

# ASPIRING TO DO MORE

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
PERFORMANCE REVIEW  
2016 - 2017

16  
17



**Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust**  
01452 396 601  
[www.aspiretrust.org.uk](http://www.aspiretrust.org.uk)

Company Registration Number: 06644292. Charity Number: 1125995







## TRUSTEES

List of Trustees who served Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust during 2016 - 2017:

Mr Matthew Burgess, Chairman [ resigned 31/12/2016 ]

Mr Neil Cameron [ appointed 24/05/2016 ]

Mrs Elizabeth Clegg

Mrs Caroline Corbett [ appointed 24/05/2016 ]

Mr Sanjai Desai [ appointed 24/05/2016, appointed Vice Chair 01/01/2017 ]

Mr Neil Hampson [ Council Nominee ]

Mr Lee Hawthorne [ Council Nominee, appointed 24/05/2016, appointed Chair 01/01/2017 ]

Mrs Kath Houson

Mr Andrew Pain

Mr Martyn White

## EXECUTIVE TEAM

Mr Bernie Jones, Chief Executive

Mrs Jacquie Douglas, Deputy Chief Executive

## COMPANY SECRETARY

Mrs Jacquie Douglas, Deputy Chief Executive

## REGISTERED OFFICE

GL1 Leisure Centre,  
Bruton Way, Gloucester GL1 1DT

## CONTACT DETAILS

[www.aspiretrust.org.uk](http://www.aspiretrust.org.uk)  
01452 396 601

## BACKGROUND

Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust was established in 2008 to provide sport, leisure and cultural opportunities for Gloucestershire.

Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust is a 'Company Limited by Guarantee', not having any share capital. We have charitable status and are a 'not for profit' organisation.

The charity is governed by a Board of up to 11 Trustees, who give strategic guidance and support to the Trust's Management Team, which is led by the Chief Executive. All of the Trustees are volunteers and receive no payment for their role.

The Trustees are all representatives of the local community and bring a wealth of experience and expertise to the organisation with representatives from education, business, community, sport, the voluntary sector and the City Council.

The charity is a totally independent organisation and whilst it currently receives a grant from the Gloucester City Council, the majority of income the charity generates comes from customers i.e. those coming through the doors. As indicated above, Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust is a registered charity with every penny surplus generated being re-invested back into improving the leisure offer to the people of Gloucestershire.





Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust is governed through its Articles of Association which details the charity's vision which is to 'enrich the lives of the community'. However, in 2016 we took the opportunity to review our purpose, mission, aims and values



## PURPOSE

We are a local charity that provides an active life for all the family

## MISSION

Aspire to do more

## VALUES



## AIMS



The trustees, management and staff were all involved in the review, the conclusions of which were shared with all staff in a roadshow. In addition they have all received credit card sized cards detailing the charity's vision, mission, aims and values.

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

Welcome to the second Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust's Performance Review Annual Report. Once again I am delighted to be able to report another successful year and within this report will highlight how, as a registered charity, we make a difference to people's lives and provide community benefit through what we do.

We all understand the power and potential that sport and physical activity has to transform lives. No other single service is capable of achieving so many positive outcomes on such a wide range of social issues. Sport and physical activity builds confidence and self-esteem, develops life skills, strengthens community spirit, improves health and well-being, reduces anti-social behaviour, helps employment prospects and boosts educational attainment.

This report provides an overview of our main achievements during the year and outlines our plans for the future. Despite the continuing difficult economic conditions; the continuing reduction in funding support from Gloucester City Council due to the Local Government spending review; and an ever increasing competitive marketplace, through hard work and teamwork it's been a good year for Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust as we have exceeded our financial targets for the year and achieved surpluses that can be re-invested back into the business. As a registered charity every penny surplus that the Trust generates goes back into the business to either improve the facilities, services or activities that we deliver, so we are delighted once again to exceed our targets and generate surpluses to re-invest. However, whilst it's important that we 'balance the books' and generate surpluses, the charity is not just measured on financial success.

