

Play and fun for everyone!



Annual report 2014 - 2015



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Charity No: 1014270

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Chair's report

It gives me great pleasure to be writing this report, as the new chair of the Springboard Project- although I have been involved with the charity for the last four years as one of its trustees. I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge 'thank you' to our previous Chairman, Bill Wilkinson, for all the support he gave us during his five years in this role.

With two centres now open and fully operational, it's been a very busy year for us. The charity continues to make good progress with its membership groups and various services, both across its short breaks provision for disabled children and young people, and building the 'play 'n stay' family membership in both centres. In addition to our two centres, our charity continues to provide activities for hundreds of disabled children and young people living in Horsham, Crawley, Mid Sussex, Worthing and the London Borough of Sutton. Many of these groups are now either reaching or exceeding their capacity and we continue to seek out opportunities to extend this provision.

The charity remains extremely grateful for the support of its trustees, staff and volunteers; all give the time and skills needed to ensure the continued vitality and success of The Springboard Project.

Jill Carnie: Chair of Trustees

Through short breaks the Springboard Project aims to support disabled children to enjoy active social lives which help build life skills and independence and enhance wellbeing. Our adapted play centres promote inclusion and celebrate diversity, also welcoming nondisabled children along with their families to join the fun and play and learn.

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CEO's report

It has been another exciting and challenging year for our charity and we have managed to navigate a period which has been more about consolidation than expansion. That is not to say that we frequently find ourselves being asked to create more services in new localities or find extra capacity where we already operate, which in turn means finding even more resources. In many ways, this conundrum is to the great credit of our staff and volunteers who are increasingly recognised for the excellence of their work in supporting our families and children - whoever they are and wherever they may be.

However, when we turn on the news we hear the national picture is now picking up with record low inflation, consistently low interest rates and increasing employment levels, but it is important to recognise we find ourselves in a different part of the economy. Because our services are aligned with the 'care' sector, this area is still affected by the continuous reductions in local authority funding which, through a number of factors, then impact on us. Examples include the closure of local children's centres and more demanding criteria to access social care. These factors place greater demands on services that voluntary sector organisations like ours provide, such as short breaks for disabled children and other family based services. At the same time, charity income is being squeezed as pressure on independent funders increase due to reducing local authority budgets.

So are we in for a perfect storm? In the recent report - A Financial Sustainability Review - by the NCVO, a £4.6bn annual shortfall in sector income is projected over the next five years simply to maintain current spending power. At the same time, there are higher expectations than ever of the voluntary sector and higher demand for its services. It is this growing demand coupled with that shortfall which will certainly grab our attention in the years ahead. However, with adversity comes opportunity and as some statutory services close down or are withdrawn, the opportunities for our charity to fill that gap have never been greater. Immediate examples that come to mind include forming a Buddies group to complement our Grasshoppers group in Worthing, creating more capacity for our Grasshoppers group in Crawley and the enthusiasm in Sutton Borough to extend our short break age groups as well as helping to establish a new Centre! At the same time we must make sure that what we have, we keep and that the support we already provide is sustained.

As mentioned in our Chairman's Report, both our centres have benefited enormously from additional capital funding plus some magnificent volunteering projects. Building bridges with our local communities is essential to keep our charity vibrant and the assistance we receive from these groups, clubs, benefactors and companies is highly valued.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the terrific support of the trustees, my management team, our staff and volunteers. Once again, they have all risen to the many challenges and joys that make up the tapestry of life in a small charity - their contributions are really appreciated.

Nigel Scott-Dickeson: CEO

Service Delivery Manager Horsham's Report

Vickie Toms

This past year has seen growth, change and a much needed revamp to our Horsham centre. The Springboard Project team together with help from organisations such as Liberty Property Trust, Wooden Spoon, Horsham Lions and Creative Assembly have transformed the centre into a bright, fun assessible play space. The soft play refurbishment, improved access to the front of the building and decorated walls have been loved by staff and members alike. Springboard House has a constant stream of visits from both our members and those visiting the house for the first time, complemented by the warm welcome they receive from our Project Assistants and centre volunteers.

The Short Breaks team continue to deliver a great service, taking into account our main aims of improving social lives, enhancing life skills and increasing independence when planning the short break sessions. With help from Saxon Weald, we have improved cooking equipment which has been invaluable for Grasshoppers and Buddies sessions - next stop the Great British Bake Off! This equipment was complemented by a 'Minion Makeover' by Assurity Consulting, making our kitchen as fun as the rest of the building.

