

Sheltered Work Opportunities Project
Company information

Trustees (Directors) at the date of this report

Martin Stewart (Chair)
Sheila Carson
Ignatius Harling
Sophie Manners
June Perryman
James Robinson
Vic Williams

Senior management team

Jessica Davies . Manager
Jane Nicholls . Assistant Manager Cherry Tree Nursery
Angela Mansbridge . Nursery Supervisor Chestnut Nursery

Registered office

Cherry Tree Nursery
Off New Road Roundabout
Northbourne, Bournemouth BH10 7DA

Patrons (as of 2004)

Bill Bailey
Rt Hon Richard Drax, MP
Mrs Anthony Pitt-Rivers
The Baroness Maddock

Auditors

Accounting for Charities Ltd
Chartered Accountants
Arena, Holyrood Close, Poole, Dorset BH17 7BA

Bankers

CAF Bank, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent
Barclays Bank, Kinson, Bournemouth
Barclays Bank, Poole
Monmouthshire Building Society
Scottish Widows

Registered numbers

Registered Company number 0244957
Registered Charity number 900325

Sheltered Work Opportunities Project Report of the Trustees

The Trustees present their report and accounts for the year ended 31 January 2014.

Governance and management

Governing document

The organisation is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 6 December 1989 and registered as a charity on 12 February 1990. The company was established under a Memorandum of Association, which established the objects and powers of the charitable company and is governed under its Articles of Association. In the event of the company being wound up, members are required to contribute an amount not exceeding £1.00.

The Trustees who served during the year and up to the date of this Report were as follows:

D M Stewart (Chair)
S Carson
I Harling appointed 17 December 2013
S Manners
J Perryman
J Robinson appointed 17 December 2013
V Williams

Methods of recruitment and appointment of Trustees

The directors of the company are also Charity Trustees for the purposes of charity law and under the company's Articles are known as members of the Board of Trustees. Under the requirement of the Memorandum and Articles of Association the members of the Board of Trustees are elected to serve for a period of a year after which they must be re-elected at the next Annual General Meeting.

In accordance with the company's Articles of Association, all the Trustees retired at the company's AGM and, being eligible, offered themselves for re-election.

Sheltered Work Opportunities Project (SWOP)'s principal activity is to help people regain wellbeing through working with land and horticulture and to ensure that the value of such therapy is widely known.

As a result of this primary activity the charity also encourages and assists in formal and informal research and education regarding the use of land as a therapy for persons in need, and the therapeutic value of horticulture, agriculture and other methods of land use to provide for dissemination of the results of this research.

SWOP also helps co-ordinate and exchange information among, co-operate with, and provide guidance and other services to government and non-governmental organisations, companies, societies, associations and persons regarding their activities and programmes. The charity also helps organise and promote public meetings, seminars and discussion groups involved in the debate of how best to support people suffering with mental illness.

The Board of Trustees seeks to ensure that the needs of this group are appropriately reflected through the diversity of the trustee body.

The more traditional business and health skills are well represented on the Board of Trustees. In an effort to maintain this broad skill mix, members are requested to provide a list of their skills and update it each year and, in the event of particular skills being lost due to retirements, individuals are approached to offer themselves for election onto the Board of Trustees. Two new trustees were appointed during the year, providing skills and experience to strengthen the Board.

SHELTERED WORK OPPORTUNITIES PROJECT REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES

Chestnut Nursery

Volunteers

During the course of the year, 63 volunteers with severe and enduring mental health problems attended Chestnut Nursery, 7 moved on and 15 new volunteers started. More referrals are being received for people who are too ill to attend; this is assumed to be due to the hospital bed cuts and loss of services generally.

