



in the mix
project

Annual Trustee & Chairs Report 2024

*Enabling brighter futures for young people
and communities through informal education
and youth work activity*

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1. Introduction and Overview

2024 has been a year of change and development within our charity, we had to make some significant changes to our operating infrastructure to enable the charity function within the initial part of 2024. There were changes to our staffing structure, including our newly appointed charity manager post, and a decrease in available youth worker staff capacity which did create a short-term gap in staff volume in the first half of the year. New services have been trialled, launched, and developed to meet the ever changing and increasing need of the children and young people we serve and represent.

In terms of successes, we have increased the amount of income received through traded activity and also through donations and legacies which has supported us to secure our finances following a significant loss in the previous year (2023). We have increased the hours of face-to-face youth work being delivered by around 40% as well as the number of youth engagements which stands at over 1400 in total.

Our plans for 2024 included:

- Develop staff capabilities and capacities to enable delivery of alternative education services
- Increase size of our board of trustees
- Further develop our work and services within our defined local catchment area as defined in the final quarter of 2023.
- Hiring of a dedicated bookkeeper
- Work on our business and development plan
- Overhaul our entire policy framework
- Redevelop our website
- Increase our work supporting young people who are disaffected rurally or financially and those with SEMH needs

The board note that most of these areas have been worked on namely, staff have worked on increasing skills in and programmes for our alternative education services. We hired a part time bookkeeper in the spring, in the autumn of this year the charity manager completely overhauled the policy framework, associated forms and documents and further digitized / improved systems and protocols. A new directory of policies and forms has been created and shared within the organisation. And we have increased the support we provide to young people with low level mental health needs, and increased sessions that provide positive activities and food for disaffected young people and their families.

We did some initial work on the redevelopment of our website and costed some options; this however ultimately fell through, and we continue to want to make improvements to our website including making it more accessible. Work however was completed to amend and add / remove some pages and develop links to other sites / add partner logos etc.

We have worked on our business plan supported by our business mentor from Somerset Council who has provided support and guidance. However, this has not been fully realised due to capacity of the charity manager and our increase of face-to-face youth work delivery

and alternative provision. We have worked to better define our values and vision, and work on how we measure impact and market our outcomes. We continue to build our plans and grow our work in line with our core charitable objectives and the trustee's direction and resoluteness.

2. Objectives and Activities

The purpose of our organisation is to provide community-based youth services which are effective in their role to support young people develop in their young lives, build positive relationships, and understand better their futures and aspirations. This is done through regular youth sessions, events, targeted projects, alternative learning, youth participation and positive activities.

The charity offers a range of social, economic, educational, and recreational opportunities, designed to encourage social inclusion and life-long learning, helping to create both economic and social independence, linking to core youth work practices and principles.

Our core objects are specifically restricted to the following:

- a) to act as a resource for children and young people up to the age of 25 living and working in Somerset and Devon providing support, advice, information, and assistance, organising programmes of physical, educational, social, spiritual, developmental, and other activities as a means of:
- b) advancement of life and helping young adults develop their skills, capacities, and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as independent, mature, and responsible individuals;
- c) advancement of education, understanding and life skills;
- d) relieving unemployment and pursuing economic independence;
- e) providing recreational and leisure time activities in the interests of social welfare for people living in the area of benefit who have need by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disability, poverty, or social and economic circumstances with a view to improving the conditions of life of such persons.
- f) provisions of activities and events for community relief and benefit.

ITMP has continued to pursue its charitable objects through its delivery of community-based youth work activity, we have continued to meet the needs of children and young people, local families, and wider communities and other agencies. See highlights of our work below.

Core Provision

During 2024 ITMP has, led by its charity manager, worked to deliver our services in line with our core areas of operation. These have been reworked in 2024 as part of our work around business development and strategy and how we market and engage with clients, networks, and service users. To this end they have been broken into four split areas, these encompass;

- Open access youth work; including youth clubs, outreach in schools, community-based activity, and our holiday club provision
- Targeted youth work; including our SEND group, detached youth work, food resilience activity, and informal education programmes like NatWest Thrive and health and wellbeing activity.
- Youth participation; offering space for youth voice, social action and volunteering and
- Alternative Education; which covers Duke of Edinburgh and outdoor learning, EHE provision, accredited courses, 1:2:1 mentoring & coaching, Social and Emotional Learning and PHSCE Curriculum.

