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**Annual Report
1st April 2014 – 31st March 2015**

 **Charity Name and Number**

The-Zone! 1156806

**Correspondence Address**

118 Fernhill Road, Farnborough, Hampshire, GU14 9DR.

**About The Zone!**

Our aim has always been to provide information, support and advice to families living with autism and similar conditions in the North East Hampshire area, as well as just over the borders into Surrey and Berkshire too. We do this by organising regular meet-ups and outings for families and aim to keep the cost as low as possible.

**The-Zone! Committee members**

All of our committee members are parents and carers who volunteer to make a difference to other local families. Without them, The-Zone! would not be able to run.

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| **Name** | **Committee Role** |
| Nikki Smith | Trustee / Chair |
| Carol Bulman | Trustee / Treasurer |
| Gaye McGowan | Trustee / Secretary |
| Karen Smith | Newsletter Editor |
| Sharon Sutcliffe | Committee member |
| Jenny Thomas | Committee member |
| Sue Wiltshire | Committee member |
| Danielle James | Committee member |
| Sam Marshall | Committee member |
| Karen Gater | Committee member |
| Julie Gill | Committee member |
| Colin Smith | @ The Zone |

**What The-Zone! does well**

We have been running as The-Zone! since the official launch in April 2014. In that time our numbers have steadily grown and we now have over 400 families on our mailing list, as well as many interested professionals and other organisations too.

In the past 12 months we have had great fun carrying out the following:

* **Saturday Zone** events were drop-in sessions where families could attend The-Zone! between 10.30am and 2.30pm for a cost of £2.50 per child. This year we have run 15 Saturday Zones and they have all been very popular, especially in the nicer weather when families can enjoy the huge outdoor area with go-karts, trikers and a bouncy castle.
* **Fun Zone** sessions are run on Wednesdays during school holidays and again, are for families to drop-in to as and when they need to. They run from 10.30am and 2.30pm and cost £2.50 per child. Eleven sessions were held and the feedback was positive, again the outside space, equipment and bouncy castles prove to be a key element.
* **After School Zone**: 49 sessions were held on Wednesdays and Thursdays 3 – 6pm, but these were cut down to just the Wednesdays and then stopped completely at the end of the financial year. Families enjoyed having the easy and regular access to The-Zone! but it was often difficult for the children with autism to cope with the transition from school to The-Zone!
* **Zone-Out events** were organised as often as possible, from a family fun day at Thames Valley Adventure Playground in Maidenhead, a coach trip to Special Children’s Day at London Zoo, a coach trip to Bocketts Farm, one session at Run-About, 4 Laser-Run sessions, donutting twice, 2 meet-ups for bowling and ceramic painting too!
* **Teen Zone In and Out** had a brilliant year with 10 Teen Zone-In! drop-in evening sessions on one Friday night each month from 6 – 8pm. Teen Zone-Out! Events have included going to a wrestling match in Aldershot, a session at Laser-Run, an evening at Ignition and a meal out at the Harvester in Fleet.
* **Coffee Zone/breakfast meet-ups** were held on an ad-hoc basis throughout the year; we had 17 events and parents found them useful to meet others without needing to also supervise their children.
* **DLA help** sessions were held on an informal basis, so that we can help parents individually and therefore in private.
* **Zone-Info,** our newsletter was produced 4 - 6 times a year was increasingly in demand. We tried to email it to as many contacts as possible but we still happily sent out paper copies to those who preferred them and we sometimes delivered them to local special schools and health visitors.
* **www.The-Zone.org.uk** website is still running. We kept it as up to date as possible with as much useful information as we could find. The calendar was useful to help families keep up with events and outings.
* **Facebook groups and page** – we had an incredibly active closed Facebook group with 319 members, the closed Facebook group for those with Teens had 89 members, the Facebook page had 403 “likes”.

**Treasurers Report**

 **Total income and expenditure April 1st 2014 - March 31st 2015**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Income** |  **Amount** |  |  |  |
| Balance from closing NAS Branch account | £7,207.85 |  |  |  |
| Grants from Hampshire County Council | £14,023.00 |  |  |  |
| Fundraising | £644.12 |  |  |  |
| Payments received for Zone-Out events | £2,360.73 |  |  |  |
| Payments received for Zone-In sessions | £2,161.42 |  |  |  |
| County Councillor’s Grant, M Staplehurst | £2,000.00 |  |  |  |
| Other donations | £259.01 |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Income** | **£28,656.13** |  |  | **£28,656.13** |
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| **Expenditure** |  |  |  **Amount** |  |
| Insurance, April 2014 and March 2015 |  |  | £2,058.64 |  |
| Venue hire – Samuel Cody School |  |  | £7,778.50 |  |
| Disclosure and Barring Service Checks |  |  | £201.60 |  |
| Computers, games consoles and spares |  |  | £1,361.08 |  |
| Games and software |  |  | £263.39 |  |
| Arts & crafts supplies |  |  | £669.09 |  |
| Zone-Out events |  |  | £5,730.85 |  |
| The-Zone! Set up (T-shirts, balloons etc.) |  |  | £969.48 |  |
| Zone-In activities |  |  | £453.88 |  |
| Goodie bags and Christmas selection boxes |  |  | £110.17 |  |
| Printing |  |  | £141.69 |  |
| Postage |  |  | £55.65 |  |
| Coffee cups, biscuits etc. |  |  | £116.00 |  |
| Lotteries registration |  |  | £40.00 |  |
| Broadband |  |  | £270.36 |  |
| Mobile phone (one month only, balance in 2015 – 16 accts) |  |  | £27.32 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Expenditure** |  |  | **£20,247.70** | **£20,247.70** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Balance carried forward to 2015-16** |  | **£8,408.43** |

