



## Reading Family Aid Group

### ANNUAL REPORT

Year ended 30 April 2021

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## ABOUT THE CHARITY

Our mission is to put a smile on the faces of disadvantaged children in the Reading area.

Our aim is to bring a little joy into the lives of children and families living with poverty, physical, mental, sexual, alcohol and drug abuse, illness, disability, homelessness or refugee status.

We work through schools, social workers, health visitors, places of worship and other charities and charitable organisations.

We distribute toys at Christmas to children aged 0-16 through our *Toys & Teens* Appeal.



Where our funds permit, we also provide outings throughout the year for children and their families who couldn't afford to go otherwise. These may be to a theme park, the seaside, a zoo or a farm park; they may also be to local activity centres and adventure playgrounds, theatres and cinemas.

# CHAIR'S REPORT

## Overview

What a year it has been! Some huge highs, some very low lows, a lot of work and, given the pandemic, a lot of agonising over what we should and shouldn't and could and couldn't do.

This time last year we were in the middle of the first Covid-19 lockdown. We naively thought that life would hopefully have returned to normal by the end of the summer. How wrong we were. During this financial year we have been in full or partial lockdown for about 6 months and with social distancing and other restrictions in place for the whole year.

So there have been almost no outings, a far from normal Toy Project, no fetes, summer or Christmas fairs, no fundraising concerts and no talks given. Zoom committee meetings have become the norm and most of us haven't seen each other in person since the March committee meeting last year.

But there have been some incredible highs not least hearing that we were to receive the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service. What an amazing accolade for our work, the committee and our volunteers!

And, having decided that we could not safely or legally do a normal Toy Project, we decided to do a fundraiser to buy toys which raised an astonishing £31,500!

## Queen's Award for Voluntary Service

In August last year, we heard that Cllr Woodward (the then Mayor of Reading) was nominating us for the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. What followed until early November was quite a process of getting the nomination details submitted, asking Homestart Reading to support his nomination, as one of the organisations we have supported for many years, providing huge amounts of documents and evidence of our work, policies, procedures and successes, arranging and participating in interviews of many of the committee with deputies of the Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire and the answering of a myriad of questions. Then nothing until the end of this April when we heard that we were to receive the award. It was such brilliant news and a fantastic recognition of the work that we do. We will look forward to receiving the award sometime this summer and sharing the news with all our volunteers, supporters and the organisations we support.

## **Summer Toy Project**

As outings were impossible to organise last summer, we decided to spend some of the money that we would have spent, on a Summer Toy Project. We asked 5 organisations to tell us how they would like us to spend £1,000 on each of them. They told us what they wanted and we ordered the items for delivery direct to the organisations. They then distributed the items to the families they support. This process went well and many families had something with which to entertain themselves during the summer after many weeks at home with schools closed.

We also set up Amazon Gift Lists for each of them and asked our supporters to buy items from their lists. This wasn't so successful as not many gifts were purchased and many ended up at the wrong organisation due to the inflexibility of the Amazon Gift List process. Lesson learnt!

## **Christmas Toy Project**

Preparing for 2020's Toy Project was a roller coaster ride of will we, won't we, should we, shouldn't we, can we, can't we. Usually, we start preparing in July and launch the Appeal in October. In July the Covid situation didn't look too bad so we hoped we might be able to do it with a bit of social distancing. We had a plan to do it over 2 weeks with half the number of helpers each day.

But then Covid didn't look like it was retreating and finally, in mid-September, we decided that we could not safely go ahead with a Toy Appeal and run the Toy Project at St Luke's as normal. It turned out to be a good decision as most of the donation points would have been closed during the November lockdown. Instead, we decided to use just a few committee members and a couple of van men to distribute the toys that we had already in our store, together with promised toys from the Berkshire Freemasons. Even that plan was far from straightforward. We had to complete an extensive Risk Assessment with the help of Reading Voluntary Action and get agreement in writing from St Luke's. Also, we weren't sure we could go ahead if lockdown continued past the expected end date as we were starting the following day and Church Halls had to be closed except for 'essential' work – was toy distribution essential? No-one could or would tell us.