A personal highlight of the year was finishing our summer short breaks scheme with a disco. We invited members old and new to attend and it was lovely to catch up with some Springboard Project graduates.

The plans for the next year are to increase membership, fit automatic doors at the front of the house, making them more accessible and introducing an inclusive Lego Club. I would like to say a massive thank you to all staff and volunteers for putting their heart and soul into the charity, to our funders for giving us the opportunity to provide our service and to all the families and supporters.



Service Delivery Manager Crawley's Report

Su Parrish

With a birthday party marking the end of our first year, as we celebrated, it was good to reflect on the success so far and those who've contributed to it. Our staff team of Project Assistants and Project Volunteers have presented a friendly welcome and have kept the centre a fun place to play and work! The Short Breaks Team have enjoyed having the use of our own Crawley base and have been able to use the house for Saturday clubs, holiday playscheme days, dvd and pizza evenings, shopping and cooking and so much more.

The centre has flourished, with new families visiting and joining each week, many of them recommending us to their friends. New equipment has been installed in the sensory room and soft playroom with the help of grants from UPS Foundation and Hall and Woodhouse Community Chest. Teams of volunteers from Gatwick Hilton and Tesco Clubcard have not only cleaned and cleared area of the house and garden but also transformed the soft play room into a tropical rainforest.

As we look into the next year, plans are underway for the lift to be installed in September which will give access to the messy playroom on the first year which will be used for fun sessions with our new Play and Learn Co-ordinator.

Thanks go to our whole staff and volunteer team as well as all those who have contributed in so many other ways - from donating toys or bottle tops, to taking away collecting boxes and bringing them back full or doing sponsored events. The "Play and Fun for Everyone" would not be possible without you.



Cheeky Monkeys aims

- To support children's school readiness through play
- To welcome all members promoting inclusion and diversity
- To enhance children's and family physical and emotional wellbeing

Membership for families with younger children offers the opportunity to use our centres on a stay and play basis. Springboard Houses in Horsham and Crawley are open Monday to Friday from 10am -5pm and welcome families to use facilities for as long or short a visit as they wish. Both centres have a soft play room, sensory room, lounges, garden and kitchen.

- 54% of our members use Springboard House once a week or more



CHEEKY MONKEYS

Springboard House Horsham
No of members: 178
No individual visits: 16279
Free first visits: 259
Parties: 64

Springboard House Crawley
No of members: 96
No of family visits: 2586
Free first visits: 265
Parties: 18

"The best party ever!"

"The most inclusive environment I have been in in a long time and from every aspect - children and adults"

"Friendly staff and freedom for my child to be independent in a safe environment"

"Friendly and welcoming, opportunity for a lone child to meet other children and make friends... sharing meals at lunchtime with other children is lovely"

"We love it here, our family are having so much fun making lots of special memories"

"Good opportunity to meet other children and learn how to interact. Good opportunity for parents to meet other parents"



Short Breaks for children and young people with disabilities:

Grasshoppers for children 5-12yrs - Saturday club and holiday scheme

Buddies and Smile for teenager 12-18yrs - Weekday evenings and holiday scheme

Sessions are run by full time Short Breaks Co-ordinators, with trained sessional workers and supported by volunteers.

Short Breaks aims

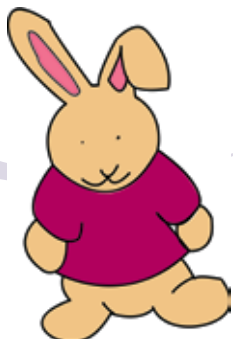
- To improve the social lives of children and teenagers with disabilities
- To increase life skills and independence
- To enhance family wellbeing and relationships

Activities have included days on site in our centres chilling out youth club style, practicing cooking, pamper, gaming, Zumba and yoga sessions to name but a few. We've been on trips out to places like Harry Potter Studio Tour and Walking Tour, farms, theatres, stadium tours, London attractions and theme parks as well as days out in our localities - shopping, bowling, cinema and popular eating places. Our members choose the activities that most interest them and we try to accommodate all their requests and ideas.

Short breaks membership also entitles families to use either of our centres

"Keith feels secure and confident in the Buddies environment and it would leave a big gap in our lives, which would be difficult to fill if he didn't have these short breaks."

Buddies parent



Bunny Hoppers

Support group for families with an under five with a disability or special need, whether diagnosed or not. Meets every other Sunday with tea and cake, play and chat. A chance for families to have their own time in the house together with other families who understand the joys and challenges.

