

Thurrock Play Network

Charity number 296428

Annual report to December 2024
Audited accounts to March 2023– 2024



Charity address:

The Pyramid Resource Centre
Heath Road
Grays

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Accountant

Kim Hooper
Chartered accountant
132, Admirals Towers
8 Dowells Street
Greenwich
SE10 9GE

Chair's report

This last year has seen Thurrock Play Network takes significant strides forward in many positive ways, not least in developing strong partnerships within the community and sharing resources.

With the serious impact that the cost-of-living crisis is having on families, businesses and the wider community, we have endeavoured to be able to continue to offer a resource that remains affordable and is accessible to everyone. The advantages that play and other activities can have on mental and physical well-being, has been key in recovering from the pandemic and is instrumental in supporting our charity's objectives and mission statement.

In 23-24, our Local authority grant, which had supported us for many years, was reduced significantly and in 2024 was reduced even further. With many charities struggling to survive, and funding pots becoming more difficult to access, the trustees have monitored the budget carefully and ensured that we remain sustainable, but also looking for other opportunities to move forward. Last march, we welcomed a surprise grant from the Postcode lottery, that was linked in with the Millionaire Street winners nearby, which made up for the shortfall. Thank you!!

We have seen an increase in our membership and support, from not only Thurrock, but a much wider area, reaching far more children and their families. We estimate that we reach nearly 10k children through schools, organisations and families.

Our volunteers

We are indebted to all the volunteer support that we have. Our volunteers are part of the furniture and carry out various tasks to keep us organised and to enable us to run efficiently. We now have over 26 volunteers on our books, all ready to contribute in whatever way they can. Some commit on a weekly basis, some when required, or when they can. We also value the volunteers who help us with maintenance free of charge and step forward to drive the van when needed. Not to forget the residents, who watered our community garden during the hot summer months, or our neighbours who share some of their lovely Asian cuisine with us.

We welcomed a group of enthusiastic volunteers from Amazon, who helped put up shelving and dug over our garden. Amazon also gave us a welcome cash donation.

We hope that the friendly, welcoming warm environment at the Pyramid Centre provides reciprocal support, as we endeavour to ensure that we are inclusive and value highly our equality and diversity philosophy.



Donations and funding grants

We continue to welcome donations from local businesses and individuals in the community, saving a considerable amount from going to landfill. Our recorded tonnage has increased steadily over the year.

Encouraging an eco-friendly environment is top of our agenda, to reuse 'waste' products in some wonderful creative projects that not only are cost effective, but very rewarding. Besides some of the local businesses, both large and small, providing regular donations, this last couple of years has seen large contributions from film companies which has really expanded what we can offer.



Partnership links

There are too many to mention everyone, but through you we can support the wider community, whether supporting events, donating goods or sharing experience and good advice with us.

We are a drop off point for Love Grace, HARP, and the Greyhound trust. In addition, we support other organisations by providing free craft resources, homeware and whatever we can.

Thank you:

- to Cory Riverside trust who have again supported us with a grant but also by involving us in some of their eco activities.
- IKEA for their weekly contribution
- Start Thurrock for funding some of our activities, including the wonderful street art on our containers and our national playday.
- Get started for providing art resources.
- The Post code lottery
- The local co-op store.
- Essex Community Foundation
- Thurrock Council for their continued support
- CVS for all the advice and support they share with us.
- And many others who we are fortunate to be able to work together with

We are very indebted to Thurrock Council staff who continue to support our charity.

Trustees

Our board of 10 trustees has played an important role in the sustainability of TPN and now covers a range of skills and experience. Finances are monitored closely, staff are supported and our policies and procedures have been updated in line with current legislation, supported by the expertise of our HR advisors. Trustees have taken on roles in line with their experience, backgrounds and interests. Thank you so much for your commitment.

Our Staff

Thank you to our staff, who often give up their time on a voluntary basis, to ensure that everything runs smoothly, always looking for new ideas, contacts and funding, often going over and above.

Events and activities

Since covid, when everything came to a sudden halt, our workshops and activities have exceeded expectation and the number of children and adults has steadily increased. Most are run by volunteers, but some are supported by outside organisations. Our emergency first aid sessions for children, funded by Cory, were particularly successful and well attended. Our forest school sessions including our Halloween event were fully booked in no time. Our children's art workshop is very popular and our varied craft activities are a success. We just need more space!

