



*Supporting children through
the wonder of science*

formerly known as Winchester Science Centre

Registered Charity No. 294582
Registered Company No. 02014929



On 28th February 2023, in the company of our Young Steering Group, Patron and many special guests, we publicly launched our new seven-year strategy, For People and Planet 2030, and unveiled our new identity as Wonderseekers.

We were delighted by the positive response we received and include below a few of the comments we captured on the night.



"I love the sense of community in the Young Steering Group and how we come together to plan and test out new things."

I'm really excited about the new strategy – I can't wait to hear about the new nature reserve and how we'll be promoting the planet."

Rumaysa (age 12)
A member of Wonderseekers' Young Steering Group



"Access to nature should be everybody's right."

There's a fantastic role for Wonderseekers in bridging that gap and listening to what young people say about how they want to interact with nature and value it. We need to involve children from the start."

Dr Dan Hoare
Director of Conservation
Butterfly Conservation



"It's brilliant to see so many young people using their voices and become empowered – I'm so inspired to learn from you all."

When I was at school, I found science really hard. I was told I was dyslexic when I was seven years old so I had to find the confidence to learn how I learn best.

Coming to places like Winchester Science Centre as a child tells me now that, regardless of what happened in the classroom, I'm able to stand here with you today.

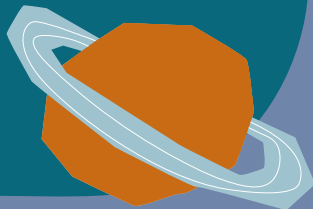
It's had a massive influence in shaping the scientist I've become and the scientist I hope to be in the future."

Megan McCubbin
Patron
Wonderseekers

"Science and discovery centres have a critically important role to play in engaging more young people with life-changing science and technology."

Our Trustees are delighted to support Winchester Science Centre with their vision to inspire and empower young people, especially those who have previously had limited access to science."

Philippa Charles
Director
Garfield Weston Foundation



Report of the Trustees and strategic report

The Board of Trustees is pleased to present its annual Trustees' report together with consolidated financial statements of the Charity and its trading subsidiary for the year ending 31st March 2023.

The report is prepared to meet the requirements for a directors' report and accounts for Companies Act purposes. The Trustees' report and financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Companies Act 2006, the Memorandum and Articles of Association, and Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice, applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

On 19th October 2022, the Charity changed its name to Wonderseekers from Winchester Science Centre.

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Chair and CEO's report

Welcome to our annual report.

This has been a milestone year for our Charity; a year full of optimism, inspirational moments and renewed resilience in the face of very significant challenges. We changed our Charity's name from Winchester Science Centre to Wonderseekers to further our reach and impact and, as Wonderseekers, in February 2023, we launched a bold new seven-year strategy, For People and Planet 2030.

As we embark on an exciting new chapter, we must also recognise and reflect on our journey so far. The confidence we have in our ability to make a difference to children's lives, through science, comes from our over 35 years' experience working in the space. We've sought to understand the barriers that prevent children from participating in science and, as a result, taken a leadership role in accessibility, enabling and welcoming more children to take part in science engagement and witnessing the impact this has first-hand.

Over the past few years, like many other charities and organisations, we've had to fight for our survival and prove our worth, learning from our experience and building resilience along the way. We've made difficult decisions, adapting to external pressures, and enduring the consequences. In 2020, we set out a Covid Recovery Plan to Regroup, Rebuild and Recover to provide a clear pathway to build our own resilience and deliver on mission. We set out long-term strategic priorities, to ensure that short-term urgency and need didn't undermine important long-term development. We're enormously proud of our whole team effort in our recovery and grateful for the incredible support we have received from organisations and funders, who have enabled us to be where we are today.



For People and Planet 2030 is bold. It stands on the shoulders of our previous strategy, building on the step-change we made in accessibility to champion equity. It also promises to lead by example on environmental sustainability, to use our spaces and experiences to help children respond to climate change and biodiversity loss and empower collective action for the benefit of people and the planet.

We are resourced and ready to go, 100% committed to the journey ahead of us.

Our review of 2022/23 has been mixed. Our ability to ignite and sustain children's curiosity through science is one of our greatest strengths and achievements and this year, through investment in our team, Winchester Science Centre, community-based outreach and funded programmes, the quality of our experiences is better than ever. We've welcomed high levels of repeat visits, an increase in annual membership and consistently positive visitor feedback.

Extreme economic pressures this year have been deeply felt by children. Strong strategic and financial planning enabled us to respond to the crisis in ways that supported children, our staff and suppliers. We continued to work in priority communities, engaging children through free, science-based holiday and school activities, invested in adding value to our visitors' experience at Winchester Science Centre and provided much-valued wellbeing and financial support packages to staff.



Unprecedented weather has a big impact on the financial performance of our Science Centre, with fewer people choosing to visit on hot and sunny days whilst on cold and wet days, the Centre's own capacity limits the number of people who can visit. With 2022 being the warmest year on record, we welcomed fewer visitors to the Science Centre than we had anticipated, despite attracting good numbers on sunny days. Delivering on our future plans, expanding into environmental science and outdoor science engagement, presents a real opportunity to address this ever-present risk.

There have been many great moments during the year. The support from our Patron, Megan McCubbin, and involvement of our Young Steering Group at our strategy launch proved to be a very powerful demonstration of young people's voices and the need for us to take action against climate change and biodiversity loss. Another memorable occasion was when we opened our Science Centre for a special evening that we held for refugees and their families and support families. We were ably supported by Ukrainian volunteers who welcomed our guests and even translated a live planetarium show for them. Then there was the delight we all felt when adults and children joined Santa on a mission to the International Space Station in our brand-new Christmas planetarium experience. Most recently, we met Layla, a young girl who contributed to a prosthetics exhibit by sharing her story about learning to use a modular prosthetic limb that has helped her overcome adversity and do exciting new things.



After six thoroughly enjoyable and rewarding years in the role, I will step back as Chair of Trustees at the AGM in October 2023.

I am enormously proud of the impact our Charity has had during my tenure and look forward to seeing Wonderseekers go from strength to strength over the years ahead.



Toby King
Chair of Trustees

These are just a few of the incredible interactions our Charity has enabled over the past year. Many more are detailed in this report and we hope you'll enjoy reading about the differences they've made to so many people.

We give thanks for the service given to our Charity by Admiral Sir Kenneth Eaton GBE KCB FREng, who sadly died aged 87 after a short illness on 20th July 2022.

We are enormously grateful for the support our Charity receives each year. We want to record our heartfelt thanks to all of our supporters and funders, our staff and volunteers, the children who inspire us and, in turn, the families and schools who support them.

Thank you.



Ben Ward
Chief Executive Officer



Prof. Toby King
Chair of Trustees

Charity impact

Our Charity has engaged young people in science since it was founded in 1986. Our delivery has evolved over the decades, but our ethos remains pretty much the same - to make science accessible and fun to children at a young age. But why?

Originally, emphasis was placed on science and technology career pathways, and for many organisations this is still their primary focus. But, for Wonderseekers, we now believe that science engagement is critical for children to reach their full potential.

Through Wonderseekers, children can:

- discover the wonder of science and make sense of the world around them and their place within it,
- use science methodology as a framework for critical thinking and problem solving,
- develop their self-confidence and resilience through practical experience and experimentation.

Fun, positive, people-led activities at our Science Centre, in schools, communities and online, are central to getting children and their families engaged in science. Over the past seven years we have worked to overcome many barriers that have traditionally stopped children from participating, particularly for people with disabilities or impairments and for children living in areas of multiple deprivation.

Our work to date has increased our awareness of the massive inequality that exists and demonstrated the important difference our Charity can make. We are determined to do more. This year we have focused on long-term impact, published a new seven-year strategy and defined our values to guide our efforts.

In October 2022, to support our new strategy, diversify our reach and grow impact, we changed our Charity name from Winchester Science Centre to Wonderseekers and developed a new online presence for our Charity.

Winchester Science Centre continues to thrive as a hub for science engagement within the South of England and plays a central role in achieving impact within the Wonderseekers family.



The difference our Charity can make is demonstrated through our theory of change



Year in view

April 2022

Megan McCubbin meets school children at the Science Centre

Outdoor science workshop with Board and Senior Management Team, 27th April



May 2022

School Travel Awards, Best STEM School Trip, 25th May

The new Young Steering Group recruits meet for the first time
Curiosity Club launches



June 2022

Noël Turner Science Festival, 30th June – 1st July

CBBC Something Special filmed at the Science Centre, 7th June



July 2022

Disney and Pixar Lightyear collaboration, 21st July – 4th September



August 2022

Science in the community – Leigh Park Library, Havant

Refugee event, 20th August
(195 people – children and adult refugees and host families attended the event)



September 2022

Staff Conference, 6th September



Wonderseekers

October 2022

Charity officially named Wonderseekers at the Annual General Meeting

Bio:Space nature space, living willow house planted outside



November 2022

Outdoor science engagement trialed with schools and toddler groups



December 2022

Cosmic Christmas and Space Station Science



March 2023

Bold Futures workshops and evaluation pilot

February 2023

Wonderseekers goes live - strategy launch and website, 28th February

New evening events programme introduced



January 2023

AccessAble training for all staff

New themes launch with Zero Degrees and free planetarium experience



We engaged

146,952

visitors at
Winchester Science Centre
through the following activities:



Schools and groups

The Ultimate STEM School Trip

Number of children: **33,710**

Teachers and accompanying adults: **4,752**

Badge Nights for uniformed groups: **1,027**

47%

received 60%
subsidy, based on
free school meal
allocation

34%

received 15%
subsidy, based on
supported school
allowance

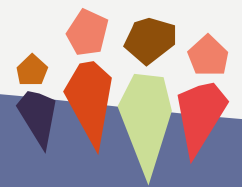
Special events

Cosmic Christmas: **2,849**

Evening events: **1,105**

Community engagement

Wonderseekers engaged **9,597** children through
funded community and school programmes



Family visits

103,509 visitors

65,452 (63%) attended a planetarium show

68,745 (68%) attended the free science show

Post visitor survey (1,856 family visitors responded)

Percentages show the respondents who agreed and strongly agreed to the following statements:

93%

We had fun

84%

We could all
participate in the
activities provided

86%

We learnt more
about science as a
result of our visit

79%

The live science
demos/shows
helped us to
engage in science
more deeply

77%

We are better
able to see how
science is relevant
to our lives

67%

Visiting the
Science Centre
has increased our
interest in science

Online engagement

Website

17%

increase

in number of users
304,808 vs 260,484

10%

increase

in number of sessions
468,461 vs 423,440



20%

increase

on previous year to
26,662 followers



7%

increase

on previous year to
4,020 followers

Strategy

Wonderseekers new strategy - For People and Planet 2030

Our new strategy, For People and Planet 2030, sets out our ambition to build on our heritage, to develop our experience in equality, diversity and inclusion, continue our focus on all disciplines of science and take on an environmental agenda in response to global climate and biodiversity crises.

Our aim is that, through Wonderseekers, children can choose to play their part and contribute to a more equitable world where science plays a key role in protecting their futures and the future of the planet.



Objectives, achievements and performance

Our new strategy came into effect in April 2023.

For this year's annual report, we are reporting against the strategic objectives set out in the previous strategy.

1.

Work collaboratively with new under-served communities, removing barriers to engagement, particularly for those living with a disability or impairment

We've been on a remarkable journey over the past six years, finding ways to bring impactful science experiences to disadvantaged communities. We're removing barriers for children to engage in our Science Centre and building our ability to provide accessibility, so everyone who meets our Charity knows they're welcomed and valued.