In addition, we decided to launch a fundraising appeal for money to buy toys. We thought we might raise £10,000, set our target at £15,000 and in the end raised an astonishing £31,500. We developed a whole new process and on-line forms that allowed organisations to request specific toys and gifts for their most disadvantaged families. These were ordered by committee members for delivery direct to the requesting organisation. We started by inviting just a few organisations to request toys and allocated them £20 per child. But as the money continued to roll in, we

were in the end able to provide toys and gifts to all the nominated children from all of the organisations that we normally support. Some had a selection of toys from our store and some had toys specifically bought for them. In total we put 1401 smiles on children's faces that Christmas morning.

It did bring a headache for our Treasurer. He is used to processing about 10 transactions a month but several hundred transactions went through our bank account during the toy buying frenzy!

The only 'downside' was that we raised so much money that we couldn't spend it all in time for Christmas and subsequently realised that we should have worded the appeal such that we said what we would do with any excess funds – it never entered our heads that we would raise too much! In the eyes of the Charity Commission this was then a 'failed appeal'! We have since agreed with them that we can use the money to buy toys or gifts in the future.

### **Reading Twilight Festival**

We did organise one outing. Reading Borough Council arranged for a Light Show in Forbury Gardens and the Abbey Ruins and offered us free tickets for some of our families. We arranged for a number of organisations to take some of their families. While a few enjoyed a great evening out, many were disappointed as Tier 4 Covid restrictions came into force and the event was sadly closed prematurely.

### **Keeping People Safe**

While it is always the responsibility of the Chair and the Trustees to ensure that the Committee and the Volunteers remain safe in whatever activities are undertaken, until this year, it has always been a relatively minor consideration with the focus on accident prevention. However, with Covid upon us, it has become a much more of a concern. It is difficult to know how much risk we should ask people to take. Should we ask people to help at the Toy Project? Should we ask people to go on coaches or to venues that may mean mixing with many more and different people that they would normally do? Should we expect people to meet in face-to-face committee meetings? How many people should we expect to be in a van? While all of these activities are entirely voluntary, people may feel an obligation to participate so as not to let down the committee or the families and perhaps feel they have to do things with which they are not entirely comfortable.

The Chair and Trustees must continue to monitor this carefully and ensure that we do not undertake activities that put anyone involved in more risk than with which they are really comfortable.

## The Committee

During the past year, despite the difficulties that Covid has thrown at us, the whole committee brilliantly rose to the challenge and brainstormed ideas on how we could help the ever-increasing number of families in difficulties. The monthly newsletters continued, the organisations we support were surveyed, crowdfunding websites were researched, over £28,000 of toys and gifts were bought on-line, tools to help with the work were built, procedures to do all this were developed, the appeal was brilliantly publicised, our new Secretary coped with all the communications to and from our Supporters and the organisations who we support, most committee members helped with toy packing and distribution and our Treasurer processed a huge increase in transactions. We rose to the challenge and exceeded our own expectations. Everyone played a part.

Through all this, the Committee has remained stable and enthusiastic. No-one has left. No-one has thrown up their hands in despair. Everyone should feel proud of what we have achieved against the odds. I'd like to thank every single one of you for your amazing support and enthusiasm. Everyone has played a part in making this year one of our most successful years, despite all the adversity.

I'd like to say a special mention to Laura who has not only brilliantly embraced the role of Secretary but also, in her first year as Toy Project Manager, managed the ever-changing options that we considered and, with Sravanthi, managed the revised Toy Project with amazing success - not really what she envisaged when she took on the role!

I'd particularly like to thank David our Treasurer, as he stands down, for all his work over the past 5 years in embracing the increasing and evolving nature of the work. In 2016 when he took over, we had an income of £11k rising generally at about 10% each year until this year when it shot up by almost 300%! Payments also shot up from £12k in 2016 to over £30k this year. Thank you, David, for your fastidious control of our funds and your wise advice.