Worthing Grasshoppers



"Grasshoppers has been fantastic. Not only does it offer my child some great opportunities, it also allows us to spend some time concentrating on his siblings as his needs can sometimes overshadow theirs."

"The Springboard Project has been great for K. He is going on day trips which I would struggle to cope with. Thank you for making a huge difference to his school holidays."



65% of Worthing Grasshoppers members felt they were becoming more independent

Crawley Grasshoppers and Buddies



"I really enjoy going to Buddies and doing fun activities with my friends, it gets me out the house and without these activities I would be stuck indoors."

"It's so nice for the boys to spend time away from home doing fun things since neither of them can do "normal" out of school activities, it's a place where they fit in"
Grasshoppers parent

92% of Crawley Grasshoppers child ren reported an increase in their self esteem
(Feeling happy being me)

70% of Crawley Buddies said they felt more able to join in activities now

"He has learnt skills to help with buying food at the shops, travelling on the trains and socialising."



Horsham Grasshoppers
and Buddies



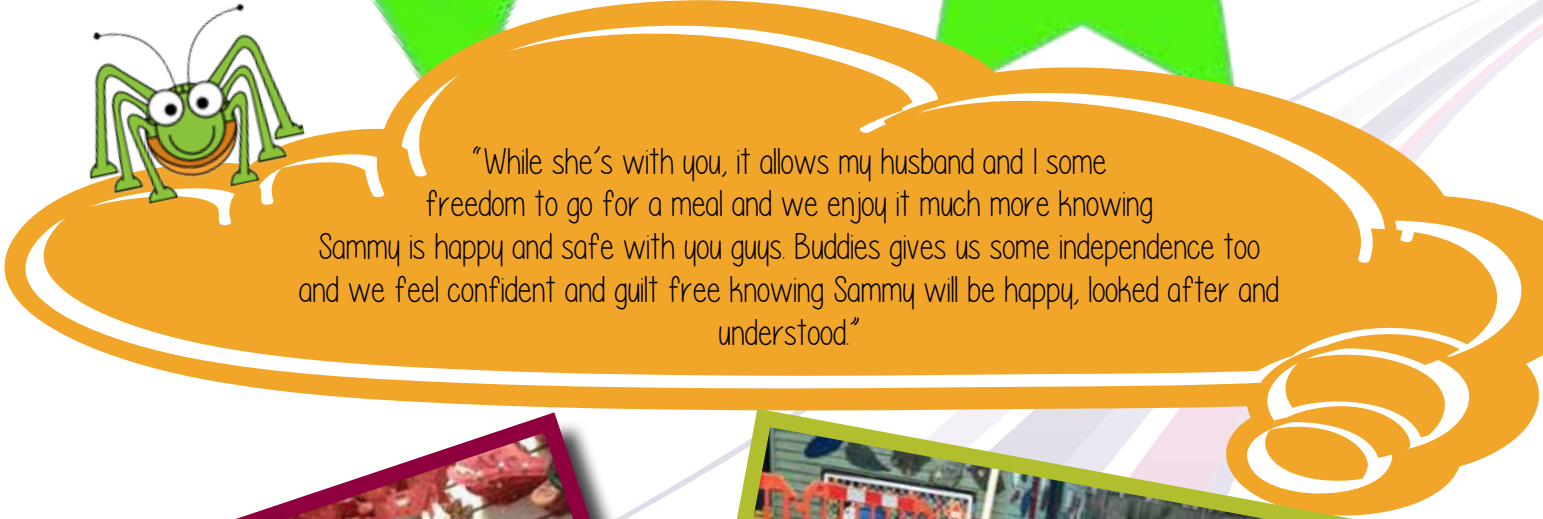
"I'm always happy when I have been to Grasshoppers."



87.5% of Horsham Grasshoppers who responded to our survey reported the Short Break had a positive impact on their family life



73% of Buddies members told us they felt more able to make choices



"While she's with you, it allows my husband and I some freedom to go for a meal and we enjoy it much more knowing Sammy is happy and safe with you guys. Buddies gives us some independence too and we feel confident and guilt free knowing Sammy will be happy, looked after and understood."



Smile (Sutton) 12-18 years



85% of Smile members agreed that they could practise doing things for themselves at Smile sessions

"Activities like this are good because the young people can do things that they'd normally be able to do with their friends, it has a youth club atmosphere."