As indicated above, the success of the charity is not measured just on financial performance or the number of attendances, but the difference the charity has made to people's lives. At Aspire, we don't just believe in getting more people, more active, more often – that goes without saying! In order to make a real impact on the health and social issues affecting our communities, we target our efforts and our service offer. Only in this way can we make participation in sport and physical activity an important part of everybody's day-to-day lives.

Throughout this report there are examples and case studies demonstrating how the charity has helped to improve the quality of life for our customers and Gloucester residents.

Total attendances at our activities and facilities were down on the previous year but still totalled over 850,000. Swimming remains the most popular activity with over 375,000 visits to wet activities in the pools at GL1 Leisure Centre. At a time when swimming has been declining nationally, the range and quality of GL1's pool facilities as well as the variety in the programme has ensured our attendances have remained high. The other key activity/facilities attracting customers include Aspire Fitness – 139,610, Oxstalls Sports Park – 151,000, and GL1 Dryside activities – 163,000.

During 2016-17 Oxstalls Sports Park picked up 3 awards at the Gloucestershire Lawn Tennis Association (CLTA) Awards evening – Community Venue of the Year; Disability Award; and Lewis Bourne won Junior Volunteer of the Year. These awards underline the reputation Oxstalls Sports Park has in the South West for delivering first class tennis opportunities for all sections of the community.

My thanks go to our Trustees for their leadership and support to the Executive Team; the Management and Staff who have worked very hard in continuing to put the customer first and delivering these results and our many partners who support our initiatives and whom we work with for shared goals.

With our City Council funding reducing to zero next year, we will be under pressure to review all aspects of our operation but I can only reiterate our desire to put the customer at the forefront of everything we do and try to make a difference to the people of Gloucestershire that we serve.





## AIM ONE

### Be a sustainable charity

**Sustainability is the number one priority for the charity and not only has Aspire got to continue to absorb the reduction in the management fee funding to zero next year but also to ensure surpluses are continuing to be generated to re-invest back into the business and ensure that we are able to keep the facilities and activities fresh and up-to-date.**

### Refurbishment of GL1 and Oxstalls

During the past 12 months a number of improvements and refurbishments of both GL1 and Oxstalls have taken place to ensure that we provide our customers with the best possible experience. Amongst the work undertaken during the year was:

- Sanding, re-sealing and re-lining of GL1 Sports Hall Floor
- Painting and decorating a number of areas at both facilities including changing rooms, corridors and specific rooms
- Steam and deep cleaning of key areas
- Replacement of lighting
- New reception desk and bar counter
- GL1 Gym redecoration and layout remodelling
- Development of Studio 2 Active Ladies fitness
- Refurbishment of bar/café at Oxstalls including replacement of furniture
- Re-carpeting main customer areas at both centres

### Effectiveness and efficiencies

During 2016-17 a number of varied working practices have been trialled to create ongoing efficiencies across the charity. Some of these trials have yielded financial benefit during the year including 206 hours of staff time saved. Examples of these efficiencies include a total review of the shift patterns and hours worked for staff, together with a significant reduction in casual hours worked/alignment to required shift patterns during non-term time.

Where these trials have been successful, they will be continued into the 2017/18 financial year and beyond and the annual benefit of the reductions will have their impact. In addition, a further 56.5 hours will be reduced through changes that will be made to the operation of the soft play facility at Oxstalls Sports Park.

### Business development

To ensure our sustainability we continue to look outside of our existing facilities and at other opportunities in the area to further enhance our offer to the community and are particularly keen to build opportunities for the whole family.

### University of Gloucestershire sports facilities

Aspire has been working closely with the University of Gloucestershire to ensure that when the new sports facilities are completed and opened that the local community will also benefit from the fantastic new facilities as well as the students. The new facilities will include 2 new 3G all weather pitches, a 12 badminton court sports hall, and associated changing facilities and accommodation.

