

Trustees' Report, 1st January 21 – 31st December 2022

1. Reference and Administration Details

Oundle Mencap Holiday (hereafter OMH) was accepted as a Company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital (# 5393382) and as a Charity (# 1108908) in 2005 and as a group affiliated to the Royal Mencap Society. At its Annual General Meeting on 10th March 2018 the members voted to change the name of the charity from Oundle School Mencap Holidays to Oundle Mencap Holidays Ltd.

OMH is registered at the address provided below.

At its Annual General Meeting on 5th March 2022 the following were elected by the meeting as OMH officers:-

Chair – Robin Banerjee
Holiday Leader / Registered Manager – Kate Taylor
Secretary – Anna Clish
Responsible Individual – Anna Clish
Treasurer – Andy Fahrenheit
Oundle School representative – M Barker
External Trustee – Jo Floto
Invited Parent Rep (2014-22) – Mel Symonds
Elected SH Rep (2019-22) – Katrina Rowe
Trustee – Eddie Dove

Katrina Rowe has since stood down from her formal role as the Elected SH Rep but continues to perform that role in an informal capacity until the election of a new SH Rep is completed.

2. Structure, Governance and Management

OMH is a Charity governed by a constitution and registered as a Company limited by guarantee. Trustees are appointed by a vote of members at the AGM.

OMH is affiliated to the Royal Mencap Society, an arrangement which provides support in the sphere of professional guidance and assessment and expert insurance advice. We greatly value all guidance given to us by the Royal Mencap Society, the Charity Commission and Companies House, and we are actively dedicated to compliance with all their recommendations as well as requirements as a means of attaining and keeping best practice in operating standards. In particular, we plan our activities with careful consideration of the Charities Commission guidance on public benefit (Charities Act 2011, section 17)

In addition, OMH is run in co-operation with Oundle School, Oundle, Northants. The holiday week benefits from the school support in the provision of accommodation and facilities for the week. Furthermore, the majority of first-time volunteers for the holidays for children are recruited from among school pupils.

OMH also works closely with the Northamptonshire Girl Guides who generously provide equipment and expertise to our camping holiday for young adults, Mencap Outdoors.



3. Objectives and Activities

The objectives of OMH are

- the relief of people with a learning disability in particular by the provision of help and support for them and for their families, dependants and carers, and to promote awareness of learning disabilities for the public benefit; and
- to provide or assist in the provision of facilities for the recreation or other leisure time occupation for people who have need thereof by reason of learning disability with the object of improving their conditions of life.

NB: "learning disability" means any developmental disability of the mind and any associated condition howsoever caused and whether mild, moderate or severe.

The activities carried out in pursuit of these objectives are:

- recruitment of young people to take part volunteering in week-long residential holidays for children and young people with learning disabilities; and
- the organisation and running of holidays for children and young people with learning disabilities,

Since 2012, the following additional activities have been carried out for the same objectives:

- recruitment of young people to take part in a long-weekend camping holiday for young adults with learning disabilities;
- the organisation and running of the camping holiday(s) for adults with learning disabilities.

Consequently, the following outcomes are achieved from all such activities:

- provision of new experiences to children and young people with learning disabilities
- a period of respite for parents, caregivers and siblings of these children and young people
- a new and beneficial experience, learning about disability and charity, for young volunteers.

4. Achievements and Performance: OMH Mencap Outdoors, 29th June - 5th July and 6th July - 10th July 2022

OMH Mencap Outdoors welcomed two groups of campers between 29th June and 10th July 2022.

There were 21 Campers and 17 Staff on the first camp and 18 Campers and 13 Staff on the second camp. Some staff did both holidays.

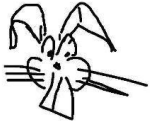
Highlights included making bird tables to take home, a puzzle hunt in and around the camp site, trips to the pub and a range of outdoor activities. We also welcomed a pizza oven on site for the first time and campers had great fun making their own pizzas. Instead of a lamb roast we had a BBQ and a fish and n chip supper at our last night parties.

The weather on the last few days, was extremely hot with temperatures in the high 30's. If weather patterns continue, the flexibility to go off site in very hot weather may be necessary. Due to the extreme heat, one group of campers didn't cook on small fires as it was too hot to do so safely without sufficient shade.

We successfully recruited local people to help out and we could extend this a bit more next year. The push of fresh energy on the last Sunday was really useful and pack down started as early as possible as temperature forecast for 38/39°C.

Storage has been partly solved, the refit of the Oundle store has allowed camp to store tentage in there. This has allowed for more space in the Guides store.

There are increasing numbers of campers who want spaces every year and at some point the team will



need to consider the way forward when capacity is reached. Suggestion that perhaps offered bi-annually. Camping needs more volunteers. While we welcomed new staff to the team this year, we still need more volunteers for camp. Camp would also benefit from an increase in number of staff who plan and prepare the weekends. Several staff have indicated they are willing to do this and the Camp Lead plans to set this in motion ahead of the 2023 holiday.