We've been delighted by the response we've had to all our work in accessibility, which we've continued to build on this year through innovation and training both at our Science Centre and experiences offered in schools and communities. This can be seen in the increase in visitors to the Science Centre who identify as having a disability, which has increased to 18.99% from 14.47% the previous year, and 9.18% recorded in 2017, at the start of our accessibility journey.

We have learnt invaluable lessons and improved our ability to support children who need our help the most, effectively and impactfully. There remain, however, significant and complex barriers to delivering impactful community engagement, which we're addressing through our future plans. With support from evaluation consultant, Jen DeWitt, we have invested in developing an evaluation framework, which we expect to complete in 2023.

Our Widening Participation and Engagement Team has engaged 9,597 children through funded programmes.



Projects to champion science equity and community collaboration

Ripple Tank

Fostering long-term relationships in three priority communities

Funded by Wonderseekers

To understand how best to support children in underserved communities, we wanted to get to know the children, schools, community leaders and organisations living and working in Wonderseekers' three priority communities: Leigh Park, Havant, Millbrook, Southampton and Newport, Isle of Wight. Activities have included holiday workshops in partnership with a community library, a collaboration with HAF (a government-funded Holiday Activity and Food Programme) and taking our mobile planetarium and workshops into schools and community settings. This supports families who are reliant on food banks to improve their cooking skills and understanding of digestion.

Bold Futures

Helping children share their hopes and fears for our planet

Funded by Museums Association and Association of Science and Discovery Centres (ASDC)

While there has been national research into children's fears and aspirations for the planet, little information exists. This is especially true for young children and particularly those from marginalised communities. The project which began in 2022/23, enabled us to work with young carers from Eastleigh, and children, aged between 7 and 11 years, from Leigh Park, Havant, to learn about children's personal experience of and feelings about nature and to capture their authentic voice on film. The project was completed in July 2023, when we premiered the children's films in the Planetarium at Winchester Science Centre.

Impact

Understanding the impact of repeat science engagement

Funded by: Science Technology Facilities Council (STFC)

Wonderseekers partnered with four primary schools in different areas of multiple deprivation. The team ran four climate-tracking workshops to model and track climate change and the pupils' level of involvement in and perceptions of science. The seven-week programme resulted in children's increased enjoyment and confidence in science and development of their agency and ownership. We ran a similar repeat-engagement initiative with five schools in Rushmoor, Hampshire, funded by Rushmoor Borough Council.

We asked the children to plot a dot on a chart to demonstrate how much they enjoyed taking part. One child said, "If I had to put a dot on how much I liked it I would have to be the world's tallest man on the world's tallest ladder", indicating their enjoyment was off the chart. Wow!



University partnerships creating greater access to science for children

Funded by University of Canterbury and University of Southampton.

Thanks to funding from the University of Canterbury we were able to take our mobile planetarium to 10 schools in areas of deprivation for World Space Week. Working in partnership with the University of Southampton, as an active member of the steering committee and exhibitor for SOTSEF, the University's free annual science festival, we entertained 7,000 family visitors with our exciting live science show 'The Secret World of Gases'. We also partnered again with University of Southampton, alongside eight other organisations from across Europe, on COSMOS, an initiative to develop an open-schools, more encompassing learning method. Our two pathfinder schools were Romsey Primary School and The Romsey School, Hampshire.



The Noël Turner Science Festival, Isle of Wight

Funded by various local organisations.

Wonderseekers held the Noël Turner Science Festival at Cowes Enterprise College in June 2022, welcoming 2,000 Year 5 and 6 children and their teachers from 27 primary schools from across the Island. Two action-packed days of fun science activities introduced children to the diverse world of science and technology, showcasing industry partners from Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.



For many of the children it has opened their eyes to how broad science is, that there is no right or wrong and encouraged them to ask questions. It has given the children hands-on practical experience, making science fun, which is great as science in the classroom is very prescriptive.

Teacher - Gatten and Lake Primary School, Shanklin, Isle of Wight

Because we home educate [...] we rely on you for our children's future as you give them access to science outside of our reach. Or at least for a cost that we can afford.

Post visit survey
14th September 2022

Supporting schools and home education

Winchester Science Centre welcomed 39,489 school and group visitors last year. To create more equitable access for children, state-funded schools receive a 12% subsidy, whilst schools with a free school meal percentage of 17% or above benefit from a 60% subsidy. 81% of school bookings benefitted from this initiative. The national average for free school meals is 23%. We also developed a new home education and SEND school package, based on our Ultimate STEM School Trip.

Inclusive and accessible experiences reaching communities at Winchester Science Centre

We worked hard to make the Science Centre accessible to all, investing in training and new exhibits and by creating opportunities, through funding and subsidies, for children facing additional barriers visiting the Science Centre.

Our investment in training was varied and was really successful in terms of the widening accessibility of our offerings. My Visual Guide training by GuideDogs was given to 15 staff members to help visually-impaired visitors get the most out of their experience at the Science Centre. We want everyone to feel confident exploring and we can now allocate an hour to give them a tour of the Centre and its facilities before we can safely step away.

Disability awareness training was given to all staff by AccessAble, a respected external training organisation who also conducted an accessibility audit of the Science Centre. We also held regular Widening Participation training, which includes further disability awareness training so we can be as accessible as it's possible for us to be. This in-house training began with Naomi House & Jacksplace, hospices for children and young adults, who visited for the first time in spring 2022. We were pleased to give them a complementary and very bespoke Planetarium show and we're now exploring how we can develop that relationship further.

We know from our visitor feedback that the Recombobulation Room, sensory backpacks and the team's disability awareness are highly valued. But we also know there's more to be done. Through our future plans we hope to address the need for more accessible parking and develop outdoor science engagement that matches up to our indoor experience in terms of accessibility.

Help for refugees

We worked with Winchester and Portsmouth City of Sanctuary groups following the invasion of Ukraine and donated 200 tickets for entry to the Science Centre. We held a single event for our largely Ukrainian guests so we could better support their visit – we even managed to hold one of the shows in Ukrainian, which was particularly well received.

Supporting foster families

We've provided a longstanding commitment to support children who need our support the most. Free admission for foster families is one of the ways we can help. Last year, we gave 1,127 free foster family tickets and 2,783 free carer tickets to support family visits.

Your staff were patient, caring and nurturing and did really little – but important – things. Kneeling down to talk with them at eye level so as to not be too imposing – using simple, accessible, age appropriate language – and just having a mindful awareness of working with children – they all did it so well!

Post visit survey
17th May 2022



Great accessibility for my son who is a wheelchair user and is autistic. We felt comfortable and relaxed here because his needs had been thought about and planned for.

Post visit survey
17th May 2022

2.

Amazing people delivering awe-inspiring STEM experiences for all

Delivering awe-inspiring science for all sits at the heart of our offering. We continually strive to deliver Wow experiences that will enrich and entertain the public, schools and groups that our work touches, whether that's at our Science Centre or elsewhere.

The redevelopment of the Science Centre's exhibition spaces in 2020 put our staff engagement centre stage. Our greatest impact moments happen when they're people-led, both science engagement and customer service, which is why our public-facing staffing grew significantly last year. In 2022, we celebrated the 20th anniversary of Winchester Science Centre, in its iconic building in the South Downs National Park, and marked the occasion with a year-long programme of live science to include everyone's favourite themes and science demos.

We were enormously proud to have been recognised by two exciting awards last year, in recognition of our high-quality, innovative and inclusive approach to public engagement. We were Winner of the School Travel Organiser STEM School Trip Award and Commended for the Beautiful South Large Visitor Attraction of the Year.

Introducing new 'wow' experiences that deliver on mission

Last year, we sought to enrich the public offer with additional free events and activities to complement the core visitor experience and introduced a new evening events programme to utilise our amazing spaces out-of-hours, widen reach and generate new revenue for the Charity.

The added-value activities included a collaboration with Disney and Pixar for summer 2022 to coincide with the release of the blockbuster film, Lightyear. To celebrate the science that inspired the plot, families got to enjoy explosive spaceship launches in Science Live and an out-of-this-world Space Ranger challenge trail. For Christmas 2022, we invited children to get close to a real part of a Black Arrow rocket and Moon rock and take part in free space activities and trail.

On the back of the success of these new initiatives, in January 2023, we committed to a year-long programme, featuring six seasonal themes to coincide with each school holiday. Not only do they give families a compelling reason to visit, they also offer something new for our regular visitors and Curiosity Club annual members.

We also invested in our core offer with brilliant new science shows, planetarium shows and science demos in Science Live. These include the hair-raising 'Van de Graaff' to support our Electricity theme, 'Marshmallows in a Vacuum' for our Space theme and 'Cloud in a Bottle' for February half term's sell out theme 'Zero Degrees'.

For Christmas 2022, we delivered our most ambitious festive initiative ever. We created a whole new immersive and theatrical show that weaved Wow science, magical storytelling, theatre, audio, special effects and incredible 360° visuals in the Planetarium. Families were invited to join Santa and his intergalactic Elf Aster on a journey through space to deliver presents to astronauts on the International Space Station. It was packed with plenty of science facts and fun frivolity throughout. The feedback we received was fantastic and armed with wonderful photography and great reviews - we're expecting the show to be an even bigger hit next year.



20 years of wow

ZERO DEGREES



I loved that there was the science part and the Christmas part and they put them together so perfectly

A visitor's Instagram story



Last year, we welcomed 106,358 family and Cosmic Christmas event visitors to our Science Centre. Impacted by weather and the cost-of-living crisis, this represents 85% of budget. We were delighted that the visitors who did come enjoyed the quality of the experiences on offer, which is testament to the ingenuity and hard work of the Science Centre team.

Here are some of the comments we've enjoyed reading from visitors last year:



Winchester Science Centre is the best science centre/museum for young children we have visited - it's so engaging and fun and sparked so much interest and imagination in our children.

Post visit survey
4 Nov 2022



I would just like to pass on my thanks to your staff for making our visit so enjoyable. The children absolutely loved the science workshops, exhibits and planetarium; the day was really well organised.

Year 5 Teacher
The Bay CofE School



There was a lot to do and the live science shows in the centre of the building were a lot of fun - educational and perfectly pitched for both adults and children. My 4 and 7 year old loved it and there was plenty that they could do. The staff were brilliant, especially the live science show staff who were so kind and friendly - they seemed to love what they do. We'd definitely visit again!

Post visit survey
6 Oct 2022



Schools form another critical route for our Charity to engage children in science, through school trips to the Science Centre, sleepovers, outreach experiences delivered in schools and supported activities to reach children who might otherwise miss out. Our Ultimate STEM School Trip is an all-inclusive experience at our Science Centre, offering all children an opportunity to participate in a themed workshop, a live planetarium show and time to explore the exhibitions. Last year, we welcomed 38,462 school visitors, consistent with pre-pandemic figures.

We engaged with a further 6,644 children (included within the total 9,597 reached beyond our Science Centre experience, previously reported), through school-funded experiences, such as our mobile planetarium and workshop activities delivered in school.



A massive thank you for a well organised and very enjoyable sleepover on Thursday night. One of the best trips we have ever done and will definitely be back next year. The children will be talking about it for weeks to come!

Debbie
Newchurch and Nettlestone Primary Schools, Isle of Wight



Introducing new 'wow' experiences that deliver on mission

We invested in new exhibits for our Science Centre during the period - our focus was to put people into the centre of the story. These are a snapshot of some of the projects that were introduced:

Prosthetics

An interactive robotic hand designed by an incredible team of people who work with patients to analyse their needs, designing bespoke prosthetics to make life-changing adaptations. The children delight in the new feature, learning about the overcoming of adversity through storyboards that show Layla, a child with a prosthetic who uses it to play the ukulele.