The charity will operate the facilities on behalf of the University during community time which will be evenings and weekends. Residents of Gloucestershire will have access to what will be some of the finest sports facilities in the county.

### Heart of the community

At Aspire the community is at the heart of everything we do and we try to support local charities and organisations to achieve their goals.

In February we worked with a local group to raise money for Elizabeth's Footprint charity by hosting the Rainbow Swim in memory of a beautiful young girl Elizabeth who had lost her life to a rare autoimmune condition.





## AIM TWO

### Develop and grow the charity

**Growing and developing the charity is fundamental to ensuring that Aspire can become a sustainable charity without the City Council management funding. The need to grow the charity internally (maximising the use of our existing facilities) and externally (developing new and profitable activities and services) is fundamental to the sustainability of the charity.**

#### Active Ladies

The New Year is always a busy time at GL1 with people committing to New Year's resolutions with the aim of getting fit. With the New Year in mind, Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust launched Active Ladies in Studio 2 at GL1 as well as a refurbishment of the existing gym. The new Active Ladies in Studio 2 provides women with the opportunity to work out in comfort and the knowledge that they can just get on with her session without having to worry about how they look, what other people are doing, and what anyone else thinks. The experienced female Fitness Instructors are also available to ensure that the customer makes the most of her workout and achieves her goals. As well as the refurbished gym, including some additional and new equipment, all of the centre's spinning bikes were also replaced.

#### Junior Active Life

Our Junior Active Life membership provides a wide range of fun and engaging programmes and drop-in sessions. These are all created to encourage an active lifestyle for children of all ages.

The membership gives weekly access to one programme at either GL1 or Oxstalls. Options include swimming lessons, tennis lessons, martial arts and gymnastics, along with the option to add additional programmes too.

In addition to our programmes, the membership provides a wide range of drop-in sessions such as Toddler World, Fun Factory, multi-sports club, public swimming, off-peak racquet sports and fitness classes. There really is something for everyone!

#### Toddler World

Part of the Junior Active Life sessions, Toddler World is available 6 mornings a week at GL1. Regularly up to 100 'little ones' and their parent or guardian attend the fun session in the sports hall.

Last year's Christmas special resulted in over 160 children attending the session which included lots of Christmas activities and a visit to Santa's Grotto!

#### CaterCater

At the beginning of March, CaterCater, who currently deliver the food and beverage and vending service at GL1, took over the same service at Oxstalls Sport Park.

Working in partnership with them, Aspire has initiated a number of improvements and refurbishments at Oxstalls Sports Park including: new bar/café servery; new reception desk/retail area; new café/bar furniture; redecoration and new carpet in main public areas.

CaterCater are introducing new menus at Oxstalls and whilst some of the old favourites will be available, there will be a wide range of healthier snacks and meals available.





## AIM THREE

### Increase and widen participation



**Increasing and widening participation is a key area of focus for the charity which also contributes to the Sport England and Government 'Active Nation' Strategy, and improving the health of the people of Gloucestershire. Increasing participation, balanced with careful pricing, will also lead to an increase in income for the charity.**

Being active is part of a life long journey at Aspire and we try to ensure that everybody, regardless of their circumstances is able to participate in an activity of one form or another. Below are some examples of specific sessions we operate to ensure that we do achieve our purpose in providing an active life for all the family.

#### Active Everyday

Maintaining a healthy lifestyle can be very difficult for a number of people following a cancer diagnosis. However, physical activity has been shown to reduce the risk of recurrence and improve survival rates as well as providing multiple physical and emotional health benefits. Working with the MacMillan Next Steps Rehabilitation Team, a programme to support people diagnosed with breast, colorectal and prostate cancer has been developed.

The Active Everyday programme gives people the skills over an initial 6 weeks to move safely and effectively and to put together their own physical activity programme. This enables initiation for those who have never been physically active and re-initiation for those who have, but are struggling to return to, physical activity. Regular 'maintenance' classes are provided by GL1 enabling people to be physically active in a safe and supportive environment.