Feedback from staff, campers and trustee visits will be used to inform planning for next year's camp.

The camp was visited by OMH trustee Robin Banerjee. Robin reported back: 'It was wonderful to visit the camp again this year. The sense of calm around the site was obvious and although the temperature hit record highs, the camp staff dealt with it well. There were opportunities to relax, or play as each camper saw fit.'

5. Achievements and Performance: OSMH Summer Holiday, 6th July - 13th August 2022

OSMH welcomed 40 holiday makers. Of the 40, 16 were new to the holiday, partially due to the covid over run, which meant we had a lot of leavers last summer.

An extensive amount of amount of work went into making visits to meet new holiday makers. In one case a pre-holiday trip was arranged to introduce a holiday maker to his helper – this worked well. The holiday continues to be able to be flexible and in this instance was able to allow the Holiday Maker to stay alternative nights, in order to help both himself and his parents recover from a previously traumatic respite experience.

The theme this year was celebrations. We invited Holiday Makers to share with us in celebrating our 40th year and other celebrations. The Holiday Makers were invited to bring photographs, certificates and memorabilia which we displayed to celebrate their achievements over the year.

We didn't go to the seaside. The team, after much consultation with volunteers, felt that it hadn't really been that missed in 2021.

On the Thursday, the Holiday Leaders made the decision to return earlier from the trip to Nene Outdoors at Ferry meadows. At midday the met office issued a severe heat warning. Although the team had put a lot of provision in place for the expected weather, they quickly realised that it was no longer safe to keep the holiday outside in the open as several Volunteers were taken ill with heat exhaustion. 1 Volunteer was extremely unwell and after not responding to treatment, the medical team responded superbly and called an ambulance. They continued to support the Volunteer until her family could arrive and support her at hospital.

Although none of the holiday makers became ill, the team made the call that the scheduled trip for the following day to Wickstead Park should be cancelled as the weather forecast was for it be equally hot. The RM explained to the children at singsong what was changing and why. Understandably some Holiday Makers were unhappy but the changes were managed well by the volunteers.

We are very grateful to Oundle School for providing us with a relatively cool sports hall for the afternoon instead. The team pulled together to give the holiday makers a different but equally fun multi sports experience. The Management Team will further discuss with trustees, policies and procedures to ensure the holiday is well prepared for future extreme weather events.

The holiday makers enjoyed their second trip to Oundle Town football club.

On the Wednesday, Half the group visited Rutland outdoor learning, where they built shelters and toasted marshmallows as well visiting the farm animals. The other group enjoyed an afternoon at Burghley House.

Our usual in-house activities went well. Swimming remains a firm favourite with the Holiday Makers. The new school pool allows for the floor to be set at different heights and we are investigating if we can have



a gap between sessions to allow shallower pool levels for smaller younger Holiday Makers and a deeper session for the older Holiday Makers or those who require additional aid from volunteers. We also enjoyed using the great hall for movie night

We continue to help Holiday Makers record and share their holiday experiences with their parents and carers, both on the week and as memories to take home.

OMH Trustee, Mel Symmonds visited the holiday. Mel reported back *'There was a fantastic atmosphere and as a group everyone worked so well together'*.

6. Achievements and performance: other Activities

The management Team introduced a new software package (Notion) to assist with planning and communications. The overwhelming feedback was that in general, the use of Notion as a system for on and pre-week communications, planning, and the Holiday Maker's care plans, was successful and a useful tool. There remain some further developments to be made and the system will continue to be monitored and developed, so its use best meets the team's needs.

Parents continue to love the daily video clips sent to them of the group/their child.

The feedback from this year's parents and Holiday Makers questionnaires is that they felt well informed about the holiday both before and during.

We were once again inspected by Ofsted who rated the holiday 'outstanding'.

The inspector observed; "All children have access to a range of fantastic facilities, including a newly built swimming pool, extensive school grounds and a sensory room"

He commented; "Leaders and managers are extremely committed and ambitious for all children to have a fantastic holiday experience. This is achieved by the support of a senior team of volunteers who bring a wide variety of personal and professional experience including expertise with children with disabilities."

Highlights from the report include;

" .. this highly bespoke planning helps to reduce anxieties for children and their families, especially when children have not attended a holiday previously. "

" achievements are celebrated"

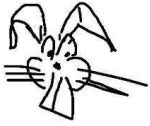
"constant reflection is a strong theme that runs through the holiday"

"When recommendations are set at inspections, leaders and managers assure these are addressed. "

7. Financial Review

The charity's finances remain suitable for the organisation's needs and obligations. At 31st December 2022, controlled balances amounted to ~£101k. In connection with this, the trustees should be hereby notified that there was an error in the previous year's accounts totals. The accounts initially stated controlled balances of ~£72k, however, it has become evident whilst finalising the 2022 accounts that the correct figure in 2021 was ~£61k (a negative difference of ~£11k). This error was in the accounting calculations only (no banking issues) and updated accounts have been filed as necessary to correct this historical error.

