



Reading Family Aid Group

ANNUAL REPORT

Year ended 30 April 2024

Email: [info@ReadingFamilyAid.org](mailto:info@ReadingFamilyAid.org)

Address: 61 Woodcote Road, Caversham,  
Reading, RG4 7EX

Website: [www.ReadingFamilyAid.org](http://www.ReadingFamilyAid.org)

Phone: 07930 033413

Registered charity no: 1022144



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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 families living with poverty, abuse, illness, disability, homelessness, or refugee status.

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

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

Where our funds permit, we also provide outings throughout the year for children and their families who otherwise would not be able to go. We take families to theme parks, the seaside, farm parks, activity centres, and to the pantomime at Christmas.



## CHAIR'S REPORT

In June 2023 Reading Family Aid marked 30 years since becoming an official Charity. Vivienne had the marvellous idea of inviting 30 local children with birthdays close to ours to help us celebrate. We contacted schools, social workers and health visitors to find the children, and held a party in the Forbury Gardens, inviting the children and their families. The weather was very kind and the families enjoyed the cake and the games and the presents.



At the AGM in July, I started my first year as chair (although for the second time around) with some trepidation. Firstly, I had no vice-chair and secondly, we had lost two key members. Sravanthi, the outgoing chair, and Roz were both stepping down. However, all was not lost.

A successful recruitment campaign spearheaded by Ruth, Vivienne and Charlie resulted in six new members. Amber, Angela, Anna G, Carolyn, Nikki and Victoria. (Amber and Nikki have since stepped back, possibly temporarily in both instances).

During the school summer holidays Vivienne and the Outings team arranged a number of events for families, including trips to Bournemouth, Caversham Lakes, and Camp Mohawk.



The September meeting was held in-person. Thanks to Vivienne for organising for us to meet at the Reading Canoe Club (and for the delicious food). This enabled most of the new members to meet the existing members. We were able to welcome Paul back to the Committee, but sadly Jo Saunders had to resign. The good news was that Vivienne stepped up to the role of vice-chair. We were able to report that the Fence Club had donated £2,000 towards outings, the Toy Project plans were getting started, Adult and Children Safeguarding training was to be organised and the publicity team got RFA onto Instagram and Threads and also updated the Christmas poster.

The November meeting saw another resignation (from Angela), but on a lighter note, plans for the Toy Project were progressing well. Laura was interviewed twice by Radio Berkshire and a “boost” post on Facebook had generated some significant responses with some 5000 views and 200 clicks to our links. NewsThump, a Reading-based satire and spoof news organisation, posted links to our Wish List and some 100 gifts were purchased for us by their followers.

It was with sadness that we learnt of the passing of Vera Box, an original member, if not the instigator of the charity. I was able to attend her funeral on our behalf.

December as ever, was a busy month. I and Jill attended carol singing at the Waitrose in Tilehurst at the invitation of the Reading Lions, who had earlier generously contributed £1000 to the Toys and Teens Appeal. The Berkshire Masons once again made a generous donation of toys during Toy Week. Many other donations were made, including excess items from the Cowshed and the Giving Tree, such that we agreed to hire a unit at Big Yellow until the following year. A monthly donation to offset the expense was made by the Chair. We were blessed with many volunteers during Toy Week and everyone’s hard work resulted in just short of 2,500 children receiving gifts.



January saw the annual trip to the Pantomime and as ever, it was a great success. We later had a celebratory meal at Quattro’s in Caversham for members, volunteers, and partners. Vivienne, our Safeguarding lead, provided an informal introduction to safeguarding; all members subsequently took an online course. Due to family and other commitments, Anna W had to stand down.

In February, members attended a reception hosted by the mayor of Reading, Councillor Tony Page. Having visited us during the Toy Week, he was impressed and wanted to show his thanks. It was a pleasant and informative evening.



At the March meeting, we welcomed Yvette to the publicity team and were able to share the news that Reading Golf Club had raised £12,265 for us over the past 12 months. Thanks to Ruth for her initial contact and for accepting the cheque on our behalf.



Also in March, we received a very welcome donation of toys from *Kids In Mind*. Gordon, a trustee of *Kids In Mind*, delivered the toys and also very kindly unloaded them all for us!



In April we were approached by Procter & Gamble who wanted to partner with us for the next two years. There was to be an initial donation of £3000. Several committee members joined with P & G in a Zoom meeting and a plan for the future was formed. I am pleased to say that after another call for a vice-chair, Anna G agreed to put herself forward at the AGM. We were also delighted to hear that after a great deal of hard work on our part, especially from Jo Skidmore, we have been awarded the Reading Voluntary Action Safe and Sound kitemark. This demonstrates our commitment to good governance of our charity.