***"On behalf of the whole club we would like to thank GL1, part of the Aspire Trust, in supporting CPFC to be the home of a powerchair football court! Having the lines permanently, accurately marked down will aid the players training and improve their match ability."***

**Jenny Rutter,**  
CPFC coach

***"Oxstalls is truly inclusive and I would encourage anyone, regardless of age, experience, ability or mobility to just give it a try. I did and it changed my life."***

**Caroline, wheelchair tennis**  
enthusiast

#### Ball kid for Barclays ATP World Tour Final

It's not just about playing that Aspire is interested in, but encouraging people to develop a life-long passion for sport and leisure.

Sophie Rees had her passion for tennis enhanced when she was chosen as a ball kid for the annual Barclays ATP World Tour Finals held at the O2 Arena in London. Sophie was in London throughout the tournament and was ball kid for Andy Murray, Stan Wawrinka and Kei Nishikori to name a few. She has come back to Oxstalls with even more passion for tennis where she trains and plays at least four times per week.

#### Power chair football

2017 has seen the introduction of power chair football at GL1. New line markings as part of the main hall refurbishment has helped Cheltenham Powerchair Football Club (CPFC) settle into their new home. Not only is this an important milestone for CPFC, it is brilliant for disability sport in Gloucestershire.

At Aspire we look forward to our partnership with the club and local charity 'Goals Beyond Grass' who provide local opportunities for children and adults to enter Powerchair football.

#### Wheelchair tennis

Regardless of your ability or disability the charity will always provide an active life for all the family. Caroline Gawler only took tennis up when she retired and when a hip replacement resulted in nerve damage to her leg she thought her tennis days were over. A solution was found for Caroline - wheelchair tennis. Caroline hasn't found wheelchair tennis easy but feels she can get the same thrill being on court as she used to.

## AIM FOUR

Be an employer and partner of choice



**As a charity it is important that Aspire has the right values and ethos that ensures that people want to work for the organisation and partners want to work with us because we will do what we say and deliver results. Retaining good staff and developing and retaining good partners is also vital to ensuring a successful future.**

### Terry Parker BEM

Terry has worked at Oxstalls Sports Park for over 15 years in different elements of the Oxstalls tennis programme but specialising in inclusive tennis. He has coached county and national champions in wheelchair tennis and actively approached wheelchair users to “come and try tennis”. He carried the Olympic torch for London 2012 around Gloucester and was awarded a BEM from the Queen for his services to tennis in 2015. He was diagnosed with Alzheimer’s a few years ago but this has not stopped him being an active and vibrant part of the tennis programme, volunteering his time to support the special educational needs (SEN) and wheelchair tennis groups every week. His dedication and enthusiasm still shines through and he hopes to continue for as long as he can before he can focus on the other passion in his life, his allotment!

### Lawn Tennis Association (LTA)

Oxstalls Sports Park was part funded by the LTA when it was first built in 2001 and as a result Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust has a long standing partnership with the LTA. Following the success of the GB Team in winning the Davis Cup, Oxstalls Sports Park was honoured to be included in the Davis Cup Tour on Saturday 20th August 2016.

Having taken 79 years to win the trophy the LTA gave local people the opportunity to have their photo taken with the unique trophy as part of an afternoon of tennis.

***The Academy has the overarching aim to “provide learning opportunities and environments that inspire people to realise their potential”***



### Gloucestershire Lawn Tennis Association (GLTA)

In addition to the partnership with the LTA, Oxstalls Sports Park has also had a long standing partnership with the GLTA working together to increase and improve tennis within the county.

This involves Oxstalls Sports Park hosting 'County Cup' training and competitions attracting high national performing tennis players to our venue. Our highly praised development and Academy programme attracts players throughout the county and beyond not only to access excellent facilities but quality coaching and a competitive programme.