Highlights of the Year

- Improved and positive atmosphere on the nursery due to more settled staffing.
- Volunteers engaging more in trying other work tasks such as the shop/office.
- Car parking area created at the back for staff and volunteers and friends increasing customer parking space.
- Bench display areas . 3-tiered displays made, trellis work erected to improve sales area, more defined plant area.
- New Dexion benching funded by Poole Rotary Club.
- Wood to replace rotted benches donated by Sydenhams, paint and nails donated by Poole Rotary Club.
- 12 people signed up for and took part in a cookery lesson on site.
- Computer lessons given by a new friend of the nursery.
- Better communication between nurseries and more stock shared.
- Southern Electric spent a community day and pointed the greenhouses.
- Bank of New York spent a community day helping to build and move benching.
- Tour given for group of learning disabled from the local college.
- Tour and talk given to 30 members of the Mothers Union.
- Various talks given to groups to raise awareness of the charity.
- Barclays ladies continued to support sales day by running raffles.
- Best ever June sales Day.
- 3 x Dolphin Centre sales days manned by the volunteers to sell plants and promote the nursery.
- Horticultural Course in Poole Park - 2 volunteers attended.
- Suttles donated 8 tonnes of scalplings for greenhouse 3 floor.
- New easier to update website set up.
- Poole Bay Rotary Club funded annual trip.
- Successful annual trip to Wisley, 3 x boat trips and 1 catamaran trip, picnic in the Park, annual fish and chip day, birthday barbecue and Christmas Party enjoyed by the volunteers.
- Hall & Woodhouse Community Chest grant gained - £820 for new till.
- August . South Today news feature on the nursery, raising awareness and need for a new shop. Articles . Seeker News & Echo.
- Shop moved from old shed to large greenhouse, creating a larger retail shop area.
- Poole Community Grant gained for Christmas calendars and cards for marketing.
- Number of volunteers gaining other voluntary positions.
- Good relations with the Parks gardening team, sharing onsite storage facilities.
- Survey of the referrers.

Cherry Tree Nursery

Volunteers

During the course of the year, 206 volunteers with severe and enduring mental health problems attended Cherry Tree Nursery, 32 moved on and 39 new volunteers started. The majority of them gained substantially in skills and confidence. Demand for places continues to increase, particularly following the closure of some local services.

A recent evaluation study completed at Cherry Tree Nursery revealed that 100% of the volunteers feel safe, 100% feel part of a community, 100% feel cared about, 96% feel they could help others, 82% have improved motivational levels and 72% would not change anything about Cherry Tree.

Highlights of the Year

- Second phase of the sustainable building replacement programme . rooms for the volunteers to work, learn and recover in . completed.
- Substantial local interest generated in the low impact structure built from locally-sourced natural materials.
- Wessex Youth Orchestra adopted by us as their charity of the year and performed on two occasions at the nursery.
- Sunday opening successfully instigated from March to October, with resulting increased income from plant sales leading to our best year ever for plant sales.
- Started production of a new video on the work of the project.
- Had visits from many people wanting to set up projects in other areas, coming for advice and inspiration, one of the reasons for making the video.
- Had the Drax Estate at Charborough Park opened for us to sell plants on Bank Holiday Monday.
- Volunteers enjoyed a tree course designed specially for them by renowned horticulturalist, Diana Guy, involving visits to local arboreta.
- Volunteers set up a sewing group to complement the already established knitting group.
- Volunteers also set up a stall to sell items they have produced in the knitting and sewing group, in aid of the new building fund at Nursery and external events.
- Large number of volunteers benefited from courses on healthy eating and cooking on a budget, run by the Dorset Food and Health Trust (now tragically closed due to lack of funding).
- More volunteers benefited from debt advice and support through our Disability Rights Advice Clinic.
- Many talks given to Community groups and groups visiting the nursery for tours and talks.
- Establishment of the Annual Day of Celebration and Remembering to celebrate the lives of those we have lost.
- New evaluation survey produced by a former volunteer, showing the positive results of attending Cherry Tree Nursery.
- Herbal shower gel workshop held with a professional herbalist.
- Chosen by Dorset Golf and Country Club as their charity of the year and raised the record-breaking sum of £9,000.
- Helga Aldersey opened her garden in aid of Cherry Tree.
- Tish and Maria ran the Bournemouth Marathon for us.
- Visited for 3 days by the Cheltenham Butterfly Garden.
- Development of strong working relationship with J P Morgan.
- Joined by HSBC for a weeding day.
- Volunteers established Cherry Tree's own band 'The Propagators' to perform at the Nursery's festival-like Plant Sales.
- Volunteers started to build benches from recycled materials in the greenhouse.
- A friend of the charity paid for a clear panel to be installed in the volunteers' tearoom, enabling it to be filled with light.
- Volunteers erected a donated metal building for storage and wet weather working.
- Re-covered two polytunnels and completed a donated twinspan tunnel for winter protection.
- Rotary Clubs of Bournemouth North and Westbourne very successfully provided barbecued food at our plant sales.
- Volunteers went on holiday to Chichester, and enjoyed many trips out in the community.
- Won a Bournemouth in Bloom Gold Award for the best small retail shop, and the Ellingham & Ringwood Agricultural Show Nurseries Cup.
- Volunteers enjoyed a talk on Talbot Village from St Christopher Lees.
- Involved in the creation of the Oakdale Library Reading Garden and sold plants at its opening.
- A wildlife board for our pond painted by local artist, Pam Shrubbs.
- Volunteers strongly supported the Food Bank.
- Strengthening of relationship with our sister nursery at Chestnut Nursery, and provided them with many more plants.
- Blossoming atmosphere of love and mutual support among volunteers who look after and care for each other like the family they are.
- AND successfully raising enough money to be able to build Phase 3 of the sustainable building replacement programme!