Throughout the year, we have continued to deliver and develop high quality youth projects, around areas that support young peoples' development including the learning of life and independence skills, increasing interest in STEM, careers and futures advice, environmentalism and conservation, community led projects, volunteering opportunities, and outdoor learning. We have increased the work we do with schools and support to teaching and engaging in the national curriculum.

Newly launched trial services in 2024 included additional holiday activity, a closed youth club for young people with low level mental health needs, increased sessions for Electively Home Educated young people, and a dedicated project to support SEND young people. Some of this work based on engagement, feedback, reflection and project evaluation will continue in 2025. We have been able to offer a variety of opportunities to the young people we support.

Commissioned and Traded Activity

We have undertaken further commissioned work, which is reflected in our accounts, this has included work further with Somerset Council and a continued relationship with The National Youth Agency. We have increased our work with local schools providing dedicated alternative education offers built around the needs of young people. We continue to be a core partner for holiday clubs and the Happy Healthy Holiday scheme in Somerset. We continue to maintain relationships with our strategic partners and commissioners.

Traded activity in 2024 has increased in line with pushing for more use of our centre and resources for hire. We have made use of DofE resources to hire to schools and we are aiming to increase this in 2025. We have plans for 2025 to make more use of The Hub Centre for events and parental / community use.

Community Development and Partnerships

We have further developed our work in communities within our defined local catchment area. This year we have supported deliver or develop youth activities in several communities including Milverton and Wiveliscombe. ITMP has continued to be a core member of the Somerset Youth Work Alliance, and we continue to engage in the alliance and work with its officers, and more widely with Spark Somerset. This has included engaging in networks and forums hosted and managed by Spark.

We continue to develop meaningful and professional relationships within the youth sector, within the wider VCFSE sector and with partners in health and social care. Relationships include working with local community groups and businesses that impacts and benefits our service users. An example of this is working with the local Co-op store around donations of surplus food and building relationships with local gym and sport facilities to provide low and no cost physical activities. We have engaged in more activity alongside the One Teams within the local area and strategic early intervention provision in Wellington working alongside Courtfields School and Wellington Town Council.

In early 2024 we were invited to attend Taunton Town Council's Annual town meeting and provide a presentation about our work in the local area and the provision we have provided in Taunton during 2023 and 2024. We were invited to attend the Together At Christmas event in Taunton in December as part of The Royal Foundation and hosted by the HM Lord Lieutenant of Somerset Which aims to celebrate all the work of voluntary and community organisations across Somerset.

Our partnership with Neighbourly continues to provide donations of surplus food for our service users and community. Our marketing plan continues to support build our profile and visibility and has resulted in a number of additional community donations of resources like sports equipment, craft materials, kitchen equipment, board games, and consoles, as well as other items of use paper towel, cafe resources, items for prizes and raffles, and monetary contributions. This demonstrates the value our work, role and impact in communities.

Youth Participation and The Core Network

We have engaged young people in further volunteering and youth voice activities, we have worked with Somerset Council to share how and where young people support their peers. Young people continue to be at the forefront of what we do; developing programmes ideas, sharing their suggestions, feeding back and discussing with youth workers what is going well, areas they'd like to improve and what doesn't work for them, so we ensure our services are relevant and meet their needs.

Our young leaders have had the opportunity to attend several outward facing community events including the Taunton Together and Wellington Together events, during these events young leaders helped to run activities and engage parents and young people in activities we were hosting. Members of the core network also set up, planned and ran their own fundraising event - a sports and cake sale event to raise funds for our services and mind in Somerset. They also took part in our parent open evening and had access to a Christmas themed celebration event.

Alternative Provision

Our Alternative Provision continues to grow and this year we have provided increased 1 to one and small group sessions for young people who are not accessing or struggle in

mainstream education settings. This has included work with Somerset Works supporting post-16 pathways around education and employment.

Part of our work this year has been reviewing how we provide accredited learning opportunities for young people, and we are keen to see this increase in 2025 with courses that reflect the activities we offer and the style of delivery we provide.

