

CHAIR'S REPORT BY STELLA BENAVIDES

In the past year we have continued to help nearly 400 children from almost 300 families in the local community by providing toys, children's books, parenting books and safety equipment as well as advice, support and information on a wide range of child development and parenting skills.

Charlton Toy Library does not receive any public funding and relies on the fundraising endeavours of a small team of volunteers in order to continue to maintain the service at Charlton House where the library is based. This year has been no exception and the team have worked tirelessly holding toy, cake and baby clothes sales, putting on pampers evenings and of course organising our Easter party which has become a much anticipated annual event. As well as these events we have continued to offer the space for children's parties as well as run fitness sessions for parents who are able to attend with small children.

In January we were very grateful to the children at Blackheath Preparatory School who had a post Christmas clear out and donated toys they had outgrown or no longer played with to the Toy Library so they could be used again to entertain the children who attend the stay and play sessions or who are supported through our Outreach Programme.

Through our Outreach Programme, our outreach worker Sharon has continued to provide a much needed service in the local community supporting disadvantaged families in four women's refuges and five Home-Start groups as well as other families referred to us by Health Visitors. As you can imagine we were extremely proud when, in March, Sharon was invited to meet the Duchess of Cambridge at Brookhill Children's Centre in recognition of her commitment to this valuable work.

It is with much regret that we have to say goodbye to Charlotte at the end of the summer. Charlotte joined us in April 2013 and has been a real asset to the Toy Library through her dedication and enthusiasm in running the sessions, co-ordinating events and management committees and organising volunteers. We will be so sad to see her go but we wish her and her family the best of luck as they move away from London to be closer to their relatives.

As I come to the end of my first year as chair it has been a pleasure to have been able to work with such a wonderful team all putting so much effort into keep this fantastic charity, which makes such a difference to the lives of families in the community, up and running.

Thanks to Charlotte, Sharon, our team of volunteers and all our members for making Charlton Toy Library such a great place!

Stella

Stella Benavides
Chairman CTL



OUTREACH WORK REPORT BY SHARON JAY

At present I am supporting a large number of families with children under 5 years old within the Greenwich Borough. I work with disadvantaged families in three women's refuges, five Home-Start groups and numerous families referred by health visitors.

Some families are hard to reach but their trust in me is growing the more I visit with them as they come to understand that my visits are completely non-judgemental towards them. They learn that my aim is to understand a child's needs and those of the parents within the family home. I help the mums to interact with their children through a range of toys, games, puzzles and books. I run activities that they can do with their children and help them understand how this can help their children if they have emotional or behaviour issues. Spending time with the child/children can make so much difference in their lives. If I feel that the family would also benefit from additional help then I refer them to Home -Start Greenwich and a volunteer can be placed within the family home for extra support.

Home-Start Greenwich runs five family groups that I visit on a regular basis: Alderwood, Vista Field, Brookhill, Sherrington and the Slade Children's Centre. I help families by supplying a wide range of toys & books and run activities within these groups. I also loan these families the unaffordable, essential home safety equipment that is needed to keep children safe within their own homes. I give the mums safety advice and equipment plus general information. I now work closely with health visitors and family engagement support workers within these centres. Families are being referred to the Charlton Toy Library outreach service for support with toys, safety advice and equipment.

Home-Start has asked us to set up satellite 'Charlton toy libraries' within the four children centre's they now run. This will give disadvantaged families access much-needed toys and safety equipment. This is being discussed at the moment and we are hoping to have this up and running for September 2015.

My outreach work still continues within the three refuges. Sadly there are more and more children arriving at these refuges and my sessions with the children are essential to them getting back an element of normality to their lives. This is especially important if they are of school age as they sometimes have to wait for nursery and school places to become available in the area they have fled to. Whilst these children are out of education we loan them a wide range of puzzles, books and games. My workshop sessions also help mums and children to interact better with each other, through a range of activities: music, painting, arts & craft and general play. My loan sessions provide the children with replacement toys, books and games that they had left behind. In some cases we are asked to find them clothes too.

Thanks to my networking and increased presence across the borough, there are a lot more Health Visitors who are more aware of the wide-ranging inter-linked outreach services that we run to support those families in the Greenwich borough who find themselves in situations of disadvantage, whether that be financial, social, ethnic and/or medical.

My outreach work also continues with support workers in Alderwood School as well as support workers in Wybourne School . Even though these children are in school, these low income families with children under 5 still need to access our toy library.

