



## Trustees' Draft Annual Report

Charity name: The Place

Charity registration number: 1175671

Reporting Period from 1st November 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025

### Our Charitable Purposes

The Place is a CIO set up in 2017 for the benefit of families with young children resident in the Faringdon area, in particular but not exclusively by advancing the education of such families in relation to childcare, parenting, health, the environment, ICT and life skills by such means as The Trustees may consider appropriate.

### What We Do

***This year a total of 720 families used our services meaning we had 3,727 child visits!***

644 families were from the SN7 postcode area, making 3188 child visits between them.

The Place offers the following services to families with babies and children under 5:

- Play At the Place (a universal group providing play activities in line with EYFS and support for parents);
- Tots and Tinies for families with small babies and Toddlers
- Breastfeeding support
- Ante-natal groups
- Movie Time
- Monthly Saturday morning family drop in group

***'Thank you for such a lovely morning. Probably the most relaxed and friendly family group I've ever been to! We shall be back. 😊'***

We have increased the number of breast feeding and ante-natal sessions we offer due to increased demand.

During school holidays, outings and outdoor events are offered for families including older siblings. This includes our annual outing to The Cotswold Wildlife Park, funded by Faringdon and District Rotary,

***“Such an incredible experience for me and my young family. We would not have been able to enjoy a day out like this without The place and its amazing staff! Thank you for allowing me and my children to make some fantastic memories together.”***

We also run courses for parents such as

- FamilyLinks Parenting
- Baby Massage
- First Aid.

A Clothes Library is also available providing baby clothes from 0-5yrs and maternity clothes. Equipment and clothes are also sourced for older children on request.

We are delighted that the Health Visitor team has decided to move their clinic back to The Place.

The Place has links with other organisations in the town, to encourage our families to make use of the facilities on offer. We hold Rhyme Time at the local library, activities at the local cycle park supported by the local cycling club and a monthly session in The Folly woodland to encourage families to explore nature together. Our monthly group at a local care home is valued by the residents there as well as our families.

The highlight of this year was the establishment of our new allotment. This has been set up entirely through the support of our families, other allotment users,

local businesses and organisations who have donated their time, tools, materials and plants.

*“As a stay at home parent it means everything to teach as much as I possibly can and get out the house daily. Watching my little one grow is amazing and having new opportunities and exciting experiences like this make it 10x worth while.”*

## **Staff and Volunteers**

We have three part time staff, our manager and two Early Years Workers. The trustees would like to thank them for their enthusiasm and dedication. The Place is supported by two sorts of volunteers; those involved with the project and those who help with fund raising.

Volunteering for the project is a formal process involving DBS checks and training. These volunteers help in sessions under the direction of the charity's staff. During the period covered by this report there were 6 such volunteers, an increase on last year. This includes two Dads who are completing their induction training with a view to setting up a support group for fathers.

Volunteering to support fundraising is informal. A core group has organised successful community events raising c.£1,200 towards our running costs. There were 10 volunteers in this category.

The trustees would like to thank all our volunteers for their support and for their enthusiasm for The Place.

## **Grants and Fund Raising**

The Place was initially set up with the support of Faringdon Town Council when the local Children's Centre closed. We are based in The Corn Exchange, a council building and receive our core funding from the council and Faringdon United Charity. In addition, we need to raise a minimum of £10,000 pa through fundraising.

We would like to thank the Funding Dory Community Three Legged Race, and The Bangers and Beer Festival for their generous support. We have also received a grant from Costa, a grant from Nationwide Building Society to refurbish our main playroom and donations through the National Trust for lectures delivered by Cllr Mike Wise.

