

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS AND GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30th JUNE 2015

Status	A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital, registered in England and Wales, number 06850797
	The company has charitable status and is registered with the Charity Commission under registration number 1129896 .
Directors	Andrew Haines (Chairman) Alex Hammond Alex Walker John Radice (until 19th June 2015) Rob Bennie
	Except John Radice, all the above served throughout the period. The directors of the company are also the trustees of the charitable activities.
Secretary	Jun Li
Registered office	Yew Tree Barn, The Paddocks, East Hanney, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 0HX
Bankers	Natwest Bank, 3 Newbury Street, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8BX

For further information contact:

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REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS AND GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30th JUNE 2015

Structure

Balsam Family Project is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It was incorporated on 18th March 2009 and registered as a charity by the Charity Commission on 29th May 2009.

Objects, objectives and principal activities

Balsam Family Project's activities are regulated by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The objects of the company are:

- 1 To advance education of the public in good practices promoting the maintenance and development of family welfare guided by the principles of the Christian Faith
- 2 To advance the Christian Faith for the benefit of the public in accordance with the statements of belief

The principal activities of Balsam Family Project have been focused on helping families with children that have been or are facing difficulties and where there may be a risk of, or actual, involvement with the Children's Social Services Department of the Local Authority. The focus in the first period has been in South Oxfordshire and the surrounding area.

Services are offered to all families regardless of faith. Balsam Family Project believes that true transformation in lives comes from the inside out. We aim to demonstrate God's love for all his creation in the services we provide to all regardless of faith.

"Balsam Family Project is a great example of local people working together to improve their communities. Combining professional training with on-going mentoring, the Project offers a sustainable response to one of today's big issues – creating opportunities for everyone to improve the quality of their parenting of small children, however tough their circumstances might be. I want to see the work of Balsam Family Project grow, be well supported by our local community and inspire others to respond in such practical and effective ways."

Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture and local MP

Review of activities during the period

1. The Issue

Balsam Family Project (BFP), for the past seven years, has been effectively addressing some of the root causes of family breakdown in Oxfordshire. Sadly, many parents have limited experience of good parenting and struggle to know how to bring up their own children. A significant proportion of the families we support with have been brought up in care themselves and/or have already, lost one child into the care system. Going it alone as single parents can make it even harder. Unless we break the cycle of a child who doesn't experience good parenting not knowing how to be a good parent themselves, then we have no reason to expect improvements in behaviour from children and adults caught in this spiral.

The Field and Allen reports both commissioned by this government identify that early intervention is absolutely critical in breaking the cycle of deprivation and destructive behaviour. Many Headteachers and educationalists will also attest to the fact that interventions at school are very much less successful if parents do not effectively bond and develop good relationships with their children in the first 3 years of life. Despite the Government's concern for troubled families, the reality is that many Early Intervention Services are seeing significant cuts. This year Children's centres are all facing closure, and Oxfordshire County Council leader, Ian Hudspeth has said: "The council is facing unprecedented budget pressures from the rising cost of care and this pressure is expected to continue for years to come".

This is what the Director for Children's Services for Oxfordshire has said acknowledging the very significant financial cuts they are facing;

"About half our budget goes on providing services for two per cent of the population – that is, vulnerable children and adults in our care. The crucial point is that demand for this care is rising so we expect it to account for three-quarters of our budget by 2020 as the county's population ages and grows. The council's budget will continue to reduce, while demand for care services goes up. The number of people receiving home care has nearly doubled (94 per cent) from 2011 to 2015. The number of children on child protection plans has risen by 71 per cent since 2011. We're engaging ever more with volunteers to keep services running – more than 800 volunteers provided 22,000 hours of volunteering in our library service last year. We're going to need more help from our communities who are clearly passionate about many of the services we provide – as they show through protest when they hear that the budgets for those services are potentially going to be cut.