Also in April we partnered for the second year with Reading Refugee Support Group to provide Easter eggs for some 70 children from refugee families. Maria Baker from RRSRG said “The gift of the Easter eggs was met with much excitement and joy. Refugee and asylum-seeking children from Afghanistan, Eritrea, Sudan, Ukraine and other countries were able to celebrate a traditional custom in safety with their friends and family. Smiles were plentiful.”



Much more has happened during the last twelve months, especially behind closed doors. The finance report/fundraising report highlights many other donations. I very much appreciate all the work that the committee members put in, especially those who have key roles. Sue for her meticulous accounts and budget planning, Laura for taking the minutes of all the meetings and spearheading the Toy Project. To Sheila for managing our info account and sending emails to the right person. To Vivienne and her team for planning and organising all the outings throughout the year (over 650 people attended this year!). To Ruth and team for the research and planning that goes into the applications for funding. And finally, to Charlie and team who keep us in the public eye with social media and newsletters.

I said earlier in this report that the year started with trepidation on my part but I can safely say that I go into my final year as chair backed by a great team of people who are gifted and dedicated in the roles they perform and who, like me, just want to

Put a smile on Children’s Faces.

Wendy Howell, Chair, July 2024

# FINANCIAL REPORT

## 1. Summary

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

	2023/24	2022/23	Change
	£	£	£
Total income	36,599.10	29,684.86	6,914.24
Total expenditure	33,923.47	24,723.75	9,199.72
<b>Surplus</b>	<b>2,675.63</b>	<b>4,961.11</b>	<b>-2,285.48</b>

## 2. Income

Total income in 2023/24 was £36,599.10, £6,914.24 higher than the previous year.

Funding was generously provided towards the Toy Project from The John Sykes Foundation (£1,000) and the Lions Club Reading (£1,000).

Funding for trips was provided by A Magic Little Grant for £500 (Camp Mohawk) and Englefield Trust for £1,100 (Easter Odds Farm trip). £3,560 had already been donated in 2022/23 by the Fence Club and Toy Trust towards this year's Bournemouth, Caversham Lakes, Chessington and Thorpe Park trips.

Fund raising by The Caversham Home of Reading Golf Course brought in a magnificent £12,265 donation and Waitrose kindly donated £3,750. A GoFundMe appeal together with generous donations from local businesses, churches, many individuals and gift aid provided further income. Donations received in memory of 2 committee members totalled £622.33 to date.

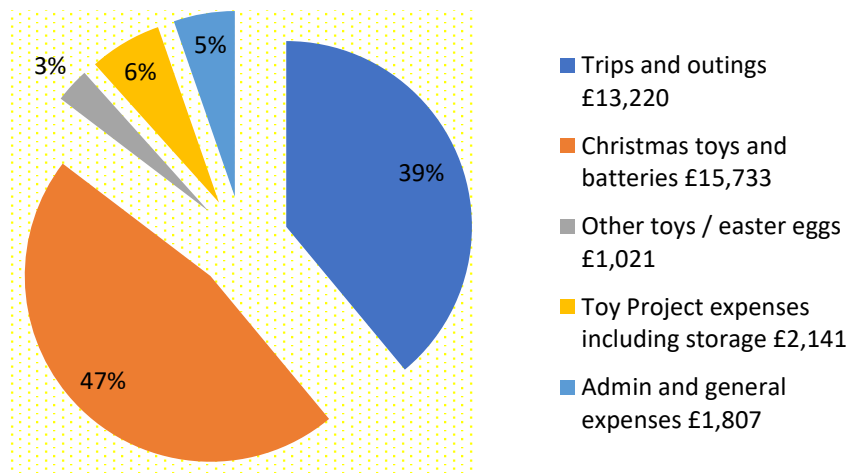
Fundraising by the committee brought in another £570 via car boot sales and sale of goods and textiles.

## 3. Expenditure

Total expenditure in 23/24 was £33,923.47, £ 9,199.72 more than 22/23. An additional £5,903.99 was spent on toys and batteries for Christmas 2023 Toy project, and additional storage costs of £676 incurred for toys for next year. £811.50 was spent on toys to celebrate our 'birthday'.

Trips cost £1,953 more than last year with an additional trip organised to Chessington and Thorpe Park for the older children in October. A second coach visit was also arranged to Bournemouth in the summer together with a visit to the Oceanarium due to the inclement weather.