Sharon Jay
Outreach worker



TREASURER'S REPORT BY JANINE KHOSHNEVISAN

During the year 2014-2015, the toy library operated with a loss of £1,920.90. A small part of this (£338.94) is due to the timing of payments from a funder. So, discounting this amount, the true loss for the year in terms of internally-generated funds & expenditure is £1,581.96. This amount will once again be taken out of cash reserves. However, this is the last year that we can safely do so. We now need to turn our attentions to gaining outside funding for the CTL Co-ordinator post.

The major part of CTL expenditure (79%) is spent on our two employees, Charlotte Nash (CTL Co-ordinator - funded internally) and Sharon Jay (our Outreach Worker - funded by BBC Children in Need). A big thank you goes to both these employees whose dedication, energy and enthusiasm have ensured a continuing high standard of the toy library's services. As always, our two employees were assisted by a long-standing dedicated team of volunteers and the management committee.

Once again, we have managed to keep running costs to a bare minimum which, excluding insurance, came to just £2,261.40. For the fourth year-running, we have had no dedicated funding to purchase new toys or safety equipment. However, thanks to the generosity of the local community, we have received a huge amount of good quality donations that have enabled us to maintain our stocks. We would like to extend a huge thank you to Blackheath Preparatory School for the huge amount of toys and games that their children donated.

We would also like to extend our thanks to thank BBC Children in Need who have funded the Outreach Worker post again this year. Our thanks also go to Greenwich Council for their continued help-in-kind through the peppercorn rent of our premises.

Internal fundraising, such as birthday parties, children's haircuts and fitness classes for mothers while their children play, continues to be central in keeping the toy library afloat. We would like to thank Alex Riley who helped raise funds through her fitness classes and Debbie Newman with her children's haircutting. Volunteers have also been very active with cake and toy sales. Our annual large events have been very successful too. Thank you to everyone who helped organise them and to those who attended.

Another huge 'thank you' goes to ALL our helpers and volunteers whose contributions have helped to improve the lives of so many children and their families across the borough. CTL would not be able to achieve as much as it does without them!

These accounts have been successfully examined and accepted by our Independent Examiner, Caroline Sharp (ACA, DChA)

CHARLTON TOY LIBRARY INCOME RESERVES POLICY - JANUARY 2004 Updated by the Management committee at the monthly Management meeting dated 11th June 2014 Unrestricted funds are needed:

- a) to provide funds which can be designated to specific projects to enable these projects to be undertaken at short notice and
- b) to cover administration, fund-raising and support costs without which the charity could not function.

The trustees consider it prudent that unrestricted reserves should be sufficient:

- a) to avoid the necessity of releasing fixed assets held for the charity's use;
- b) to cover 6 month's administration, fund-raising and support costs (currently approximately £10,000)
- c) to provide a pool equal to 10% of the average charitable expenditure over the preceding 2 years from which funds can be designated to specific projects (currently approximately £4,500).



TOY LIBRARY CO-ORDINATOR'S REPORT BY CHARLOTTE NASH

It has once again been a busy year at the toy library, with lots of new members joining, new volunteers and new committee members! It will also sadly be my last year here as I am relocating with my family to the North West over the summer. I have had a fantastic time working as Toy Library Co-ordinator for the past two years and will be very sad to leave. Charlton Toy Library provides a unique service within the community and I have felt very privileged to work for it and with such a dedicated team of volunteers and staff. I also suspect my children may never quite get over me leaving as they are convinced their mum has the best job in the world!

There have been many highlights over the past twelve months: we have had a great year for sales and fairs, with our Summer and Christmas Fairs being particularly successful. We also had fun at the Horn Fair over the summer and have had table sales at Millennium Primary School amongst others. All of this is due to the enormous dedication of Dona, who is a driving force in organising these great fundraisers. All of the many donations of good quality toys, books and children's equipment we receive are invaluable for helping us raise these vital funds, and also for restocking.

We had a very busy Christmas this year. Last year we organised for all of our Outreach children to receive a Christmas present, and this year we did the same and also had a Hamper Appeal. Thank you so much to all of you who helped with this - we had a fantastic response and managed to take hampers to all our outreach families and the refuges! Thank you also to our brilliant volunteers who helped wrap shoe boxes and pack these so that they could be delivered in time!

This year we also had a massive donation of toys, books and games from the children at Blackheath Prep, organised by Stella. After Christmas each child brought in at least one toy to school (and some brought quite a few!) and in total we collected a huge array. This donation alone hugely restocked our collection, and has also enabled us to build up a stand-alone outreach supply for Sharon to use, so a very big thank you to everyone involved in organising this.

