



ANNUAL REPORT & Financial Statements

Year ended 30 September 2019

Registered Charity: 1172875

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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIR



2018-19 led into our 10th Anniversary. Within these 10 years we evolved from a two-person entity namely Carla and Tom Gill to a charity with a significant reputation for making things happen. It has never been easy and continues to be challenging. *"Enriching the lives of children through play"* is our new mantra and it is more easily understood by others in terms of our purpose and mission.

In our first 10 years East African Playgrounds (now Play Action International) have built 355 playgrounds impacting positively on more than half a million children who otherwise may have suffered inadvertently. Literally thousands of students from around the UK have contributed to this success by helping to fundraise and at the same time learning and appreciating how they can make a difference through voluntary work. We have also helped over 80 young adults and staff find new opportunities contributing to the quality of their well-being.

This year has seen the charity achieve some phenomenal successes. We have partnerships with Save the Children, World Vision, UNICEF and Plan International. These global entities, giants in the charity world, have all recognized the value we add on the ground and the difference we can make through our inclusive and creative solutions. This year we built a staggering 116 playgrounds with 40 % of our programmes running in refugee settlements. As if this were not enough, we won a major award from The Foundation for Social Improvement *"Small Charities Big Impact Award"*. Measuring what we do, and the impact of our work remains an important part of how we work and justifies our spend from the charitable funds we raise.

Sadly, after 10 years Tom Gill, one of our founders and CEO stepped down to enable the charity to evolve and meet the challenges of the next 10 years. Before leaving he helped me to recruit Murielle Maupoint, who without any doubt is leading from the front. Her energy and commitment is second to none. Whilst the future is uncertain for many charities caused by the global pandemic and emerging recession, we remain positive. We have a new name now Play Action International; we have new leadership, and we have a vision that many others support.

Last but most importantly I'd like to thank all of our staff who work relentlessly and volunteers who continue to give their time. As Chair I'd also like to thank trustees for their contributions and in particular Phil Jan who has served 5 years as our Treasurer navigating us through challenging and difficult times. I'd like to welcome Alex Minford, a very experienced trustee and treasurer who takes over from Phil.

We look forward to the next 10 years with immense excitement.

Dr Noorzaman Rashid
Chair of Board of Trustees

WHY PLAY?

We are a small but mighty international development organisation, based in the UK and Uganda, that is passionate about play. We believe that play-based interventions can provide children with immense benefits...



THE BENEFITS OF PLAY

DEVELOPMENT



Play is important for healthy development

Play allows children to use their creativity and imagination while developing their physical, cognitive, and emotional strength

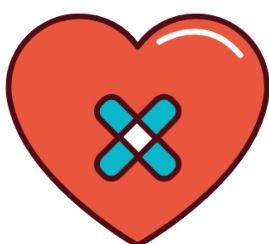
LEARNING

Play makes learning both fun and more effective

When play is used in the classroom, children are more likely to engage with what they are being taught and therefore can retain the information more easily



RECOVERY



Play has the power to help trauma affected children

Play provides children with opportunities to process anger, relieve stress, relax, bond with others, express themselves, overcome challenges and model positive behaviours

1. Child Development

Play is critical to child development, supporting the cognitive, physical, social and emotional well-being of children. Play is especially important during the early years (0-8 years of age), because this is the period in life when the brain develops most rapidly and has a high capacity for change – laying the foundation for health and well-being throughout life. Indeed, play is so important to a child's development that it is enshrined in **Article 31** of the **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child**:

“Every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts”

Yet for many children, their right to play and to reap the developmental advantages associated with play is challenged. Factors such as poverty, war, displacement, child labour, abuse and exploitation can severely limit a child's opportunity for play – further exacerbating the disadvantage they experience and impacting their long-term potential.

2. Play-Based Learning

Play is a hugely effective and sustainable approach to education. Play provides children with a rich context for learning, through which they can make sense of their world. During play children try new things, invent, create, test ideas, explore and discover. Play-based learning has been shown to improve a child's IQ and help them develop a wide range of skills – such as problem solving, language development and social skills – that support academic achievement. Incorporating play in education, especially in environments where educational resources are limited, helps children consolidate, retain and apply knowledge, rather than just absorb information.



3. Trauma & Well-being

Childhood should be a time where children can feel safe to form secure attachments, explore their world and develop healthy foundations for the future. Yet for many children it can be a source of significant trauma.

When a child experiences trauma, their brain changes its structure to enable the child to respond to any future threats. The trauma can impact a child well into their adult future – increasing their potential for disease, depression, anxiety, suicide, addiction, violence and relationship breakdowns as well as reducing their academic and economic potential.

Play has been proven to provide a wealth of therapeutic opportunities, all under the child's control, to process anger, relieve stress, relax, bond with others, express themselves, increase their locus of control, overcome challenges and model positive behaviours. Play is perhaps one of the simplest, most impactful and cost-effective interventions for trauma affected children.

Enriching children's lives through play...

Play is incredibly important for children's development & well-being. This is why everything we do is based on providing safe, child friendly spaces for children to enjoy and sharing our passion with local communities so they can enrich children's lives through play.

HOW WE WORK

Play is super important for children's development & well-being, which is why we develop and deliver a range of innovative and effective play-based child friendly spaces and programmes to enrich children's lives...

Playgrounds

We pride ourselves on being the leading international development playground building not-for-profit organisation in Africa, if not the world! We have worked tirelessly to ensure that our playgrounds meet international safety standards, are fit for purpose, built to last and reflect the community's identity and needs.

Our playgrounds allow children to be themselves and enjoy the rich benefits that play has to offer. Not only do the playgrounds facilitate and promote play opportunities for children, they are a symbol of childhood in the communities they serve and have a far-reaching impact on the communities they are built in, helping to develop positive attitudes towards play at a local level. The schools where our playgrounds are built also report that once a playground is installed, they experience an increase in student enrolment, attendance, and the educational attainment of students.