Hand cycle

This exhibit features the remarkable story of Alex Lewis, a quadruple amputee who rode a hand cycle designed by University of Southampton Engineering students up the highest mountain in Ethiopia. A thought-provoking exhibit that encourages children to explore how science can change lives.

Evaluation toolkit

We obtained funding to work collaboratively with researchers from University of Southampton to establish a process to garner visitor information, such as reactions to exhibits, dwell time on exhibits, connections to interactions, emotional voices and feedback on the visitor experience. Data comes from a range of sources: children wear sound recordings, families wear Go Pros, ask questions, tell us how they felt, what they've learnt and use the Thought Bubble Wall and the Experiencometer to share their experiences.

3.

Use STEM to champion change to protect and heal our planet and inspire others to do the same

Through the year, we've piloted outdoor activities for schools and families and initiated discussions and partnerships with conservation experts and partner organisations who share our environmental values and ambitions for change.

We're proud to be working with Butterfly Conservation to provide school trips on its flagship butterfly reserve, Magdalen Hill Down. Our staff underwent considerable training to understand the science of butterflies and caterpillars and have now brought this incredible teaching resource, its unique facilities and exciting workshops, to life. We've even created complimentary family activities in the Science Centre to reinforce this offering, covering biodiversity, environmental habitats and monitoring, ecology and the human link.

Support from our Young Steering Group, from inputting their ideas and piloting activity, has supported these exciting developments, and their input has been invaluable in helping to develop our long-term future plans. Find out more about our Young Steering Group on page 31.



Leading by example on sustainability Action Log 2022/23

We're wholeheartedly committed to improving our environmental credibility and inspiring others to do the same.

Last year, we made substantial changes that saw us take action to reduce emissions, reduce-reuse-recycle to cut waste, improve purchasing decisions and protect the precious biodiversity of our site.

Our Sustainability Action Group (SAG), a cohort of environmentally minded staff from across the organisation, work together to initiate and implement changes to reduce our environmental impact.

Electricity

When light bulbs fail and electrical appliances reach their end of life, they're replaced with energy efficient and sustainable alternatives. Approximately 85% of the Science Centre is now lit by LED lighting and a capital investment plan is in place to take us to 100% LED or energy efficient lighting within two years.

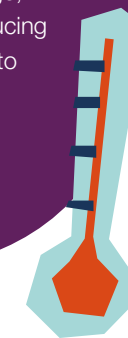
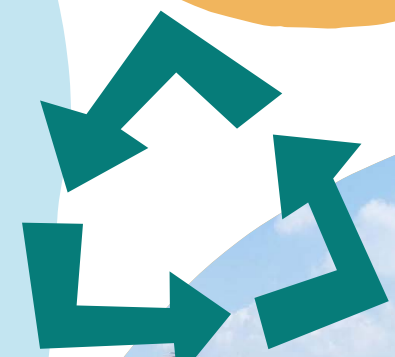
Waste

Large food stations were added to both exhibition floors to help family visitors sort food, liquid, recyclable and non-recyclable waste. Our food waste is now collected and taken off site to be processed. We've reduced single-use plastics, introducing compostable cups, recyclable drinks bottles and replacing individual condiment sachets with sustainable alternatives.

Our Curiosity Team made serious efforts to reuse and recycle theatrical props from our live science shows and rehoming any items that couldn't be used for a small donation where possible.

Heating

Our 20-year-old Science Centre heating relies on an oil-filled boiler. By closely monitoring our usage, adjusting the settings and reducing heating timings, we managed to reduce our oil consumption by 25% last year.



Changing behaviour and making more sustainable purchasing decisions

We focussed heavily on making better purchasing decisions last year.

Our Marketing Team now prioritises suppliers based on environmental credibility, such as a new print supplier that uses sustainable stock, renewable energy and electric vehicles to make deliveries to us. Our annual membership card is now made from a special paper card that comes with a sustainability story and replaces our plastic versions.

Our café took a great lead thanks to our new Café Manager, Marta, introducing more ethical, sustainable practices. We began to produce more food products in-house rather than buying in, cutting our food miles in the process. Healthier, more ethical food options are now available - for example, we removed big brand chocolate bars and replaced them with ethically produced bars that support cocoa farmers and help lift them out of poverty. Our vegan and vegetarian options rose to 95% of the menu.



In the shop, Adam, our Retail Manager, is now sourcing more sustainable products to sell, such as 100% recyclable puzzles and games, green things to grow and environmentally focussed books with ingenious ideas to educate and entertain.

Our Curiosity Team, with two members on the SAG, is passionate about sustainability. Last year, we became more conscious about our material sourcing, engaging the whole team to consider the impact of the equipment we buy and introducing a methodology to reduce waste. We moved school dining into the café where one of the large new waste stations is based and sent messages to schools to encourage children to take their waste home. The next challenge is to achieve zero-waste lunchboxes.

Hannah, our Estates Officer, is often coming up with innovative ideas to help the planet. This year, she introduced Soap Nuts, a non-toxic natural washing detergent, and sourced a new toilet paper made from waste sugarcane. Winchester Science Centre uses nearly 125km of toilet roll every year, so a small change can make a big difference.

Everyone at Wonderseekers has a role to play in our sustainability journey. So as we're committed to inspiring others to do the same, we use our voice on platforms such as social media, sharing stories about even the little changes we're making, to engage our audiences and encourage them to play their part too.



Winners of the first Green South Downs (Gold) Award

We're very proud to be one of just four organisations to be recognised with the first Green South Downs (Gold) Award. Green South Downs Sustainability Certification is a sustainability award programme created by the South Downs National Park Authority in partnership with Green Tourism. It's based on Green Tourism's assessment framework that reviews sustainability performance based on three key pillars: People, Place and Planet.



4.

Diversification, sustainability and growth

Unlike our other three objectives, this objective focuses on improving the Charity's long-term financial sustainability to ensure we can deliver on our charitable aims.

The Charity is heavily reliant on income generated through Winchester Science Centre and, as we experienced through Covid, any interruption to its operation can be challenging.

To support the diversification and growth of our Charity, we took the decision in 2022 to rename our Charity from Winchester Science Centre to Wonderseekers. The new name enables us to differentiate activities and programmes taking place at our Science Centre from those not limited to a particular location, such as our community, schools and digital engagement programmes. There's a significant opportunity to grow our activity beyond the Science Centre and potential to create a more balanced income portfolio.

The renaming process, which was supported by external agencies, took over a year and included a lot of research and wide consultation with our diverse audiences, patron, partners and supporters. This work helped to inform the in-house development of our strategy, challenging us to define and articulate our purpose and values more clearly. Getting the Charity name changed and new strategy agreed at the Charity's AGM in October 2022 marked the start of a new chapter for the Charity.

The strategy and new Wonderseekers website were unveiled at an official launch event on 28th February 2023, in the presence of the Wonderseekers family, our Charity's friends and supporters, partner organisations, Patron and Young Steering Group.

In developing our strategy, we were able to review all our activity to date and assess its value from a new, more confident and defined, perspective. We identified our commitment first and foremost to supporting young children and, in doing so, acknowledged that some of our priorities needed to change.

One of the difficult decisions we made last year was to end a long-standing contract with STEM Learning, to manage and coordinate the national STEM Ambassador programme within our region. We provided a successful handover to the new contract holders and have continued to promote and benefit from the programme.



Growing our Science Centre experience

In early 2022, we welcomed Jenna to the team as Head of Events, a new role created to enhance our Science Centre visitor experience and develop a new out-of-hours events programme to further charitable reach and generate new income.

In addition to supporting the Science Centre's core visitor offer, a new evening programme was launched in January 2023. This included: Night Sky Live, a hosted family stargazing event made full use of the Science Centre's location in the South Downs National Park and Dark Sky Reserve; Science Lates where adults could explore the Science Centre after hours with music and licenced bar; Science Explained with guest speakers to talk through science fact and fiction; and Starlight Cinema, showing science-based films, such as Jurassic Park, ET and Back to the Future, for parents and children to view together. We welcomed 1,105 people to our evening events from January – March 2023.

We also brought back Badge Nights for uniformed groups, introduced birthday party packages - the first party booking in January saw 23 children attend and thoroughly enjoy themselves. Investment in events has also opened a new opportunity to build profitable venue hire.

Investment in our Science Centre shop and café, introducing new product lines and extending our menus, has seen an increase in visitor spend, up 12% in the shop and 8% in the cafe.

We went for my son's 6th birthday and he said it was his best birthday ever. He loved learning new things, it was so interactive and made it fun for everyone.

Post visit survey
14 Sep 2022

Investing in our visitor experiences and infrastructure

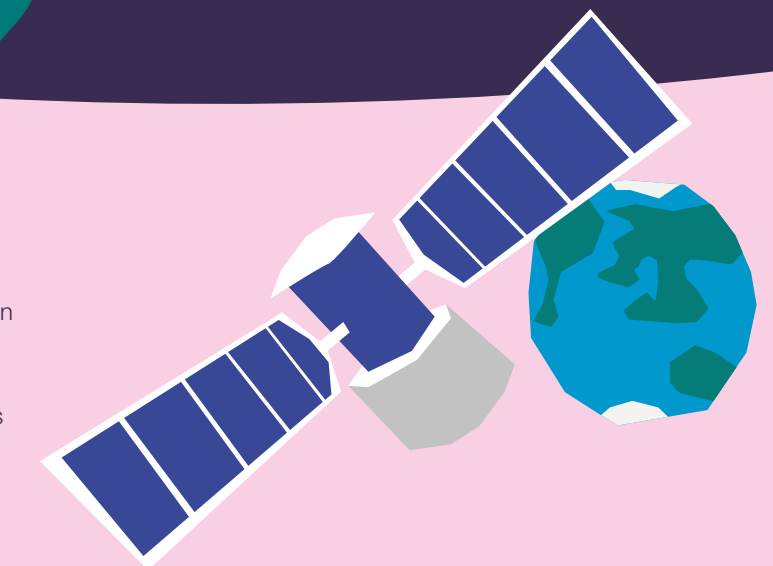
Maintaining a high-quality visitor experience is critical to running a successful Science Centre, so it's vital we continue to invest in our visitor experience, exhibitions and infrastructure for the future. Changes to public offer, themed activities and new events programme, have made it a bigger and bolder offer with a wider audience appeal.



We want families to visit more than once for greater impact. Relaunching our annual membership scheme as Curiosity Club, with exclusive e-newsletter content, and the introduction of new seasonal themes has created a compelling reason for visitors to return. We have seen an increase in repeat visits and a 5% increase in annual membership.

Future focussed

We have increased our business planning from a single-year plan to a three-year business plan. The plan has been developed to sit alongside our new strategy to help us articulate the investments and changes that are required over the next three years to meet our strategic goals. This longer-term approach allows the team to focus the more complex planning that's so crucial to our Charity's growth and security.



Fundraising

Charitable income is critical to changing the lives of children who, for many reasons, routinely miss out. Your support makes a difference.

We want to express our sincere gratitude to all our funding partners who have played an important and valuable role in enabling us to engage children in science. We're particularly grateful to those who supported us through the redevelopment of our Science Centre in 2020 and the leadership from Garfield Weston Foundation in their support for science centres during the pandemic. Not only did this support help us to deliver impactful science engagement at the time, it also proved essential in supporting our strong recovery from the impact of the pandemic.

Over the past five years, fundraising has enabled us to transform the way we engage our audiences with science. Building on our heritage of providing fun hands-on interactive experiences, we've been able to extend our reach in communities, bring more powerful people-led activity programmes to the forefront of our offer and take a leading role in accessibility to overcome longstanding barriers to engagement.

