



Balsam Family Project

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS AND GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30th JUNE 2014

Status	<p>A company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital, registered in England and Wales, number 06850797</p> <p>The company has charitable status and is registered with the Charity Commission under registration number 1129896.</p>
Directors	<p>Andrew Haines (Chairman) Alex Hammond Alex Walker John Radice Rob Bennie</p> <p>All the above served throughout the period. The directors of the company are also the trustees of the charitable activities.</p>
Secretary	Jun Li
Registered office	Yew Tree Barn, The Paddocks, East Hanney, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 0HX
Bankers	Natwest Bank, 3 Newbury Street, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 8BX

For further information contact:

email info@balsamfamilyproject.co.uk
Alex Walker 07799 894410

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Balsam Family Project

REPORT OF THE DIRECTORS AND GENERAL INFORMATION FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 30th JUNE 2014

Structure

Balsam Family Project is a charitable company limited by guarantee. It was incorporated on 18th March 2009 and registered as a charity by the Charity Commission on 29th May 2009.

Objects, objectives and principal activities

Balsam Family Project's activities are regulated by the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

The objects of the company are:

- 1 To advance education of the public in good practices promoting the maintenance and development of family welfare guided by the principles of the Christian Faith
- 2 To advance the Christian Faith for the benefit of the public in accordance with the statements of belief

The principal activities of Balsam Family Project have been focused on helping families with children that have been or are facing difficulties and where there may be a risk of, or actual, involvement with the Children's Social Services Department of the Local Authority. The focus in the first period has been in South Oxfordshire and the surrounding area.

Services are offered to all families regardless of faith. Balsam Family Project believes that true transformation in lives comes from the inside out. We aim to demonstrate God's love for all his creation in the services we provide to all regardless of faith.

"Balsam Family Project is a great example of local people working together to improve their communities. Combining professional training with on-going mentoring, the Project offers a sustainable response to one of today's big issues – creating opportunities for everyone to improve the quality of their parenting of small children, however tough their circumstances might be. I want to see the work of Balsam Family Project grow, be well supported by our local community and inspire others to respond in such practical and effective ways."

Ed Vaizey, Minister for Culture and local MP

Review of activities during the period

1. The Issue

Balsam Family Project (BFP), for the past five years, has been effectively addressing some of the root causes of family breakdown in Oxfordshire. Sadly, many parents have limited experience of good parenting and struggle to know how to bring up their own children. A significant proportion of the families we deal with have been brought up in care themselves and/ or have already lost one child into the care system. Going it alone as single parents can make it even harder. Unless we break the cycle of a child who doesn't experience good parenting not knowing how to be a good parent themselves, then we have no reason to expect improvements in behaviour from children and adults caught in this spiral.

The cost to society is immense in terms of wasted potential, the huge costs of children in care and the compelling evidence of the long term financial cost of dysfunctional behaviour. At the end of March 2014, in Oxfordshire alone, there were 463 children in care, 10% more than the previous year. John Bird the founder of the Big Issue puts it like this "Around 80 per cent of people selling The Big Issue have been through local authority care at a cost of £2,000 a week. That's £100,000 a year, £1million if they have spent 10 years in care. And the money that's spent on them is yours and mine."

The Field and Allen reports both commissioned by this government identify that early intervention is absolutely critical in breaking the cycle of deprivation and destructive behaviour. Many Headteachers and educationalists will also attest to the fact that interventions at school are very much less successful if parents do not effectively bond and develop good relationships with their children in the first 3 years of life. Despite the Government's concern for troubled families, the reality is that many Early Intervention Services are seeing significant cuts. This year Children's centres were at risk of budget cuts, and Oxfordshire County Council leader, Ian Hudspeth has said: "The council is facing unprecedented budget pressures from the rising cost of care and this pressure is expected to continue for years to come".

In Oxfordshire the number of children subject to child protection plans has increased from just over 300 children in 2011 to 504 in 2014. The South Oxfordshire Children Board concluded that this increase reflects the greater identification, recognition and response to signs of neglect and abuse as well as sensitivity to risk. Cuts to Early Intervention Services will inevitably see more pressure on struggling families and in turn on Social Services to keep children in care. We believe that it is vital we work in partnership with the local authority to engage the local community to work together to support their more vulnerable families.

