

Thurrock Play Network

Charity Number 296428



Annual report to December 2025

Accounts for April 2024 – March 2025

Charity address:

The Pyramid Resource Centre

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Accountant

Kim Hooper Chartered accountant

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Chair's report

Another year flown past, where does time go? Although the pandemic has left lasting scars in many ways, we have had a great year. Our aim was to consolidate all the good things that were going on, supporting the community, continuing to develop great partnerships and establishing clear plans moving forward.

Our Charity objectives had remained unchanged for the last 20+ years and have been updated to be far more inclusive of the whole community. Alongside this our constitution, which was not fit for purpose has been rewritten and both have been approved by the Charity Commission.

It was always a concern that we would be struggling to secure funding, at a time when there is tremendous competition for any funding opportunities. With Council funding having been withdrawn, after years of support, our long-term future was in doubt. With rising costs and outgoings, it was becoming difficult to plan ahead.

After starting the process of submitting an application to the Big Lottery Community Fund in April 2024, we were delighted that we made it through all stages of the process, finally being awarded funding for 5 years, just over £300,000 to cover our revenue costs. In addition, we also received £38,000 capital funding to purchase a new van. We were sorry to see our old van go, but it has a new life with TRUP, The Thurrock Re Use Partnership.



It was important to us that we could continue to build on opportunities to encourage creativity and play opportunities for our families and partners. With tremendous thanks to our volunteers, who have shared their skills, running workshops, both in the Centre and at outside events, we have been able to reach a lot of people. Using donated resources, these opportunities have been affordable for all.

Our forest school run by Lynsey, in her own time, have encouraged children to enjoy nature, enjoying play opportunities and learning new skills. They have been well attended and we could have run more!!

Lucy and Lynsey also run ongoing Saturday morning art workshops, enjoyed by many children, Thank you to both of you for your dedication, time and creativity.



We have always been concerned that there is little to do for young people. The Monday sessions, run by Kent and Lauren, for 12 young people from a nearby SEND school, have been an absolute pleasure to see. They have learnt new skills and in an out of school environment have participated completely, proud of their final products. Thank you to their teachers and carers who have accompanied them.

Our volunteers are absolutely essential to the smooth running of the Centre and help in many different ways, committing their time freely. Tasks vary and may be sorting donations that we receive, cleaning, inputting information, working on the till, helping in the café on a Saturday morning, and much more. This year has seen a drop in the number of volunteers, some through illness, returning to work, moving away from the area, or just moving on. But we do have new volunteers who we welcome with open arms, as well as volunteers who come to us from local companies who offer community days. In 2024, we started a Saturday morning café to support the Park run participants. This has gone from strength and not only has it generated a steady income, but brought new people into the Centre. It is very basic, bacon butties, hot and cold drinks, but plans are on the horizon to expand!!

Our trustees continue to work hard to ensure that the charity runs smoothly. Particular thanks to Peter who has taken on a Health and Safety officer role, ensuring that everything is in place that should be, and to Andy whose spreadsheets are amazing and keep our monitoring and statistics collation on track, not to forget his amazing minutes and attention to detail. Our other trustees are just as valued and their input is invaluable.

And Paul made a wonderful Father Christmas!! An essential part of his trustee role!



Donations and funding

Thank you to Cory Riverside Trust who awarded us £3000 towards our activities. We are pleased to be able to continue working with them. They recently funded a tutor to run an upcycling workshop, which was really successful and helps our reuse agenda.

Thank you to Thurrock Council, not only for £8000 of VSDF funding but for their ongoing support in other ways.

Thank you for all the donations of amazing craft items, in particular, that are used for our workshops, sold on to support exciting projects, including some of the wonderful items that are made by our members to sell at craft fairs and as part of their cottage businesses. Together with the continuing support from local companies, both big and small, our tonnage of items that might otherwise have gone to landfill, has continued to increase, thus meeting our targets and green agenda.

Partnerships

Lauren, our manager, has worked tirelessly to develop partnerships with other groups, sharing resources and skills, for the benefit of the community. We remain a collection point for Love Grace, HARP, a charity in Southend supporting homeless people and the Greyhound Trust.

Our relationship with the Gateway Learning Community continues to benefit our local community.

Last year, Community in Action was set up in Chadwell as a pilot project. Its aim was to pull the community together and empower local residents to make local decisions. We are proud to have been part of that and it has been great to meet local groups and organisations, all working hard to support the community. A new play area, alongside the Centre, that we had worked hard on, with the community and Thurrock Council, to get built, was finally completed and community funding has now paid for new benches and a picnic table.

Staff

We have a group of dedicated staff, who in addition to paid employment volunteer extra time to the Charity. We were sorry to see Fiona retire in December and wish her well in all the planned adventures she has. Fiona started out many years ago as one of our play rangers!!

Manager: Lauren Strutt

Support staff: Faye Smith, Michelle Tucker, Fiona Flint, Kent Lowe

Saturday staff: Peoney Tucker, Will Sullivan

Trustees as of December 2025

Sylvia Yates	Chair
Andy Cole	Secretary
Peter Eates	Health and Safety
Aileen Burgess	Volunteer support
Paul Allchorne	
Dave Henderson	
Margaret Henderson	
Pam Freestone	
Sara Muldowney	
Teresa O’Keeffe	

Change in organisation.

At the last AGM approval was given to consider changing from an Unincorporated Charity to a CIO – a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, which will give greater protection.

With the help of an external consultant, this has now been achieved. With the Charity Commission giving its approval in record time, the new organisation is now set up. A full changeover is being scheduled for the 1st April 2026, with a crossover period to ensure that the current charity is correctly closed down and all assets are moved over to the new CIO.

Financial Position

Our finances are very carefully monitored and clear financial procedures put in place.

We currently have an active bank account for our daily transactions and 2 investment accounts. One of these serves as a reserve account which will cover essential costs should we need to wind down and the other is now set up as a restricted account towards our building project. Both have been making good interest over the last year.

Trustees continually assess the finances and ensure that our cashflow is in a good place. Running costs increased considerably last year, with

government support, following on from Covid, gradually being withdrawn. Wages, utilities and general running overheads increased by 10%.

Despite rising overheads, we hope to be able to minimise any increase in charges e.g. Membership fees, as we are aware that the cost-of-living crisis has had a serious impact on all our residents.

Although we have the security of the lottery funding, we are continually open to other ideas to raise funding, whether in kind or financial contribution to expand activities and support for the community. We are aware that we do not access Gift Aid opportunities and this is high on our priorities for 2026, to generate an additional 25% on donations made by taxpayers, which we can claim from the HMRC.

Risk assessment.

Our finances are steady, but changes in employment legislation will have an impact on us. We have sufficient funding to negate small emergencies and good insurance cover. A contract has been negotiated with a new HR company to give us legal protection and keep us updated with regards to changes in the law.

Trustees as of December 2025

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Margaret Henderson	
Pam Freestone	
Sara Muldowney	
Teresa O'Keeffe	

Statement of Financial Position

Thurrock Play Network

As of 31 March, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Fixed Asset	
Tangible assets	
Office Equipment Cost	0.00
Total for Tangible assets	£0.00
Total for Fixed Asset	£0.00
Cash at bank and in hand	
Cash	0.00
Cash on hand	0.00
CHARITY BANK	12,476.79
COIF	70,434.47
Co-Op Community Direct Plus	61,782.77
co-op savings account	100.00
Nat West Current	0.00
Petty cash	0.00
sundries	0.00
Total for Cash at bank and in hand	£144,794.03
Debtors	
Debtors	1,629.00
Total for Debtors	£1,629.00
Current Assets	
other debtors	0.00
Prepayments	0.00
Stock Asset	4,500.00
Total for Current Assets	£4,500.00
NET CURRENT ASSETS	£150,923.03
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	
Trade Creditors	
Creditors	0.00
Total for Trade Creditors	£0.00
Current Liabilities	
Accruals	12,809.00
bacs	0.03
bacs control	0.00
barclaycard control	245.35
Deferred income	3,000.00
Payroll Liabilities (83)	£0.00
Pension	6.32
Total for Payroll Liabilities (83)	£6.32

Statement of Financial Position

Thurrock Play Network

As of 31 March, 2025

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT	TOTAL
Payroll Liabilities	
Employment Allowance	0.02
HMRC	882.08
Other Deductions	0.00
Pension	-6.32
Total for Payroll Liabilities	£875.78
safe control	-359.36
VAT Control	-453.49
VAT Suspense	0.00
Total for Current Liabilities	£16,123.63
Total for Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	£16,123.63
NET CURRENT ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	£134,799.40
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	£134,799.40
TOTAL NET ASSETS (LIABILITIES)	£134,799.40
Capital and Reserves	
Opening Balance Equity	43,591.40
Unrestricted Funds	84,833.85
Net Income	6,374.15
Total for Capital and Reserves	£134,799.40

Statement of Activity
Thurrock Play Network
1 April, 2024-31 March, 2025

Distribution account	Total
Income	
Bank Interest	3,714.39
cafe	3,284.48
Cory Riverside grant	5,000.00
Craft sales	1,007.80
Donations Misc	4,370.78
event donations	664.52
HIRE	866.75
MEMBERSHIPS	4,228.00
postcode lottery	25,000.00
SCRAP DONATION	26,084.53
Services	1,409.00
VSDF GRANT	8,000.00
Total for Income	£83,630.25
Gross Profit	£83,630.25
Expenses	
Advertising/Promotional	262.47
Buildings Insurance	271.63
business rates	364.89
Commercial Waste	897.00
Computer Costs	660.60
Dues and Subscriptions	128.73
Equipment	411.98
furniture and fittings	882.49
gas supply	1,115.46
Health and Safety	576.40
Insurances	2,293.14
Legal and professional fees	11,485.08
maintenance	173.30
mileage	260.10
Misc Expenses	200.00
Office/General Administrative Expenditures	946.26
Card payment costs	244.01
Total for Office/General Administrative Expenditures	£1,190.27
Payroll Expenses	
Pension	531.70
Wages	43,499.24
Total for Payroll Expenses	£44,030.94

Phone Costs	607.81
Printing, Postage and Stationery	89.70
Refreshments	585.36
rent a shelf payment	589.25
Rent or Lease of Buildings	5,000.00
garage rent	623.90
Total for Rent or Lease of Buildings	£5,623.90
Repairs and Renewals	786.57
Supplies	169.19
cafe	406.77
cleaning	124.31
craft	1,313.26
Total for Supplies	£2,013.53
Van Expenses	
fuel	297.51
road tax and breakdown cover	335.00
toll charges	12.50
van insurance	668.87
Van repair and maintenance	123.71
Total for Van Expenses	£1,437.59
Volunteer Expenses	307.91
Total for Volunteer Expenses	£327.91
Total for Expenses	£77,276.10
Net Operating Income	£6,374.15
Net Other Income	
Net Income	£6,374.15