This last year, the fundraising focus has been to support the development of the Charity's new strategy and the fundraising strategy needed to support its delivery. A Fundraising and Partnerships Manager, Laura, joined the team to build our in-house resource and we have engaged external consultants to bring additional expertise and specialist knowledge to the Team.

Fundraising income for the past year is in line with our expectations. Grants awarded to the Charity have been to support short-term community projects, including Bold Futures, COSMOS, STFC Impact and Noël Turner Science Festival, details of which can be found on pages 13 and 14 of this report.

If you would like to help us inspire every child in science, we'd love to hear from you.

Please contact: fundraising@wonderseekers.charity or call 01962 863 791 and ask to speak to the Fundraising Team.

Our supporters:

- Airbus
- Association of Science and Discovery Centres
- BAE Systems
- Daisy Rich Trust
- GKN Aerospace
- Herepath Shenton Trust
- Johnson Electric
- Liminal Space
- Museums Association
- Newport Grammar School Trust
- Syder Foundation
- Wellcome
- WightAID



Wonderseekers is registered with the Fundraising Regulator and is compliant with the Code of Fundraising Practice. All fundraising activity is undertaken by the Fundraising Team, in accordance with the Fundraising Policy and Procedures, with support and oversight from the Fundraising Committee. Funding is sought from trusts and foundations, government, corporate sponsorship and through partnership agreements with industry and universities. All donations are given freely from individuals, including the invitation to Gift Aid admission. Wonderseekers does not use any third-party fundraiser or seek funding from vulnerable people. No complaints have been made in relation to fundraising activities (2021/22: nil).

Volunteering

The Trustees and staff thank all our volunteers who have given their time, skills and expertise to support our Charity. We'd also like to thank our Patron and Young Steering Group for their active involvement in helping us shape our Charity's future.

This year, we made the decision to end our contract coordinating the STEM Ambassador Hub for Central South England, but we remain a supporter and grateful recipient of the STEM Ambassador programme. The decision was made so the Charity could focus more actively on supporting younger children in line with our strategy.

Two interns joined us through our partnership with SEPnet, an association of physics departments at universities in the South-East of England that specialises in physics and public engagement. Public engagement volunteers have worked with us as interns, bringing with them scientific expertise. In turn, we can support them in broadening their science engagement skills. We're delighted that interns through this programme regularly go on to join our Curiosity Team as Casual Inspirers.

In September 2022, we launched a new work experience programme to offer regular placements to students in Year 10 and above. Four students participated in the programme last year. The programme is expanding for the following year and already attracting many applications.

We would also like to thank Dana, a Ukrainian volunteer who supported school workshops and made a huge difference to Ukrainian children who relocated to the UK due to the war and had little English comprehension.



Profile: The Young Steering Group

When it comes to engaging children in science and, in particular, our Respect. Protect. Action. key theme, one of our most pivotal stakeholders is, without doubt, the Young Steering Group.

Last year, this engaged and diverse team of volunteers who help guide our activities and shape our plans embarked on a very exciting journey.

Our original call to recruit a team of young people who would fit our equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) criteria produced 70 applications from households where home education, disability and deprivation were present, but was put on hold due to the pandemic. We restarted the process in March 2022 and welcomed 23 exceptional volunteers who have shown us considerable passion throughout their first year.

All visit us regularly and are supported by their immediate family who have all been given annual passes to the Science Centre. Over the past year, meeting once a half term, the Group has built relationships and trust and seen their ideas, the outdoor engagement trials and co-creation sessions turn into real activities our visitors will enjoy.

Their hard work culminated in Wonderseekers' grand launch event and it was a pleasure to see these young stars shine with so much enthusiasm and pride.

Evie's story

At the start of their journey, the children were shy strangers, like Evie, who liked science, but had little or no confidence.

Aged just six, Evie sent us a video of her sitting on her bed with a polar bear toy. She told us how we needed to save the world to save her bear.

Evie was the youngest child who turned up to the first Group meeting and, despite having no face-to-face confidence, she told her stories about her local wildlife and the impact she was seeing on it. Over the past year, she has turned those stories into messaging about the positive action we can take to make change – and help her polar bear.



Future plans

While we celebrated Winchester Science Centre's 20th birthday in 2022 with our audiences, behind the scenes, we've have been firmly focused on mapping out the direction of travel for the Charity over the next 20 years.

The launch of our new identity as Wonderseekers and the new strategy mark the start of an exciting new chapter which very much builds on our journey to date and responds to the strategic priorities identified in 2020 to: (1) develop outdoor science experiences, (2) diversify and expand activities and (3) restructure our group and evolve our identity.

In our strategy, we set out two key themes to ensure we are doing everything we can to increase equality, diversity and inclusion in science and support children, through science, to respond positively to the threat of climate change and biodiversity loss.

Key themes

Be the change

We pledge to increase opportunities for children to engage with the wonder of science, especially those who are disadvantaged by social and economic deprivation, disability or impairment. To grow our own understanding of EDI in science to become a more diverse Charity and use our experience and platforms to champion change.

Respect. Protect. Action.

We pledge to use our spaces, experiences and voice to positively engage children, through all disciplines of science, with the natural world and to take action against climate change and we will lead by example.



Responding to our strategy and key themes, we're exploring ways in which our site in the South Downs National Park can be used as a hook and a gateway for children to explore science and nature, connect communities, and, through science, take collective action against the climate and biodiversity crises.

Our Science Centre's rural location presents us with a unique opportunity within the sector. Our site is situated on rare and precious chalk downland in a Dark Sky Reserve within the South Downs National Park. There's great potential to use this wonderful site to create an accessible biodiversity and climate hub, offering activities for young children and families, especially those facing multiple barriers, to explore science and nature. In doing so, we'll improve the environmental sustainability and increase the biodiversity of our site and celebrate local, natural heritage and strengthen children's connections with nature.

Whilst the long-term aspirations will take considerable time to explore and develop, we're able to take steps in the short-term to build our learning about the land, continue to trial outdoor science engagement with schools and families, build relationships with our stakeholders, such as landowners, scientists, children and communities, and improve our own environmental sustainability.



Pathfinder projects

To support our learning and strengthen our case for support, we have identified two projects that we are currently seeking funding for: Our Place on Earth and Making Waves. The learning from previous projects, such as Bold Futures and Ripple Tank outlined on page 13, have helped to inform their development.

Making Waves

Making Waves is a new audience engagement programme designed to build children's relationships with nature and science. The project specifically engages children disadvantaged by social and economic deprivation, disability and/or impairment.

Our Place on Earth

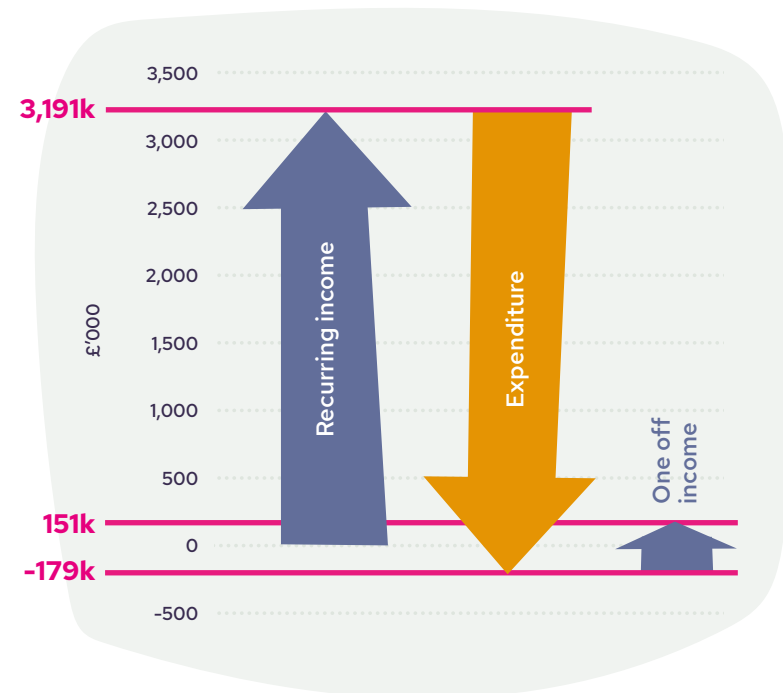
This is a project encompassing a broad programme of work, which includes the first environmentally-themed exhibition for Winchester Science Centre, school and community outreach and digital engagement. Developed in collaboration with local researchers and communities, the project, which builds on previous work, will support young people aged 3-12 use critical science enquiry skills to understand the nature crisis, how it's affecting local landscapes and help them to feel empowered to take action.



Financial review

Overview

The Charity faced a tough financial environment during the early part of the year with Science Centre visitor numbers falling behind budget and increased expenditure due to investment in the Science Centre's visitor experience. The Charity would have incurred a loss of £179k for the full year had it not received a one-off refund from its move to a culturally exempt VAT status, which resulted in a net surplus of £151k for the period. It used £393k of its cash reserves to repay its CBILS loan, ending the period in a similar overall financial position as at the start of the year.



Income

Total group income for the year was £3,521k, 3% below the record of £3,630k achieved in 2021/22.

Donations and legacies – note 3

Income from Donations and Legacies was 41% down on the prior year, consistent with the Charity's fundraising focus away from the current year and on to developing the Charity's new long-term strategy, including the essential groundwork preparations required to support its ambitious future plans.

The Charity was extremely grateful for the grants received, including the COSMOS, Bold Futures and STFC Impact funding, which supported community engagement programmes, details of which can be found on pages 13 and 14 in this report.

It was also grateful for the increased Gift Aid. The 21% higher Gift Aid and 5% increase in annual membership largely offset the impact from lower footfall.

Donations and Legacies income also includes the remaining Covid Recovery funding from Garfield Weston Foundation supporting the development of the Charity's future plans (with other Covid support ending in 2021/22).

Charitable activities – note 4

2022/23 was the first full year of public and school visits after Covid and came with significant challenges. Cost of living and other financial pressures impacted school and public visits to the Science Centre. The greatest challenge for the Science Centre however, was the weather. The unseasonably warm spring and autumn and the heatwave in the summer reduced visitor numbers. Some recovery was seen in the final quarter as more normal weather returned, but Science Centre footfall ended the year 15% below budget and only 6% ahead of the previous year, which had been significantly impacted by Covid. Despite this, admissions income rose by 20% following the difficult decision to increase ticket prices in April 2022 for the first time since February 2019 and the removal of VAT from the ticket income following the Charity's move to culturally exempt status.

Activities including sleepovers, Badge Nights and a space-themed Christmas event also contributed towards admissions income growth.

Income from charitable activities also includes a £330k correction of the Charity's VAT liabilities related to its status as a culturally exempt organisation.

The Charity took the difficult decision not to renew its STEM Ambassador contract choosing instead to focus its resources on delivering its charitable objectives for younger children. Although this resulted in a 56% fall in income this was offset by a similar reduction in costs associated with running the programme. The Charity continued to make use of the programme through support from STEM Ambassadors.

Income from trading activities – note 5

Income from trading activities increased by 20% from 21/22, but was also lower than expected.

Income from fundraising events was up £64k on 21/22 (183%). However, investment initially centred around enhancing the core public offering, with investment in fundraising events following later in the year. As a result, income from fundraising events was slower to materialise and reflected the challenges of breaking into new markets, developing the right products and building a reputation for out-of-hours activities.

Income from trading operations rose only 12% from the prior year impacted by the lower than anticipated visitor numbers.

Sponsorship income fell by 25% following a decision not to renew the partnership agreement with Airbus as the Charity focussed on developing its new long-term strategy and objectives.

Expenditure

Expenditure rose 17% in 22/23 largely due to inflation and the investment in resources to rebuild after Covid and to develop the Group's new strategy. The change to culturally exempt status has reduced the ability to recover VAT on purchases contributing £100k of irrecoverable VAT to the Charity's costs.