Following on approval for our kitchen, our Saturday morning café, linked in with Park run is successful, and beside providing drinks and a bacon roll, has also introduced new members. Our rent a shelf was originally set up to encourage our members to sell their wonderful home-made crafts at affordable prices, often made from scrap that had been sought from the Centre. We now have a waiting list.



Constitution and charity status

Following on agreement at the AGM, through a Special Resolution, our 23-year-old constitution has been updated and accepted by the Charity Commission. Our Object, which defines our charity, to encompass the whole community, and ensure that we are now inclusive to all age groups and sectors of the community. has been expanded and received approval,

We are also in the process of moving towards changing our charitable status, from an unincorporated charity to incorporated charitable status, which will give us more protection and security and take the onus away from individuals and belong to the organisation. This again was given approval at the AGM in a special resolution and a consultant is now moving this forward.

Our new objects are:

The objects of the association shall be: -

1. ***to encourage the provision of facilities and services for recreation and other leisure time occupation for children and young people resident in Thurrock being facilities and services:***
 - (a) ***of which such children and young people have need by reason of their youth or social and economic circumstances: and***
 - (b) ***which will improve the conditions of life for such children and young people by promoting their physical, mental and spiritual well-being.***
2. ***to further or benefit all residents of Thurrock without distinction of age, sex, sexual orientation, race or of political, religious, or other opinions by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents.***

Financial information

Our finances are well regulated and monitored. We have marginally increased our income this year and sought grants to support various activities.

We have a reserve fund which in case of difficulties or having to wind down the organization, will support the process.

We have been able to maintain the existing cost of membership fees, which are still exceptionally low compared with other similar groups throughout the country.

We continue to search for funding opportunities, not only for larger amounts but for accumulative smaller amounts.

The trustees set a projected budget for the year and building in a in a contingency for any unpredicted expenditure. We are aware that in 2025, many of the subsidies such as rate relief, that we received will end although we should retain the 80% mandatory relief. .

General bills are rising and employment costs increasing.

In 23-24, we managed to have a small underspend which has been carried forward.

We are looking for longer term sustainability opportunities rather than just go hand to mouth each year.

Our van is a necessity and we are currently looking for ways to replace it, as it is not ULEZ compliant, being nearly 20 years old. This will have a significant impact on our finances but is becoming a priority as it is used for deliveries and collections of donations.

Risk assessment

Like any charity, we can only build in contingency funding, but the future is unpredictable, as we have seen.

We are clear about the need to follow a realistic business plan but also to recognize any risks that manifest themselves, whether those tend to be on a short-term basis or over a longer period. Risks can be minimized by careful monitoring and strategies put in place to counteract any possible difficulties, seeking advice and support. Strengthening some of our partnerships is key, and sharing resources is beneficial to everyone. We are always looking at current trends and practices to help us achieve more, especially around local need and well-being.

Trustees as of September 2024

Sylvia Yates	Chair	Margaret Henderson
Andy Cole	Secretary	Pam Freestone
Paul Allchorne		Aileen Burgess
Peter Eates		Sara Muldowney
Dave Henderson		Teresa O'Keeffe

Ngoze Alike - Councillor rep.

Staff

Lauren Strutt - Project co-ordinator
Faye Smith
Fiona Flint
Michelle Tucker
Tony Boughen - Driver / handyman

Thurrock Play Network

Financial Activities

April 2023 - March 2024

	TOTAL	
	APR 2023 - MAR 2024	APR 2022 - MAR 2023 (PP)
Income		
Bank Interest	3,195.06	592.32
Cory Riverside grant	-2,800.00	
CRAFT	4,332.73	450.55
Craft Income	8,730.81	2,503.68
DELIVERY CHARGES	68.00	197.50
Donations and legacies	4,400.00	1,700.00
Donations Misc	2,155.52	661.94
event donations	317.20	981.11
Grant Essex Community Fund	10,000.00	
HIRE	1,275.50	1,320.58
MEMBERSHIPS	4,136.00	4,502.15
SCRAP DONATION	30,551.10	21,414.15
Services	4,248.00	3,362.00
Unrestricted Income	100.00	59.18
vat refund	294.80	
VSDF GRANT	30,000.00	32,000.00
Total Income	£101,004.72	£69,745.16
TOTAL	£101,004.72	£69,745.16
Expenditures		
Advertising/Promotional	184.02	
British Telecom - Telephone		84.90
Buildings Insurance	229.39	203.92
business rates	358.26	847.35
cafe expenses	45.76	
Commercial Waste	794.40	620.60
Computer Costs	535.14	439.32
Computer Equipment	558.31	
DBS	142.00	102.50
Dues and Subscriptions	40.00	55.00
Equipment	1,399.67	1,033.38
Health and Safety	403.42	222.23
HM Revenue & Customs (VAT) Expense	299.70	11.40
Insurances	2,497.62	1,905.05
Legal and professional fees	4,633.84	4,295.82
Misc Expenses	63.35	25.21
Office Shelves	233.33	
Office/General Administrative Expenditures	959.64	1,159.95
Office/General Administrative Expenses		70.05
Other Professional Services	65.00	
Payroll Expenses		
Pension	427.47	227.42
Taxes	-710.67	-26.60