"Thank you also for all the time and effort you and the other members of staff put in. I know M is one of the more challenging youngsters but we have seen such progress in his development since he has been involved with SMILE. When I think back to how unconfident and timid he was when he first met you and Luke - I wasn't sure how he would cope on his first trip or even if he would be brave enough to get on the minibus! Now he seems to be happy and confident enough to try new challenges and a huge part of that is down to you guys giving him the opportunities to spread his wings (albeit slowly) without having his Mum and Dad around. We are really grateful".



Case studies

Harvey is five years old and has recently transitioned into Grasshoppers from our Bunny Hoppers group. He lives at home with his Mum, Dad and brother. Harvey has Quadriplegic Cerebral Palsy and is a wheelchair user. He attends Ingfield Manor School Monday to Wednesday and St Johns Primary School Thursdays and Fridays, which is the same school as his brother.

At his home visit Harvey's mum said that she hoped that by using our service he would interact with other children, make friends, access activities that they aren't able to as a family, as well as enabling her and her husband to spend time with Harvey's brother.

As Harvey has just transitioned into Grasshoppers, the primary target was for him to attend regularly, making sure that he is happy and the process goes smoothly. This began with an initial home visit to enable Harvey and his family to get to know the Short Breaks Co-ordinator and for them to find out a bit more about Harvey and his individual needs. Since Harvey has started with Grasshoppers, he has been enthusiastically attending regularly and he is very excited every time we see him. Harvey recognises some existing friends from school and has started to form relationships with other children in the group as well as getting to know children from our other Grasshoppers groups on joint sessions.

'Mark is our son, born 12 years ago with a diagnosis of Downs Syndrome. Mark lives at home in Burgess Hill with his parents and two younger sisters; he has been attending The Springboard Project since he was a toddler. We accessed the project on a walk in basis initially; he then became a member of Bunny Hoppers and presently Grasshoppers'.

Mark's parents continued aim is for him to work on his challenging behaviour, to increase his independence, to work on communication skills and to make friends.

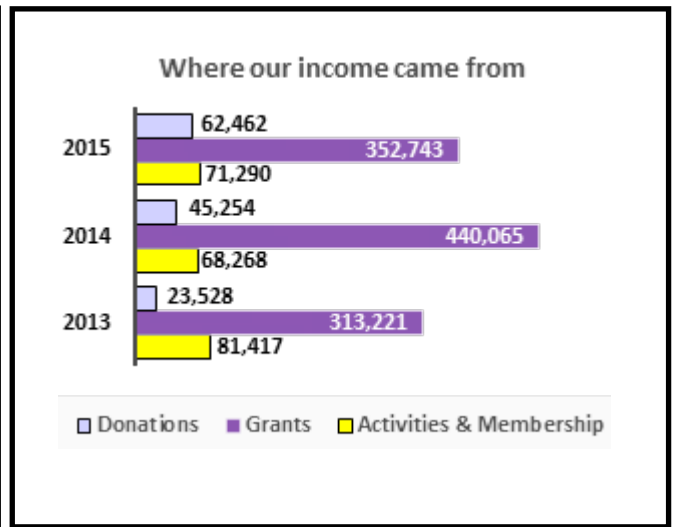
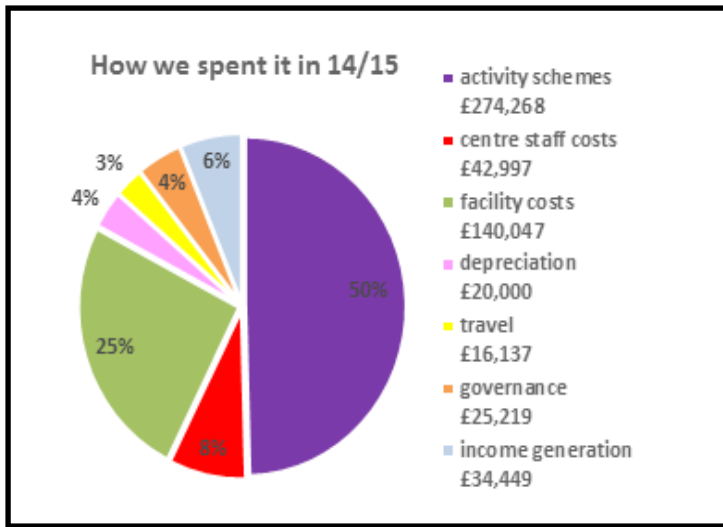
With encouragement Mark has worked towards staying for the full length of a Grasshoppers session and has been able to enjoy some off site trips with the group. This increased independence has enabled positive plans to be in place for a smooth transition to Buddies soon.