This year, 40% (46/116) of our playgrounds were installed in early childhood development (ECD) centres and primary schools in refugee settlements and refugee hosting districts across Uganda, including in Bidibidi, the world's second largest refugee settlement. Our work within refugee settlements is vital due to the growing need for children who have experienced trauma to feel safe and make sense of their experiences through play. Our work in the settlements was driven by partnerships with leading INGOs such as UNICEF and World Vision. Partnership work is a highly effective way for us to complement aid provision by maximising our impact and reaching more vulnerable children.

Success stories

We have worked hand in hand with local communities to build 116 playgrounds this year with some phenomenal results.

In the 20 UNICEF schools we installed playgrounds in during 2018-19, we saw an average enrolment increase of 24%, and at some schools it was significantly more. Getting more children to attend school and stay in school is the first step to a child realising their full right to a quality education.

This has been reiterated by parents at Buwenge Primary School, with one parent saying:

"The playground has helped the community in so many ways. The children now have a place to play and do not loiter around. Even when your child gets lost, you don't worry so much because you will find her at the school playing".

The headteacher from Walukuba West Primary School, where we built our first-ever playground, said:

"It has attributed to a lot of positives as far as a child's learning is concerned. Because when the children are out, they have to play and relax their minds, and as they refresh and come back to class, they absorb a lot of information... Personally I think children join this school because of the playground."

Our plans for the future...

It is not logistically possible or cost effective to install playgrounds in every location where child friendly spaces and play opportunities are desperately needed. To ensure wider access to play facilities, over the next 24 months we will be developing new, mobile play solutions as well as indoor games and play materials to complement our playground construction.

Educational Play

We tailor our educational play programmes for teachers, caregivers and parents...



Play is vital for a child's learning and understanding of the world. By providing training opportunities and creative play sessions, individuals and communities can better understand the importance of play in childhood. The skills and knowledge gained from these sessions allow for play activities to continue in the home, in class and in other environments, long after we have gone. We specialise in teacher training – helping teachers to incorporate play in the classroom to complement their teaching methodologies focused on how to use the playgrounds as a learning tool. The playground is a rich learning

resource, and it allows teachers to expand their teaching potential and bring play to the heart of the ECD or school centre.

In the past year alone, we have shared our learnings with teaching staff at 116 ECD centres and primary schools enabling them to inject the power of play into their teaching.

After an assessment at 40 Primary Schools who received the Educational Play Programmes Training the schools reported the following:

- 95% (38/40) schools reported a significant change in their educator's teaching styles
- 90% (36/40) found the training interesting
- 65% (26/40) found the training fun
- 87.5% (35/40) found the training educational
- 70% (28/40) felt that they had learnt the most about how to apply interactive teaching
- 82.5% (33/40) felt that they had learnt the most about how to use the playground as a learning tool
- 22.5% (9/40) felt that they had learnt the most about classroom management
- 22.5% (9/40) felt that they had learnt the most about children's motivation

Teacher Okot from the same school said:

"The session about playground has inspired positive behaviour and discipline both in class and outside. It was so marvellous".

A teacher from World View Primary School said:

"Teachers were willing to leave rote learning and adopt play-based learning."

Our plans for the future...

Feedback from our teachers overwhelmingly states that they want to continue enhancing their teaching skills through increased training and support. We will develop more intensive training to address this need as well as explore options for on-going coaching. Additionally, we are keen to expand our provision of training to support children with specific needs such as girls and those affected by trauma.

Vocational Training

By training local young people to be our builders and welders of the future, we have an ethical and sustainable model...

In Uganda, up to 85% of young people are unemployed and there is a growing demand for vocational training. Through our vocational training programmes, we provide opportunities for young adults to gain a nationally recognised qualification whilst learning workplace skills.

We provide vocational training for welding fabrication and catering through our highly skilled and qualified in-country team. Giving young people not only the knowledge of the trade but also transferable workplace skills, provides hope and inspiration for future success.



Play Action International has worked with SALVE International, a local NGO who works with street connected children, to provide appropriate apprenticeship and internship schemes for street connected young people. We deliver the practical apprenticeship programme and SALVE International supports the apprentice's psycho-social needs, including counselling, housing, and money management during the apprenticeship.



Matthew had lived on the streets for several years after a very traumatic past, including time as child soldier. SALVE International had been supporting him and after a period of rehabilitation identified him as a potential candidate for our apprenticeship pilot. Matthew successfully completed the scheme and has now moved on to further education.

Thanks to grants from the Marr-Munning Trust and the Geoff Herrington Foundation, during the year we worked with 6 apprentices and 5 interns to provide them welding qualifications and work skills. All apprentices took their exams at the end of March and successfully passed.

Here's how our programme impacts the lives of our young apprentices...

"The programme has changed my life, I now have a sense of belonging and am able to feed well. It has also changed my mindset – I now think of developing as a person, for example I am planning to construct a house in my village"

"From the salary I now earn I have been able to buy myself some valuables like bicycle, a bed, sofa and can pay rent and buy food. I have been able to acquire grinding and sanding skills. I thank EAP because I now think like a man and cannot even think of going back to the street."