1. As you can see, the money we had at the start-up of The-Zone! (from the NAS Branch account) plus the grant from Hampshire County Council gave us a good budget for the year up to March 2015.
2. We spent a large amount of the money we had on hiring the rooms we use at Samuel Cody School. The number of sessions was cut from April 2015.
3. The figure for expenditure on insurance is for two years. We couldn't insure for our use of Samuel Cody premises until The-Zone! was legally a charity in April 2014. The policies had to be renewed before the end of March 2015 so this figure will be approximately half of that shown in March 2016.
4. The rest of the expenditure on the mobile phone used by The-Zone! shows in the accounts for 2015-16. It amounts to £300.52.

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| **Donations were received from:** |  |  |
| HCC Councillor Mark Staplehurst | £2,000.00 |  |
| Funds raised by Gaye McGowan & Lisa (her colleague)  | £153.16 | Shown as “fundraising” |
| Sponsorship money from Janet Stubbings (abseiling Guildford Cathedral) | £490.96 | Shown as “fundraising” |
| Donation by Jane Baker’s mother from making & selling cards | £100.00 |  |
| Funds raised by Dale Fontaine (Elvis impersonator) | £140.00 |  |
| Anonymous donations | £19.01 |  |

**Future plans for The-Zone!**

As of now, The-Zone’s new Trustees are:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Committee Role** | **Tasks/Responsibilities** |
| Carol Bulman | Trustee / Chair | Zone phone, emails, Facebook groups, funding forms. |
| Karen Smith | Trustee / Treasurer | Paypal, funding forms,membership database |
| Sharon Sutcliffe | Trustee / Secretary | Coffee/Saturday Zones,education advice |
| Nikki Smith | Committee member | Website, emails, Facebook groups, generally passing on usefulinfo to the committee.  |
| Jenny Thomas | Committee member | Christmas raffle, Christmas party,ad hoc Zone-Out events |
| Sue Wiltshire | Committee member | Teen Zone |
| Danielle James | Committee member | Christmas raffle, Christmas party,ad hoc Zone-Out events |
| Lisa Frankham | Committee member | Teen Zone |
| Sam Marshall | Committee member |  |
| Riannon Gonzalez | Committee member | Helping setup/packing awayat Zone-In sessions |
| Julie Gill | Committee member |  |
| Colin Smith | @ The Zone | Helping when needed |

As with everything we have done as The-Zone! we listen to families and what they would like us to do. Feedback is always incredibly useful as it tells us what is working well and what needs to be looked at and changed.

Attendance at our monthly Saturday Zones, Teen Zone-In and Fun Zones in the holidays have proven to be good and therefore we will do our best to ensure we secure funding to be able to continue providing these.
Some committee members have agreed to take on the running of the Saturday Zones and Teen Zones, with Carol and Riannon hosting Fun Zones. Other committee members will also run ad hoc Zone-Out events too, including the Christmas party for the under 11’s that they’ve already booked! (Details will be in the next newsletter.)
We are working on more Teen Zone-Out events so that the teens get more opportunities for social interaction.

Carol and Nikki are taking a step back from running so many of The-Zone events; we will still be at some of them, just not always the ones in charge. Instead, we will be focusing on all of the behind the scene work; applying for more funding to keep The-Zone! events running, answering emails, dealing with phone calls, keeping the Facebook page and groups up to date and ensuring they remain a supportive environment for families, as well as various other fun tasks too.

If you have any suggestions for Zone-Out events, or equipment/toys for at Zone-In sessions, please write them on the feedback slip attached to this report, along with anything else you think we should know.

As always, we need more people to join us – if you feel you are able to help us, please just talk to one of the Trustees; from help setting up or packing away at an event, taking charge of the library, helping complete DLA forms, fundraising or anything else you think might help, please just talk to us or write details on the slip below.

Here’s to another fantastically active year!

**Feedback / comments for the new Trustees**

Please use this space to give us any comments, information or feedback about anything The-Zone! have done in the past year.

You can do this anonymously or if you’d like us to get in contact with you, let us know your name :o)