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Financial Activities

April 2023 - March 2024

	TOTAL	
	APR 2023 - MAR 2024	APR 2022 - MAR 2023 (PP)
Wages	50,892.84	28,554.94
Total Payroll Expenses	50,609.64	28,755.76
PC Insurance	9.17	110.04
Phone Costs	521.67	348.81
Printing, Postage and Stationery	181.22	25.02
Raising funds		140.00
Refreshments	267.83	418.72
Rent or Lease of Buildings	5,600.00	5,597.50
Repairs and Renewals	703.40	721.97
Supplies	1,540.36	1,546.80
craft supplies	5.50	28.90
Total Supplies	1,545.86	1,575.70
Travel and Accommodation	32.50	
Uniform		109.31
Utilities	829.44	847.27
Van Expenses	1,538.91	1,706.42
Volunteer Expenses	731.11	129.60
Total Expenditures	£76,013.60	£51,562.80
NET OPERATING INCOME	£24,991.12	£18,182.36
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)	£24,991.12	£18,182.36

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Balance Sheet

As of March 31, 2024

	TOTAL	
	AS OF MAR 31, 2024	AS OF MAR 31, 2023 (PY)
Fixed Asset		
Tangible assets		
Office Equipment Cost	0.00	0.00
Total Tangible assets	£0.00	£0.00
Total Fixed Asset	£0.00	£0.00
Cash at bank and in hand		
Cash	0.00	0.00
Cash on hand	0.00	215.00
CHARITY BANK	12,086.84	
Co-Op Community Direct Plus	53,554.05	33,690.09
co-op savings account	100.00	
COIF	67,110.03	64,001.81
Nat West Current	1,294.01	12,580.31
Petty cash	33.88	26.83
sundries	0.00	0.00
Total Cash at bank and in hand	£134,178.81	£110,514.04
Debtors		
Debtors	157.00	73.00
Total Debtors	£157.00	£73.00
Current Assets		
other debtors	0.00	0.00
Prepayments	0.00	0.00
Stock Asset	4,500.00	4,500.00
Total Current Assets	£4,500.00	£4,500.00
NET CURRENT ASSETS	£138,835.81	£115,087.04
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		
Trade Creditors		
Creditors	0.00	0.00
Total Trade Creditors	£0.00	£0.00
Current Liabilities		
Accruals	12,809.00	12,809.00
bacs	0.00	0.00
bacs control	0.00	0.00
barclaycard control	-226.89	0.00
Deferred income	5,000.00	2,200.00
Payroll Liabilities		
HMRC	786.90	2,506.50
Other Deductions	0.00	0.00
Pension	-68.52	-3.96
Total Payroll Liabilities	718.38	2,502.54
safe control	-842.57	0.00
VAT Control	0.00	1,010.78

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Balance Sheet

As of March 31, 2024

	TOTAL	
	AS OF MAR 31, 2024	AS OF MAR 31, 2023 (PY)
VAT Suspense	-129.17	48.78
Total Current Liabilities	£17,328.75	£18,571.10
Total Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	£17,328.75	£18,571.10
NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	£121,507.06	£96,515.94
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	£121,507.06	£96,515.94
TOTAL NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	£121,507.06	£96,515.94
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Charity funds		
Opening Balance Equity	43,591.40	43,591.40
Unrestricted Funds	52,924.54	34,742.18
Surplus/(Deficit)	24,991.12	18,182.36
Total Charity funds	£121,507.06	£96,515.94