People costs – note 11

People costs rose 33%, reflecting the cost of rebuilding after the pandemic and the introduction of a new staffing structure in early 2022 designed to create capacity to invest in the Charity's future strategy. The full benefits from the investment are expected to flow through in subsequent years. To support the Charity's staff through the cost-of-living crisis it paid a one-off cost-of-living payment of £1,000 to all staff in January 2023. The average full-time equivalent employees for 2022/23 was 50 (2021/22: 42).

Expenditure on charitable activities – note 7

Expenditure linked to delivery of the Science Centre, other educational and STEM activities rose by 13% (+£285k) against the prior year. Science Centre costs increased 11% to £2,093k, mainly due to staffing. Increased activity out in the community increased Engagement and Outreach costs by 34% (£78k).

Expenditure on raising funds – note 6

Trading costs reflect the recruitment of dedicated café and shop managers, the introduction of new stock lines and focus on ethical products, and inflation in the cost of goods purchased for resale. Fundraising costs have increased due to investment in the Fundraising Team and the introduction of a new CRM system.

Governance and support costs – note 8

The Charity's electricity and heating oil costs increased 36% year on year with the increase mitigated by the hard work done by the staff to reduce usage wherever possible. (Heating oil use fell 25% compared with 2021/22.)

Other governance and support costs increased largely due to investment in the Finance and IT Teams.

Reserves policy

The Charity holds both restricted and unrestricted funds, with the unrestricted funds covering both designated funds, funds set aside by the trustees for a specific purpose, and general funds, reserves which provide working capital and resources for unforeseen financial difficulties.

The Charity's policy on unrestricted general reserves is set based on forecast income and expenditure and the likelihood of material risks crystallising which would not be covered by future income or insurance.

The general unrestricted reserves is set with regard to:

- Annual budget – set to ensure the Charity's future expenditure levels are matched to the income the Charity receives from operating the Science Centre and other grants and income.
- Risk management process - assesses the impact and likelihood of all risks to the Charity and the appropriate level of short-term reserves to be held.

The Trustees have assessed the impact and likelihood of uninsured risks to create an expected value, which is reduced by the assessment of mitigating controls, to set the appropriate level of general unrestricted short-term reserves to be held. This value is formally reviewed on an annual basis with the opportunity for any material changes to be picked up within the risk review process.

With the increasing level of global economic uncertainty and continuing risks from Covid during 21/22 the Charity aimed to hold general unrestricted reserves of 300k – 350k, equivalent to three months of expenditure for full operations. With the new resources now in place for the ongoing operations of the Charity and the continuing economic environment the range of 300k – 350k has continued to be considered appropriate for 22/23.

General reserves outcome

Following a challenging year of operations, unrestricted reserves now stand at £2,859k, of which £2,338k were designated and £521k were general unrestricted reserves.

The Trustees are committed to using these funds to support our beneficiaries by investing in the seed funding of the outdoor science engagement project, for which a £600k designated reserve has been created (see note 20), as well as long-term maintenance of our Science Centre, managing future risks and growing charitable impact.

Principal risks

This year is the first since 2018/19 that our Science Centre has not been impacted by Covid 19 closures. However, the Charity's performance and risk profile continued to be affected by powerful external pressures. The cost of living crisis, rising inflation and warm, dry weather have presented the greatest challenges.

Our most effective response to such risks is through delivery of our strategy; building impact and resilience through diversification and growth. The reimagining of our Morn Hill site in Winchester to expand our science engagement outdoors and increased focus on community and schools-based activity will build capacity and reduce the Charity's reliance on income generated through its indoor Science Centre.

Wonderseekers is in a strong position to respond to these external threats. Investment in our Science Centre visitor experience over recent years has given the Charity space to focus on long-term strategy, build the Charity's new identity as Wonderseekers and develop our future plans. We recognise however that continued investment in our team, our ability to meet fundraising targets and the need to maintain a high-performing Science Centre are all critical success factors and reflected in the risks identified.

The Trustees believe that sound risk management is integral to both good management and good governance practice.

Risk management is part of the Charity's decision-making and is incorporated within strategic and operational planning.

The Trustees recognise that risk is inherent in any operation and that some level of managed risk is essential if the Charity is to achieve the greatest impact for its beneficiaries.

Wonderseekers manages risk through a top-down-bottom-up approach assessing longer-term strategic risks alongside shorter-term operational risks.

The Senior Management Team maintains departmental risk registers identifying key risks to their departments, which are updated and cascaded quarterly.

Any fast-moving or escalating risks during the quarter are reported at the weekly Senior Management Team meeting. Risks are cascaded to the Chair of Trustees and Chair of Finance, Audit and Risk Committee as required.

The Senior Management Team reviews the Charity's Risk Register monthly. The Charity risk position is reviewed quarterly by the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee and risk is a standing agenda item at all quarterly board meetings.

Risk

Recruitment and staff retention

Status

Increasing

Description

Dynamic people-led and impactful experiences, synonymous with our Charity, and our ability to deliver the ambitious plans necessary to secure long-term financial sustainability, growth and impact, rely on successful recruitment and the retention of key staff.

People costs are our biggest annual expenditure so, whilst critical, an inability to sustain increasing staffing costs, makes recruitment and retention particularly vulnerable to the impact of the economic pressures associated with the increased cost of living and rising inflation.

Risk mitigation strategy

The Board of Trustees and SMT will continue to foster a people-focused and values-based culture that is highly valued by staff and appeals to new recruits. Annual staff surveys will be used to measure staff satisfaction and identify employment terms that are valued and areas for improvement. Progression within the Charity will be encouraged and regularly demonstrated and salaries will continue to be reviewed and benchmarked. An ambitious long-term strategy and three-year business plan will enable staff to see how they contribute to the Charity's aims and success. The Charity recognises that economic pressure is an external threat that cannot always be mitigated.

Risk

Global economic situation

Status

Increasing

Description

There are two risks associated with external economic pressure.

- Our Charity relies on visitor income generated through the Science Centre. Economic pressure impacting on visitors may result in lower visitor numbers and lower visitor spending.
- The market cannot sustain price increases to cover increasing operational costs that could reduce our ability to maintain the investment needed to deliver a consistent, high-quality visitor offer.

Risk mitigation strategy

We will continue to invest in the visitor experience and build on the Science Centre's already very good reputation. Creative programming and added-value activities will be used to drive repeat visits and increase annual membership. Future plans to extend the science engagement programme, including environmental science and outdoor experiences, will help to create a compelling future offer. The impact of rising costs on our expenditure will be thoroughly modelled and included in scenario planning conducted through the business planning and budgeting cycle. The Trustees receive monthly management accounts, and the Senior Management Team will be monitoring the impact of rising costs closely. The potential for increased running costs is considered when setting the reserves policy.

Risk

Fundraising

Status

Increasing

Description

Our ambitious future plans rely on fundraising success to be achieved. Global economic uncertainty has impacted on the fundraising landscape, squeezing available funds and increasing competition. Failure to secure the necessary funding will limit our ability to deliver our strategy as planned. Development projects also include essential investment in infrastructure, so not securing the funds could also impact on financial reserves and our ability to operate.

Risk mitigation strategy

Wonderseekers has developed a good fundraising track-record over the past five years, delivering projects as planned and maintaining excellent communications with funders. We intend to use our new Wonderseekers identity and online platforms to increase our Charity's profile, demonstrate our credibility and build our reputation for impact with existing and new funders. We will continue to take an impact-focused approach to project development, ensuring projects respond to social need, deliver on our strategy and values and demonstrate excellent value for money. By doing so, we are aiming to make a strong, evidence-based case for support. The Board of Trustees' Fundraising Committee has oversight of the fundraising strategy and operation and provides representation at board level.

Carbon footprint and emissions

We are passionate about playing a lead role within our region to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies.

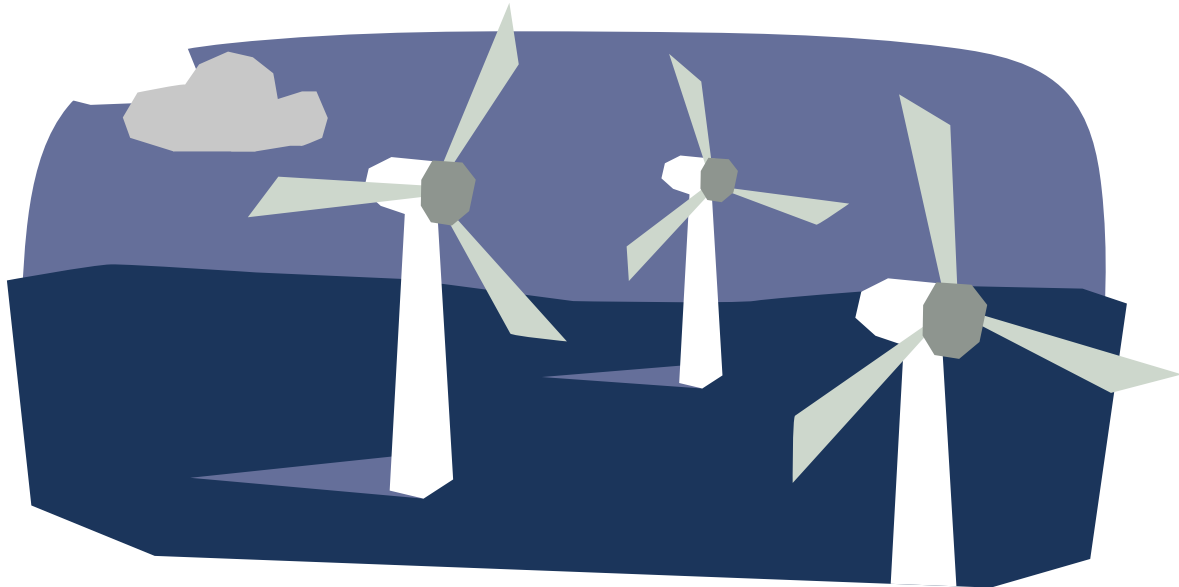
We will use our spaces, experiences and platforms to positively connect with and engage children with science and the natural world, empowering and enabling our collective action. We will lead by example, working with others to protect and recover the important heritage of our site, the rare chalk downland and biodiversity found here within the South Downs National Park. We will also reduce our carbon emissions and waste.

While the development of a Group Sustainability Strategy over the coming year will help guide our progress, the greatest opportunity we have to meet our sustainability ambitions is through our future plans and the reimagining of our site.

An independent carbon footprint report was commissioned for 2021/22 and 2022/23.

		2021/22	~CO ₂ Tonne	2022/23	~CO ₂ Tonne	% change in emissions
Electricity	KWh	251,582	58.15	246,024	51.58	-11.3%
Heating oil	litres	37,174	102.55	27,901	76.97	-24.9%
Business travel*	miles	3,734	0.85	5,239	1.77	108.2%
Fuel purchase	litres	574	1.44	599	1.53	6.3%
Water	m³	1,546	0.21	1,691	0.25	19.0%
Waste**	tonnes	29.03	5.84	46.54	7.19	23.1%
Total			169.04		139.29	
Emissions per employee	tCO ₂ e		4.02		2.79	
Emissions per £M turnover	tCO ₂ e		46.57		39.56	

*The 2021/22 figures cover employee vehicle travel, while the 2022/23 figures encompass vehicle, train, ferry, and air travel.
**Due to difficulties with estimating, this calculation excludes waste disposed of in skips.



Structure, governance and management

Wonderseekers is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity.