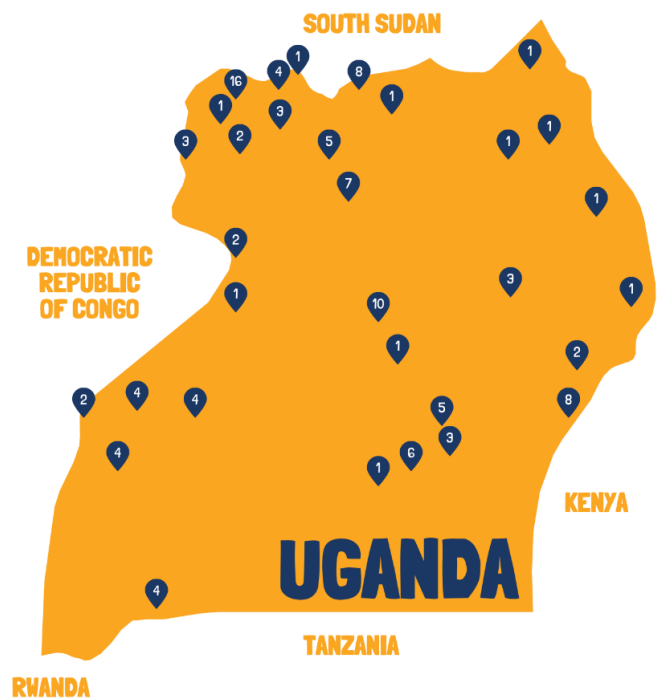
Our plans for the future...

The apprenticeship scheme provides invaluable skills, knowledge and qualifications to help young people start their own business or secure a job employment. We plan to expand the scheme to offer qualifications in woodwork and to recruit more women into the programme.

10 HIGHLIGHTS FROM OUR 10TH YEAR

This year saw Play Action International reach our 10th birthday and boy did we make it count. Here are a few of our highlights...

1. 28,135 children gained access to a safe space to play
2. 3,000+ parents and caregivers received training on the importance of play
3. 1,000+ teachers received training play-based teaching methodologies
4. We built 116 playgrounds
5. We worked across 32 districts in Uganda
6. Suzie Rees awarded 'Fundraiser of the Year'
7. We hosted our first ever gala dinner to celebrate our 10-year anniversary
8. We were awarded 2 grants from DFID
9. Our amazing university students raised over £500,000 to support our work
10. Our Founder, Tom, embarked on a new adventure



Awarded 2 DFID Grants

This year we were over the moon to be successful in securing not one but 2 major grants from the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID). This is a huge milestone for Play Action International – validating the quality and impact of our work in East Africa.

UK Aid Direct

A 3-year grant, in partnership with Save the Children, to use playgrounds as a tool to improve access to early years education in Uganda's refugee settlements.



UK Aid Match

A 2-year grant that will see us working in Bidibidi, the world's second largest refugee settlement, to give 8,015 children greater access to early years education, through the installation of playgrounds and play based learning training for local educators.



Suzie wins the Fundraiser of the Year Award 2019

We were thrilled that our Grants Manager, Suzie Rees was recognised with the highest award within the sector. Suzie is not only a talented fundraiser who established our grant income from nothing but also an incredible team player who works tirelessly to create new funding opportunities for the organisation.

"International Development is extremely hard and what Suzie has achieved is breath-taking."

Nominations & Elections Committee
Institute of Fundraising



International Volunteering

Each year we work with UK Universities and their RAG Societies (Raise & Give) and Volunteering Departments to provide students with life-changing volunteering opportunities. Our offering is unique – the opportunity to spend up to a month in Uganda, supporting our local team to build 11 school playgrounds and embarking on adventure activities that support local communities and conservation work.



This year we saw a record-breaking number of students joining our volunteering projects with 431 students raising an incredible £500,605 to support our work.



A huge thank you to our Summer Project Officers: **Sophie Cordery, Shannon Gunning, Tal Shalson & Ruby Stock**, all of whom helped to make these programmes so successful.



A New Adventure for Our Founder



After 10 incredible years, one of our Founders, Tom Gill, bid a fond farewell to all our fabulous supporters, beneficiaries, and staff. Tom was the driving force behind the organisation, using his determination, 'can do' attitude and clear vision to ensure children could have a safe place to play.

In 10 years, Tom has led the organisation to become an award-winning charity, as well as supporting the development of staff to become award winning themselves and provided employment opportunities for over 100 Ugandan staff members. Under Tom's leadership, 532,500 children (that is 6 Wembley stadiums full of children) now have access to safe, fun playgrounds.



We thank Tom for his dedication and passion to transform the organisation from an idea to a reality that has impacted so many lives. We will continue to build on Tom's vision as we journey into the next chapter of our play story.

"It has been a privilege to have been supported by so many wonderful people over the past 10 years. Thousands of people have joined the Play Action International family over the past decade and it is the combined efforts of our supporters, volunteers, trustees, staff and interns in the UK and Uganda that have given me the chance to live out the dream Carla and I had as bright eyed students in our early twenties. I could never have expected that the organisation would have done so much and impacted so many people. I am extremely excited to see the organisation grow and expand our work across the African continent in the coming years. I would like to say a big thank you to you all for making everything Play Action International has achieved possible. We have a fantastic team and under the leadership of Murielle, Carla, David and Noorzaman the future is very exciting."

Love Tom x

LOOKING BACK

Play Action International started in Uganda with a simple objective - to provide child-friendly spaces for children to play in and to promote the importance of play for children's' development and well-being...

Our concept was unique and as communities began to recognise the impact of our work, the demand for our playgrounds and play programmes began to grow exponentially. Never did we ever imagine that in just 10 short years we would achieve so much.

2009 – 2014

From the outset, our focus was on delivering fun, high quality, durable and impactful playgrounds that were tailored to the individual needs of each community.



We were determined to use locally sourced materials and local tradespeople to ensure an ethical and sustainable basis for our work. With demand for our playgrounds rapidly increasing, we needed a way to increase our manufacturing and construction capacity whilst ensuring we retained the highest quality standards in the sector. To address this issue, we launched our apprenticeship programme, which due to its highly practical content, enabled us to train apprentices quicker and to a higher standard than the local vocational training centres. Today, the apprenticeship programme continues to run successfully, partnering with SALVE International to offer our apprenticeship opportunities to former street-connected young people.