As I stand down from three eventful years as Chair, I'd like to thank everyone for their incredible support and to wish Sravanthi and Wendy well as they start their terms as Chair and Vice-Chair.

Ruth Perkins

Chair

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## 1. Summary

The accounts for the year ended 30 April 2021 reflect the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Reading Family Aid's activities.

Income was significantly higher than the previous year, as money was raised to purchase toys at Christmas, rather than toys being largely donated. Similarly, expenditure was significantly higher reflecting the purchase of those toys. Toys were also purchased in the summer of 2020 and the spring of 2021.

In addition, we were not able to arrange our normal outings during the year.

Total income and expenditure are set out in the table below. Further information is provided in sections 2 and 3.

|                          | 2020/21          | 2019/20           | Change           |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|
|                          | £                | £                 | £                |
| Total income             | 44,778.54        | 15,024.65         | 29,753.89        |
| Total expenditure        | (30,387.30)      | (16,748.46)       | (13,638.84)      |
| <b>Surplus/(deficit)</b> | <b>14,391.24</b> | <b>(1,723.81)</b> | <b>16,115.05</b> |

## 2. Income

The main components of income are set out in the table below.

| Income                        | 2020/21          | 2019/20          | Increase/<br>(decrease) |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
|                               | £                | £                | £                       |
| General/toy project donations | 40,183.62        | 6,532.61         | 33,651.01               |
| Local Giving donations        | 1,351.09         | 2,939.16         | (1,588.07)              |
| Fundraising and other         | 243.83           | 1,379.53         | (1,135.70)              |
| Funding                       | 3,000.00         | 3,950.00         | (950.00)                |
| Sale of goods                 | -                | 223.35           | (223.35)                |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>44,778.54</b> | <b>15,024.65</b> | <b>29,753.89</b>        |

Total income in 2020/21 was £44,778.54, £29,753.89 higher than the previous year.

General/toy project donations were £33,651.01 higher. This includes £31,550.59 raised to purchase toys and gifts for the 2021 toy project.



Donations through Local Giving were £1,588.07 lower, as we set up a GoFundMe fundraising page for the Christmas appeal.

Funding in 2020/21 was £3,000.00, £950.00 lower than the previous year. The full £3,000 was received from Toy Trust, £750 more than the previous year. In the year to 30 April 2020, we also received funding from St James's Place (£1,000) and Reading Dispensary Trust (£700).

Fundraising and other income decreased by £1,135.70 to £243.83. No fundraising activities were possible in 2021, due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

### 3. Expenditure

The main components of expenditure are set out in the table below.

| Expenditure                          | 2020/21          | 2019/20          | Increase/        |
|--------------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                                      | £                | £                | (decrease)<br>£  |
| Toy project                          | 21,207.28        | 1,283.85         | 19,923.43        |
| Summer toys                          | 4,480.20         | -                | 4,480.20         |
| Toy Trust and other toys             | 3,026.13         | -                | 3026.13          |
| Summer outing                        | -                | 8,389.40         | (8,389.40)       |
| Pantomime                            | -                | 2,623.50         | (2,623.50)       |
| Camp Mohawk                          | -                | 1,320.00         | (1,320.00)       |
| Gazebo, T Shirts, buckets and banner | -                | 904.10           | (904.10)         |
| Room hire/storage                    | 986.88           | 1,488.66         | (501.78)         |
| Liability insurance                  | 468.16           | 468.16           | -                |
| Other                                | 218.65           | 270.79           | (52.14)          |
| <b>Total</b>                         | <b>30,387.30</b> | <b>16,748.46</b> | <b>13,638.84</b> |

Total expenditure in 2020/21 was £30,387.30, £13,638.84 higher than the previous year. The net increase reflects the significant change to our activities caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. We spent funds on purchasing toys. We were not able to organise our normal outings.

