



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From 1st April 2016 Period start date To 31st March 2017 Period end date

Charity name: Forest Pulse

Charity registration number: 900216

Objectives and Activities

	SORP reference	
Summary of the purposes of the charity as set out in its governing document	Para 1.17	<p>To promote the education, welfare and benefit of children with special needs and their families and to promote activities and services in relation thereto.</p> <p>In furtherance of the above object but not further or otherwise the Charity shall have the following powers:</p> <p>i) To give families with a child who has any special need/disability the opportunity of contact with other families who are in the same situation and area as themselves.</p> <p>ii) To enable these families to meet as near as possible to their home at a central meeting place.</p> <p>iii) To give parents through being part of a local group the opportunity to press for better services and say collectively what their group needs are.</p> <p>iv) To encourage families to organise services that they need locally e.g. Holiday Playschemes, Out of School Activities, Childcare, Transport Schemes etc.</p> <p>v) To enable families as a whole to benefit from the group - not just the child with special needs/disabilities..</p> <p>vi) To promote interaction and good relations between the members and the community as a whole.</p>

		<p>vii) To raise funds and invite and receive contributions from any person or persons whatsoever by way of subscriptions and otherwise PROVIDED THAT the Charity shall not undertake permanent trading activities in raising funds for the said objects.</p> <p>To do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the attainment of the said objects.</p>
<p>Summary of the main activities in relation to those purposes for the public benefit, in particular, the activities, projects or services identified in the accounts.</p>	<p>Para 1.17 and 1.19</p>	<p>Family Support: Parents can contact the Charity Manager to discuss any aspects relating to the care of their children - we won't know the answer to everything, but hopefully will know someone who does. Issues might include benefit applications, contacts for other services, grants for equipment, holidays etc., statementing, respite, behaviour issues, out of school activities - anything anyone wants to know more about. Or perhaps just to meet other parents in a similar position.</p> <p>Activities A variety of out of school activities are provided, and the main ongoing ones are listed below. However, additional activities are organised at different times.</p> <p>Summer Activity Club A programme of activities including art and craft, music, sport, circus skills, animation as well as free play and organised games. Above all, it is a chance for children to meet up with their friends during the long school holidays. Experienced staff supervise a core of volunteers from the local community to ensure all children have the support they need to take part in the activities. In addition, activities are held during most of the shorter holidays.</p> <p>Family Trips to places such as soft play centres, farm parks, swimming etc. These give parents the chance to meet and chat, give the children chance to have fun with their friends, and brothers and sisters can also join in the treat. Family Social Events such as discos are also held periodically.</p> <p>Independence Trips: Children and young people are offered the chance to visit a range of community activities, e.g. theatre, cinema, swimming, shopping etc independent of their parents, support by experienced staff. In this way they build up the skills to enable them to enjoy such opportunities more independently, and with family members and friends.</p> <p>Music sessions Held after school on Fridays and offer small group specialist and creative music sessions.</p>