These are not choices we want to make – but the reality of our financial position means we must make them nonetheless. In Oxfordshire the number of children subject to child protection plans has increased from just over 300 children in 2011 to 504 in 2014. The South Oxfordshire Children Board concluded that this increase reflects the greater identification, recognition and response to signs of neglect and abuse as well as sensitivity to risk. Cuts to Early Intervention Services will inevitably see more pressure on struggling families and in turn on Social Services to keep children in care. We believe that it is vital we work in partnership with the local authority to engage the local community to work together to support their more vulnerable families. "

2. What Balsam Family Project does:

Balsam Family Project has a proven record for delivering parenting support to counter some of the problems faced by vulnerable families. A team of self-employed staff and volunteers support families who recognise their need for help with positive parenting, management of homes or finances, building up self-confidence and life skills and building links with their own community. BFP provides a quality support service to vulnerable families in a nurturing environment.

Our programme includes 10 week College Courses in parenting, on two days a week, run by qualified and experienced staff. The aim is to educate parents in basic child care and home management, providing opportunities for them to learn to develop the skills to live well together as a family. While parents are tutored, their children are cared for in a safe and stimulating environment with trained staff and volunteers. They then get to practice some of their new found skills and approaches under supervision to ensure the learning is applied.

BFP recognises that to be the catalyst for any real long-term change requires commitment to every family for the long term. Trained Community Family Friends regularly visit families, keeping in close touch with them.

Weekly Family Days, as well as other informal social opportunities across south Oxfordshire, provide a place and a time every week, in a supportive environment where families can meet, make friends and build trust with each other, as well as BFP staff and volunteers.

Because our volunteers come from local churches we aim to build bridges between isolated families and these vital parts of social infrastructure to help ensure a family become part of their local communities and an efficient ongoing support network.

3. How do we differ from other Family initiatives:

BFP differs from and is complementary to other valuable parenting initiatives in a number of respects.

- * The intensity of our interventions We have recognised that the most needy parents need significant input to change their behaviours and approach to parenting. Our programme therefore provides relatively intensive input 9 hours a week for 10 weeks, with a maximum of 4 families or 6 adults with a high staff to client ratio and supervised demonstration of the skills acquired.
- *The quality of delivery Our training is delivered by a qualified social worker who also has many years experience of family fostering herself. We use material specifically developed based on a detailed understanding of recurrent issues facing parents who have few good parenting reference points of their own.
- *Ongoing, cost effective support As described above we recognise that many families need ongoing support both on a 1-1 level and via access to community groups. Many of our families already have state funded interventions but there is, inevitably, low levels of trust and infrequent, erratic engagement. We use volunteers through our network of churches in the area to ensure our ongoing mentoring is highly cost effective and delivers a level of contact that the state cannot and should not fund.
- *Entirely privately funded To date we have not received a penny of state funding. Our support comes from donors, church groups, trusts and local bodies.

4. What have we achieved:

BFP is making a significant and positive difference in the lives of vulnerable families. Parents testify to a new bond with their children and greater ability to interact with them, as well as learning how to discipline and train their children in appropriate ways. These changes will almost inevitability lead to improved outcomes for these children entering school, however, It is difficult to measure the long-term impact these changes will make. To build up a picture of the various positive outcomes of families' work with us we use various methods including;

- · Parental Stress Index Testing at the start and completion of our College Courses
- Observation and recording of behavioural change
- · Regular feedback from our Community Family Friends, Health Professionals and Social Workers
- · Personal testimonials from participants

At end June 2015 we have supported over 79 families in total, 63 of which have gone on to access other community support as a result of our contact, including joining churches, community groups, further education, therapy, and support with health needs. 85% of participants continue to meet with their Family friend or attend one of our toddler/social groups one year after attending the course programme, which means that families are being supported to maintain long-term change.