Our Charity is governed by our Articles of Association, which sets out the Charity's powers and authorities. The objective of the Charity is detailed in the Articles of Association:

To advance the education, knowledge and understanding of the public, in particular the young, in basic technological and scientific principles and processes, particularly through the improvements of the links between industrial, commercial and educational bodies and institutions.



The Charity's wholly owned subsidiary, Sparking Curiosity Ltd, operates the onsite shop and café under licence from the Charity and gift aids the maximum permissible amount of its profits to the Charity (see note 10 to the accounts).

Wonderseekers operates under principles documented in our Code of Governance, which comply with the Charity Governance Code for larger charities (2020).

The Board of Trustees holds all of the Charity's powers and authorities.

The Board is ultimately responsible for the overall control and strategic direction of the Charity and for the protection of its assets. The Board receives regular updates on the major risks likely to affect the Charity and ensures these are properly documented and that mitigating actions are in place and actively managed. The Board receives regular updates on the handling of personal data held by the Charity and ensures the policy and procedures are compliant with legislation.

In setting our objectives and planning our activities the Trustees have carefully considered the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit. Operational management is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer, Ben Ward, and the Senior Management Team.

Board of Trustees

The Trustees, who are also Directors under company law, are elected by the Board at the Annual General Meeting and serve for a term of three years.

Trustees can be re-appointed up to a maximum of three terms. The performance of individual Trustees, including the Chair, is informally reviewed each year. All Trustees give their time freely and no Trustee received remuneration in the year. Details of Trustee expenses and related party transactions are disclosed in notes 11 and 23 of the accounts.

Board and committee membership and attendance

Title	First name	Last name	Appointed	Stepped down	Full board (Apr, Jul, Oct, Jan, Feb)	AGM (Oct)	FARC (Apr, Jul, Oct, Feb)	NomRem (Jun, Oct, Dec)	Fundraising (Jun)	D&L (Apr, May)
Dr	Ian	Jenkins	30/09/14		4 of 5 (apologies Oct22)	0 of 1		3 of 3		
Dr	Toby	King	31/10/17		5 of 5	1 of 1		3 of 3		
Mrs	Tajinder	Leonard	26/11/19		5 of 5	1 of 1		3 of 3	1 of 1	
Prof.	Diane	Newell	29/09/15	09/05/23	5 of 5	1 of 1				2 of 2
Mr	Adrian	Owen	26/11/19		5 of 5	1 of 1	4 of 4			
Mrs	Sue	Parr	26/11/19		5 of 5	1 of 1			0 of 1 (apologies Jun22)	2 of 2
Prof.	Janet	Preston	30/09/14		4 of 5 (apologies Jul22)	1 of 1		3 of 3		1 of 2 (apologies Apr22)
Mrs	Sara	Sullivan	26/11/19		5 of 5	1 of 1		3 of 3	1 of 1	
Mrs	Katherine (Katie)	Roberts	21/10/21		5 of 5	1 of 1			1 of 1	
Mrs	Phyllida	James	21/10/21		5 of 5	1 of 1	4 of 4			
Dr	Rutang	Thanawalla	21/10/21		4 of 5 (apologies Feb23)	1 of 1	3 of 4 (apologies Apr22)			
Dr	Dolores	Byrne	30/09/14	19/10/22	4 of 4	1 of 1	2 of 3 (apologies Apr22)	1 of 2 (apologies Oct22)	1 of 1	

Board effectiveness

In Spring of 2021, the Board undertook an internal Board Effectiveness Review by assessing adherence to recommendations in the Charity Governance Code 2020.

Each Trustee was asked for their view on how well, or otherwise, the Charity met each recommendation and the results summarised in three categories by significance: routine, process or requiring Board action.

The matters of routine were actioned by the secretariat, the matters of process were actioned by committee chairs, the matters requiring Board attention were discussed and adopted by the Board, including an external Board Effectiveness Review that took place in the Summer of 2022.



Organisation

The Board holds five meetings a year, one of which is dedicated to Strategy, and has established the following four Committees: Finance, Audit and Risk; Nominations and Remuneration; Discovery and Learning, and Fundraising, which report to the Board.

The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee is independent of the management of the Charity. It has the standing and resources to report directly with opinion and oversight to the Board of Trustees on the annual report and accounts and other financial reports, the risk management process and risk register, delivering value for money, policy maintenance and the Charity’s whistleblowing arrangements. It is also responsible for making recommendations to the Board of Trustees in relation to the performance, appointment, reappointment and removal of the external auditors.

The Nominations and Remuneration Committee reports to the Board on governance effectiveness, the structure, size and composition of the Board, succession planning and on the salary and benefits of the CEO and members of the Senior Management Team.

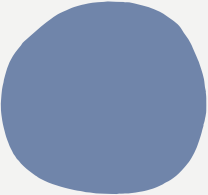
The committee makes recommendations to the Board of both the Charity and its subsidiary for approval of new trustees, chairs and deputy chairs of both Boards and committees. It also recommends salary and benefits for the CEO, Senior Management Team, appointment of CEO and carries out an annual review and update of the Code of Governance.

The Board issues public advertisements for trustees and aims to attract a diverse range of candidates with the skills the Charity needs. It values the benefits of a membership with a variety of backgrounds, expertise and experience. New Trustees undertake an induction programme that includes meeting senior management and fellow Trustees. It also covers the Charity’s aims and how they are being fulfilled, the Code of Governance including Committee structures and decision-making processes, the business plan and recent financial performance. Trustees are encouraged to attend appropriate external training events where appropriate budget has been allocated to cover Trustee expenses and course fees.

In reviewing the salary and benefits for the CEO and the Senior Management Team, the committee considers salary benchmarks for equivalent roles in the sector. The committee assesses individual performance in the year against the objectives agreed in each individual annual review and, on that basis, makes a salary review recommendation to the Board for approval.

The Discovery and Learning Committee provides strategic input and makes recommendations to the Board regarding the appropriateness of the scientific and educational content of the strategic plan. The committee assesses the overall scientific and educational value of the Charity’s programme, reviews activities aimed at diversifying our reach and assesses the effectiveness of ongoing academic collaborations.

The Fundraising Committee contributes expertise as well as regional and industry sector perspectives to the development and successful operation of the fundraising programme. Members contribute ideas and engage with other Trustees to open up new fundraising sources. The responsibility for developing the fundraising strategy and delivering fundraising activities rests with the Fundraising Team.



Related parties and co-operation with other organisations

Any relationship between a Trustee or senior manager of the Charity with a university, sponsoring company exhibition, or an organisation contracted to work for the Charity, is openly disclosed to the Board.

Trustees’ responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

The Charity Trustees are responsible for preparing a Trustees’ annual report and financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice). Company law requires the Charity Trustees to prepare financial statements for each year that give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the parent charitable company and the group, and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable group for that period. In preparing the financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently,
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP,
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent,
- state whether applicable UK accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements,
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the Charity will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charity and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the Charity and taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

The Trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company’s website.

Legislation in the United Kingdom governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.



Financial statements

Provision of information to auditors

So far as each of the Trustees at the time the report is approved are aware:

- there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware and,
- they have taken all the steps they ought to have taken to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information, and to establish that the auditors are aware of that information.

Auditor

A resolution to reappoint Haysmacintyre LLP as auditor will be proposed at the Annual General Meeting.

In preparing this report the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees' Annual Report was approved by the Board of Trustees on 18th October 2023 and signed on its behalf:



Dr Toby King
Chair of Trustees

Toby King



Independent auditor's report to the members of Wonderseekers

Opinion

We have audited the consolidated financial statements of Wonderseekers for the year ended 31st March 2023 which comprise the Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities, Consolidated Balance Sheet, Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion, the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the group's and of the parent charitable company's affairs as at 31st March 2023 and of the group's and parent charitable company's net movement in funds, including the income and expenditure, for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006.

Basis for opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) (ISAs (UK)) and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of our report. We are independent of the group in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the FRC's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Conclusions relating to going concern

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the group's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.

Other information

The trustees are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the information included in the Trustees' Annual Report and the Chair's statement. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with our audit of the financial statements, our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether there is a material misstatement in the financial statements or a material misstatement of the other information. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

Opinion on other matters prescribed by the Companies Act 2006

In our opinion, based on the work undertaken in the course of the audit:

- the information given in the Trustees' Annual Report (which includes the directors' report prepared for the purposes of company law) for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
- the directors' report included within the Trustees' Annual Report has been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

Independent auditor’s report to the members of Wonderseekers (continued)

Matters on which we are required to report by exception

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the group and the parent charitable company and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, we have not identified material misstatements in the Trustees’ Annual Report (which incorporates the directors’ report).

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters in relation to which the Companies Act 2006 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- adequate accounting records have not been kept by the parent; or
- the parent charitable company financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- certain disclosures of trustees’ remuneration specified by law are not made; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit; or
- the trustees were not entitled to prepare the financial statements in accordance with the small companies’ regime and take advantage of the small companies’ exemptions in preparing the trustees’ report and from the requirement to prepare a strategic report.

Responsibilities of trustees

As explained more fully in the trustees’ responsibilities statement set out on page 46, the trustees (who are also the directors of the group for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the group’s and the parent charitable company’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the group or the parent charitable company or to or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor’s report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities, including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below.

Based on our understanding of the group and the environment in which it operates, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to charity and company law applicable in England and Wales, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We also considered those laws and regulations that have a direct impact on the preparation of the financial statements such as the Companies Act 2006 and the Charities Act 2011.

We evaluated management’s incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls) and determined that the principal risks were related to revenue recognition, and management override of controls. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inspecting correspondence with regulators;
- Discussions with management including consideration of known or suspected instances of non-compliance with laws and regulation and fraud;
- Reviewing the controls and procedures of the charity relevant to the preparation of the financial statements to ensure these were in place throughout the year;
- Evaluating management’s controls designed to prevent and detect irregularities;
- Identifying and testing journals, in particular journal entries posted with unusual account combinations, postings by unusual users or with unusual descriptions, and
- Challenging assumptions and judgements made by management in their critical accounting estimates.

Because of the inherent limitations of an audit, there is a risk that we will not detect all irregularities, including those leading to a material misstatement in the financial statements or non-compliance with regulation. This risk increases the more that compliance with a law or regulation is removed from the events and transactions reflected in the financial statements, as we will be less likely to become aware of instances of non-compliance. The risk is also greater regarding irregularities occurring due to fraud rather than error, as fraud involves intentional concealment, forgery, collusion, omission or misrepresentation.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council’s website at: www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities. This description forms part of our auditor’s report.

Use of our report

This report is made solely to the group’s members, as a body, in accordance with Chapter 3 of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the group’s members those matters we are required to state to them in an Auditor’s report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the group and the group’s members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

Jane Askew

J Askew

Senior Statutory Auditor, For and on behalf of
Haysmacintyre LLP,
Statutory Auditors
10 Queen Street Place
London
EC4R 1AG

Date:

27 October 2023



Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities

(incorporating an income and expenditure account) For the year ending 31st March 2023

	Note	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total funds 2023 £'000	Total funds 2022 £'000
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	3	543	46	589	999
Charitable activities:	4				
Science Centre		2,084	-	2,084	1,819
Engagement and Outreach		115	2	117	206
Income from investments		6	-	6	1
Other trading activities	5	720	5	725	605
Total		3,468	53	3,521	3,630
Expenditure on:					
Raising funds:	6				
Other trading activities		967	5	972	756
Charitable activities:	7				
Science Centre		2,049	44	2,093	1,886
Engagement and Outreach		281	24	305	227
Total		3,297	73	3,370	2,869
Net (expenditure)/income:		171	(20)	151	761
Transfer between funds	20	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds		171	(20)	151	761
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	20	2,688	323	3,011	2,250
Total funds carried forward		2,859	303	3,162	3,011

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year, and all income and expenditure derived from continuing activities.