		<p>Sibling Project A Project which creates trips and activities for young people who have a brother or sister with a disability.</p> <p>Bream 'Devils' is an integrated Youth Club held on Thursday evenings. Open to any young person aged between 13 and 19 who lives in the Forest of Dean (transport can be provided from most areas of the forest). A varied programme of activities including games, sports, dance, themed nights and much more.</p> <p>After School Club Held on Wednesdays. Young people aged 6-13 travel by bus to Whirlikidz in Chepstow where they have lots of fun burning energy on the soft play equipment, socializing with their friends. We pause for a cooked meal, when children can develop skills needed to 'dine out'</p> <p>Dance Sessions We are very proud of our Fused Dance Company, which grew from an after school dance session. Disabled and non-disabled dancers choreograph their own pieces and frequently perform both locally and county wide, and their achievements are inspirational. The company is aimed at dancers over 16 years of age. Our junior group Fusion helps younger dancers develop their dancing and choreography skills. Both groups are held on a Wednesday.</p> <p>Weekend Activity Club We have two Clubs which are held on alternate Saturdays. The first session begins at 10am and primarily for young people aged 12+. The other session begins at 10:30am and is for those aged between 6-11 years. There are a variety of activities on offer such as art and craft, soft play, music, dance and more.</p> <p>Forest Friends A weekly social/learning group for young people aged 18 and over. Run in partnership with the Forest Youth Support Service, and meeting on Mondays at the Main Place in Coleford. Members get the chance to meet up with friends, socialise and learn new skills in the areas of cooking, recreational skills, problem solving etc.</p>
Statement confirming whether the trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit	Para 1.18	<p>Trustees of the charity are fully aware of their responsibilities in relation to Public Benefit, and ensure that all the activities of the charity meet Charity Commission Guidance. They have read relevant Charity Documentation, e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Benefit Requirement (PB1) Public Benefit Running a Charity (PB2) Public Benefit Reporting (PB3). <p>The trustees believe it is essential that all its activities (as outlined above) are for public benefit, and that focussing on this benefits not only our members but also the local community.</p>

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

	SORP reference	
Policy on grant making	Para 1.38	Not Applicable
Policy on social investment including program related investment	Para 1.38	Not applicable
Contribution made by volunteers	Para 1.38	<p>The benefit volunteers bring to the charity is invaluable, and we could not provide all the activities we currently do without their involvement. Upwards of 60 volunteers worked with us this year. Mainly pupils from local schools and colleges who support individual children to enjoy the various activities on offer to maximum benefit. They join in activities alongside our members, model behaviours, encourage social interaction, help children focus and become 'friends' they can interact with. Our trustees also work on a voluntary basis.</p> <p>As well as supporting children and young people at activities, these volunteers have a much wider benefit. They take their experience of working with disabled children, and the challenges those young people face, out into the wider community and help raise awareness, and break down barriers.</p>
Other		

Achievements and Performance

	SORP reference	
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<p>Summary of the main achievements of the charity, identifying the difference the charity's work has made to the circumstances of its beneficiaries and any wider benefits to society as a whole.</p>	<p>Para 1.20</p>	<p>During the course of the year we have maintained a membership of around 276 families, incorporating 315 disabled children and young people and almost 500 individual parent carers.</p> <p>200 children and young people were registered at various activities over the course of the year, with 6,200 places available across all activities.</p> <p>With the help of a grant of £30,000 from Gloucestershire County Council Short Breaks Capital Grants Fund, and £2,000 from the sale of old minibus we were able to add to this from our general funds to purchase a brand new accessible Peugeot Boxer Minibus – so with the Ford minibus were 'won' in the Citizen/Pied Piper Appeal Draw we now have a fleet of two minibuses! These ferry children from all around the Forest to take part in the various activities we run.</p> <p>The introduction of an annual registration for our regular activities has proved very successful. All activities are well attended, and we have managed to reduce our waiting lists significantly through this. We still have a waiting list for our Weekend and After Schools Clubs and we are looking at ways to address this.</p> <p>We continue to maintain very good relationships with commissioners in the Disabled Children & Young Peoples team at Gloucestershire County Council, and with other organisations and professionals working with disabled children and young people locally and county wide.</p>
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Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

<p>Achievements against objectives set</p>	<p>Para 1.41</p>	<p>Objectives Set for supporting children: To offer Disabled children/young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced Isolation • Increased social opportunities • Choice of activities/opportunities • New Skills; doing things they would not otherwise do. • Chance to meet and make friends • Increased Independence • Going places without having to rely on parents/carers for support • Improved Self Esteem • Improved social/communication skills
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- The same opportunities open to non disabled children and young people.
- When appropriate, the chance to return in a voluntary capacity to give others the benefit of their skills

Achievements:

- Offering wide range of sport, social and recreational activities
- Around 200 children/young people involved in regular activities
- Over 6,000 individual places offered at activities
- Feedback from parents and young people indicates improvements in all the above objectives.