In 2019/20 £904.10 was spent on a branded gazebo, T shirts, buckets and banner, which are used to raise the charity's profile at fundraising events.

Room hire/storage was £501.78 lower than the previous year. We no longer needed the storage unit from December as we did not collect large numbers of toys in 2021.

Further information on the toy project expenditure is provided in the table below. Once again this reflects the change to our activities caused by the Covid-19

pandemic. We raised funds to purchase toys and had them delivered directly by the supplier, rather than those toys being largely donated and delivered by our own volunteers. Consequently, expenditure on purchase of toys is significantly higher, whilst distribution costs such as van fuel and insurance are lower.

| <b>Toy Project expenditure</b>      | 2020/21          | 2019/20         | Increase/<br>(decrease) |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
|                                     | £                | £               | £                       |
| Toys, gifts, and batteries          | 20,597.89        | 328.90          | 20,268.99               |
| Contribution for use of hall        | 250.00           | 250.00          | -                       |
| Labels, rubber bands and stationery | 114.23           | -               | 114.23                  |
| Bags for delivery                   | 150.00           | 247.36          | (97.36)                 |
| Van insurance and fuel              | 95.16            | 318.54          | (223.38)                |
| Food for helpers                    | -                | 139.05          | (139.05)                |
| <b>Total</b>                        | <b>21,207.28</b> | <b>1,283.85</b> | <b>19,923.43</b>        |

#### 4. Funds

The movement in funds is set out in the table below.

In normal times, a significant proportion of our expenditure arises in the first quarter of the year when the Camp Mohawk and summer outings take place. We therefore aim to have higher level of funds in place at the financial year end in order to fund these activities.

The year to 30 April 2021 was unusual as we raised a large amount of funds to purchase toys.

|                               | 2020/21          | 2019/20          |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|
|                               | £                | £                |
| Funds at start of year        | 17,372.81        | 19,096.62        |
| Expenditure in year           | (30,387.30)      | (16,748.46)      |
|                               | (13,014.49)      | 2,348.16         |
| Income raised during the year | 44,778.54        | 15,024.65        |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>31,764.05</b> | <b>17,372.81</b> |

#### 5. Looking forward

Funds are in place for activities currently planned for the year to 30 April 2022. However, we will need to raise further funds during the year to fund trips planned for 2022.

## Reading Family Aid Group Income and Expenditure Report

|   | Year ended<br><b>30 April<br/>2021</b><br>£ | Year ended<br>30 April<br>2020<br>£ |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|
| <b>Income</b>                                       |   |                                     |
| Donations   |   |                                     |
| General (including toy project)                     | 40,183.62                                   | 6,532.61                            |
| Local Giving (incl Fundraising and Gift Aid)        | 1,351.09                                    | 2,939.16                            |
|   | 41,534.71                                   | 9,471.77                            |
| Funding   |   |                                     |
| Reading Dispensary Trust                            | -   | 700.00                              |
| St James Place                                      | -   | 1,000.00                            |
| Toy Trust   | 3,000.00                                    | 2,250.00                            |
|   | 3,000.00                                    | 3,950.00                            |
| Fundraising   |   |                                     |
| Forbury Gardens                                     | -   | 110.00                              |
| World Armed Forces Day                              | -   | 40.00                               |
| Earley Green Fair                                   | -   | 810.85                              |
| Winnersh fete                                       | -   | 166.00                              |
|   | -   | 1,126.85                            |
| Sale of Goods                                       |   |                                     |
| Toy project items                                   | -   | 223.35                              |
| Other Income  |   |                                     |
| Deposit Account Interest                            | 10.58                                       | 42.18                               |
| Gift Aid on donations made directly to us           | 233.25                                      | 210.50                              |
|   | 243.83                                      | 252.68                              |
| <b>Total Income</b>                                 | <b>44,778.54</b>                            | <b>15,024.65</b>                    |
| <b>Expenditure</b>                                  |   |                                     |
| Toy Project   |   |                                     |
| General expenses                                    | 609.39                                      | 954.95                              |
| Toys, gifts & batteries                             | 20,597.89                                   | 328.90                              |
| Pantomime   | -   | 2,623.50                            |
| Summer outing                                       | -   | 8,389.40                            |
| Camp Mohawk outing                                  | -   | 1,320.00                            |
| Summer toys   | 4,480.20                                    | -                                   |
| Toy Trust and other toys                            | 3,026.13                                    | -                                   |
| Admin & general expenses                            | 84.95                                       | 135.16                              |
| Gazebo, T shirts, buckets and banner                | -   | 904.10                              |
| Local Giving subscriptions                          | 96.00                                       | 96.00                               |
| Room hire/storage                                   | 986.88                                      | 1,488.66                            |
| Liability Insurance                                 | 468.16                                      | 468.16                              |
| Website   | 37.70                                       | 39.63                               |
| <b>Total Expenditure</b>                            | <b>30,387.30</b>                            | <b>16,748.46</b>                    |
| <b>Surplus/(deficit) of income over expenditure</b> | <b>14,391.24</b>                            | <b>(1,723.81)</b>                   |

