Account****For the year ending September 2025**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Appeals - Trust Funds</b>	<b>15000</b>	<b>15125</b>
<b>Appeals - Employers</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2500</b>
<b>Crowdfunding</b>	<b>9176</b>	<b>11418</b>
<b>Fundraising receipts</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>750</b>
<b>Donations received</b>	<b>7984</b>	<b>3406</b>
<b>Gift Aid</b>	<b>1382</b>	<b>886</b>
<b>Insurance Claim</b>	<b><u>1,564</u></b>	<b><u>0</u></b>
	<b>35106</b>	<b>34,085</b>

**Less Expenditure:**

<b>Holiday expenses</b>	<b>22,591</b>	<b>32,846</b>
<b>Fundraising costs</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Insurance</b>	<b>830</b>	<b>846</b>
<b>Storage of equipment</b>	<b>2,762</b>	<b>2,343</b>
<b>Sundry expenses</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>336</b>
<b>Accountancy</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Postage &amp; Packaging</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Tents &amp; Camping Equipment</b>	<b>1321</b>	<b>1,585</b>
	<b>27,612</b>	<b>37,956</b>
	<b><u>7,494</u></b>	<b><u>(3,871)</u></b>

**Balance sheet as at 30th September 2025**

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Prepayments	0	0
Cash at Bank	7,697	3,933
Cash in Hand	243	136
	<u>7,940</u>	<u>4,069</u>
<b>Creditors falling due within one year</b>		
Interest free loan	0	0
Sundry Creditors	0	0
Accruals	0	0
	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	<u><u>7,940</u></u>	<u><u>4,069</u></u>
<b>Represented by:</b>		
<b>General Fund</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>2025</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Balance / (Deficit) brought forward	446	7,940
Surplus / (Deficit) for the year	7,494	(3,871)
	<u>7,940</u>	<u>4,069</u>
	<u><u>7,940</u></u>	<u><u>4,069</u></u>



# Audit of CHAOS Accounts for Year Ending 30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2025

Registered Charity No 281609

This is to certify that an independent scrutiny of the charity's accounts was carried out at the end of its financial period. This covered all receipts and expenditure made by the charity, including its major expense, the running of its annual summer camps.

No irregularities were found. I have no active role within the charity at the present time, although I was involved in its early camps during the 1970s.

The Accounts were prepared solely by me, as in previous years, and presented to the charity's Treasurer, Mr Stuart Ludlow.



Chris Inch  
14<sup>th</sup> November 2025