2. What Balsam Family Project does:

Balsam Family Project is a church based charity with a proven record for delivering parenting support to counter some of the problems faced by vulnerable families. A team of self-employed staff and volunteers support families who recognise their need for help with **positive parenting, management of homes or finances, building up self-confidence and life skills and building links with their own community**. BFP provides a quality support service to vulnerable families in a nurturing environment.

Our programme includes 10 week **College Courses** in parenting, on two days a week, run by qualified and experienced staff. The aim is to educate parents in basic child care and home management, providing opportunities for them to learn to develop the skills to live well together as a family. While parents are tutored, their children are cared for in a safe and stimulating environment with trained staff and volunteers. They then get to practice some of their new found skills and approaches under supervision to ensure the learning is applied.

BFP recognises that to be the catalyst for any real long-term change requires commitment to every family for the long term. Trained **Community Family Friends** regularly visit families, keeping in close touch with them. This is very much Big Society in action. All our volunteers are unpaid local church members. In this financial year we have continued to increase the number of volunteers and the number of churches that are providing volunteers. Two local churches have moved from seasonal support for our large events to year-round support by providing volunteers as Community Family Friends and Project Worker for our weekly activities.

Weekly Family Days, as well as other informal social opportunities across south Oxfordshire, provide a place and a time every week, in a supportive environment where families can meet, make friends and build trust with each other, as well as BFP staff and volunteers.

Because our volunteers come from local churches we aim to **build bridges** between isolated families and these vital parts of social infrastructure to help ensure a family become part of their local communities and an efficient ongoing support network.

3. How do we differ from other Family initiatives:

BFP differs from and is complementary to other valuable parenting initiatives in a number of respects.

*** The intensity of our interventions** - We have recognised that the most needy parents need significant input to change their behaviours and approach to parenting. Our programme therefore provides relatively intensive input - 9 hours a week for 10 weeks, with a maximum of 4 families or 6 adults with a high staff to client ratio and supervised demonstration of the skills acquired.

***The quality of delivery** - Our training is delivered by a qualified social worker who also has many years experience of family fostering herself. We use material specifically developed based on a detailed understanding of recurrent issues facing parents who have few good parenting reference points of their own.

***Ongoing, cost effective support** - As described above we recognise that many families need ongoing support both on a 1-1 level and via access to community groups. Many of our families already have state funded interventions but there is, inevitably, low levels of trust and infrequent, erratic engagement. We use volunteers through our network of churches in the area to ensure our ongoing mentoring is highly cost effective and delivers a level of contact that the state cannot and should not fund.

***Entirely privately funded** - To date we have not received a penny of state funding. Our support comes from donors, church groups, trusts and local bodies.

4. What have we achieved:

BFP is making a significant and positive difference in the lives of vulnerable families. Parents testify to a new bond with their children and greater ability to interact with them, as well as learning how to discipline and train their children in appropriate ways. These changes will almost inevitably lead to improved outcomes for these children entering school, however, it is difficult to measure the long-term impact these changes will make. To build up a picture of the various positive outcomes of families' work with us we use various methods including;

- Parental Stress Index Testing at the start and completion of our College Courses
- Observation and recording of behavioural change
- Regular feedback from our Community Family Friends, Health Professionals and Social Workers
- Personal testimonials from participants

At end June 2014 we have supported 72 families in total, 60 of which have gone on to access other community support as a result of our contact, including joining churches, community groups, further education, therapy, and support with health needs. 75 % of participants continue to meet with their Family friend or attend one of our toddler/social groups one year after attending the course programme, which means that families are being supported to maintain long-term change.

Our most successful intervention is the college course. Due to the high-intensity of this course we find that families form strong friendships and develop the trust with volunteers to seek help and advice. This has led to many families being supported to identify their needs and gain the appropriate help in the community:

Of all graduates from the Level 1 college course we have found that:

- 89% have gone on to attend another **local community group** such as a toddler group or social group
- 54% have been helped to successfully access **therapeutic support**,
- 11% have attended **further education**
- 54% have been helped to **gain support with their health needs**
- 43% have gone on to attend a **personal development/support group** in the area.
- 32% have **become Christians** and found support through faith and the local church
- 46% have gone on to attend our **Level 2 programme** in Personal Growth and Development.