### Babcock Training

Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust began working with Babcock Training a couple of years ago through the appointment of apprentices. The partnership with Babcock has developed considerably and we have now launched the Aspire Academy aimed at ensuring every member of staff has an individual development programme. Babcock Training are helping us deliver high quality training to all members of our team.

**The success of the partnership with Babcock can be highlighted by the example of Joel Layton. Joel joined the charity in April 2016 as an apprentice Recreation Officer. From the word go it was clear that Joel had the right attitude and determination to succeed.**

**In 12 months Joel has developed considerably, initially securing a full-time Recreation Officer post before being appointed Head Recreation Officer at the end of the year. Joel is now also acting as Relief Duty Manager at GL1 as well. Fantastic progress for a young man who has put his NVQ training with Babcock Training to good use and used his knowledge and experience gained to the maximum. Joel is a great advert for both Babcock Training and Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust.**



## AIM FOUR

Be an employer and partner of choice  
*continued...*



### Age UK (Gloucestershire)

Whilst part of a national charity that is the leader in working with older people, Age UK Gloucestershire is a local charity whose whole existence is to enable people to maintain their independence, stay connected to their community, and enjoy quality of life. Their vision is to make Gloucestershire the best county in which to grow older - enabling over 55s to be able to access a wide range of physical and social activity is an important part of that vision.

Over the past 12 months our partnership with Age UK Gloucestershire has seen the introduction of a variety of walking sports, drop-in sessions, and corporate engagement. With the support of sporting governing bodies and our partnership with Active Gloucestershire, we are creating affordable, sustainable and enjoyable activities for people to experience.

### Increase the Peace and Aspire Charity Swim

For the 36th year a Christmas mile swim was held at GLI. Approximately 150 swimmers took the plunge and raised funds for Increase the Peace, a local Gloucester based charity that works with children and young people.

Aspire also provided a training venue for Increase the Peace Chief Executive Delroy Ellis to train for his sponsored skipathon.

Delroy skipped from Cheltenham to GLI to raise funds for Increase the Peace.



## EVENTS



Aspire has a great reputation for hosting National and International events and during 2016-17 the charity hosted the following events:

- Amateur Swimming Association National Waterpolo
- Gloucestershire County Swimming Championships
- Worcestershire County Swimming Championships
- White Collar Boxing
- Wild West CrossFit Challenge
- Ultimate Impact Wrestling / Pro Evolution Wrestling
- Davis Cup Tour
- Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) South West Sprint Championships
- Roller Derby
- Sportsbeat
- Motivational Preparation College for Training (MPCT) Awards
- Comic Con (Sci fi event)
- Robot Wars
- Big Health Day
- UB40
- Festival of Remembrance
- British Gymnastics Championships
- National Synchronised Swimming Championships



## COMMUNITY BENEFIT

### Community Health Trainers

Aspire works in partnership with Community Health Trainers with the aim of supporting the Gloucestershire community to make significant lifestyle changes and move from a sedentary position towards the recommended physical activity guidelines. Aspire provides discounted rates and in the past 12 months 105 people have benefitted from using the Health Card and Community Health Trainer scheme.

There have been many success stories of participants making major lifestyle changes.

#### One such success is Heather:

**Heather was completely sedentary, lacked basic fitness and had many health issues including fibromyalgia, very poor mobility and depression. Heather's first challenge was to walk into GL1. With help and support from both a Community Health Trainer and an Aspire Fitness Instructor, Heather has made significant progress and attends Active Ladies 3 times per week. Heather now feels better equipped to deal with fibromyalgia flare ups and now has the support of friends she has made whilst attending GL1. She is now able to walk unaided, no longer feels lonely and has a greater sense of well-being with a more positive outlook on life.**

### Little Vikings

In March 2017, little Vikings from Widden Primary School took to the water at GL1 in longboats that they had built themselves as part of a Viking project in school. Under the guidance of yacht master and sailing instructor Chris Bell building and racing the dragon boats helped bring history to life. A small example of how Aspire helps the local community.