Our most successful intervention is the college course. Due to the high-intensity of this course we find that families form strong friendships and develop the trust with volunteers to seek help and advice. This has led to many families being

supported to identify their needs and gain the appropriate help in the community:

Of all graduates from the Level 1 college course we have found that:

- 65% have gone on to attend our Level 2 in Personal Growth and Development.
- 86% have received support and mentoring from our Community Family Friends (CFF)
- 89% have go on to attend another local community group such as a toddler group or social group
- 54% have been helped to successfully access therapeutic support,
- 11% have attended further education
- 54% have been helped to gain support with their health needs
- 43% have gone on to attend a personal development/support group in the area.
- 73% have found support through faith and/or a local church group

During the financial year 14/15 we have seen many achievements among the families we support:

- > Five families have completed Level 1, 10 week course in basic parenting and home management
- > Seven families have completed a Level 2 10 weeks course in personal growth and development.
- > Six families have accessed the support of a Community Family Friend (CFF). CFF's offer support and mentoring on an individual basis tailored to the needs of each family.
- > One family was supported by us at the direct request and in partnership with the Local Authority as they did not have the resources to provide the necessary outreach support this family needed.
- > An average of six families attended the regular Saturday morning Coffee Mornings at Boswells Café in Didcot. These coffee mornings have no agenda and provide a free drink for each adult who attends. The aim is to build friendships and develop a sense of community.
- Six new families have started attending the Family Day who have formed strong friendships and gained confidence to take active roles in the group, helping with craft activities and packing away equipment. One family is now considering training to become a formal volunteer for Balsam.
- > Over 145 individuals received a Christmas hamper and Christmas gifts at our Christmas Celebration 2014
- In addition to this, we have been able to keep up our long term commitment to those families who have joined us in the previous years and continue to work hard to make positive changes for their families.

Feedback from our families:

We continue to receive exceptionally positive feedback from participant attendees on the college course and users of our other support groups:

K, mum of three, says, "Having that 1:1 with a Community Family Friend was the most important [part of the process with BFP]. Having them helping me with my family, with friendships, relationships, with my partner, with my son. There's just so many positives, I can't go into it; I can't name them all. She's just done wonders for myself and my family."

L, mother of two is expecting her third child which she will name after Roxy, her CFF. She has now become a volunteer with Balsam and is getting married this month. She says, "A CFF is important to me as I have a 14 year old and do not know what to do with him outside of school so he is not in front of the Xbox all the time. My CFF helps me to find someone and something for him to do."

B, a separated mum of D says, "I am a grateful mother who has benefited immensely from the Balsam Family Projects Community Family Friend. My CFF has restored my faith that there are still people out in the community who want to help, want to see people better themselves and their lives. She has always been a listening ear for me through some really tough points of my life. Just knowing that I can text or call, and know that I have someone to talk things through with. Being a single mother is tough and through my CFF I feel as though I have that other parent to vent to and understand my child's behaviour. I cannot thank her enough and I think that every vulnerable family should have this same opportunity as for me. It's been absolutely priceless and has helped me to become the person I have always wanted to be."

5. Financial

For the period to 30th June 2015 income was £43,208. It was unrestricted income.

The Charity is registered for Gift Aid.

Expenditure was £41,359.

The closing bank balance was £18,378.

The company's income has arisen from donations. The directors ensure that commitments do not exceed funds available.

6. The Year in Question

This year has seen some key successes that have contributed to the overall growth of the project and its reputation as a valued part of the local community.

- We have run further courses on Parenting and Home Management and the follow-up course in Personal Growth and Development.
- The Family Day toddler group has continued to grow and bring new families into the project. This financial year has

seen the families really gain confidence and get involved, helping to run craft activities and staying behind at the end to help volunteers pack away equipment. We have also seen wonderful friendships develop between families who keep in good contact outside of Balsam's activities.