During the financial year 13/14 we have seen many achievements among the families we support:

- **Five families** completed the 10 week course in personal growth and development having already completed level 1 the previous term.
- **An additional Three families** completed level 1 in parenting and home management, all of whom went on to complete level 2 in the summer term, including one grandmother determined to make things better for her grandson.
- **Four new families** have started attending the family day who have formed strong friendships and gained confidence to take active roles in the group, helping with craft activities and packing away equipment.
- **We have supported** one family through both levels of the college course while they went through care proceedings for their baby daughter. Through our program the couple were able to demonstrate more than sufficient improvements in the parenting skills and confidence to have their child returned to them. They continue to receive support from us as they settle back into life as a family.
- In addition to this, we have been able to **keep up our long term commitment** to those families who have joined us in the previous years and continue to work hard to make positive changes for their families. For one mother this meant gaining the confidence to leave an abusive relationship. For another, this meant making the difficult decision of giving their child to adoptive parents. For one couple this meant moving house to provide a more secure setting for themselves and their children. With these, and all our families, we have been there providing friendship, support and encouragement.

Feedback from our families:

We continue to receive exceptionally positive feedback from participant attendees on the college course and users of our other support groups:

"Balsam was the first place I came to with my daughter where I didn't feel judged"

"Thank you for Balsam's courses. I found out that I'm a good mum and quite a nice person. And also, being a mum is a very important thing and I should be proud of it. And I am, I really am. I also understood few things about myself. It helped me with my relationship. Now, I see myself in a different light. Thank you very much. I hope we will keep in touch."

"You will never quite know how much blessed and how grateful we were to receive a 'hamper' at Christmas. We were financially in despair as had just come off Job Seekers before starting a new job but not getting paid for 4 weeks. It was full of yummys that we could not afford. So please accept our real heartfelt thanks, it really made our Christmas."

5. Financial

For the period to 30th June 2014 income was £22,905. £21,905 was unrestricted income and £1,000 was restricted income and it has been paid out during the period.

The Charity is registered for Gift Aid.

Expenditure was £33,469.

The closing bank balance was £12,753.

The company's income has arisen from donations. The directors ensure that commitments do not exceed funds available.

6. The Year in Question

This year has seen some key successes that have contributed to the overall growth of the project and its reputation as a valued part of the local community.

- We have run 1 course on Parenting and Home Management and 3 of the follow-up course in Personal Growth and Development. This second level course was launched in 2013 and proved immensely popular. In the first term of this financial year we run two Second Level courses back-to-back to cater for all the Level 1 graduates who wanted to take this course, by the end of Jun 2013 over 46% of those who have completed level 1 have now completed level 2.
- The Family Day toddler group has continued to grow and bring new families into the project. This financial year has seen the families really gain confidence and get involved, helping to run craft activities and staying behind at the end to help volunteers pack away equipment. We have also seen wonderful friendships develop between families who keep in good contact outside of Balsam's activities.
- We have successfully appointed a Project Development Manager for an initial 12 months starting in October of 2013 who has contributed to the growth of the project in a number of ways including: To promote the charity in the local community, develop fundraising and sustainability strategies, increase partnership working with statutory bodies and other community groups, volunteer recruitment, develop materials to communicate the model that the charity employs, improve our on-line presence and communications with supporters and sponsors.

Supporters and Partnerships

Once again we have been entirely reliant on donations and fundraising for our income and we are hugely grateful for the generosity of our supporters including those who give on a regular basis, and those who help at our regular fundraising events. This year has also seen immense support from other local community groups who have taken on their own fundraising projects to help support BFP. Special thanks should go to the National Citizens Service, the Didcot Girl's Brigade, the Abingdon Lions Club, and the Didcot Rotary Club for their generous support.