Objectives Set for Parent/Carer Support

- To offer parent members support, guidance and advice on a wide range of topics – respite, benefits, funding, equipment, behaviour management
- To keep parents informed about services provided by the charity
- To inform parents of other services available which could benefit them and their family.
- To give parents a break from caring
- To provide short breaks for children
- To link parents with others in a similar position for mutual support
- To empower parents to seek the support and services they need

Achievements:

- 500 individual parents/carers receive regular newsletters and information about services provided by both our charity and other statutory and community organisations.
- Formal and informal feedback tells us that parents/carers feel they benefit from all the above provisions

Objectives Set for Staff and Volunteers:

- To maintain a highly trained and competent staff team, able to meet the individual needs of all our members
- To recruit and support volunteers to give them the skills to support children and young people attending activities.
- When appropriate, to support volunteers to develop the necessary skills and training to progress to

		<p>employment within the charity – and support them seeking employment elsewhere.</p> <p>Achievements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of up to 60 volunteers over the course of a year. • Maintaining a competent and highly trained staff team • Providing training in a range of skills including, but not exclusively: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Generic and Paediatric First Aid - Child and Adult Safeguarding - Moving and Handling - Gastrostomy (tube) feeding - Positive Behaviour Management - Administration of Medication, including emergency epilepsy medications and other specialist medications. - Administration of oxygen - Suction and nebulisation - Total Communication
Performance of fundraising activities against objectives set	Para 1.41	<p>The charity set a target of £10,000 for Fundraising, and are delighted to have raised a total of £11,068 net profit. In addition we were able to claim a total of £2,639 Gift Aid, which make a grand total for Fundraising of £13,707.</p> <p>A target of £10,000 was also set for Donations, and we were delighted to raise £14,366.</p>
Investment performance against objectives	Para 1.41	N/A
Other		<p>Feedback from membership and from involved professionals indicates an increased need for services for our adult members. We do not have the resources to address this at the present time, but are considering possibility and potential funding for this.</p> <p>We are still searching actively for a site on which to develop a central provision for all our activities.</p>

Financial Review

Review of the charity's financial position at the end of the period	Para 1.21	<p>The charity has reached the end of this period in a very positive financial position. A profit of 82,274 was made in this financial year, but this includes £4,875 funding from Gloucestershire County Council for last years Weekend Club provision. The trustees actively worked to produce this profit to allow for the appointment of an additional part time clerical staff member; to ensure the costs of all maternity, sickness and redundancy could be met if necessary, and to build up our building fund.</p> <p>Due to historic accountancy recording, a prior year adjustment of £7,356 has been made this year to our actual cash in hand. Therefore total funds carried forward £207,560, which includes all fixed assets. Cash in hand to carry forward ££153,967.</p>
Statement explaining the policy for holding reserves stating why they are held	Para 1.22	<p>The policy of the charity is to retain sufficient reserves to ensure the financial stability of the charity for the next financial year, whilst maintaining and building on our Designated Funds as detailed below.</p>
Amount of reserves held	Para 1.22	<p>£207,560, of which the charity have designated:-</p> <p>Maternity, Sickness & Redundancy Fund: £40,000</p> <p>Building Fund: £75,000*</p> <p>*This fund was at £50,000 in April 2013 but funds have been transferred in the interim to ensure the financial viability of the charity. The trustees have agreed in the current financial year to restore this deficit funding, and increase it in readiness for the purchase of a suitable building/site, which is the vision of the charity.</p>
Reasons for holding zero reserves	Para 1.22	N/A
Details of fund materially in deficit	Para 1.24	N/A
Explanation of any uncertainties about the charity continuing as a going concern	Para 1.23	<p>The charity has Big Lottery Funding until December 2018, and a contract with Gloucestershire Council for its Weekend and holiday activities covering this period. The trustees aim to secure replacement funding if Big Lottery funding is not continued after this time as otherwise the charity would have to reduce its services.</p>