Consolidated and Charity Balance Sheet

As at 31st March 2023

	Note	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Fixed assets:					
Tangible assets	13	1,819	2,077	1,819	2,077
Current assets:					
Stocks	14	39	24	8	9
Debtors	15	138	257	163	263
Short term investments		450	-	450	-
Cash at bank and in hand		1,143	1,774	1,056	1,530
Total current assets		1,770	2,055	1,677	1,802
Liabilities:					
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	16	(427)	(648)	(392)	(570)
Net current assets		1,343	1,407	1,285	1,232
Total assets less current liabilities		3,162	3,484	3,104	3,309
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year	18	-	(473)	-	(473)
Total net assets		3,162	3,011	3,104	2,836
The funds of the charity	20				
Restricted income funds		303	323	303	323
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated		2,338	1,951	2,338	1,951
General unrestricted		521	737	463	562
Total unrestricted funds		2,859	2,688	2,801	2,513
Total charity funds		3,162	3,011	3,104	2,836

Wonderseekers formally known as Winchester Science Centre (the parent entity) reports a surplus for financial year 2022/23 of £268k (2021/22: £649k surplus).

The financial statements of Wonderseekers formally known as Winchester Science Centre (registered number 02014929) were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 18th October 2023.

Signed on behalf of the Board of Trustees

Dr Toby King

Chair of Trustees

Toby King

Consolidated and Charity Statement of Cash Flows

For the year ending 31st March 2023

	Note	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Cash flows from operating activities:					
Net cash provided by operating activities	A	590	1,073	747	910
Cash flows from investing activities:					
Purchase of plant and equipment		(153)	(106)	(153)	(106)
Net cash used in investing activities		(153)	(106)	(153)	(106)
Cash flows from financing activities:					
Repayment of borrowing		(601)	(70)	(601)	(70)
Cash inflows from new borrowing		-	-	-	-
Interest paid		(17)	(7)	(17)	(7)
Net cash (used in)/provided by financing activities		(618)	(77)	(618)	(77)
(Decrease) / Increase in cash and cash equivalents in the year		(181)	890	(24)	727
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		1,774	884	1,530	803
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	B	1,593	1,774	1,506	1,530

Consolidated and Charity Statement of Cash Flows (continued)

For the year ending 31st March 2023

Notes to the cash flow statement

A) Reconciliation of net income to net cash flow generated from operating activities

	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Net income/(expenditure) for the year	151	761	268	649
Adjustments for:				
Depreciation charges	411	447	411	447
Decrease/(increase) in stocks	(15)	(5)	1	(8)
Decrease/(increase) in debtors	119	51	100	34
(Decrease)/increase in creditors	(93)	(199)	(50)	(230)
Loss on disposal	-	11	-	11
Interest paid	17	7	17	7
Net cash provided by operating activities	590	1,073	747	910

B) Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Cash in hand	1,143	1,774	1,056	1,530
Cash on deposit	450	-	450	-
Total cash and cash equivalents	1,593	1,774	1,506	1,530

C) Analysis of changes in net debt

	As at 1st April 2022	Cash-flows	Non-cash changes	As at 31st March 2023
Unrestricted cash	1,774	(631)	-	1,143
Cash restricted to projects	-	-	-	-
Loans falling due within one year	(128)	601	(473)	-
Loans falling due after more than one year	(473)	-	473	-
Total	1,173	(30)	-	1,143

Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ending 31st March 2023

1. Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements have been prepared under the historic cost convention. Wonderseekers meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Wonderseekers is a company limited by guarantee and incorporated in England and Wales. The Registered Office is: Telegraph Way, Morn Hill, Winchester, Hampshire, SO21 1HZ.

Group financial statements

The Consolidated Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA), Consolidated Balance Sheet and the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows consolidate the financial statements of the Charity and its subsidiary undertaking. The results of the subsidiary are consolidated on a line by line basis.

No separate SOFA has been prepared for the Charity alone as permitted by Section 408 of the Companies Act 2006.

Preparation of accounts on a going concern basis

The Group's primary source of income continues to be visitors to the Science Centre.

After careful consideration of the Group's current financial position, with due attention paid to the Group's cash flows, liquidity and borrowings, and future plans and prospects, the Trustees are confident the Group has adequate resources to continue in operation for the foreseeable future which is at least 12 months from the date of approval of these financial statements. Accordingly, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the accounts.

Income

Income is recognised when the Group has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount is measurable.

Donated services and facilities

On receipt, donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the Group, which is the amount the Group would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds

Unrestricted funds are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the Group. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the Group which the Trustees have decided at their discretion to set aside to use for a particular purpose.

Restricted funds

Restricted funds are donations which the donor has specified are to be solely used for particular areas of the Group's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the Group.

Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified under the following headings:

- Costs of raising funds comprise the costs of commercial trading including the shop and café and their associated support costs. It also includes a proportion of the cost of front-of-house staff.
- Expenditure on charitable activities includes the costs of exhibitions, educational and other activities undertaken to further the purposes of the Charity and their associated support costs.

Allocation of support costs

Support costs are those functions that assist the work of the Group but do not directly undertake charitable activities. Support costs include back office costs, finance, facilities, personnel, IT and governance costs which support the Group's activities. These costs have been allocated between the cost of raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. The basis on which support costs have been allocated are set out in note 8.

Notes to the Financial Statements (continued) for the year ending 31st March 2023

Tangible fixed assets

The Group has elected to use the 'deemed cost' option on transition to FRS102 for Land and Buildings which have been revalued as at 31 March 2014 and have been depreciated from that date. Other tangible fixed assets are capitalised at cost and are depreciated on a straight-line basis over their estimated useful economic lives as follows:

Asset category	Annual rate
Intellectual assets	10%
Planetarium	10% – 33⅓%
Office equipment	20%
Computer equipment	33⅓%
Technical equipment	6⅔% – 33⅓%
Exhibition equipment	20% – 33⅓%
Equipment library	20%
Motor vehicles	25%
Freehold buildings	2%
Freehold land	Nil

Stock

Stock is included at the lower of cost and net realisable value.

Debtors

Short term debtors are measured at transaction price, less any impairment.

Short term investments

Short term investments are cash deposits held with financial institutions with maturities of greater than three months. They are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash is represented by cash in hand and deposits with financial institutions with original maturities of less than or equal to three months. These are short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.

Creditors

Short term trade creditors are measured at the transaction price. Other financial liabilities, including bank loans, are initially measured at the transaction value and subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

Operating leases

Rentals paid under operating leases are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities on a straight-line basis over the term of the lease.

Corporation tax

The Charity is exempt from tax on income and gains falling within section 505 of the Taxes Act 1988 or section 252 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992 to the extent that these are applied to its charitable objects.

Any profits generated from the Charity's trading subsidiary Sparking Curiosity Ltd will be transferred to the parent with a gift aid payment and therefore no taxation is due.

Financial instruments

The Group has financial assets and liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value with the exception of bank loans and mortgages which are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method.

Judgements in applying accounting policies and key sources of estimation

In the application of the Group's accounting policies, described in the accounting policies above, the Trustees are required to make judgements, estimates and assumptions about the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities that are not readily apparent from other sources. The estimates and associated assumptions are based on historical experience and other factors that are considered to be relevant. Actual results may differ from these estimates. The estimates and underlying assumptions are reviewed on an ongoing basis. Revisions to accounting estimates are recognised in the period in which the estimate is revised if the revision affects only that period, or in the period of revision and future periods if the revision affects both current and future periods.

The Trustee representatives consider that the following are key estimates;

- Depreciation of fixed assets is charged over the useful economic life of the assets. Trustees and management review the useful economic life on an annual basis.
- Bad debt provisions – debtors are reviewed regularly to assess likelihood of recoverability. A provision of bad debt is estimated based on these reviews. At the year end, no bad debt provision has been made (2022: £0k).

2. Legal status of the Charity

The Charity is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. In the event of the Charity being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the Charity.

3. Income from donations and legacies

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Donations and grants	515	861
<i>Government support:</i>		
Job retention scheme	-	33
Other	-	35
Membership subscriptions	74	70
Total	589	999

The Charity benefits greatly from the involvement and enthusiastic support of its many volunteers, details of which are given in our annual report. In accordance with FRS 102 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the economic contribution of general volunteers is not recognised in the accounts.

4. Income from charitable activities

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
<i>Science Centre:</i>		
Admission fees	1,761	1,465
Exhibit sponsorship	(13)	15
Tax relief	336	89
Insurance claim	-	250
Total	2,084	1,819
<i>Engagement and Outreach:</i>		
STEM NOW	86	195
Outreach workshops	31	11
Total	117	206

5. Income from other trading activities

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Fundraising events	99	35
Trading operations	596	530
Corporate sponsorship	30	40
Total	725	605

6. Expenditure on raising funds

	Direct staff costs £'000	Other direct costs £'000	Governance support costs £'000	Other support costs £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Trading costs	237	450	14	192	893	711
Fundraising costs	65	14	-	-	79	45
Total	302	464	14	192	972	756

7. Expenditure on charitable activities

	Direct staff costs £'000	Other direct costs £'000	Governance support costs £'000	Other support costs £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Science Centre	892	553	28	620	2,093	1,886
Engagement and Outreach	43	183	5	74	305	227
Total	935	736	33	694	2,398	2,113

8. Analysis of governance and support costs

	Direct staff costs £'000	Overheads £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Governance costs	-	47	47	50
Finance, HR and IT costs	297	89	386	255
Management costs	102	39	141	130
Premises and office costs	-	360	360	272
Total	399	535	934	707

Support costs related to the building have been re-allocated on a square footage basis, whilst other costs have been re-allocated on a direct cost basis.

9. Net income for the year

<i>This is stated after charging:</i>	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Depreciation	410	447	410	447
<i>Auditor's remuneration for:</i>				
Audit	19	18	15	14
Taxation services	4	19	4	18
<i>Operating lease rentals:</i>				
Plant and machinery	11	7	11	7

10. Investment in subsidiary and trading income

The Charity has a wholly owned trading subsidiary, Sparking Curiosity Limited (Company Number 10661776), which is incorporated in England and Wales. A summary of the trading results of the subsidiary to 31st March 2023 is shown below. This includes a management charge levied by the Charity of £304k (2022: £181k). Audited accounts are filed with the Registrar of Companies.

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Turnover	640	572
Cost of sales	(304)	(255)
Gross profit	336	317
Other operating charges	(331)	(195)
Profit for the year before tax	5	122

The capital of the company comprises 100 ordinary shares of £1 each. The maximum permissible amount of the subsidiary's reserves of £58,006 will be transferred to the parent company by 31st December 2023 such that no tax will be payable by the subsidiary.

11. Analysis of staff costs, Trustee remuneration and expenses, and the cost of key management personnel

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Salaries and wages	1,484	1,126
Social security costs	124	86
Pension costs	28	21
Redundancy costs	3	-
Total	1,639	1,233

The number of employees whose emoluments exceeded £60,000 during the year was:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
£80,001 - £90,000	1	1
£60,001 - £70,000	1	-

Pension costs are allocated to activities in proportion to the related staffing costs incurred.

The Trustees were not paid and did not receive any other benefits from employment with the Charity in the year (2021/22: £nil). One Trustee was reimbursed £157.50 for travel costs during the year (2021/22: £0). No Trustee received payment for professional or other services supplied to the charity (2021/22: £nil).

The key management personnel of the charity comprise the Trustees, CEO, and Directors of Finance and Operations, Science Engagement, Communications, Fundraising and Experience. The total employee costs of the key management personnel of the charity were £353k (2021/22: £296k).