### Gloucestershire Sports Awards

Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust has long been associated with the Gloucestershire Sports Awards and in the Olympic and Paralympic Year the charity was delighted to be headline sponsors of the event that recognises the achievements of local sportsmen and sportswomen and the coaches and administrators in the county. 3 times Olympic Rowing Gold Medallist Peter Reed was the overall winner.

### Active Connections

As part of the Charity's commitment to ensuring that there is an active life for all the family, on Friday evenings at the beginning of September we began hosting an activity session in partnership with Active Connections. A variety of sports and health and fitness activities are made available to young people. The evening has proved successful and the partnership with Active Connections has developed to such an extent that the Gloucester based charity has moved their base to GL1.

### Staff Success

GL1 Duty Manager, Tom Parsons represented Great Britain at the ETU Sprint Triathlon Championships in Lisbon whilst Oxstalls Duty Manager Dawn Lawson was appointed Team Manager for Great Britain Disability Trampoline Team. Chief Executive Bernie Jones ran for Wales in an indoor match and team managed the Welsh Masters athletes at cross country and road international events.





## FINANCES

**As indicated in the Chief Executive's report, the charity has exceeded its financial target for the year despite the continued increase in competition, particularly around health and fitness, and the continuing reduction in the support funding from Gloucester City Council. The charity exceeded its operational surplus target by approximately £59,000.**

Total operating income for Aspire was down on 2015/16 with the majority of this being attributable to the reduction in the support funding. Despite the reduction in income there were some encouraging achievements, some above target - swimming in GL1, and the synthetic pitch at Oxstalls Sports Park.

The managers and their teams have again controlled expenditure tightly and made a number of efficiency and effectiveness improvements that have ensured that we underspent on budget and exceeded the projected surplus. Further savings were made on staff costs with further reviews of shift working patterns and opening hours of specific activity centres contributing to the savings.

Given the challenges we have faced during the year we are delighted to be reporting that we have exceeded our budgeted operational surplus for 2016-17 which will allow the charity to continue to invest in the facilities and services and ensure that we do not have to pass on the reduction in the support funding to our customers. Every penny surplus generated by the charity is re-invested back into the leisure facilities or the service within the City of Gloucester. Since its inception back in 2008 the charity has invested over £2 million in facility and service improvements.



With the reduction in support funding from Gloucester City Council reducing to zero next year there will be continuing pressures on the charity to make further savings whilst at the same time increasing revenue.

However, despite this and the increasing competition and challenging economic climate we are in, we are confident that Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust will be able to provide a quality, value-for-money service to the community of Gloucestershire that is accessible to everyone.





## THE FUTURE

Despite the many challenges facing the charity, including the withdrawal of funding from Gloucester City Council, Aspire Sports and Cultural Trust is looking forward to an exciting future with the new University of Gloucestershire facilities opening in the next 12 months and the charity continuing to invest in our facilities and develop new programmes and initiatives for the people of Gloucestershire.

As indicated earlier within this report, work has already started on the development of the new University of Gloucestershire sports facilities at Oxstalls Sports Park. In a short few months we hope to see the 2 new 3G pitches being available for community use in evenings and weekends, whilst the sports hall will come on stream in the middle of 2018.

*Encourage even more people  
to "Aspire to do more"*

Aspire is looking forward to working closely with the University of Gloucestershire to maximise the community benefit of the new facilities which will widen the offer and ensure that we are able to encourage even more people to fulfil our mission of *"Aspire to do more"*.

As a local charity leisure provider that puts every penny surplus we generate back into the community, we are in the unique position of being able to provide something for everyone and our range of activities at affordable and value for money prices ensures that sport, leisure and physical activity is accessible to everyone regardless of their circumstances.

The charity is keen to continue to build on the 'family' offer and further enhance our 'Active Life' membership and the range of activities that are available within our facilities.

We look forward to working with you in the future.