Sheltered Work Opportunities Project Report of the Trustees

Trustee induction and Training

Most Trustees are already familiar with the practical work of the charity, having been encouraged to follow closely the activities of the Project.

Additionally, new Trustees are invited and encouraged to attend the day to day operation of the Projects to familiarise themselves with the charity and the context in which it operates. These visits are led by the Chairman of the Trustees with the help and support of the Project managers.

Information provided to new Trustees includes:

- The obligations of the Board of Trustees

- The main documents which set out the operational framework for the charity including the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

- Resourcing and the current financial position as set out in the latest published accounts.

- Future plans and objectives.

The Charity Commission's guide 'The Essential Trustee' is made available as a follow up to these sessions.

Organisational Structure

The Board of Trustees meets quarterly with a pre-planned agenda and receives management accounts, a written and verbal report from each nursery manager and a financial risk and funding overview, to enable it to make decisions. Volunteer observers also attend the meeting and are permitted to report back to other volunteers on the meeting. SWOP's two managers report to the Board of Trustees. The power to make decisions relating to the day-to-day operations of SWOP is vested in the managers and an appointed Management Committee on each site. An open group of volunteers also attend such a meeting.

Related and affiliated organisations

SWOP is not connected with any other charity or company but does work closely with a number of different organisations. In so far as it is complementary to the charity's objects, the charity is guided by both local and national policy.

Risk management

The Board of Trustees has conducted a review of the major risks to which the charity is exposed. A risk register has been established and is updated at least annually. Where appropriate, systems and procedures have been established and is updated at least annually. Where appropriate, systems and procedures have been established to mitigate the risks the charity faces. Significant external risks to funding have led to the development of a strategic plan which will allow the diversification of funding and activities. Internal control risks are minimised by the implementation of procedures for authorisation of all transactions and projects. Procedures are in place to ensure compliance with health and safety of staff, volunteers, and visitors to the centres. These procedures are periodically reviewed to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the charity.

Public Benefit

The Trustees have referred to the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing the charity's aims and objectives and in planning its future activities.

The Trustees do not consider that the charity's activities include any potential detriment or harm or that they convey any significant incidental private benefit.

Sheltered Work Opportunities Project

Report of the Trustees

Objectives and activities

Objectives

The objectives of the charity are:

To offer a sheltered workplace to those experiencing from mental illness, to encourage and assist in formal and informal research and education regarding the use of land as therapy for persons in need;

To co-ordinate and exchange information among, co-operate with, and provide guidance and other services to government and non-government organisations, companies, societies, associations and persons regarding their activities or programmes;

To organise and promote conferences, public meetings, seminars, discussion groups and similar activities;

Activities

The main areas of charitable activity are the provision of two sheltered workplaces, Cherry Tree Nursery and Chestnut Nursery, as well as support, training and guidance for the volunteers who attend.

The volunteers, who are the primary beneficiaries of the charity, are people with mental illness who are referred to the project by The Dorset Healthcare University Foundation Trust and other agencies. All services are provided free of charge to the volunteers.

Achievements and Performance

Review of the Business

SWOP now has two thriving nurseries supporting adults with severe and enduring mental health problems in East Dorset and West Hampshire. The charity continues to try to work towards greater sustainability, but the trustees have identified that the funding gap between plant sales and running costs remains the major issue the charity faces. The cost of salaries, which is 50% of SWOP's total running costs, is the most important issue. It needs to be noted that many of the grants awarded recently are unlikely to be repeated, and the need for additional fund-raising remains paramount, especially as no new Lottery Grant has been applied for at Chestnut Nursery. It should also be noted that the figures for funds raised are significantly higher because much of the fund-raising has been undertaken for replacement buildings at Cherry Tree Nursery. To maintain the integrity of the running costs, funds raised for the new building are kept separately.