Our learning curve was extremely steep in these early years. With each new playground build, we further refined our approach to community consultation and sensitisation as well as playground design and construction, giving us an excellent foundation for growth.

2015 – 2019

In 2015, we undertook the most comprehensive evaluation of our achievements to date. Not only did we discover the positive impact the playgrounds were having on children's well-being and learning, we also found that some schools were using the playgrounds as an educational resource. With several former-teachers on our team and a clear understanding of the importance of play for children's learning and development, we set about developing our Educational Play and Teacher Training Programmes that teach caregivers and teachers how to utilise play within their classrooms and ECD centres (and beyond) to aid children's learning and development.



In this same period, millions of refugees were welcomed by Uganda. The humanitarian and disaster response community set about developing the infrastructure to support refugees and their host communities to access education, healthcare and other social services. Child friendly spaces were suddenly required across numerous refugee resettlement camps. With no other organisation providing high-quality playgrounds in Uganda, the demand for our playground building model and educational play programme increased. Thus, started our incredible partnership with UNICEF, World Vision, Plan International and Save the Children, in Uganda, to ensure child refugees could access a safe space to learn, develop and heal through play.

We are proud of what we have achieved in the last 10 years and are committed to continue to grow, learn and develop our programmes to ensure many more vulnerable children can access play during their childhood and beyond.

OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

Over the next 10 years, we want even more children to have access to child friendly play spaces and a range of other innovative products and services that can enhance their learning, development and well-being...

To enable us to do this we have 5 strategic priorities:

1. To revise our brand & positioning

As East African Playgrounds, the organisation's positioning was centred on providing quality, safe play equipment to support child development. But we have always been so much more than this. We promote the importance of play as an essential part of childhood, child development and indeed, life. Through the power of play, we demonstrated that we could reduce school dropouts, prevent child labour, increase educational attainment, heal trauma and provide the foundations for children to thrive in challenging and adverse environments. Under this name, we were also geographically restricted to working East Africa alone despite having ambitions to work elsewhere. To this end, we have developed a new brand identity – Play Action International - to enable us to have a broader market appeal and better position ourselves within the humanitarian and international development sector.



2. To develop a culture based on PLAY

We want **PLAY** to be at the heart of everything we do – from how we advertise roles, and the tone of our grant applications to how we deliver our programmes. The way we do what we do should radiate playfulness, creativity, curiosity and resourcefulness and should champion learning, growing, sharing, helping, laughter and authenticity – the same values and qualities that are exhibited by the children who have the opportunity to play and enjoy their childhood.



3. To expand our operations to 10 countries

We are excited by the new partnerships we are developing and opportunities that we are tapping into to work across Africa. We are actively developing partnerships in Tanzania, Kenya and South Sudan that we hope to bring to fruition in the next 18-24 months. We are also keen to explore developing play-based offerings within the UK so that we can provide a local impact to vulnerable children here too.



4. To enhance our systems

To support our rapid growth, we need an effective infrastructure and an experienced, peak performing team - whilst ensuring we retain the heart and soul of the organisation we love. Key areas that we will be urgently addressing over the next 12 months are:

- **Safeguarding**

We will review our processes and procedures to ensure we deliver our work with the highest standards of safeguarding for our beneficiaries, communities and staff.

- **Financial Management**

We will invest in a new accounting systems and finance staff to ensure we have accurate, timely financial data to effectively monitor and forecast the financials of the organisation.

- **Marketing**

We will develop an in-house marketing and communications capacity to build our supporter base, maximise donations and create greater brand awareness within the sector and to support the successful delivery of our forthcoming UK Aid Match campaign.

- **Fundraising**

We will invest in a new CRM system to provide greater donor care and supporter stewardship.

- **Staffing**

We will make key appointments to support financial management, marketing and communications, programme development and fundraising.

5. To develop new programmes & products

Our Educational Play and Teacher Training programmes provide a fantastic foundation, from which over the next 24 months we can innovate further play based programmes that support children's education, health, well-being, and gender equality outcomes.

We also recognise that in Uganda, we have a valuable manufacturing resource that is not operating at full capacity. Over the next 12-18 months we will be developing new products to be manufactured in our workshop including indoor games and play equipment, educational materials and facilities to improve hygiene in play spaces.

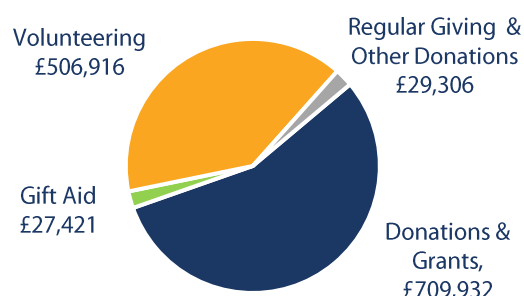
Based on our achievements over the past 10 years, we know that our potential over the next decade is immense. With a robust infrastructure, strong governance and the passion, vision and energy of our growing team, we are confident we can further develop and expand our unique offering and in doing so provide life enriching opportunities for at least another 500,000 vulnerable children in that time!

FINANCIAL REVIEW

The financial review is for the consolidated accounts of our operations in the UK and Uganda. Due to the financial impact of COVID-19 on the charity's revenue streams and the urgent need to conserve resources, the Charity Commission granted the organisation dispensation from a full annual audit for the year ending 2019 and a filing extension to 30 October 2020.