- We continued to employ a Project Development Manager until she moved away due to family commitments in May 2015 and have made alternative arrangements for the coming year. This role has contributed to the growth of the project in a number of ways including: promoting the charity in the local community, developing fundraising and sustainability strategies, increasing partnership working with statutory bodies and other community groups, enhancing volunteer recruitment, developing materials to communicate the model that the charity employs and improving our on-line presence and communications with supporters and sponsors.
- We have increased the paid hours of our Project Manager in line with the growth of the need and the service we offer to our families.
- We have increased our CFF activity in line with meeting the growing need of families.
- We have recruited more volunteers to support us in running events as these have also grown in size in response to the growing need.

Supporters and Partnerships

Once again we have been entirely reliant on donations and fundraising for our income and we are hugely grateful for the generosity of our supporters including those who give on a regular basis, and those who help at our regular fundraising events. This year has also seen real support from other local community groups and local businesses who have taken on or supported fundraising projects to help finance BFP. Special thanks should go to the National Citizens Service, the Didcot Girl's Brigade, the Abingdon Lions Club, and the Didcot Rotary Club, Sainsbury's, SOHA, Sovereign Housing, and Tesco for their generous support.

Following our nomination as one of the Mayor of Didcot's charities of the year, Mayor Axel MacDonald worked extremely hard to promote our work during his term of office in 2013/14 and his wife continues to be a CFF for Balsam mentoring and befriending a family. His successor, Mayor Scott Wilgrove continued to support Balsam in a hands on way and was observed to have his sleeves rolled up and helping to serve food at each of our Seasonal Celebrations as well as assist us to promote our work and fundraise. We are delighted that Mayor Des Healy is also equally as enthusiastic to continue supporting Balsam in whatever way he can.

Our biggest celebration is our Christmas Lunch and party. All our key partners in making this a success returned again for Dec 2014 which saw over 145 people sit down for a wonderful Christmas dinner! Thank you to Bright Horizons, the children's nursery company that continue to provide presents for all of our families at Christmas and to Didcot Baptist Church and Didcot Food Bank who for a second time provided generous food parcels for each of our families and to several of our partnering churches who together bought a small gift for each adult represented. The readiness of both organisations to give to families in need is a real encouragement to those families and to those of us involved in the project.

Working Collaboratively

Due to our raised profile in the local community Balsam Family Project has been recognised for its valuable work with vulnerable families and has been invited to join the Didcot area Children's Centre Advisory Board and the Children's Trust board as representatives of the Voluntary Sector and to ensure collaborative work in the community to support families. BFP was also invited to join the Didcot First Community Matters Network which seeks to "bring together commerce, statutory bodies, voluntary agencies, and the general public for the specific purpose of ensuring that Didcot is a positive place to live, work and invest".

We have continued to receive valuable training and support from Bethany Children's Trust and The Cinnamon Network, both are well-established Christian charities doing fantastic work with children in desperate situations.

We have also become Members of OCVA whom we also receive excellent support and training from. OCVA works across the board with voluntary sector charities and organisations to facilitate and enable better practice, sustainability and collaborative working.

Volunteer Development

Our network of volunteers is at the heart of BFP both because of our dependence upon it to fundraise and provide practical help but also because it is one of our unique selling points. We have committed volunteers, gifted in many ways, who are ready to work with families and individuals on a sustainable basis in a way that the state cannot support. One of our key aims identified in our last report was to increase support and develop this volunteer network.

Over the past year our volunteer base has developed in a number of ways: We have recruited a another qualified and experienced Christian Counsellor to provide teaching on the level 2 college course; we have visited key volunteers to gather feedback on how to improve support for volunteers working with families; we have provided additional training for our volunteers that are co-ordinating the news letter and website to improve our communications with supporters; one of our key

Project Workers has continued to develop her role from working as administrator to managing the Family Days and helping at the College where she has now taken on teaching the art sessions on the Level 2 College Course.