## 2023/24 How we spent the money



<b>Christmas Toy Project expenditure</b>	2023/24	2022/23	Change
	£	£	£
Toys and batteries	15,733.25	9,829.26	5,903.99
Contribution for use of hall	350.00	250.00	100.00
Labels, bags, publicity and stationery	542.17	444.24	97.93
Van insurance, travel and fuel	345.56	389.99	-44.43
Food for helpers	48.65	39.80	8.85
Storage	854.70	192.00	662.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>17,874.33</b>	<b>11,145.29</b>	<b>6,729.04</b>

<b>Trips and Activities Expenditure</b>	2023/24	2022/23	Change
	£	£	£
Caversham Lakes	1,244.00	1,686.00	-442.00.
Coach /(s) to Bournemouth and expenses	2,310.58	840.00	1,470.58
Chessington/Thorpe Park	3,360.00	1,575.00	1,785.00
Bucklebury Farm		1,014.80	-1,014.80
Camp Mohawk	1,145.00	1,130.00	15.00
Panto	3,956.00	3,940.00	16.00
Easter Outing to Odds Farm	1,204.80	1,081.20	123.60
<b>Total</b>	<b>13,220.38</b>	<b>11,267.00</b>	<b>1,953.36</b>

**READING FAMILY AID**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORT FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30th APRIL 2024**

	Year Ended 30th April 2024 £	Year Ended 30th April 2023 £
<b>Income</b>		
Donations		
General /Toy Project donations with Gift Aid	8,351.89	21,094.63
Toy Project appeal	7,796.93	
Reading Golf Club	12,265.00	
Waitrose	3,750.00	
	<b>32,163.82</b>	<b>21,094.63</b>
Funding		
Magic Little Grant (Camp Mohawk)	500.00	500.00
Englefield Trust (Odds Farm Easter 24)	1,100.00	
John Sykes (for Toy Project)	1,000.00	1,000.00
Reading Lions / Giving Tree 2023 ( for toys)	1,000.00	1,500.00
Tesco Groundworks (Toys)		1,000.00
Fence Club (for Caversham Lakes trip 2024)		2,000.00
Toy Trust (for Bournemouth trip 2024)		1,560.00
	<b>3,600.00</b>	<b>7,560.00</b>
Fundraising		-
Fairs, Car boot, textiles	285.00	800.50
Sale of Goods	285.00	200.00
Other Income		
Deposit Account Interest	265.28	29.73
	-	-
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>36,599.10</b>	<b>29,684.86</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Toy Project : General expenses	1,587.88	1,124.03
Toy Project :Toys, Gifts and vouchers	15,431.75	9,829.26
Toy Project: Storage	854.70	192.00
Pantomime	3,956.00	3,940.00
Summer / Autumn outings	6,914.58	5,115.80
Camp Mohawk outing	1,145.00	1,130.00
Easter Outing 2024	1,204.80	1,081.20
Easter Eggs for refugees	210.00	140.00
Birthday celebrations	811.50	-
Admin & general expenses	1,807.26	2,171.46
	-	-
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>33,923.47</b>	<b>24,723.75</b>
<b>Surplus of income over expenditure</b>	<b>2,675.63</b>	<b>4,961.11</b>

**READING FAMILY AID GROUP  
BALANCE SHEET**

	As at 30 April 2024 £	As at 30 April 2023 £
<b>Balance at Bank</b>		
Barclays Current Account	2,890.43	1,230.08
Barclays Deposit Account	30,341.09	29,325.81
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>33,231.52</b>	<b>30,555.89</b>
<b>Funds at beginning of year</b>	30,555.89	25,594.78
<b>Surplus/(deficit) of income over expenditure</b>	2,675.63	4,961.11
<b>Funds at end of year</b>	<b>33,231.52</b>	<b>30,555.89</b>

Prepared by: S. Marson, Treasurer

Signed S Marson Dated 30.5.2024

**Basis of preparation**

The accounts are prepared on the receipts and payments basis.

**Funds**

Total funds at the end of April 2024 are £33,231.52. £1,245.29 has been donated towards toys for the 2024 Toy Project.

All other funds are unrestricted

It is currently planned to use most of the existing funds to finance activities in the year ended 30th April 2025.

**Reserves Policy:**

The trustees aim to keep sufficient unrestricted funds to cover a year of essential expenditure. This includes insurance, admin expenses and toy project expenses as well as a further buffer to cover any unexpected expenses.

The reserve amount is set to be £5,000

**Independent Examiner's Statement:**

I have examined the accounts for the year ended 30th April 2024. 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 examination to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed Annette Parker Dated 18/6/24

Mrs Annette Parker

## TRUSTEES

Chair: Wendy Howell

Vice Chair: Vivienne Simpson

Secretary: Laura Windisch

Treasurer: Sue Marson

Others: Charlie McLean, Ruth Perkins, 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, 4 March 2021 and 11 January 2024

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 Registered Address

61 Woodcote Road, Caversham, Reading, RG4 7EX