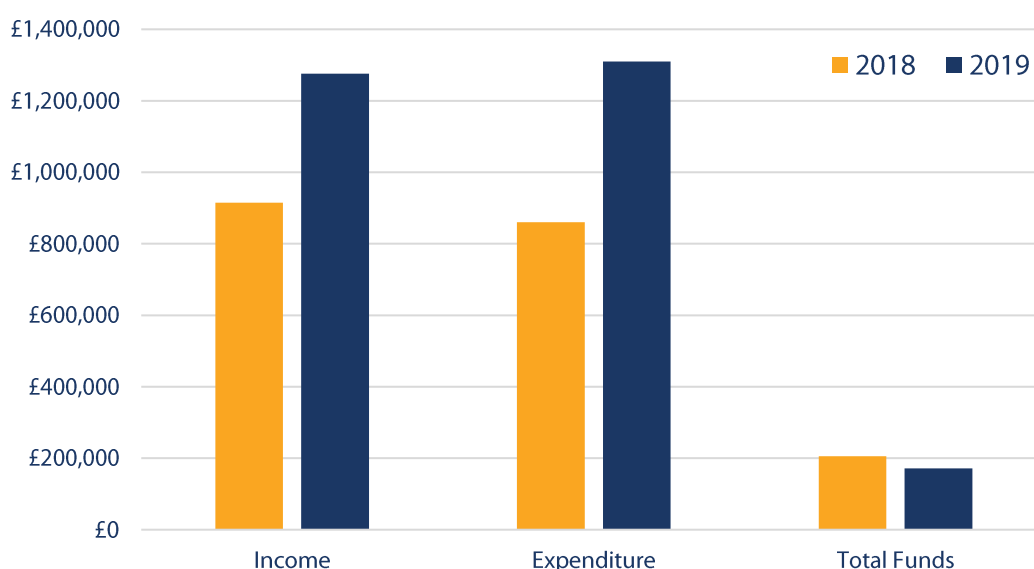
Play Action International's total income for the year ending 30 September 2019 was £1,275,854 (2018: £915,099). In such a competitive climate, it is a testament to the innovation and impact of our work and the resourcefulness of our team that we were able to increase our income in the year by 39%. Most notably, we were able to increase our restricted income from £376,938 (2018) to £648,343. This massive, 72% increase in restricted funding, enabled us to significantly increase our charitable activities in Uganda. Notably, we were able to achieve this increase our income, whilst also reducing our expenditure on raising funds by 2%, to £96,091 (2018: £98,207).

Sources of Income 2019



Total expenditure increased from £860,431 (2018) to £1,310,137 over the course of the year - of which 93% was spent on charitable activities. Compared against our performance in 2018, we were able to spend 59% more (£441,822) on our charitable activities, with a total of £1,214,046 (2018: £762,224) spent on our play and apprentice programmes in the year. That equates to thousands more children being able to enjoy the wide-ranging benefits of play for their education, well-being, and over-all development.

2018 & 2019 Comparative Overview



The investments we made in our operations meant that we ended the financial year 2019 with a net deficit of £34,283. This reduced our total funds carried forward to £171,625 (2018: £205,908). Of the total funds carried forward, £74,148 were held as restricted funds, which are committed funds that will be spent on specific programmes in the coming years.

RESERVES POLICY

The Board of Trustees has agreed a reserves policy and the Audit Committee reviews the associated risks on a regular basis.

Play Action International is committed to the prudent use of funds it receives as soon as is practical to achieve its mission whilst recognising the need to have reserves in place to ensure the continuation of our operations in the event of an unforeseen downturn. Using the budget, the board determines on an annual basis the level of unrestricted reserves required to meet the organisation's liabilities and the appropriate funds required to continue providing its services.

It is the policy of the trustees to maintain the level of unrestricted funds at a range of £200,000 to £220,000 which represents three months of the charity's anticipated working capital needs. As at 30 September 2019, unrestricted reserves stood at £97,477 which trustees recognise is significantly below our stated target level. Trustees are undertaking an urgent review of the charity's cost-recovery model and exploring alternative modes of income generation to ensure effective costing of programmes and raise additional unrestricted funds to protect the charity from unexpected financial risks.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The trustees have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to manage those risks. The trustees consider that they have taken adequate steps to ensure compliance with this duty.

The Senior Management Team and Board of Trustees maintain a pro-active approach to identifying, managing and mitigating risks to the charity and its operations. A risk register is maintained, which identifies significant risks, along with the probability of such risks occurring, the likely level of impact, together with mitigating action to reduce the charity's exposure as appropriate. Particular attention is given to those risks having the potential to have the greatest impact on the charity such as safeguarding, reputation, finance, funding, international partnerships and health and safety. Procedures to mitigate other identified significant risks are implemented covering areas such as staff retention, erosion of values, mission drift and efficiency. Operational risks are managed daily at the working level, whilst strategic risks are reviewed at least quarterly, ensuring mitigation actions are progressing to plan and risks are consistently being minimised. This is formally presented to the trustees and assessed on a semi-annual basis.

INVESTMENT POLICY

The Board of Trustees, having regard to the liquidity requirements of operating the charity, have kept reserves in an interest-bearing deposit account to provide financial security.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

In all matters, the trustees have had due regard for the guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit.

THANK YOU!

Our work is only possible because of the generous support and belief of so many different people and organisations. In particular, we would like to make special mention to the following funders and organisations:

GRANT FUNDERS

- Borrows Charitable Trust
- Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust
- Busia Area Communities Foundation
- Cotton on Foundation
- Department for International Development
- Didymus
- Eleanor Rathbone Trust
- Geoff Herrington Foundation
- Hasluck Charitable Trust
- Henry Van Straubenzee Memorial Trust
- Kisubi High School
- Marr-Munning Trust
- Morel Charitable Trust
- Souter Charitable Trust
- Stella Symons Charitable Trust
- Sterry Family Foundation
- The Westcroft Trust
- The World We Want Foundation
- Youth with a Mission

UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

Play Action International was founded by passionate students who wanted to make a difference. Through our early beginnings, we have developed an extensive network of amazing university partnerships led by passionate students and staff members. We are very grateful to everyone involved, from those leading the charge to our passionate students who come out to Uganda.



