

**OXFORDSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION**

**REPORT & ACCOUNTS**

**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

## **OXFORDSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION: WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO**

OPFA, registered charity 304398, works to ensure that everyone in Oxfordshire has access to good quality local facilities for outdoor sport, play and recreation.

OPFA assists community organisations to provide, preserve, improve and adequately maintain such facilities, through information and advice, training and helping to identify relevant sources of financial help.

OPFA provides its members with practical advice by phone, email or site visit; emailed news items; and a regularly updated series of information sheets covering a wide range of topics.

OPFA is the only not-for-profit organisation in Oxfordshire able to offer comprehensive and impartial advice on outdoor facilities for sport, play and recreation.

A paid-for consultancy service is available, offering more in-depth and hands-on support than is covered by OPFA's modest membership fees.

OPFA's advice service is provided by its Community Development Officer, Andrew Parsons, formerly Head of Parks and Green Spaces at Oxford City Council and an original member of the CABE Space Advisory Panel (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment). Andrew also helped to re-write the Green Flag Award Scheme's guidance manual "Raising the Standard".

### **KEY FEATURES OF THE YEAR**

- Fifteen site visits covering eleven different organisations to advise on management issues and ideas for local improvement projects.
- Well over 100 requests for guidance and information dealt with by phone and email.
- Three pieces of contract work involving project management of local facility improvements demonstrated the value of being able to bring in OPFA's professional knowledge and experience and also helped to provide much-needed income to support our general advisory work.
- Despite an increase in the cost of our general information and advice service, which has required more hours of work from our Community Development Officer (CDO) to meet demand, an increase in the level of work under contract and therefore in income generated resulted in an almost break-even year-end outcome.

**OXFORDSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION  
TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

**Charity number:** 304398

**Principal address:**

c/o South Stables, Worton Park, Witney OX29 4SU  
Tel: 01865 883488

**Email:** oxfordshirepfa@gmail.com

**Website:** [www.opfa.org.uk](http://www.opfa.org.uk)

**Governing Document**

Constitution (adopted in 1985 and amended in 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2008, 2013, 2019 and 2023)  
Unincorporated association.

Area of benefit: Priority given to Oxfordshire and neighbouring areas, but our objects are not specific to a particular geographical area.

**President:** David Astor, CBE

**Vice-President:** Mr A Walker

**Charity Trustees**

The members of our Executive Committee, who as charity trustees were legally responsible for the control and management of the charity during this period, following election at the AGM, were as follows:

Chairman:	RT Johnston
Vice Chairman:	E Bickley
Hon. Treasurer:	P Bramwell
Hon. Manager	M Smith
Other members:	Sir C Ponsonby, J Sword, S. McKechnie

**Method of appointing Trustees**

According to the constitution, Trustees are appointed annually at the Annual General Meeting consisting of the following:

- Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Hon. Treasurer and such other Hon. Officers as the Association may from time to time decide.
- Members elected at the Annual General Meeting, the number to be determined from time to time by the Association.

**Bankers**

National Westminster Bank plc, 32 Cornmarket Street, Oxford OX1 3HQ

**Independent Examiner**

M Watkinson MBE

**Consultant**

Andrew Parsons                      Contracted to deliver the OPFA's information and advice services.

## **THE CHARITY'S OBJECTS AND STATEMENT OF PUBLIC BENEFIT**

Our charity's main aim, as set out in the Objects clause in our constitution, is to advise on and assist in the provision of adequate playing fields and playgrounds for the purpose of outdoor games, sports and pastimes, including facilities for the recreation of people with disabilities.

We review our aims, objectives and work programme each year with reference to the guidance available from the Charity Commission on public benefit.

Our work fulfils the two key principles of public benefit in the following ways:

- There is clear recognition by policy makers and the public of the benefit to the physical and mental health and well-being of children, young people and adults of involvement in formal or informal sport, play and outdoor recreational activity. This depends on the availability of attractive, high quality and locally accessible playing fields and playgrounds. All our aims and activities are focussed on achieving these benefits and we cannot identify any potential detriment or harm that needs to be balanced against those benefits.
- Our activities are aimed at achieving these benefits for all the population in as many communities as possible. The recreational facilities we promote and support communities to provide are not restricted to use by any particular section or sections of these communities. On the contrary, we promote the provision of facilities that are as accessible as possible to people of all ages and abilities. The facilities are also generally available free of charge.

The main activities undertaken in order to fulfil these charitable purposes are to:

- Provide an on-going information, advice and support service for community recreation space managers or project groups, such as parish and town councils, playing field committees and play area action groups.
- Provide opportunities for recreation space managers to share ideas and information
- Raise awareness of the importance of good quality outdoor recreation space by liaising and working in partnership with other interested agencies at national, regional and local level and responding to policy and consultation documents
- Be alert to evidence of threats to existing community recreation spaces from new building or other pressures and make representations and/ or support representation by others in order to remove them
- Advise on means available, through Fields In Trust (the operating name of the National Playing Fields Association) and otherwise, of protecting green spaces from inappropriate development.

## **SUMMARY OF OPFA'S WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE YEAR**

### **Our information service**

- Our CDO answered numerous queries on a wide range of topics by phone or email
- We issued electronic News Bulletins to members
- Fact sheets:  
If the subject of an enquiry is one that OPFA may have not dealt with before, we have taken the opportunity to produce a new fact sheet. We have also updated all of our existing fact sheets to ensure they offer current guidance and are presented in a coordinated style.

Fact sheets that are either new to OPFA or have been recently reviewed include:

1. Accident Reporting
2. Accessible Play Areas
3. Checklist for Grant Applications
4. Draft Constitutions
5. Dog Fouling
6. Funding the future of children's play
7. The Use of Glyphosate Weedkiller
8. Goal Post Safety
9. Managing Charitable Playing Fields
10. Maintenance Contractors
11. Playground Fencing
12. Playground Inspections
13. Playground Legislation, Standards and Guidelines
14. Playground Notices
15. The Management of Risk and Risk Assessments
16. Outdoor Fitness Equipment
17. Section 106 agreements
18. Setting charges for the hire of Sports Pitches
19. Sports Pitch Maintenance
20. Toxicara Canis

### **Site visits**

Site visits were made as follows:

East Hanney, East Hendred (2), Somerton, HM Bullingdon Prison, Tackley First School, Risinghurst (2), Tiddington, Weston-on-the-Green, Woodstock, Deddington (3), Begbroke.

### **Consultancy work**

We have continued to promote our consultancy and project management services and continued contract work in Carterton (for WODC), Aston and Cote (for the Community Trust) and East Hanney (for the Parish Council).

In Carterton OPFA has been commissioned to review and recommend improvements to a large destination play space in Kilkenny Park and then to oversee the required work. During the year this has involved sixteen site visits.

In Aston and Cote, OPFA has been engaged to oversee and manage the planning and construction of a floodlit Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). This has involved two site visits.

In East Hanney OPFA was appointed as project manager to assist with the delivery of a MUGA and new car park at the recreation ground by overseeing the work on site. This has involved seven site visits.

### **Membership**

During the period OPFA had 80 member organisations: 5 Town Councils, 68 parish councils and 7 Parish Meetings, field trusts or others.

### **Executive Committee business**

The Committee met 3 times during the year and business included the following:

- A review of investments resulting in the closure of a relatively low-interest Deposit Account at Shawbrook Bank. The funds from the Account were transferred to the charity's COIF Charities Deposit Fund account, which offered a much better level of yield.
- Agreed a 5% increase in membership fees for 2024-25 and to adopt a policy of small annual increases in the future.

- A review of the charity’s risk register, identifying key risks and mitigation measures required.
- Proposals for amendments to the Constitution to provide for virtual as well as face-to-face meetings, which were agreed at the AGM in October 2023.

**THANKS**

As always, our thanks are also due to the following for their interest and support during the year:

- The agencies with whom we work in partnership, including:
  - Local Authority Officers and Members
  - Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils
  - Oxfordshire Play Association
- Our President, David Astor, and our Hon Officers and members of the Executive Committee.
- Mike Watkinson MBE for being our Independent Examiner of accounts.
- Our funders (mentioned in the Notes to the Accounts).
- Our consultant CDO, Andrew Parsons, for making his expertise available to OPFA and local community organisations through a contract to deliver our information and advice service.
- The Trustees and staff of Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) for offering us the opportunity to purchase virtual office services at a cost-effective rate. We are delighted to continue what has been a very long-standing partnership with CFO (formerly the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council) who helped OPFA to become established in the 1930s.
- All the volunteers in communities who work to provide, maintain and develop green spaces and outdoor sport, play and recreation opportunities.

**FINANCIAL REVIEW AND RESERVES POLICY**

We are grateful to the following for their assistance in helping us to cover our general annual operating costs:



- Cherwell District Council which provides a revenue grant in return for an enhanced information and advice service available to parishes in that District
- Income from membership fees from parish-level organisations

Despite an increase in the cost of our general information and advice service, which has required more hours of work from our CDO to meet demand, an increase in the level of work under contract and therefore in income generated resulted in an almost break-even year-end outcome.

As a general precaution against future changes of fortune, the Trustees have adopted a cautious approach in holding sufficient reserves to deal with current and future financial pressures. If necessary, we have funds in hand to cover annual operating costs for at least three years.

The Trustees declare that they have approved this Report by email in September 2024

**Signed on behalf of the Charity’s Trustees:**

<b>Signature</b>		
<b>Full name</b>	ROBIN TIMOTHY JOHNSTON (Chair)	ELISABETH SARAH BICKLEY (Vice-Chair)

Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st March 2024

	Total (Unrestricted funds)		Total (Unrestricted funds)	
	2024		2023	
	£	£	£	£
<b>Incoming resources</b>				
<i>Income and endowments from:</i>				
Grants		2,500		2,500
Donations		1		1,001
<i>Grants and donations</i>	<b>3</b>	<u>2,501</u>		<u>3,501</u>
Membership subscriptions		4,395		4,089
Contract work		6,871		5,492
Miscellaneous		-		200
<i>Charitable activities</i>	<b>3</b>	<u>11,266</u>		<u>9,781</u>
COIF account interest		403		144
Shawbrook Bank Deposit Account interest		148		193
<i>Investments</i>	<b>3</b>	<u>550</u>		<u>337</u>
<b>Total incoming resources</b>		<u><u>14,317</u></u>		<u><u>13,619</u></u>
<b>Resources expended</b>				
<i>Expenditure on:</i>				
Consultancy (Community Development Officer)		(12,910)		(10,745)
Office costs		(516)		(417)
Travel		(454)		(429)
Insurance		(511)		(512)
Subscriptions		(75)		(75)
Meeting & trustee expenses		(95)		(135)
<i>Charitable activities</i>	<b>4</b>	<u>(14,560)</u>		<u>(12,313)</u>
Miscellaneous		-		(200)
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<u><u>(14,560)</u></u>		<u><u>(12,513)</u></u>
<b>Net income/(expenditure)</b>		(243)		1,107
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		(243)		1,107
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>				
Total funds brought forward		<u>44,758</u>		<u>43,651</u>
Total funds carried forward	<b>8,9</b>	<u><u>44,515</u></u>		<u><u>44,758</u></u>

Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Balance Sheet  
31st March 2024

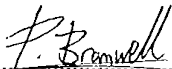
Charity number: 304398

	Note	£	2024 Total £	£	2023 Total £
<b>Current assets</b>					
<b>Debtors</b>	6	1,256	<u>1,256</u>	1,290	<u>1,290</u>
NatWest current account		4,490		4,143	
COIF Charity Deposit account		40,183		8,280	
Shawbrook Bank Deposit account		-		32,829	
<b>Cash at bank and in hand</b>			<u>44,673</u>		<u>45,252</u>
<b>Total current assets</b>			<u>45,930</u>		<u>46,542</u>
<b>Creditors</b>					
Deferred income		(1,415)		(1,784)	
<b>Creditors: amounts falling due within one year</b>	7		<u>(1,415)</u>		<u>(1,784)</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>			<u>44,515</u>		<u>44,758</u>
Unrestricted funds	8,9		<u>44,515</u>		<u>44,758</u>
<b>Total funds</b>			<u>44,515</u>		<u>44,758</u>

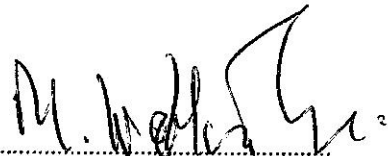
The financial statements were approved and authorised by the Board of Trustees on 1st July 2024.

Signed on behalf of the Board:

Financial statements reviewed by:



Hon. Treasurer



Independent Examiner



## Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

### Notes to the Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2024

#### Note 1 Summary of significant accounting policies

##### 1.1. Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

- the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014;
- the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- the Charities Act 2011.

#### Note 2 Accounting policies

##### 2.1 Income

###### Recognition of income

Income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

###### Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS 102 SORP).

###### Contractual income and performance-related grants

This is only included in the SoFA once the charity has provided the related goods or services or met the performance-related conditions.

##### 2.2 Expenditure and liabilities

###### Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

###### Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date.

Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Notes to the Accounts  
for the year ended 31st March 2024

Note 3 Analysis of income

Grants and donations

	2024	2023
	£	£
Grants	2,500	2,500
Donations	1	1,001
	<u>2,501</u>	<u>3,501</u>

Charitable activities

	2024	2023
	£	£
Membership subscriptions	4,395	4,089
Contract work	6,871	5,492
Miscellaneous	-	200
	<u>11,266</u>	<u>9,781</u>

Income from investments

	2024	2023
	£	£
COIF account interest	403	144
Shawbrook Bank Deposit Account interest	148	193
	<u>550</u>	<u>337</u>

Note 4 Analysis of expenditure

Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

2024

	Activities undertaken directly	Support costs	Total
	£	£	£
Consultancy (Community Development Officer)	(12,910)	-	(12,910)
Office costs	-	(516)	(516)
Travel	(454)	-	(454)
Insurance	-	(511)	(511)
Subscriptions	-	(75)	(75)
Meeting & trustee expenses	(95)	-	(95)
	<u>(13,459)</u>	<u>(1,102)</u>	<u>(14,560)</u>

2023

	Activities undertaken directly	Support costs	Total
	£	£	£
Consultancy (CDO)	(10,745)	-	(10,745)
Office costs	-	(417)	(417)
Travel	(429)	-	(429)
Insurance	-	(512)	(512)
Subscriptions	-	(75)	(75)
Meeting & trustee expenses	(135)	-	(135)
	<u>(11,309)</u>	<u>(1,004)</u>	<u>(12,313)</u>

Note 5 Staff costs

The charity did not have any employees during the reporting period (2023: none).

The Trustees neither received nor waived any remuneration during this or last year.

Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Notes to the Accounts  
for the year ended 31st March 2024

**Note 6 Debtors**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Accrued income	1,256	1,290
	<u>1,256</u>	<u>1,290</u>

**Note 7 Creditors**

	2024	2023
	£	£
Deferred income		
Membership income	1,415	1,784
	<u>1,415</u>	<u>1,784</u>

	2024	2023
	£	£
Balance at the start of the period	1,784	3,599
Amounts added in current period	1,415	1,784
Amounts released to income from previous periods	(1,784)	(3,599)
Balance at the end of the period	<u>1,415</u>	<u>1,784</u>

Grant income is deferred in accordance with the period stated in the grant agreement.

**Membership income received each March relates to the following period and is therefore deferred.**

**Note 8 Funds**

	2024	2023
	Total - Unrestricted funds	Total - Unrestricted funds
	£	£
At 1st April	44,758	43,651
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(243)	1,107
At 31st March	<u>44,515</u>	<u>44,758</u>

**Note 9 Analysis of net assets between funds**

	2024	2023
	£	£
<b>Fund balances at 31st March are represented by:-</b>		
Net current assets	44,515	44,758
	<u>44,515</u>	<u>44,758</u>



Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

OXFORDSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

On accounts for the year ended

31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024

Charity no  
(if any)

304398

Set out on pages

1/2

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

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

[The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of [insert name of applicable listed body]]. *Delete [ ] if not applicable.*

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below \*) 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.

*\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

Date:

8/8/24

Name:

MICHAEL WATKINSON MBE

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body

CHARITY FINANCE CONSULTANT

(if any):

Address:

**Section B**

**Disclosure**

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

NONE