We have had lots of great sessions over the past year, with visits from East Greenwich Fire Service, the Speech & Language team, Page & Small Opticians, Greenwich Ecology Park and storytime with both Barefoot Books and Usborne Books and we would like to thank everyone for giving their time and expertise. Our Tuesday singing sessions with Stella have been ever popular and she is much missed since returning to work this summer. I would like to thank Sarah and Simina who have very ably stepped in to carry these sessions on, and we hope to continue them next term. We have also had new weekly craft sessions this year run by Kezia every Thursday. These have been very popular and her dedication and creativity have enabled the children to have lots of fun painting, making dragons, bears and muddy pigs!





CHARLTON TOY LIBRARY INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT 2014-2015

Income	Restricted	Unrestricted		Previous year
BBC Children in Need	8,753.10		BBC Children in Need	5,003.90
Fundraising		2,883.09		1,314.95
Membership fees		1,804.00		2,343.00
Toy loan fees		1,412.15		1,786.00
Safety Equipment loan fees		113.00		133.50
Session sales		736.00		662.60
Special events/parties		1,163.00		993.00
Donations		1,279.96		1,255.70
Bank interest		2.14		1.84
Gift Aid		101.78		582.39
TOTAL	8,753.10	9,495.47	18,248.57	14,076.88
Expenditure	Restricted	Unrestricted	Total	Previous Year
Advertising/promotional		39.79	39.79	48.99
Child Safety Equipment		30.00	30.00	5.00
Equipment		88.95	88.95	63.46
Fundraising expenses		334.13	334.15	180.50
General running costs		2,261.40	2,261.40	2,410.46
Insurance		990.35	990.35	1,040.26
Management costs		56.62	56.62	64.00
Staffing costs	9,092.04	6,913.51	16,005.55	13,369.23
Rent (to Greenwich Council)		0.00	0.00	0.00
Toys books videos etc		21.59	21.59	0.00
Travel		341.09	341.09	185.40
Volunteer expenses		0.00	0.00	20.48
TOTAL	9,092.04	11,077.43	20,169.47	17,387.78
PROFIT/LOSS	-338.94	-1,581.96	-1,920.90	

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 MARCH 2015

CURRENT ASSETS	Restricted	Unrestricted	Totals
Current Account	201.44	6,496.50	6,697.94
Business Reserve		4,643.98	4,643.98
Cash in hand		100.00	100.00
5 unrepresented items		-467.81	-467.81
	201.44	10,772.67	10,974.11
Represented by:			
Balance b/fwd 2013-2014	540.38	12,354.63	12,895.01
Profit/loss for 2012-2013	-338.94	-1,581.96	-1,920.90
	201.44	10,772.67	10,974.11

ACHIEVEMENTS 2014-2015

- 276 families used CTL'S services during the year
- 397 children used our service
- Continued to run all play and borrowing sessions with the help of volunteers
- Continued our popular music and craft sessions
- Continued our Child Safety Equipment Loan Scheme

- Our Outreach Worker met the Duchess of Cambridge
- Received a huge toy donation from Blackheath Prep
- Continued the Mobile Project in the Charlton, Thamesmead, Woolwich, Eltham, Plumstead & Abbeywood areas
- Catalogued new toys, books and safety equipment for the Mobile Project
- Created and maintained strong links with relevant organisations across the Borough, including several HomeStart groups and 3 Women's Refuges
- Promoted awareness & membership of our service amongst target groups, including black and minority ethnic & low income families, and families suffering domestic abuse
- Attended outreach/networking days with the Mobile Project

- Organised a massively successful Easter Party
- Ran 121 borrowing and stay-and-play sessions
- Held weekly music sessions & craft events... free of charge to members
- Opened one day per week during the summer holidays
- Held Speech and Language, Dental and Fire Safety information days
- Improved the Stay-and-Play sessions with new and exciting messy play ideas
- Organised the photographer
- Celebrated events in the cultural calendar, e.g. Chinese New Year and Divali
- Held regular Management Committee meetings and the AGM
- Provided skill and experience opportunities for volunteers
- Published a regular newsletter
- Publicised the Toy Library to local groups and around the borough
- Further developed and enhanced our online presence
- Diversified our income sources by offering other events for our members such as birthday parties, child hair-cutting and parent fitness classes
- Attended the Horn Fair