12. Staff numbers

The average monthly head count was 92 staff (2021/22: 66 staff) and the average monthly number of full-time equivalent employees (including casual and part-time staff) during the year were as follows:

	2023 Number	2022 Number
Science Centre	41	34
Office and management	9	8
Total	50	42

All staff were employed by the Charity.

13. Tangible fixed assets – Group

	Work in progress £'000	Intellectual assets £'000	Equipment £'000	Freehold land and buildings £'000	Total £'000
Cost or valuation:					
At 1st April 2022	8	253	2,557	1,087	3,905
Additions	-	-	153	-	153
Transfers	(8)	-	8	-	-
Disposals	-	-	(41)	-	(41)
As at 31st March 2023	-	253	2,677	1,087	4,017
Depreciation:					
At 1st April 2022	-	249	1,483	96	1,828
Charge for year	-	4	387	19	410
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	(40)	-	(40)
As at 31st March 2023	-	253	1,830	115	2,198
Net book value:					
As at 31st March 2023	-	-	847	972	1,819
As at 31st March 2022	8	5	1,073	991	2,077

In July 2016, the land and buildings were inspected by Andrew Smith & Son of Winchester to obtain a current open market valuation at 31st March 2014. The buildings were valued at £1,000k and the land at £125k. The Trustees restated opening balances on 1st April 2015 in accordance with the deemed cost option of FRS 102. Had the deemed cost option not been elected, at 31st March 2023, the cost of freehold land and buildings stated above would be £7,621k, and the net book value £5,356k.

13. Tangible fixed assets – Charity

	Work in progress £'000	Intellectual assets £'000	Equipment £'000	Freehold land and buildings £'000	Total £'000
Cost or valuation:					
At 1st April 2022	8	253	2,556	1,087	3,904
Additions	-	-	153	-	153
Transfers	(8)	-	8	-	-
Disposals	-	-	(41)	-	(41)
As at 31st March 2023	-	253	2,676	1,087	4,016
Depreciation:					
At 1st April 2022	-	249	1,482	96	1,827
Charge for year	-	4	387	19	410
Eliminated on disposal	-	-	(40)	-	(40)
As at 31st March 2023	-	253	1,829	115	2,197
Net book value:					
As at 31st March 2023	-	-	847	972	1,819
As at 31st March 2022	8	5	1,073	991	2,077

14. Stock

	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Shop goods for resale	31	15	-	-
Heating fuel	8	9	8	9
Total	39	24	8	9

During the year, £327k (2021/22 £274k) of stock was recognised as an expense.

15. Debtors

	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Trade debtors	38	105	38	99
Prepayments	36	38	36	38
Grants	3	-	3	-
Events	4	-	-	-
Tax relief	8	89	8	89
Amounts owed from group undertakings	-	-	30	13
Other	49	25	48	24
Total	138	257	163	263

16. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Bank loans and overdraft	-	128	-	128
Trade creditors	73	131	57	112
Accruals	160	68	151	60
Taxation and social security	41	36	41	14
Other creditors	18	12	11	8
Deferred income	135	273	132	248
Total	427	648	392	570

17. Deferred income

Deferred income comprises: advance ticket sales related to admission to the Science Centre and for events held after 31st March 2023 of £76k (2021/22 £61k), deferred membership from annual passes of £44k (2021/22 £36k), deferred sponsorship of nil (2021/22 £36k) and deferred grant income of £15k (2021/22 £140k).

	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Balance as at 1st April	273	546	248	526
Amount released to income and expenditure account	(273)	(546)	(248)	(526)
Amount deferred in year	135	273	132	248
Balance as at 31st March	135	273	132	248

18. Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year

	Group 2023 £'000	Group 2022 £'000	Charity 2023 £'000	Charity 2022 £'000
Bank loan	-	84	-	84
CBILS loan	-	389	-	389
Total	-	473	-	473

The bank loan was repaid on 22nd July 2022, interest was charged at 2.5% above the base rate. The CBILS loan was repaid on 7th March 2023, interest was charged from 31st October 2021 at 1.63% above the base rate. Both loans were secured on the charity's freehold property.

The bank loans are repayable as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Amounts payable within one year	-	128
Amounts payable between one and two years	-	131
Amounts payable between three and five years	-	342
Total	-	601

19. Analysis of assets and liabilities between funds

	Restricted funds 2023 £'000	Unrestricted funds 2023 £'000	Total 2023 £'000	Restricted funds 2022 £'000	Unrestricted funds 2022 £'000	Total 2022 £'000
Group:						
Fixed assets	303	1,516	1,819	323	1,754	2,077
Current assets	-	1,770	1,770	-	2,055	2,055
Current liabilities	-	(427)	(427)	-	(648)	(648)
Long-term liabilities	-	-	-	-	(473)	(473)
Group total	303	2,859	3,162	323	2,688	3,011
Charity:						
Fixed assets	303	1,516	1,819	323	1,754	2,077
Current assets	-	1,677	1,677	-	1,802	1,802
Current liabilities	-	(392)	(392)	-	(570)	(570)
Long-term liabilities	-	-	-	-	(473)	(473)
Charity total	303	2,801	3,104	323	2,513	2,836

20. Movement in funds

	At 1st April 2022 £'000	Income £'000	Expenditure £'000	Transfer between funds £'000	At 31st March 2023 £'000
Restricted funds:					
Widening Participation and Outreach	-	53	(53)	-	-
Millennium Project	323	-	(20)	-	303
Other restricted funds	-	-	-	-	-
Total restricted funds	323	53	(73)	-	303
Unrestricted funds:					
<i>Designated:</i>					
Planetarium	152	47	-	-	199
Fixed assets	1,755	-	(391)	153	1,517
Outdoor Science Engagement	-	-	-	600	600
Exhibition	44	(13)	(9)	-	22
STEM NOW	-	87	(47)	(40)	-
Total designated funds	1,951	121	(447)	713	2,338
<i>Unrestricted:</i>					
General unrestricted	562	2,707	(2,093)	(713)	463
Total general unrestricted funds	562	2,707	(2,093)	(713)	463
Total unrestricted funds	2,513	2,828	(2,540)	-	2,801
Total charitable funds	2,836	2,881	(2,613)	-	3,104
Trading subsidiary	175	640	(757)	-	58
Total group funds	3,011	3,521	(3,370)	-	3,162

See note 27 for prior year comparatives

Restricted funds

The Charity received donations and grants that the donor specified to be solely used for particular areas of the Charity's work or for specific projects being undertaken by the Charity.

Widening Participation and Outreach

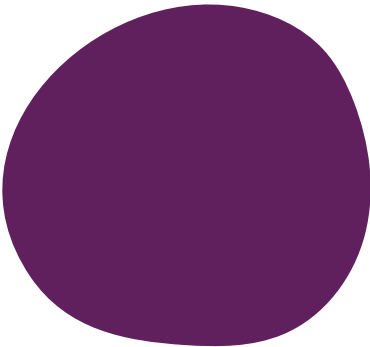
A number of discrete projects to reach underserved audiences. Projects included outreach activities in school and community settings.

Millennium Project

A capital development project for the creation of the Science Centre, placing restrictions on the use of the building.

Unrestricted funds

These are funds available for the general objectives of the Charity. Included within unrestricted funds are designated funds that the Charity has put aside for a specific purpose. The Charity has existing fixed assets that are essential to its operation, the value of which has been designated. A further designated fund, Outdoor Science Engagement, has been established in 2022/23 to support the Charity's ambitious future plans.



21. Operating lease commitments – Group and Charity

The future operating lease payments are as follows:

	2023 £'000	2022 £'000
Within one year	11	11
Between one and five years	6	16
After more than five years	-	-
Total	16	27

22. Pension scheme

During the year £28k (2021/22: £21k) was paid into a defined contribution pension scheme. At the year-end no contributions (2021/22: £5k) were due to the scheme.

23. Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year, nor in 2021/22.

24. Limitation of liability

Wonderseekers formally known as Winchester Science Centre is a company limited by guarantee and has no share capital. At the year ended 31st March 2023, there were 11 members (13 members at 31st March 2022), each of whom has undertaken to contribute a maximum of £1, if required, in the event of the winding up of the company.

25. Capital commitments

There were no outstanding capital commitments at 31st March 2023.

26. 2022 Statement of Financial Activities (Prior Year)

	Unrestricted funds £'000	Restricted funds £'000	Total funds 2022 £'000	Total funds 2021 £'000
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	752	247	999	940
Charitable activities:				
Science Centre	1,819	-	1,819	238
Engagement and Outreach	206	-	206	203
Income from investments	1	-	1	-
Other trading activities	605	-	605	107
Total	3,383	247	3,630	1,488
Expenditure on:				
Raising funds:				
Other trading activities	628	128	756	258
Charitable activities:				
Science Centre	1,757	129	1,886	1,416
Engagement and Outreach	217	10	227	175
Total	2,602	267	2,869	1,849
Net (expenditure)/income:	781	(20)	761	(361)
Transfer between funds	73	(73)	-	-
Net movement in funds	854	(93)	761	(361)
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	1,834	416	2,250	2,611
Total funds carried forward	2,688	323	3,011	2,250

27. 2022 Movement in funds (Prior Year)

	At 1st April 2021 £'000	Incoming resources £'000	Outgoing resources £'000	Transfer between funds £'000	At 31st March 2022 £'000
Restricted funds:					
Inspiring Science for All	60	-	(18)	(42)	-
Inspiring Science for All - Digital	-	163	(135)	(28)	-
Widening Participation and Outreach	14	35	(49)	-	-
Millennium Project	342	-	(19)	-	323
Other restricted funds	-	49	(46)	(3)	-
Total restricted funds	416	247	(267)	(73)	323
Unrestricted funds:					
Designated:					
Planetarium	106	46	-	-	152
Fixed Assets	-	-	-	1,755	1,755
Exhibition	44	13	(13)	-	44
STEM NOW	-	194	(141)	(53)	-
Total designated funds	150	253	(154)	1,702	1,951
Unrestricted:					
General unrestricted	1,621	2,558	(1,988)	(1,629)	562
Total general unrestricted funds	1,621	2,558	(1,988)	(1,629)	562
Total unrestricted funds	1,771	2,811	(2,142)	73	2,513
Total charitable funds	2,187	3,058	(2,409)	-	2,836
Trading subsidiary	63	572	(460)	-	175
Total Group funds	2,250	3,630	(2,869)	-	3,011

Charity information

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Acknowledgements

We would also like to acknowledge the support of our Research and Evaluation Consultant: Jen DeWitt, UCL, Young Steering Group, Sustainability Action Group and the families and professionals with accessibility expertise and lived experience who continue to help guide our accessibility development.

Patron

Megan McCubbin

Ambassadors

Peter Rogers MSc CEng FIOA FRSA MIOL

Life members

Mr Jeremy C Booker ACA

Mr Colin Brook

Dr Dolores Byrne OBE HonFIET CEng

Professor Malcolm J Coe FRAS FHEA

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Mrs Phyllida James

Dr Ian C Jenkins MSc

Mrs Tajinder Leonard

Mr Adrian A Owen

Mrs Sue Parr

Dr Janet Preston MSc PhD MInstP FRAS

Mrs Katie Roberts

Dr Rutang Thanawalla

Chief Executive Officer and Senior Management Team

Mr Ben Ward FRSA, Chief Executive Officer

Ms Jo Hennessy, Director of Experiences

Mrs Emily Mace, Director of Science Engagement

Mrs Charlotte Mercer, Director of Communications

Ms Elizabeth Moorcraft ACMA, Director of Finance and Operations

Dr Effrosyni Nomikou, Director of Science Engagement (maternity cover)

Mrs Kate Wasche, Director of Fundraising



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