Following our nomination as one of the Mayor of Didcot's charities of the year, Mayor Axel MacDonald worked extremely hard to promote our work during his term of office in 2013/14. Axel attended fundraising events and joined us for our end of course celebrations to present certificates of achievement to those that have completed courses. This proved very encouraging to our families and we were delighted that Mayor Axel encouraged his successor, Mayor Scott Wilgrove to continue the new tradition. We are also delighted to welcome his wife, as a new volunteer.

Our biggest celebration is our Christmas Lunch and party. All our key partners in making this a success returned again for Dec 2013 which saw 130 people sit down for a wonderful Christmas dinner! Thank you to Bright Horizons, the children's nursery company that continue to provide presents for all of our families at Christmas and to Didcot Baptist Church and Didcot food Bank who for a second time provided generous food parcels for each of our families too. The readiness of both organisations to give to families in need is a real encouragement to those families and to those of us involved in the project.

Working Collaboratively

Due to our raised profile in the local community Balsam Family Project has been recognised for its valuable work with vulnerable families and has been invited to join the Didcot area Children's Centre Advisory Board to ensure collaborative work in the community to support families. BFP was also invited to join the Didcot First Community Matters Network which seeks to "bring together commerce, statutory bodies, voluntary agencies, and the general public for the specific purpose of ensuring that Didcot is a positive place to live, work and invest".

We have continued to receive valuable support from Bethany Children's Trust, a well-established Christian charity doing fantastic work with children in desperate situations. Their principal focus has been overseas but they have been using their extensive experience to provide us with spiritual guidance, practical support and financial contributions as well. This year we were very grateful of some expert advice in Fundraising and Financial sustainability given to our Project Development Manager.

We have also begun initial conversations with the Cinnamon Network to discuss the possibility of becoming a Cinnamon recognised project. The Cinnamon Network aim to make it "as easy as possible for local churches across the UK to help those people most at need in their communities."

Volunteer Development

Our network of volunteers is at the heart of BFP both because of our dependence upon it to fundraise and provide practical help but also because it is one of our unique selling points. We have committed volunteers, gifted in many ways, who are ready to work with families and individuals on a sustainable basis in a way that the state cannot support. One of our key aims identified in our last report was to increase support and develop this volunteer network.

Over the past year our volunteer base has developed in a number of ways: We have recruited a another qualified and experienced Christian Counsellor to provide teaching on the level 2 college course; we have visited key volunteers to gather feedback on how to improve support for volunteers working with families; we have provided additional training for our volunteers that are co-ordinating the news letter and website to improve our communications with supporters; one of our key Project Workers has continued to develop her role from working as administrator to managing the Family Days and helping at the College where she has now taken on teaching the art sessions on the Level 2 College Course.

I would like to pay tribute to all our regular volunteer supporters who in the past 12 months have supported BFP on so many ways including;

- delivering substantial elements of our courses and coordinating our Family Days
- providing excellent administrative support
- acting as Family Friends
- coordinating our prayer newsletter and website
- catering for over 100 people at our celebrations and Christmas lunch
- fundraising in many ways from sponsored swims, knitting dolls, to busking and bag packing

To everyone who has supported Balsam in any way we would say a very big thank you.

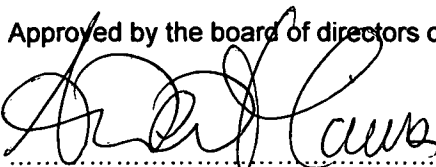
The Coming Year

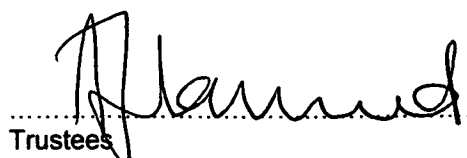
In the coming year we will continue to support local families with the services that have seen significant impact; those being the Family College, Family Day, Community Family Friends and Social Events.

As we have seen our profile in the local area heighten over the past year we plan to develop our volunteer & staffing structure in a number of ways: Hold a promotional event to engage new interest and recruit volunteers; train one of our Project Workers to take on the role of Volunteer Co-ordinator to help improve the support of volunteers and their continued development; recruit an additional volunteer administrator to share the increasing load due to our growth as a charity; offer one form of additional training to interested volunteers (extra to their induction training) such as a workshop in play therapy or money management.