Trustees have identified certain major threats to the business. These are:-

- The availability of Vicarage field for car parking at Cherry Tree Nursery for the project's major fund-raising events. The recent loss of the use of this field, due to inclement weather, combined with the unpredictability of its availability, has resulted in a high loss of income.
- Staffing issues - It is essential to obtain dedicated staff who are able to stay for a long period of time. Change and disruption can be very detrimental to the stability and smooth running of the project. We hope very much that this problem has now been resolved.
- As Cherry Tree Nursery reaches its 25th year, the fact that it is relying on ageing staff and helpers is an increasingly severe problem, which needs to be addressed and a strategy identified.
- The general picture for charities in terms of fund-raising is not good. A national survey by the Charities Aid Foundation in 2012 revealed that one in six charities face closure in the coming year amidst public spending cutbacks and falling donations from the public. It is imperative that all efforts are put into finding other sources of income.
- The high pressure on the services of the charity continues to increase, as more and more other services are withdrawn. This urgent need is becoming acute and means that staff are having to give far more support (to volunteers) than in previous years, resulting in a huge increase in the work they do.

Sheltered Work Opportunities Project Report of the Trustees

Financial Review

Against the backdrop of limited resources and insecurities over funding, it has continued to be difficult to plan or develop services.

Principal Funding Sources

The Trustees are particularly indebted to and would like to thank:-

Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Charitable Foundation, The Aish Family, Borough of Poole, Bournemouth Borough Council, Dorset HealthCare University Foundation Trust, East Dorset Golf Club, Holdenhurst Charity, Incorporated Bournemouth Free Church, Knighton Heath Golf Club, Talbot Village Trust, V A Dickinson, Valentine Charitable Trust

For the building of Phase 2 of the sustainable replacement building replacement project at Cherry Tree Nursery, we are indebted to:- Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Charitable Foundation, Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation, Garfield Weston Foundation, Talbot Village Trust.

And for pledges for Phase 3:- Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Charitable Foundation, Talbot Village Trust, The Valentine Charitable Trust.

Investment Policy

As well as retaining a prudent amount in reserves each year, most of the charity's funds are allocated for forthcoming projects so there are few funds for long-term investment. Having considered the options available, the Board of Trustees has decided to maintain any investment possible in a CAF Fix Rate Selector Account. Investments are also held at Birmingham Midshires, Scottish Widows Bank and Monmouthshire Building Society. Investment policies are reviewed on an ongoing basis.

Reserves

The accounts presented cover the figures for the charity the Sheltered Work Opportunities Project (SWOP). This consists of two projects, Cherry Tree Nursery and Chestnut Nursery.

Sheltered Work Opportunities Project Report of the Trustees

The policy of SWOP trustees is to keep one year's running costs in reserve. This was £496,000 for the year 2013-14 whilst free reserves totalled only £127,000 representing 3 months' total running costs or 7 months' salary costs.

When considering expenditure of any surplus, SWOP needs to bear in mind:

- The current staffing load at Cherry Tree has not been increased for seven years. If resources permitted, which they currently do not, they need to employ an additional member of staff to manage the increasingly busy sales and information area.
- Now Cherry Tree has embarked on the final stage of the building programme, they will need reserves to cover any other unexpected expenditure.

Plan for future periods

The Trustees are aware of the demand for projects such as Cherry Tree Nursery and Chestnut Nursery in other conurbations and look at other opportunities if any sites become available. Maintaining the high quality of the support being offered remains paramount and any future expansion must not jeopardise the current standard of care.

In the short term, both projects continue to invest in improved facilities for volunteers, staff and customers. To this end, plans are being drawn up to develop the site at Chestnut Nursery with a recognition of the need to develop increased sustainability. At Cherry Tree work continues on Phase Three of the Replacement Building Programme and development of their retail sales area must be considered as a priority.

At both sites, the Trustees recognise the increasingly urgent requirement for fundraising to support the charity's ongoing core activities.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the accounts

The directors are responsible for preparing the report and accounts in accordance with applicable law and regulations.

Company law requires the directors to prepare accounts for each financial year. Under that law the directors have elected to prepare the accounts in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (United Kingdom Accounting Standards and applicable law). Under company law the directors must not approve the accounts unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the profit or loss for that period. In preparing those accounts, the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and the apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and
- prepare the accounts on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Sheltered Work Opportunities Project Report of the Trustees

Audit

Accounting for Charities Ltd were re-appointed as the charitable company's auditors.

Whilst the incoming resources of the charity for the year were less than that at which an audit is a statutory requirement under the Charities Act 2011, the trustees chose to continue to have the accounts subject to full statutory audit to assist in the discharge of their governance responsibilities.

The Trustees have agreed that the auditors' liability for any economic loss or damage suffered by the charity arising out of or in connection with their audit services shall be limited, unless it arises through the auditors' wilful default of their obligations.

Disclosure of Information to auditors

So far as each director at the date of approval of this report is aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the company's auditors are unaware; and
- the directors have taken all steps that they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Small company special provisions

This report has been prepared in accordance with the provisions in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

This report was approved by the board on 26 June 2014

Martin Stewart
Trustee