We would like to pay tribute to all our colleagues and amazing volunteer supporters who in the past12 months have supported BFP on so many ways including;

- delivering substantial elements of our courses and coordinating our Family Days
- providing excellent administrative support
- acting as Family Friends
- coordinating our prayer newsletter and website
- catering for over 145 people at our celebrations and Christmas lunch
- fundraising in many ways from Didcot Bake Off, knitting dolls, to busking and bag packing

To everyone who has supported Balsam in any way we would say a very big thank you.

Approved by the board of directors on 22nd February 2016, and signed on its behalf:

.. Andiew Hames

Trustees

Statement of Financial Activities For the period ended 30 June 2015

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds	Total 2015 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds	Total 2014 £
Incoming resources Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income (Note 3) Bank interest	43,208		43,208	22,905		22,905
Total incoming resources	43,208		43,208	22,905		22,905
Resources expended (Notes 4 to 6 Charitable activities	6) 41,359		41,359	33,569		33,569
Governance costs Total resources expended	41,359		41,359	33,569	-	33,569
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	s 1,849	·	1,849	(10,664)	· -	(10,664)
Net movement in funds	1,849		1,849	(10,664)		(10,664)
Total funds brought forward	16,529		16,529	27,193		27,193
Total funds carried forward	18,378	- 	18,378	16,529		16,529

Balance Sheet at 30 June 2015

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	funds	income funds	2015	funds	income funds	2014
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Tangible Fixed Assets	0		0	69		69
Current Assets						
Debtors	0		0	3,700		3,700
Adjustment	0		0	7		7
Cash at bank and in hand	18,378		18,378	12,753		12,753
Total current assets	18,378	_	18,378	16,460	_	16,460
Current Liabilities						
Creditors: amounts falling due						
within one year (Note 9)	0		0	0		0
Total current liabilities	0		0	0		0
Total assets less current liabilities	18,378		18,378	16,529	- - –	16,529
Funds of the Charity (Note 10)						
Unrestricted funds	18,378		18,378	16,529		16,529
Restricted income funds			0			
Total funds	18,378	_	18,378	16,529	_	16,529

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the

Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The Directors have taken advantage of the Companies Act 2006 in not having these accounts audited under Section 477.

The Directors have confirmed that no notice has been deposited under Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Directors have acknowledged their responsibilities for ensuring the company keeps accounting records which comply with Sections 386 and 387' of the Companies Act 2006.

The Directors have acknowledged their responsibilities for preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the company and its surplus for the year ended in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006.

These accounts were approved by the Directors on 22 February 2016 and signed on their behalf by:

nes - Director A Walker - Dire

Notes to the Accounts For the period ended 30 June 2015

1 Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historic cost in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities and the Companies Act 2006. They follow the recommendations of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" published in March 2005.

2 Accounting Policies

2.1 Incoming resources

2.1.1 Recognition of incoming resources

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with reasonable reliability.

2.1.2 Incoming resources with related expenditure

Where incoming resources have related expenditure, the incoming resources and related expenditure are reported gross in the SoFA.

2.1.3 Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

2.1.4 Tax claims on donations

Incoming resources from tax claims are included in the SoFA in the same accounting period as the donations to which they relate.

2.1.5 Legacies

Legacies are included in the SoFA when the charity is notified of an impending distribution or otherwise when received.

2.1.6 Volunteer help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the directors' annual report.

Notes to the Accounts For the period ended 30 June 2015

2 Accounting policies (continued)

2.1.7 Bank interest

This is included in the SOFA when receivable.

2.2 Expenditure and liabilities

2.2.1 Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

2.2.2 Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is included with the expenditure to which it relates.

2.2.3 Governance costs

Governance costs include costs of the preparation of the statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings, and the cost of any legal advice to directors on governance or constitutional matters.

2.2.4 Depreciation

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Equipment - 20% straight line

2.3 Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £200.

2.4 Funds structure

The charity currently operates a single, unrestricted fund.