We have a meeting with a representative of the Cinnamon Network set up for the new year to look at whether we can work together to share the model of Balsam Family Project more widely. Whether it is with Cinnamon, or another form of partnership working, we really believe we have a model worth sharing and look forward to progressing this vision in the coming year.

Approved by the board of directors on 5th January 2014, and signed on its behalf:

 Andrew Haines

 Alex Hammond
Trustees

Balsam Family Project

Statement of Financial Activities For the period ended 30 June 2014

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	funds	income funds	2014	funds	income funds	2013
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Incoming resources						
Incoming resources from generated funds						
Voluntary income (Note 3)	22,905		22,905	40,233		40,233
Bank interest						
Total incoming resources	22,905		22,905	40,233		40,233
Resources expended (Notes 4 to 6)						
Charitable activities	33,469		33,469	22,675		22,675
Governance costs						
Total resources expended	33,469		33,469	22,675		22,675
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources	(10,564)		(10,564)	17,558		17,558
Net movement in funds	(10,564)		(10,564)	17,558		17,558
Total funds brought forward	27,193		27,193	9,635		9,635
Total funds carried forward	16,629		16,629	27,193		27,193

Balsam Family Project**Balance Sheet
at 30 June 2014**

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	funds	income funds	2014	funds	income funds	2013
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Tangible Fixed Assets	69		69	721		721
Current Assets						
Debtors	3,130		3,130	3,103		3,103
Cash at bank and in hand	12,753		12,753	23,369		23,369
Total current assets	15,883		15,883	26,472		26,472
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 9)	0		0	0		0
Net current assets	15,883		15,883	26,472		26,472
Total assets less current liabilities	15,952		15,952	27,193		27,193
Funds of the Charity (Note 10)						
Unrestricted funds	21,905		21,905	27,193		27,193
Restricted income funds	1,000		1,000			
Total funds	22,905		22,905	27,193		27,193

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities (effective April 2008).

The Directors have taken advantage of the Companies Act 2006 in not having these accounts audited under Section 477.

The Directors have confirmed that no notice has been deposited under Section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

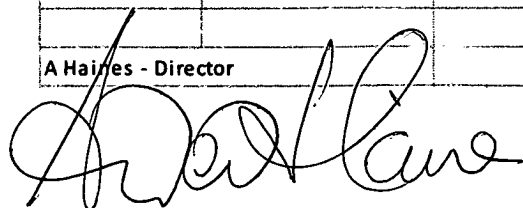
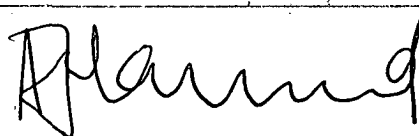
The Directors have acknowledged their responsibilities for ensuring the company keeps accounting records which comply with Sections 386 and 387 of the Companies Act 2006.

The Directors have acknowledged their responsibilities for preparing accounts which give a true and fair view of the company and its surplus for the year then ended in accordance with the requirements of Sections 394 and 395 of the Companies Act 2006.

These accounts were approved by the Directors on 05 January 2015 and signed on their behalf by:

A Haiges - Director

A Hammond - Director

Balsam Family Project

Notes to the Accounts

For the period ended 30 June 2014

1 Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historic cost in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities and the Companies Act 2006. They follow the recommendations of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP), "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" published in March 2005.

2 Accounting Policies

2.1 Incoming resources

2.1.1 Recognition of incoming resources

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- the trustees are virtually certain they will receive the resources; and
- the monetary value can be measured with reasonable reliability.

2.1.2 Incoming resources with related expenditure

Where incoming resources have related expenditure, the incoming resources and related expenditure are reported gross in the SoFA.

2.1.3 Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the charity has unconditional entitlement to the resources.

2.1.4 Tax claims on donations

Incoming resources from tax claims are included in the SoFA in the same accounting period as the donations to which they relate.

2.1.5 Legacies

Legacies are included in the SoFA when the charity is notified of an impending distribution or otherwise when received.

2.1.6 Volunteer help

The value of any voluntary help received is not included in the accounts but is described in the directors' annual report.