In addition we would like to thank all the trades people, businesses and organisations who have donated their materials, time and expertise during the year, supporting our playroom refurbishment and setting up our new allotment:

- ★ Alderson Spraying and Decorating
- ★ Amcogiffen
- ★ Ben Gristwood Garden and Tree Care
- ★ Beth Cleans
- ★ The Buscot Estate
- ★ Caldecourt Carpets
- ★ Mark Dowel
- ★ Stacey Greenshield
- ★ Onpoint Paving

The trustees pay due regard to the guidance from the Charity Commission on Public Benefit. All spending commitments and activities are guided by our commitment to the charity's core purpose to provide benefit to a particular section of the public, namely families with young children in the local area (Faringdon). This is also in accordance with the requirements of our key funders, FTC and FUC.

## Financial Summary

### *2024/25 Annual Accounts*

Our annual accounts to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025 were audited and submitted to the Charity Commission in October. They reported the following income and expenditure for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025:

<b>Per Annual Accounts</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Income	47,279
Expenditure	88,925
<b>Surplus / (Deficit) per Annual Accounts</b>	<b>(41,647)</b>

It should be noted that due to cash accounting the expenditure figure includes £36,785 of payments to Faringdon Town Council for operating costs that relate to prior periods. Adjusting for this gives a more accurate reflection of the costs incurred in the year:

<b>Underlying</b>	<b>2024/25</b>
Deficit per Annual Accounts	(41,647)
Adjustment for FTC invoices	36,785
<b>Underlying Surplus / (Deficit)</b>	<b>(4,862)</b>

This modest shortfall reflects some one-off additional costs as part of the set up following the transition away from Spurgeons that we would not expect to incur on an ongoing basis.

### *Current Financial Position*

At 31<sup>st</sup> October 2025 the we held cash balances of £71,110. Of which £6,617 was held in our current account; £38,052 in an instant access savings account and £26,442 in a higher interest limited access savings account.

Cash balances currently exceed our reserves requirement due to the timing of grant income to support the running costs for the financial year to 31<sup>st</sup> March. The charity remains in a stable financial position.

## *Reserves*

As a non-profit making charity The Place Trustees have reviewed the need for reserves in line with guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The charity will keep money aside as a reserve to protect the charity against drops in income or allow it to take advantage of new opportunities. Reserves will be held to ensure that The Place is able to operate during periods of lower income and to ensure money is reserved for unexpected events, redundancies or any Emergencies. Trustees understand that uncertainties may be faced in the future and the need to hold reserves where future income alone is unlikely to meet costs. We recognise that trustees need to be able to justify the holding of income as reserves as the Charity Law requires any income received be spent within a reasonable period of receipt.

Reserves will be held to meet expenses in unpredicted occurrences. This includes but is not limited to:

- Ensuring there are sufficient cash reserves in the current account to cover day to day running costs, including staff training & staff meetings.
- Replacing equipment as it wears out and carry out necessary maintenance.
- Closure due to unexpected damage to our rented premises,
- Re-location of The Place from its current premises.
- Unexpected drop in income, resulting in The Place being unable to meet its financial obligations
- Redundancy payments after closure of business
- Any other reasonable expense agreed by more than half the Trustees.

Reserves are held across two interest-bearing savings accounts; a high interest Virgin account with access restrictions and a lower interest instant access savings account with Lloyds.

The reserves held in 2026 will be £37,868; equivalent to 6 months operating costs. This figure will be reviewed in line with our budget setting process prior to the start of the new financial year in April 2026.

## **Trustees**

The charity has seven trustees currently.

The Chair would like to thank Sally Thurston who stepped down as Treasurer this year for everything that she has done in establishing The Place and putting it on a sure footing for the future. A warm welcome to Rebecca Stewart who has taken on the role. Alan Ford is now Mayor of Faringdon so has taken the place of Peter Castle as the council's representative on the board. We thank Peter for all his support. Thanks also to Eleanor Tucker who stepped down at the end of February, for her help with grants and fundraising.

Trustees are directed to the training material for trustees on the Charity Commission website. All trustees receive the charity's safeguarding policy and other key policies. The Safeguarding Trustee has safeguarding training. We also have a trustee with responsibility for Health and Safety.

Report Approved 27/1/26

*Joanna Cave*