3 Voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total 2015 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds	Total 2014 £
Donations	43.208	-	43,208	21,905	1,000	22,905

Notes to the Accounts For the period ended 30 June 2015

4 Analysis of resources expended

	Unrestr funds £	icted Restricted income funds £	Total 2015 £	Unrest funds £	ricted Restricted income funds £	Total 2014 £
Charitable activities	_	_		_		
Restricted Income payout		-	-		1,000	1,000
Direct service provision						
Project Workers	8,379		8,379	-		7.576
Salary	13,823		13,823	-		11,038
Employer tax and PAYE	1,939		1,939			1,266
Direct Project Costs	6,768		6,768	6,57	0	6,570
Teaching Materials	-	_	-		,	-
Rent, Rates & Utilities	3,501		3,501			4,198
Training and development	10)	10) 11	.0	110
Gift for other charitable work	-	•	-	. 242		24 206
Total	34,42	U	34,426	J 31,2	86	31,286
Support costs						
Advertising and promotion	-		-	-		-
Repairs and maintenance	-		-	-		_
Small fittings and consumables	53		531			
Printing, post and stationery	64		647		•	-
Motor and travel	1,10		1,102			-
Telephone	61		610		44	244
Insurance	38	7	387		87	387
Subscriptions	-	•	-		-	-
Sundry	48	2	482	2	-	-
Office Costs		•	6	0 4	552	652
Depreciation	69		6' 3,11		052	032
Bad Debts Written Off Total	3,11 6,93		6,93		- 283	1,283
Total	0,93	7	0,73	1,2	203	1,203
Total charitable activities	41,35	9	41,35	33 ,	569	33,569
Governance costs						
Independent examiner's fee						
for reporting on the accounts	_		_	_		-
Other fees paid to the						
independent examiner	_		_	_		-
•	-		-	-		-

Notes to the Accounts For the period ended 30 June 2015

5 Remuneration to Directors

A Walker, a director of the charity, received £8,379 (2014: £7,576) in fees for work she carried out for the charity. £1,071 in out of pocket expenses were reimbursed to a director in the Year (2014: £2,189).

6 Employee emoluments

	Unrestr funds £	icted Rest income f £		Total 2015 £	Unrestri funds £	icted Restricted income funds £	Total 2014 £
Salary Employer tax and PAYE	13,823 1,939 15,76 3)		1,939	11,038 1,266 12,304		11,038 1,266 12,304
7 Tangible fixed assets							
			Equipmo 2015 £	ent	Total 2015 £	Equipment 2014 £	Total 2014 £
Cost					_	2	_
At start of period Additions Disposals			3,329		3,329	3,329	3,329
At 30th June			3,329		3,329	3,329	3,329
Depreciation							
On 5 year life							
At start of period Disposals			3,260		3,260	2,608	2,608
Charge for period At 30th June			69 3,329		69 3,329	652 3,260	652 3,260
Net book value							
At 30th June			0		0	69	69

Notes to the Accounts For the period ended 30 June 2015

8 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:

	Unrestr	icted Restricted	Total	Unrestr	icted Restricted	Total
	funds	income funds	2015	funds	income funds	2014
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Debtors	-	-	-	3,707	-	3,707
Prepayment	-	-	-	-	-	-

9 Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year:

	Unrestri	cted Restricted	Total	Unrestri	cted Restricted	Total
	funds	income funds	2015	funds	income funds	2014
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Creditors	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accruals	-	-	-	-	-	-

10 Funds

Movement of funds

Fund name	Balance at 30 June 2014	Incoming Resources	Outgoing Resources	Balance at 30 June 2015
General Fund	16,529	43,208	41,359	18,378
Restricted income fund	-	-	-	
Total	16,529	43,208	41,359	18,378

11 Related Party Disclosure

1 Alex Walker, a director of the charity, received £8,379 in fees for work she carried out for the charity and £1,071 in reimbursed out of pocket expenses.