Membership Statistics

Total families using CTL main services and outreach service combined: 276

Total number of children helped: 397

Outreach families supported (free of charge): 89

Families paying concessionary rate: 29

Families on low incomes: 122

Families from BME backgrounds: 82

New families: 129

Lone parents: 79

Childminders: 8

Grandparents: 13

PLANS 2015-2016

- Continue to offer our full range of services both at the main site in Charlton House and via our Outreach Mobile Project
 - Continue to serve three Women's Refuges and five HomeStart Groups
 - Continue the funding search for salaries and toy/book stock and safety equipment.
 - Apply for funding for computer software updates
 - Work on further diversifying our income sources
 - Search for a dedicated fundraising volunteer
-
- Hold regular committee meetings and AGM
 - Continue to encourage greater Management Committee representation.
 - Review Toy Library policies & procedures
 - Further develop our website and online presence.
 - Undertake a membership survey.
 - Open our services at Charlton House for one session per week in school summer holidays, (dependent on availability of volunteers)
-
- Maintain and improve links with relevant organisations across the Borough
 - Continue to increase awareness and use of our services particularly amongst black and minority ethnic and disadvantaged families
 - Further promote our services to local Grandparents & childminders
-
- Organise seasonal and cultural events.
 - Hold Speech and Language, Dental and Fire Safety information days.
-
- Continue to publish a regular newsletter.
 - Find and develop fundraising and promotional opportunities at local events.
 - Continue to organise internal fundraising & social events.
 - Organise the Photographer to visit.
 - Continue to offer multiple volunteering opportunities for people



AIMS & OBJECTIVES

AIMS:

- To promote the principle that play does matter for the developing child.

OBJECTIVES:

- To make play available and lend appropriate toys to extend the opportunity for shared play into the home.
- To provide play areas where children and adults can use a wide range of toys and creative activities.
- To offer an opportunity to socialise and exchange experiences.
- To offer a befriending and supportive service to parents and carers.

“Toy libraries exist to promote the principle that play does matter for the developing child. They operate as a preventative service filling the gaps in the existing provision for all families with babies and young children, and for people with special needs. By offering a befriending, supportive service to parents, and by making available and lending appropriate toys, they extend the opportunity for shared play in the home.”

Playmatters

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Charlton Toy Library is committed to Equal Opportunities. We recognise that this means more than ensuring that no individual is discriminated against on grounds of sex, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or racial origin, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, age or religious belief. It means we need to take positive action to promote the development of Equal Opportunities in every area of the Toy Library. The concept of Equal Opportunities is the basic foundation of a democratic society and underlines all legislation. We declare our intention to work for the furtherance of equal treatment employment, committee, representation and service provision. Charlton Toy Library is committed to a programme of action to make this policy effective. This policy will be updated and monitored to check that it is being effective. The responsibility for this will lie with the Chair of the Management Committee and a key worker.



COMMITTEE MEMBERS, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS (AS AT 31 MARCH 2015)

Stella Benavides, Chair
Janine Khoshnevisan, Treasurer
Dona Dickson, Secretary
Sarah Roseblade, Committee Member
Patricia Santome, Committee Member
Emily Wasp, Committee Member
Ann Bijmens, Committee Member

Trustees and Officers are elected and appointed at the Annual General Meeting by nomination method, or co-opted by the Management Committee at a monthly meeting.

Staff

Sharon Jay, Outreach Worker
Charlotte Nash, Toy Library Co-ordinator

Volunteers & Fundraisers

Janine Khoshnevisan, Dona Dickson, Stella Benavides (music),
Sarah Roseblade, Simone Joseph, Michele Cleaverly, Federica Bianchi,
Madeley Crenshaw-Dykes, Kezia Okafor, Gill Broaders,
Ben Khoshnevisan, Harpreet Kaur Gill, Alex Riley, Debbie Newman

**And to everyone else who has helped on a more informal basis...
thank you!**



VOLUNTEERS, FUNDRAISERS AND SUPPORTERS

Supporters

As always, there are a huge number of people and organisations to thank for their support.

First, the Management Committee, the Staff and the Volunteers along with their partners, families and friends, who have all contributed so much to the Toy Library to make it such a success.

Next, our funders:

BBC Children in Need

And to all our other supporters:

Old Cottage Coffee Shop	Speech & Language Services
Theatre Bugs	Community Dentist
Charlton Resident's Association	Linda Pound
Boppin' Bunnies	Alex Riley
Diddi Dance	Debbie Newman
Punk Me Up Buttercup	Blackheath Cooks
Children's Bureau	Meantime Brewery
Greenwich Council	The Sunday Times
P C Services (Charlton)	Biscuit Cafe
Charlton House	Ottie & the Bea
Home-Start Greenwich	Sainsbury's Local
The Women's Refuges	Giraffe
Greenwich Ecology Park	
Old Time Nursery	
East Greenwich Fire Brigade	

And thanks too to our Independent Examiner, Ms Caroline Sharp (ACA, DChA)

And finally, our thanks (and apologies!) to anyone else who has helped us along the way and who we may have momentarily forgotten to mention when we wrote this report!



Signature

I declare, in my capacity as Chair of the Management Committee,
that:

- the Management Committee has approved the report above; and
- have authorised me to sign it on their behalf.

Signature:

Full name:

Position:

Date:

