Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Helping communities make
good outdoor space
for play, recreation and sport

REPORT & ACCOUNTS

for the year ended 31 March 2026

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 play, recreation and sport, including playing fields, children's playgrounds, multi-use games areas (MUGAs) and wheeled sport facilities.

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 fact 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 play, recreation and sport.

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

- The appointment of Richard Venables DL as our President .
- 10 site visits to advise on facility management issues and ideas for local improvement projects.
- Well over 100 requests for guidance and information dealt with by phone and email.
- Due to a decline in income from membership fees and contract work, we made a loss on the year. The Executive Committee will be reviewing these and other pressure points for us in the coming year.

OXFORDSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION

TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2026

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

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: Richard Venables , DL (from October 2025)

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:

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

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 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.

OPFA Fact sheets include:

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

Site visits

Site visits were made as follows:
Deddington,Tiddington (2), Botley, Woodstock, Yarnton, Crowmarsh, Appleton, East Challow and Checkendon

Consultancy work

We have continued to promote our consultancy and project management services but unfortunately, due to the lack of capital funding for new facility or improvement projects, there has been no interest from the parishes during the year.

Membership

During the period OPFA had 76 member organisations: 5 Town Councils, 65 parish councils and 6 Parish Meetings, field trusts or others.

Executive Committee business

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

- A new Trustee recruitment drive via the Oxfordshire Trustee Leadership List and REACH Volunteering, which unfortunately yielded no new members to join the Committee.
- The meeting noted indications of a number of pressure points which will need attention for the future: decline in membership numbers/income; uncertainty of contract work; Government plans for local government reorganisation which will require building new relationships with larger Councils without a history of funding OPFA
- Andrew Parsons and Meryl Smith had a useful meeting with the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils to discuss ways of co-operating and of broadening Parish and Town Council knowledge of OPFA's offer.
- However, towards the end of 2025 we had to draw on reserves to fund day to day running costs until income from membership fees for 2026/27 started to come in.
- We approved 4 governance policies which had either needed updating or adding to our portfolio as follows: Financial Governance, Trustee expenses, Serious Incident Reporting, Investment.
- We reviewed ways of maintaining and increasing membership

Thanks

As always, our thanks are 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 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.
- All the volunteers in communities who work to provide, maintain and develop green spaces and outdoor play, recreation and sport opportunities.

Special thanks are due to Richard Venables DL for agreeing to support us as our President.

Richard has been a Deputy Lieutenant for Oxfordshire since 2016 and was High Sheriff of Oxfordshire in 2018–19. He holds the Oxfordshire Lieutenancy's Sport and Physical Activity Brief for the County. Richard has a long-standing interest in youth, sport and cultural activities. He is an Ambassador for Oxfordshire Youth and a Patron of Active Oxfordshire In addition, he is an active supporter of Access Sport Oxfordshire, an inclusive sports programme, and co-founder of Horspath parkrun, where he volunteers as an Event Director. He was largely responsible for managing a major new playground project in his home village of Islip some years ago, so he understands our client base.

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
- A generous £500 donation by the Doris Field Charitable Trust

Due to a decline in income from membership fees and contract work, we made a £2,000+ loss on the year. As a general precaution against future financial volatility, 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 (£42,024) to cover annual operating costs for at least four years.

The Trustees declare that they have approved this Report by email in August 2026

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees:

Signature		
Full name	ROBIN TIMOTHY JOHNSTON (Chair)	ELISABETH SARAH BICKLEY (Vice-Chair)

Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st March 2026

		Total (Unrestricted funds) 2026		Total (Unrestricted funds) 2025	
		£	£	£	£
Incoming resources					
Income and endowments from:					
Grants		2,000		2,500	
Donations		501		1,001	
Grants and donations	**3**		2,501		3,501
Membership subscriptions		3,872		4,311	
Contract work		-		418	
Charitable activities	**3**		3,872		4,729
COIF account interest		1,695		1,973	
Investments	**3**		1,695		1,973
Total incoming resources			**8,068**		**10,203**
Resources expended					
Expenditure on:					
Consultancy (Community Development Officer)		(9,000)		(9,030)	
Office costs		(330)		(460)	
Travel		(104)		(282)	
Insurance		(532)		(562)	
Subscriptions		(115)		(114)	
Meeting & trustee expenses		(157)		(77)	
Charitable activities	**4**		(10,237)		(10,525)
Total expenditure			**(10,237)**		**(10,525)**
Net income/(expenditure)			(2,169)		(322)
Net movement in funds			(2,169)		(322)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward			44,193		44,515
Total funds carried forward	**7,8**		**42,024**		**44,193**

Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Balance Sheet
31st March 2026

Charity number: 304398

	Note	£	2026 Total £	£	2025 Total £
Current assets					
NatWest current account		1,895		2,859	
COIF Charity Deposit account		41,350		42,156	
Cash at bank and in hand			43,245		45,015
Total current assets			**43,245**		**45,015**
Creditors					
Deferred income		(1,221)		(822)	
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	**6**		**(1,221)**		**(822)**
Total net assets			**42,024**		**44,193**
Unrestricted funds	**7,8**		42,024		44,193
Total funds			**42,024**		**44,193**

The financial statements were approved and authorised by the Board of Trustees on **1/7/2026**

Signed on behalf of the Board:

P. Bramwell

Hon. Treasurer

Financial statements reviewed by:

M. Wallington

Independent Examiner

Oxfordshire Playing Fields Association

Notes to the Accounts
for the year ended 31st March 2026

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 2026

Note 3 Analysis of income

Grants and donations

	2026	2025
	£	£
Grants	2,000	2,500
Donations	501	1,001
	2,501	**3,501**

Charitable activities

	2026	2025
	£	£
Membership subscriptions	3,872	4,311
Contract work	-	418
	3,872	**4,729**

Income from investments

	2026	2025
	£	£
COIF account interest	1,695	1,973
	1,695	**1,973**

Note 4 Analysis of expenditure

Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

2026

	Activities undertaken directly	Support costs	Total
	£	£	£
Consultancy (Community Development Officer)	(9,000)	-	**(9,000)**
Office costs	-	(330)	**(330)**
Travel	(104)	-	**(104)**
Insurance	-	(532)	**(532)**
Subscriptions	-	(115)	**(115)**
Meeting & trustee expenses	(157)	-	**(157)**
	(9,261)	**(976)**	**(10,237)**

2025

	Activities undertaken directly	Support costs	Total
	£	£	£
Consultancy (CDO)	(9,030)	-	**(9,030)**
Office costs	-	(460)	**(460)**
Travel	(282)	-	**(282)**
Insurance	-	(562)	**(562)**
Subscriptions	-	(114)	**(114)**
Meeting & trustee expenses	(77)	-	**(77)**
	(9,389)	**(1,136)**	**(10,525)**

Note 5 Staff costs

The charity did not have any employees during the reporting period (2025: 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 2026

Note 6 Creditors

	2026	2025
	£	£
Deferred income		
Membership income	1,221	822
	1,221	**822**

	2026	2025
	£	£
Balance at the start of the period	822	1,415
Amounts added in current period	1,221	822
Amounts released to income from previous periods	(822)	(1,415)
Balance at the end of the period	**1,221**	**822**

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

Note 7 Funds

	2026	2025
	Total - Unrestricted funds	Total - Unrestricted funds
	£	£
At 1st April	44,193	44,515
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	(2,169)	(322)
At 31st March	**42,024**	**44,193**

Note 8 Analysis of net assets between funds

	2026	2025
	£	£
Fund balances at 31st March are represented by:-		
Net current assets	42,024	44,193
	42,024	**44,193**

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees	OXFORDSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION		
On accounts for the year ended	31ST MARCH 2026	**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.

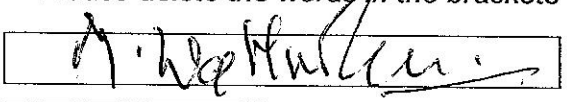
Independent examiner's statement

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.

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

Signed:		**Date:**	17/08/2026
Name:	MICHAEL WATKINSON MBE		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	CHARITY FINANCE CONSULTANT		
Address:	1 COTE HOUSE FARM COTTAGES COTE, OXON OX18 2EQ		

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