There has been a significant increase in the year-end 2022 controlled balances on the prior year (~£40,000) and an all-time peak for a year-end balance. Given the expense of running the charity in 2022 was ~£60,000, we remain of the view that this level is appropriate and would welcome further increase, in line with our policies. The successful enhancement of reserves has resulted from a concerted strategy undertaken by the trustees, the treasurer, and the fundraising team to focus on income generation via donations and sponsorship.



Additionally, the detail of income and expense categorisations and recording has been increased for the charity's accounts from 2022 onwards. Using the more granular detail, the treasurer will be able to provide the trustees with more detailed information and trend data in relation to the charity's finances in the future. This will begin next year once we have more than one year of newly formulated data to pull from. It is understood that such information will also be of assistance to the charity's fundraising team who can then allocate fundraising efforts to specific items or categories.

The charity has opened a new charity business bank account with The Co-Operative Banking group. This account allows the charity to split its funds across two different banks which gives better security of access to funds should either bank have technological, access or financial issues. The new bank account also allows the charity to have multiple debit card holders on the account. This is particularly useful for on-week spending which can now come directly from the charity bank account rather than asking volunteers to pay-out and expense amounts. The current list of charity debit card holders are: Andy Fahrenheit, Kate Taylor, Anna Clish, Robin Banerjee, Claire Huntingdon, Livvie Kirkbride, Sam Cone and Bella Kirk. The intention is therefore to use the Co-op bank account for all current spending, and leave the pre-existing bank account to act as a savings deposit.

2022 was an incredibly successful year for OMH fundraising. The combined sponsorship of the London Landmarks Half Marathon and a personal donation by Allan Arthur were instrumental in this strong result, but it is really the diversity of OMH's income sources that should be celebrated. From individual donations of all sizes to grants from trusts to sponsored challenges by enthusiastic volunteers, this combination is a winning formula for OMH and will hopefully continue long into the future.

8. Staff training

Two members of the Senior Team successfully undertook stages 1 and 2 of Makaton training. Ethan and Lily then lead the meal-time announcements and encouraged the use of Makaton across the holiday. This greatly improved the quality of communication with Holiday Makers and it needs to continue to be further grown and developed.

Three members of the team have already undertaken Midas minibus training previously and an additional member took the training this year. We hired two accessible vehicles for wheelchair users. We further continue to use staff cars for some individuals who struggle to use the coaches. The transport organisation is an area which the Management Team is reviewing in the coming year.

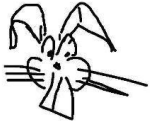
Group Leaders, Specialist Support Team and Senior Helpers were sent the behaviour management package to read through prior to the holiday.

There is now a comprehensive database of training held by of the all volunteers on the Oundle School Holiday week. This allows easy access to information and also reminders of when key training needs renewing.

The Volunteers continue to receive a range of training to meet their different roles on the holiday. All volunteers must do safeguarding training. Additionally, Makaton and Mental Health First Aid have been added to training undergone by certain members of the Senior Team.

New volunteers attended either in person or zoom training before the holiday. Feedback was taken after these sessions. Most found them really useful, as an introduction, but some felt they wanted more information about the structure of the holiday and the Holiday Makers in terms of disabilities. The Management Team will look at how this can be added in to further develop initial volunteer training.

We further encourage and use knowledge and experiences brought to the volunteer team by individuals from their professional roles. The Senior Team, Group Leaders and Specialist Support teams are encouraged to give personal feedback on the skills or areas they would like develop within the roles as volunteers on the holiday.



9. Other notes:

Feedback questionnaires were given to every holiday maker at the end of the holiday. Overwhelmingly the feedback from Holiday Makers and parents was positive. All 18 parents/carers that responded, felt their child had had an excellent holiday - that it appropriately met physical and emotional needs, kept children safe and that their child had taken part in a range of activities. Staff were friendly and approachable and they felt involved with planning for their child. All agreed or strongly agreed their child had tried new things, and that they had had enough information at the right time during the holiday.

All who answered the questionnaire felt that their child's culture was respected and they felt they were told if sanctions or behaviour management techniques were used during the holiday. Parents tell us their children enjoyed in particular swimming sessions and Twin Lakes. Other comments included "making new friends", "all of it", "everything the holiday is the highlight of his year".

Parents also commented "Organisation was great" and some commented on the value of a pre-visit - especially to new Holiday Makers. That they feel the holiday promotes independence, has "brilliant enthusiastic volunteers", and many mentioned the respite it provided them and the "opportunity to spend time with family and siblings".

Declaration: The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature

Anna Clish

Full name: Anna Clish

Position: Trustee

Date: 01/10/2023