Isaac is 16 years old with mild autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. He has been attending the Springboard Project for just over five years. He joined Springboard as a Grasshopper and transitioned through to the Buddies group at age 12. Isaac boards at school from Monday to Thursday evening. Isaac attends Buddies to help improve his social skills has to have the opportunity to take part in new activities he hasn't done before.

Isaac has recently started volunteering within the Springboard Project office as part of his work experience on a Friday morning. His duties include signing our members in, answering the phone and showing visitors around the centre. He said:

"It's really good fun. Great people to work alongside you. Work is really fun, really enjoying it."

Finance facts



A short breaks activity for disabled children costs:
£556 per session

Annual cost for running our minibuses
£3068

Each Springboard house costs
£157 to run per day

Our annual insurance cost
£9992

Short Breaks are proven to enhance family wellbeing, bringing an estimated annual preventative saving (to the public purse) of
£6330 per short breaks group

Thank you to all our supporters!

BBC Children in Need
Crawley Borough Council
Futures for Kids
Hall & Woodhouse Community Chest
Henry Smith Charity
Longley Trust
St James Place Foundation
Saxon Weald Community Scheme
Sussex Community Foundation
Three Oaks Trust
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The Saddlers Company
Sobell Foundation
Sutton Community Fund
Three Rooms Charitable Trust
West Crawley CLC
WSCVYS

FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES & EVENTS ON OUR BEHALF

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Katherine Turner
Tasha Figg
Horsham Referees Association
Su Parrish
Shelley Arms Fun Day
Sutton Borough Mayor's Charity of the Year
Tesco Extra - Horsham
White Stuff Foundation

Collyers 6th Form College Rag Week
Dog & Bacon Fun Day
Headquarters Hair Studio
North Heath Nearly New Sales
RSA Horsham - UK Legacy Team
Springboard Project Charity Ball
Tanbridge House School
Paul Tunnell
Shelley & Glyn Woodage

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Many thanks to all our other donors, supporters and benefactors- Including some who wish to remain anonymous - and are too numerous to mention here

How could you help?

As a voluntary organisation, we rely on and are grateful for so much support. If you're wondering how you could help us, here are just some suggestions - you may have more ideas!

Volunteer your time and skills -	In our short breaks activities with the children and young people or in our centres e.g. DIY and premises maintenance, decorating, admin, publicity, marketing.
Hold a fundraising event -	From a cake sale to a sponsored sky dive - How much fun could you have doing it?!
Join our Ambassadors group -	To support Springboard in fundraising and awareness raising
Get creative -	Paint a mural, plant a border, brighten up our centres.
Minibus maintenance -	Help us keep them clean and in good order
Organise a corporate day -	Could your workplace provide a team to volunteer?
Alert us to funding -	Does the company you work for have a fund for local charities?
Donate -	Funds, equipment, toys, office resources.
Become a trustee -	Do you have expertise that would help steer our organisation?
Leave us a legacy -	Consider remembering us in your will.

To discuss any of these opportunities please contact either:

Vickie Toms -	Service Delivery Manager Horsham - sdmh@springboardproject.com 01403 218888
Su Parrish -	Service Delivery Manager Crawley - sdmc@springboardproject.com 01293 531963

Meet the Springboard Team

Trustees:	Jill Carnie (Chair), Alison Skinner (Treasurer), John Walker Lee, Elaine Jackson, Oscar Holmes, Alan Vallon, Brian O'Hagan and Bill Wilkinson (resigned Dec 2014)
Chief Executive Officer:	Nigel Scott-Dickeson
Service Delivery Managers:	Vickie Toms (Horsham), Su Parrish (Crawley)
Funding and Finance Co-ordinator:	Helen Van Yperen
Short Breaks Co-ordinators:	Luke Woodjetts (Horsham Grasshoppers), Scott Bacon (Horsham Buddies) Tasha Figg (Crawley Grasshoppers), Simon Pearce/Lisa Brown (Crawley Buddies) Jamie Reynolds (Worthing Grasshoppers) Catherine Austin/Stuart Tyler (Smile)
Play and Learn Co-ordinator:	Anna Barnes
Project Assistants:	Christine Huckstepp, Cathy Powling, Maureen Butcher (Horsham) Magda Dias, Nasrin Jamal, Kerry Peters, Lorraine Whiskin, Jo Wood (Crawley)
Housekeepers:	Cathy Powling, Lorraine Bird, Julia Syson

And an army of volunteers who support in too many ways to name in both centres and all our Short Breaks groups.

Thank you all!

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