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Structure, Governance and Management

Description of charity's trusts:		
Type of governing document (trust deed, royal charter)	Para 1.25	Constitution
How is the charity constituted? (e.g unincorporated association, CIO)	Para 1.25	Registered Charity
Trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions e.g. election to post or name of any person or body entitled to appoint one or more trustees	Para 1.25	<p>The Constitution stipulates that 'The majority of the Trustee Management Committee must be made up of members who have a child with special needs/disability in their family'.</p> <p>The existing trustees have also actively sought trustees from outside the membership who have skills/expertise identified as being beneficial to the charity.</p> <p>The trustees meet monthly and make all major decisions relating to the running of the charity, giving consideration to any feedback from members of the charity and any other stakeholders.</p> <p>The day to day running of the charity is delegated to the Development and Charity members, and other staff members as appropriate.</p>

Additional information (optional)

You may choose to include further statements where relevant about:

Policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees	Para 1.51	<p>All trustees undergo DBS clearance and relevant trustees undergo Safeguarding training.</p> <p>Before being accepted as a trustee individuals are asked to apply in writing giving the qualifications/skills/experience they would bring to the Management Committee. They are given a Trustee Induction Pack with relevant documentation from the Charity Commission pertaining to the roles and responsibilities of being a trustee. They then come to at least one Management Meeting before they are co-opted onto the committee. Non-member trustees are given an additional induction relating to the activities of the the charity.</p>
The charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works	Para 1.51	<p>The charity is an 'Approved provider' for Gloucestershire County Council, and we have a positive partnership working with their Children & Young People With Disabilities Commissioning Team. We also liaise regularly with Forest of Dean District Council.</p>

		<p>We work closely with health and social care professionals, and various special and mainstream schools.</p> <p>We work closely with a number of other CVO organisations who provide services for disabled children and young people including, but not exclusively:-</p> <p>Forest Youth Support Service FOD Children's Opportunity Centre LIFE (Forest Adult Day Care Provision) The Orchard Trust</p>
Relationship with any related parties	Para 1.51	<p>We work in particularly close partnership with Heart of the Forest Community Special School, the school many of our members attend and where our charity is based and holds many of its activities.</p> <p>Our accounts have been prepared by Aubrey & Co, Accountants, Ross on Wye, Herefordshire.</p>
Other		

Reference and Administrative details

Charity name	Forest Pulse
Other name the charity uses	N/A
Registered charity number	900216
Charity's principal address	c/o Heart of the Forest Community Special School, Speech House, Coleford, Gloucestershire GL16 7EJ.

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Helen Baker	Chair		
2	Sharon Shirley	Vice-Chair		
3	Elaine Grunbaum	Treasurer		
4	Pamela Reid	Secretary		
5	Beverley Couzens			From 14 th September 2016
6	Mark Jones			
7	Rebecca Wellsted			
8	Suzanne Rollinson			
9	Ian Campbell			
10	Rebecca Cherry			
11	Janet Phelps			From August 2016
12	Linda Drew			
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Corporate trustees – names of the directors at the date the report was approved

Director name		

Name of trustees holding title to property belonging to the charity

Trustee name	Dates acted if not for whole year	

Funds held as custodian trustees on behalf of others

Description of the assets held in this capacity	
Name and objects of the charity on whose behalf the assets are held and how this falls within the custodian charity's objects	
Details of arrangements for safe custody and segregation of such assets from the charity's own assets	

Additional information (optional)

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address
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Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

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Exemptions from disclosure

Reason for non-disclosure of key personnel details

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Other optional information

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Declarations

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	Helen Baker	S. Shirley
Full name(s)	HELEN BAKER	SHARON SHIRLEY
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	CHAIR	Vice Chair.
Date	7/1/18	