- Aberdeen RAG
- Bath RAG
- Birmingham RAG
- Bournemouth RAG
- Bristol RAG
- Buckingham University
- Canterbury Christ Church University
- Cardiff University
- Coventry RAG
- DUCK
- Exeter RAG
- Falmouth RAD
- Hertfordshire University
- Imperial RAG
- Kent RAG
- Leeds Beckett
- Leicester University
- Loughborough RAG
- Manchester University
- Newcastle RAG
- Northampton University
- Nottingham Karnival
- Nottingham Trent University
- Plymouth RAG
- Reading RAG
- Roehampton University
- Royal Holloway University
- Southampton RAG
- Southbank RAG
- UEA RAG
- University of East Anglia
- University of West England
- Warwick RAG
- York RAG
- York St Johns

NGO & GOVERNMENT PARTNERS



Working in partnership with other organisations & government departments has many benefits to organisations like ourselves – enhancing our operational abilities and most importantly, providing the best opportunities for our beneficiaries. We thank the following partners for helping us to deliver our programmes:

- BUACOFÉ
- Ministry of Education & Sports (Uganda)
- Office of the Prime Minister (Uganda)
- PLAN International (Uganda)
- SALVE International
- UNICEF
- Save the Children (Uganda)
- World Vision (Uganda)
- Youth with a Mission

OUR GOVERNANCE

East African Playgrounds became a charitable incorporated organisation (CIO) in April 2017. We changed our name to Play Action International in August 2020. The charity is governed under its Constitution which was last amended in July 2020.

CHARITY OBJECTS

The objects of our charity are to advance in life and relieve the needs of disadvantaged children and young people in Africa and throughout the world through:

- a) The provision of educational play facilities, resources, activities and training programmes provided in the interest of social welfare, designed to improve their conditions of life; and
- b) Providing support and activities which develop their skills, capacity, and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature and responsible individuals

OUR BOARD & COMMITTEES

The governing body of Play Action International is the Board of Trustees. Trustees serve an initial term of three years and are eligible for reappointment. Play Action International's Trustees ensure that the charity carries out its aims and objectives for public benefit. The Board is responsible for overseeing the governance of all Play Action International's work and delegates the day to day management to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Senior Management Team (SMT). The Trustees remain collectively responsible for the charity.

In 2019, the Board met quarterly. At each meeting Trustees reviewed the charity's overall progress against agreed annual objectives, the financial position against the approved budget and organisational risks based on reports from the CEO, SMT and Treasurer.

The Board has delegated specific responsibilities to two sub-committees, as detailed below, whose membership is appointed by the Board and who also meet quarterly. The Finance Committee is responsible for ensuring effective oversight of the charity's financial position – ensuring that financial risks are mitigated, and charity assets are used in the most effective manner possible. The Audit & Risk Committee is responsible for ensuring the charity manages risks and maintains strong internal controls. The committee receives updates in key risks that could affect the charity's operations including safeguarding, fundraising, finance, data protection and HR.

RECRUITMENT, INDUCTION & TRAINING OF TRUSTEES

When recruiting new Trustees, the Board gives regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO with a particular focus on key areas including financial management, safeguarding, legal, education and international development. We regularly review the skills, expertise and contribution of our Trustees to identify and gaps and development needs.

Play Action International operates an equal opportunities and diversity policy and encourages applications from diverse backgrounds to reflect the nature of our work and our primary beneficiaries. Trustees are appointed following open promotion of vacancies. Interviews are conducted by the Chair and CEO, with input from other Trustees as required. New Trustees complete and sign a declaration of interest, anti-bribery policy, fit and proper person's declaration, Play Action International's code of conduct, safeguarding policy and also undertake an Enhanced DBS check.

All new Trustees receive a structured induction programme that covers all aspects of the role, an overview of the organisation and safeguarding training. Trustees receive a comprehensive induction pack that includes copies of the charity's constitution, safeguarding policy, code of conduct, strategy, budget, previous year's annual accounts and minutes of the Board's previous four meetings.

REPORTED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

During this financial year no conflicts of interests were reported by Trustees.

KEY MANAGEMENT REMUNERATION

Play Action International runs a very lean Senior Management Team (SMT) comprising of the Country Director for Uganda and CEO. The salaries SMT staff are based on the same approach we use for all employees. All salaries are reviewed annually by the charity Board of Trustees who decide on the level of remuneration to be awarded. We plan to undertake a review of employee salaries and benefits in the UK and Uganda in 2020, to ensure that our salaries are commensurate with comparable charities.

PLAY ACTION INTERNATIONAL IN UGANDA

Play Action International operates in Uganda as East African Playgrounds (NGO registration number 9716).

OUR MANAGEMENT

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dr Noorzaman Rashid (Chair)

Phil Jan (Treasurer)

Rob Taylor

Tana Parker (appointed 21 October 2018)

Anuraag Parashar (appointed 19 January 2020)

Alex Minford (appointed 19 July 2020)

Daniel Sanders (resigned 2 September 2019)

Marc Wileman (resigned 18 January 2020)

Fiona Moyes (resigned 12 February 2020)

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Murielle Maupoint

REGISTERED OFFICE & PRINCIPAL ADDRESS

Challenge House, Sherwood Drive, Bletchley, MK 3 6DP

INDEPENDENT EXAMINERS

Torr Waterfield

Park House

37 Clarence Street

Leicester

LE1 3RW

BANKERS

The Co-operative Bank

PO Box 101

1 Balloon Street

Manchester

M60 4EP

CHARITY NUMBER

1172875

(previously registered as 1129244)