ITMP Friends and Volunteering / Fundraising

We have recruited some additional voluntary help in 2024 towards specific events and fundraising activities and this has supported to increase again the amount of fundraising and donations received on last year's previous total. Funds have been raised towards new storage facilities for 2025, our minibus fund, and towards our accessibility fund which supports low income and disadvantaged young people access our work by means of travel support, funding placements of sessions and trips, purchasing equipment or providing meals.

There is a need to seek a wider pool of regular volunteers, particularly to help with fundraising and community action activity. We continue to encourage parents and carers to support our work and advertise in local communities. This year we have also relaunched our spark a change site, working with Spark Somerset to recruit volunteers.

We have maintained the voluntary commitment of previous years from both directors and volunteers. Paid staff have also provided a voluntary contribution to support the charities work and objectives and fundraising activity. We would like to thank all of those who have made a voluntary contribution to our charity in 2024.

Performance

The Trustees have referred to and worked within the guidance contained in the Charity Commission's general guidance on public benefit when reviewing our aims and objectives for the year represented in this report, and in planning all future activities. They are happy with the work undertaken by the charity and on behalf of the charity and agree this fulfils the criteria as laid out in our articles and within the charity commissions documentation.

3. Achievements and Performance

During the period of 2024 ITMP has continued to work hard to provide opportunities for children, young people and families and work in communities within its defined local catchment area as well as more widely across Somerset. This supports our core mission and is responsive to our charitable objectives.

During 2024 ITMP has achieved the following:

- Overhauled and renewed our entire policy framework and associated forms.
- Restructured our staff and appointed a charity manager to safely navigate the next steps in our development and manage the day-to-day operation of the charity.

- Successfully completed commissioned work including youth voice projects for Somerset Council and the NatWest Thrive programme for the National Youth Agency. NatWest Thrive is likely to continue with support from the National Youth Agency.
- We have worked once again with Somerset Council, Somerset DoFE and SSE to offer DoFE to students from Taunton.
- Continued to offer a varied youth work service and at different times to suit the families and young people using our service including afterschool, evenings, holidays and out of term, weekends, and overnights.
- Employed a part time bookkeeper and improved our monthly financial reconciliation and better manage budgets and income.
- Worked further on our business and development needs, marketing and business to business relationships.
- Ran several successful Happy Healthy Holidays schemes for local young people on free school meals providing a total of over 450+ meals and food hampers to vulnerable and low-income households.
- Provided support and opportunities for young people with SEND and with additional needs through a dedicated monthly youth club session.
- Setup a new youth provision to support young people with low level mental health needs to provide peer to peer support and youth worker engagement to alleviate mild to moderate issues.
- Further developed our relationship with partners and businesses to; support our work, offer low cost and no cost activities for young people, undertake fundraising, provide community support, and meet the needs identified by communities and community leaders. An example includes linking up with Wivey Pantry to develop opportunities for food and cooking education within the 10 parishes.
- Increased the time investment in seeking larger and long term funding and trust funding, and the amount of applications sought to increase our overall success rate and charitable funds received.
- Worked on our marketing, developing new promotional materials alongside our marketing strategy, an example includes our new induction and onboarding presentation, new posters for clubs, and service offer presentation.
- Undertaking several social action projects, some with and developed by young people, examples include cooking a meal for and playing recreational games elderly residents with dementia and their carers, undertaken local litter picks, and raised funds for Mind in Somerset to support young people's mental health in the county.
- Delivered a regular youth session from Wiveliscombe for young people within the town and rural surrounding parishes.
- We have provided opportunities for participants and families to access free and low-cost food from our centre in Wiveliscombe.
- Increased our fundraising activity, raising over £2000 through events such as discos, face painting, car boot sales, raffles, bake sales, and general donations.
- Delivered more outreach and community-based sessions across our catchment area, examples include delivery of outreach sessions in Wiveliscombe and attending the Wellington Together and Taunton Together events during the summer.

- Increased our reach to young people through taster sessions and visits in schools in the area and their families through attendance of community fetes and summer events.
- Engaged more in community activity, network meetings, and VCFSE forums such as attending LCN meetings and youth subgroup meetings, attending town and parish council meetings. Joining various Spark Somerset networks including the communications and marketing leads network, childing and young people's mental health network as well as Somerset Councils participation worker's network. Linking in better with our Connect Somerset champions and colleagues in housing and health.
- Our DoFE work continues to grow from strength to strength as does our relationship with the partners involved.
- We ran a successful overnight residential experience in June focussing on outdoor learning and local history.
- Worked further on food resilience locally, supplying both young people, families and the local community pantry with food and meals.
- Worked towards raising funds to support our transport needs and that of our service users understanding their needs and the issues they face accessing our services and getting to our centre. This will continue in 2025.
- Redeveloped our planning and reflection toolkits and forms to further reflect the standards set by the National Youth Agency, their youth work curriculum matrix and its themes, and how we measure strength-based outcomes and learning.