Balsam Family Project

Notes to the Accounts For the period ended 30 June 2014

2 Accounting policies (continued)

2.1.7 Bank interest

This is included in the SOFA when receivable.

2.2 Expenditure and liabilities

2.2.1 Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources.

2.2.2 Irrecoverable VAT

Irrecoverable VAT is included with the expenditure to which it relates.

2.2.3 Governance costs

Governance costs include costs of the preparation of the statutory accounts, the costs of trustee meetings, and the cost of any legal advice to directors on governance or constitutional matters.

2.2.4 Depreciation

Depreciation is provided at the following annual rates in order to write off each asset over its estimated useful life.

Equipment - 20% straight line

2.3 Tangible fixed assets for use by the charity

These are capitalised if they can be used for more than one year and cost at least £200.

2.4 Funds structure

The charity currently operates a single, unrestricted fund.

3 Voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total 2014 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total 2013 £
Donations	21,905	1,000	22,905	40,233	-	40,233

Balsam Family Project

Notes to the Accounts

For the period ended 30 June 2014

4 Analysis of resources expended

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total 2014 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total 2013 £
Charitable activities						
Restricted Income payout		1,000	1,000	-		-
<i>Direct service provision</i>						
Course Workers	7,576		7,576	11,000		11,000
Salary	11,038		11,038	-		-
Employer tax and PAYE	1,266		1,266	-		-
Direct Project Costs	6,470		6,470	6,116		6,116
Teaching Materials	-		-	545		545
Rent, Rates & Utilities	4,198		4,198	2,706		2,706
Training and development	110		110	546		546
Gift for other charitable work	528		528	-		-
	31,186		31,186	20,913		20,913
<i>Support costs</i>						
Advertising and promotion	-		-	-		-
Repairs and maintenance	-		-	-		-
Small fittings and consumables						
Printing, post and stationery	-		-	-		-
Motor and travel	-		-	-		-
Telephone	244		244	605		605
Insurance	387		387	387		387
Subscriptions	-		-	114		114
Sundry	-		-	4		4
Office Costs						
Depreciation	652		652	652		652
	1,283		1,283	1,762		1,762
Total charitable activities	33,469		33,469	22,675		22,675
<i>Governance costs</i>						
Independent examiner's fee for reporting on the accounts	-		-	-		-
Other fees paid to the independent examiner	-		-	-		-
	-		-	-		-

Balsam Family Project

Notes to the Accounts

For the period ended 30 June 2014

5 Remuneration to Directors

A Walker, a director of the charity, received £7,576 (2013: £11,000) in fees for work she carried out for the charity. £2,189 in out of pocket expenses were reimbursed to a director in the Year (2011: £1,103).

6 Employee emoluments

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total 2014 £	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total 2013 £
Salary	11,038		11,038	-		-
Employer tax and PAYE	1,266		1,266	-		-
	12,304		12,304	-		-

7 Tangible fixed assets

	Equipment 2014 £	Total 2014 £	Equipment 2013 £	Total 2013 £
Cost				
At start of period	3,329	3,329	3,329	3,329
Additions				
Disposals				
At 30th June	3,329	3,329	3,329	3,329
Depreciation				
On 5 year life				
At start of period	2,608	2,608	1,956	1,956
Disposals				
Charge for period	652	652	652	652
At 30th June	3,260	3,260	2,608	2,608
Net book value				
At 30th June	69	69	721	721

Balsam Family Project

Notes to the Accounts For the period ended 30 June 2014

8 Debtors

Amounts falling due within one year:

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total 2014	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total 2014
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Debtors	3,103		3,103	3,103		3,103

9 Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year:

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total 2014	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total 2014
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Creditors	-		-	-		-
Accruals	-		-	-		-
	-		-	-		-

10 Funds

Movement of funds

Fund name	Balance at 30 June 2013	Incoming Resources	Outgoing Resources	Balance at 30 June 2014
General Fund	27,193	21,905	32,469	16,629
Restricted income fund	-	1,000	1,000	
Total	27,193	22,905	33,469	16,629

11 Related Party Disclosure

1 A Walker, a director of the charity, received £7,576 in fees for work she carried out for the charity and £2,189 in reimbursed out of pocket expenses.