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

The trustees are responsible for preparing the Report of the Trustees and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales, the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed, requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of the affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charity for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of the trust deed. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the charity and financial information included on the charity's website. Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on 25th October 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

Dr Noorzaman Rashid
Chair of Board of Trustees

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF PLAY ACTION INTERNATIONAL

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Play Action International ("the Charity") for the year ended 30 September 2019.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the Act and, in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent Examiner's Statements

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Mark Andrew Torr
Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
25th October 2020

For and on behalf of
Torr Waterfield
Park House
37 Clarence Street
Leicester
LE1 3RW

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

For the year ended 30 September 2019

		Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Year to 30/09/19 Total Funds £	Year to 01/10/18 Total Funds £
	Note				
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Income & Endowments from:					
Donations & legacies	2	625,232	648,343	1,273,575	912,064
Charitable activities		-	-	-	-
Other trading activities	3	-	-	-	235
Investments	4	622	1,509	2,131	1,947
Other	5	148	-	148	853
Total incoming resources		626,002	649,852	1,275,854	915,099
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds	6	96,091	-	96,091	98,207
Charitable activities					
Play & apprentice programmes	6	602,829	611,217	1,214,046	762,224
Total resources expended		698,920	611,217	1,310,137	860,431
NET INCOME / (DEFICIT)		(72,918)	38,635	(34,283)	54,668
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		170,395	35,513	205,908	151,240
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		97,477	74,148	171,625	205,908

BALANCE SHEET

As at 30 September 2019

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	30/09/19 Total Funds £	01/10/18 Total Funds £
FIXED ASSETS					
Tangible assets	10	62,901	-	62,901	41,615
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	11	24,040	-	24,040	18,435
Cash at bank & in hand		26,363	74,148	100,511	279,701
		50,403	74,148	124,551	298,136
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within 1 year	12	(15,827)	-	(15,827)	(133,843)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		34,576	74,148	108,724	164,293
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		97,477	74,148	171,625	205,908
NET ASSETS		97,477	74,148	171,625	205,908
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY	14				
Unrestricted funds				97,477	170,395
Restricted funds				74,148	35,513
TOTAL FUNDS				171,625	205,908

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees on 25th October 2020 and were signed on its behalf by:

Dr Noorzaman Rashid
Chair of Board of Trustees

Philip Jan, FCA
Treasurer

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

For the year ended 30 September 2019

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, and in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102), and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity is a public benefit entity as defined in FRS 102.

The Statement of Financial Activities and Balance Sheet consolidate the financial statements of the charity and its Ugandan operation. The Ugandan operation, which is structured as a non-profit membership organisation in Uganda, prepares separate, independently audited financial statements for the year ending 30 September, which are available on request.

Fund accounting

Restricted funds can only be used for restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of trustees.

Incoming resources

All incoming resources are included on the Statement of Financial Activities when the charity is legally entitled to the income, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received, and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy.

In the case of performance related grants or long-term contract income, income entitlement is considered to be conditional upon delivery of a specified level of service. Income is therefore recognised to the extent that the charity has delivered the service or activity. The expenditure incurred to date is used as a reasonable estimate or approximation of the charity's performance and so income entitlement. Any such income not recognised in the year will be carried forward as deferred income and is included in liabilities in the balance sheet to reflect the matching of such income with future activities.

Resources expended

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all costs related to the category.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charity to raise funds for its charitable purposes and comprises the direct costs of fundraising, costs for fundraising events and promotions, the staff in these areas and an appropriate allocation of support costs.

Charitable expenditure includes costs incurred in the furtherance of its charitable objectives, in addition to costs of recruiting and selecting volunteers for the volunteer programmes and an appropriate allocation of support costs.

Support costs include UK staff, office, administrative costs and finance costs, as well as governance costs.

Governance costs are those costs related to the governance of the charity as opposed to the day-to-day management of the charity's activities. Included within this category are independent examiner costs and trustee expenses.

Support costs are allocated to expenditure purpose heading on the basis of the full-time equivalent number of staff contributing towards each purpose.

Taxation

The charity is exempt from tax on its charitable activities.

Operating leases

Rental payments under operating leases are charged as expenditure as incurred over the term of the lease. The charity does not have any assets held under finance lease.

Tangible fixed assets

Expenditure of a capital nature costing more than £1,000 in the UK or more than UGX 1 million in Uganda is capitalised at cost. Items below these thresholds are expensed as incurred.

Fixed assets are stated at cost less accumulated depreciation. Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its useful economic life:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| • Office equipment and motor vehicles | 12.5% on cost and 20% on cost |
| • Tools, equipment, fixtures and fittings | 12.5% on cost |

Other assets and liabilities

Debtors and creditors are stated at the settlement amount after any applicable discounts. Cash and bank deposits are stated at the cash amount.

Deferred income relates to the timing differences between donations received in respect of performance related grants or long term contract income and the recognition of income relating thereto in the Statement of Financial Activities based on the income recognition accounting policy outlined above.

Foreign currencies

Assets and liabilities in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rates of exchange ruling at the balance sheet date. Transactions in foreign currencies are translated into sterling at the rate of exchange ruling at the date of transaction. Exchange differences are taken into account through the Statement of Financial Activities.

Foreign exchange forward contracts are included on the balance sheet at their fair value and realised and unrealised gains (or losses) are credited / (debited) to the Statement of Financial Activities.