## Reading Family Aid Group Balance Sheet

|   | As at<br>30 April<br>2021<br>£ | As at<br>30 April<br>2020<br>£ |
|---|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Balance at Bank</b>                              |                                |                                |
| Barclays Current Account                            | 3,212.48                       | 1,806.82                       |
| Barclays Deposit Account                            | 28,551.57                      | 15,565.99                      |
| <b>Total Assets</b>                                 | 31,764.05                      | 17,372.81                      |
| <b>Funds at beginning of year</b>                   | 17,372.81                      | 19,096.62                      |
| <b>Surplus/(deficit) of income over expenditure</b> | 14,391.24                      | (1,723.81)                     |
| <b>Funds at end of year</b>                         | 31,764.05                      | 17,372.81                      |

Prepared by: D Berry, Treasurer

Date: 7 June 2021

### Independent Examiner's Statement

I have examined the accounts for the year ended 30 April 2021. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that, in any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act 2011 or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records.

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

Name: Julian Pearce

Date: 7 June 2021

## Notes to the accounts

### Basis of preparation

The accounts are prepared on the receipts and payments basis.

### Funds

Total funds at 30 April 2021 are £31,764.05. £11,843.31 has been donated towards the purchase of toys; £1,000.00 has been donated towards the cost of a summer outing and £700 towards the cost of a Camp Mohawk trip. All other funds are unrestricted. It is currently planned to use almost all existing funds to finance activities in the year ending 30 April 2022, primarily on the purchase of toys, a trip to Camp Mohawk and summer activities. The remainder will finance the 2021 Christmas activities and ongoing costs.

## TRUSTEES

Chair                Ruth Perkins

Vice Chair        Sravanthi Yellapragada

Secretary        Laura Windisch

Treasurer        David Berry

Others:            Vera Box (resigned October 2020)  
                      Roslyn Heinze  
                      Wendy Howell  
                      Valerie Sansom  
                      Vivienne Simpson  
                      May Smith (resigned October 2020)  
                      Sallie Wall

# CHARITY COMMISSION & GOVERNING DOCUMENTS

## Governing Document

Reading Family Aid Group operates in accordance with its constitution adopted on 21 April 1993, as amended on 16 June 2004, 19 July 2016 and 4 March 2021.

UK Charity Commission registration number: 1022144

## Charity Commission for England and Wales Public Benefit Guidance

The trustees have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

## Charity Commission for England and Wales Cy-Pres Scheme Application

The trustees applied for a cy-pres scheme to the Charity Commission to allow them to use the excess funds raised in the 2020 Christmas Toys and Teens Appeal on toys and gifts in the future and received final approval on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2021.

## Charity Registered Address

61 Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7EX