2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS & LEGACIES

			Year to 30/09/19 Total Funds £	Year to 01/10/18 Total Funds £
	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £		
Institutional donations & grants	61,589	648,343	709,932	293,637
Gift aid	27,421	-	27,421	42,627
Volunteer fundraising & contributions to volunteer participation costs	506,916	-	506,916	543,470
Regular giving & other donations	29,306	-	29,306	32,330
	625,232	648,343	1,273,575	912,064

Institutional grants and donations of £5,000 and above in the year ended 30 September 2019, and included in the above, are as follows:

	Year to 30/09/19 £
UNICEF	317,288
World Vision	224,124
The World We Want Foundation	50,000
Busia Area Communities Foundation	14,887
Plan International Uganda	10,193
Henry Van Straubenzee Memorial Trust	10,000
Marr-Munning Trust	8,000
Kisubi High School	7,552
Cotton on Foundation	6,998
Borrows Charitable Trust	6,000
Youth with a Mission	5,726

3. INCOME FROM OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES

	Year to 30/09/19 £	Year to 01/10/18 £
Sale of merchandise	-	235

4. INVESTMENT INCOME

	Year to 30/09/19 £	Year to 01/10/18 £
Interest receivable	2,131	1,947

5. OTHER INCOME

	Year to 30/09/19 £	Year to 01/10/18 £
Income from asset disposal & other income	148	853

6. EXPENDITURE

	Direct costs £	Allocation of support costs £	Year to 30/09/19 Total £	Year to 01/10/18 Total £
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds	19,842	76,249	96,091	98,207
Charitable activities				
Play & apprentice programmes	1,029,504	184,542	1,214,046	762,224
	1,049,346	260,791	1,310,137	860,431

Direct costs include foreign exchange gains recognised during the year of £7,023 (2018: £117)

7. SUPPORT COSTS

	Year to 30/09/19 £	Year to 01/10/18 £
UK Staff costs	216,658	215,772
Management & administration costs	31,895	24,512
Charity running costs	11,201	12,623
Governance costs	1,037	1,247
	260,791	254,154

	Year to 30/09/19 £	Year to 01/10/18 £
GOVERNANCE COSTS		
Independent examiner's remunerations		
Examination services	900	810
Trustee expenses	137	437
	1,037	1,247

Support costs are allocated to expenditure purpose headings on the basis of the number of full-time equivalent staff contributing towards each purpose.

8. STAFF COSTS

	Year to 30/09/19 £	Year to 01/10/18 £
Wages & salaries	311,682	279,550
Social security costs	24,979	22,953
Pension costs	4,474	3,146
	341,135	305,649

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

	Year to 30/09/19	Year to 01/10/18
UK – Management	2	2
UK – Administration & support	7	6
Uganda	63	51
	72	59

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

The Chief Executive Officer (“CEO”) is considered to be the key management of the charity. Murielle Maupoint was CEO in September 2019 and remuneration paid to her during the year was £6,183. Prior to the appointment of Murielle Maupoint, the key management of the Charity were the Chief Executive Officer, Tom Gill, who resigned from the charity in August 2019 and the Managing Director, Carla Powell. Total remuneration of £84,219 was paid during the year to Tom Gill and Carla Powell (2018: £79,039).

9. TRUSTEES’ REMUNERATION & BENEFITS

The trustees do not receive any remuneration for their services. Trustees are re-imbursed for their travel expenses in attending trustee meetings. Travel costs amounting to £137 (2018: £437) were re-imbursed to 2 trustees (2018: 4).

10. TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS

	Office equipment & motor vehicles £	Tools, equipment, fixtures & fittings £	Totals £
COST			
At 2 October 2018	41,553	27,108	68,661
Additions	1,341	26,439	27,780
Disposals	-	-	-
At 30 September 2019	42,894	53,547	96,441
DEPRECIATION			
At 2 October 2018	19,865	7,181	27,046
Charge for the year	3,386	3,108	6,494
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	-
At 30 September 2019	23,251	10,289	33,540
NET BOOK VALUE			
At 30 September 2019	19,643	43,258	62,901
	21,688	19,927	41,615

11. DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30/09/19 £	01/10/18 £
Other debtors	24,040	17,956
Derivative asset	-	479
	24,040	18,435

12. CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	30/09/19 £	01/10/18 £
Trade creditors	4,276	19,425
Deferred income – restricted	-	97,909
Accrued expenses	6,036	11,547
Taxation & social security	5,515	4,962
	15,827	133,843

13. OBLIGATIONS UNDER OPERATING LEASES

At the balance sheet date, the total future minimum lease payments under non-cancellable operating leases in respect of leases for land and buildings were:

	30/09/19 £	01/10/18 £
Within one year	3,025	3,300
Within two to five years	-	2,750
After five years	-	-
	3,025	6,050

The above operating lease commitment relates solely to the property lease entered into for the charity's registered office in the UK.

14. CHARITY FUNDS

	At 02/10/18 £	Income £	Expenditure £	At 30/09/19 £
Restricted funds				
Community play programme	-	157,518	(157,518)	-
Refugee play programme	17,950	484,334	(434,282)	68,002
Vocational training programme	17,563	8,000	(19,417)	6,146
Total restricted funds	35,513	649,852	(611,217)	74,148
Unrestricted funds				
General funds	170,395	626,002	(698,920)	97,477
Total unrestricted funds	170,395	626,002	(698,920)	97,477
TOTAL FUNDS	205,908	1,275,854	(1,310,137)	171,625

Restricted funds

Grants are sought and received towards the specific costs of our three programmes: i) Community Play Programme, where funds are applied in disadvantaged communities to install playgrounds, and provide play-based training for these communities; ii) Refugee Play Programme, where funds are applied to install playgrounds and provide play-based training in refugee settlements and iii) our Vocational Training Programme where funds applied in providing apprenticeships to disadvantaged young people to learn vocational skills working with East African Playgrounds in Uganda. These funds are treated as restricted until such funds are spent.

General funds

General funds are unrestricted funds in hand and are available to the charity to meet its objectives.

15. RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year ended 30 September 2019 nor during the year ended 1 October 2018.