We have received a wide range of feedback from service users, alongside positive comments from both parents and the communities & partner organisations we have worked with. The enclosed impact statement clearly shows some of our outputs as well as case studies of service users. Our work has therefore had a positive impact and provided the opportunity for our service users to develop and grow, learning more about themselves, society, their communities, and their futures.

4. Financial Review

Below is the review of the charity's financial position for the year end December 2024. We have worked hard this year to increase our income and make up for last year's deficit, this has included hiring a part time bookkeeper to support with month-to-month financial management, increasing the amount of grant applications completed during a calendar year, and increasing our traded activity and paid for alternative education provision.

A budget was set in January 2024 for the year which was reviewed on a regular basis by the board of trustees and monitored by the newly appointed charity manager. All programmes and projects had their own budget to ensure projects remain financially solvent. The 2023 accounts were reviewed earlier in 2024 to enable swift actioning of any financial decisions relevant to this financial year. We have increased the income from 2023 to what was more in line with our income levels in 2021/22.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to financial statements

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year, that give a true and fair view of the Company's state of affairs at the end of the financial year, and of its income and expenditure for that year. In preparing those financial statements the Trustees are required to;

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply these consistently
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent
- State whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements
- Prepare the financial statements on a 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 which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Charitable Company 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 Charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Reserves and Risk Management

It is the intention of the Trustees that the freely available reserves of the charity should be sufficient to ensure the continuance of its activities, should there be an unexpected short term adverse fluctuation in income. The Trustees consider that an appropriate level of free reserves is approximately six months' normal expenditure.

The Trustees have examined and addressed the financial risks to which the Charity is exposed and in association with its insurers, has mitigated those risks to the best of its ability. Our main risks continue to be ongoing financial security of the organisation, increasing our income generation, and support at board level.

Going Concern

The Trustees note the continued need to ensure our financial stability and raise funds to cover our operating costs to meet our financial obligations and reserve policy.

Sources of Income

The charity's principal sources of funds, including any fundraising efforts are detailed in our annual accounts. We have increased our traded activity and commissioned youth work, and we have plans to pursue this further including new trading opportunities and fundraising initiatives.

We would like to thank our accountant and independent examiner, Tim Green for support with financial reconciliation, his expert knowledge and advice in maintaining our accounts. Thanks to Ali Davey for her role in month-to-month reconciliation and bookkeeping services.

5. Structure, Governance and Management

The Charity was incorporated on the 15th of December 2011 as a Company Limited by Guarantee. It is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The Charity registered with the Charity Commission on 29th April 2015. The Directors of the charitable company (“the charity”) are its trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the trustees. ITMP is managed under our Articles of Association as incorporated on 1st November 2014 and as amended on 8th July 2020, the document sets out our charitable objectives and structure.

The Board has meet on a bi-monthly basis. The trustees retire every three years and may stand for re-election. The Board of Trustees is responsible for determining the overall direction of the charity, for fixing and reviewing its annual budget, and for approving annual accounts.

Our trustee selection methods including details of any constitutional provisions are laid out in our governing document as well as our trustee recruitment pack. When inducting new trustees, we make use of our own internal recruitment processes as well as the Essential guide to trustees. We have our own conflict of interest policy and declaration form. All trustees receive the same level of induction.

Our charity is affiliated with several bodies including the charity commission, companies house, UK Youth, and the National Youth Agency. We are members of the Somerset Youth Work Alliance. Mendip Payroll and HR continue to supply payroll services, in 2024 Chime HR was instigated to provide Human Resources support. Ali Davey Bookkeeping has been engaged to provide bookkeeping services. Our ICT is managed by CJ Systems.

6. Reference and Administrative Details

Please see below our specific charity information.

Charity name	In The Mix Youth Project
Other name the charity uses	In The Mix Project
Registered charity number	1161486
Charity's principal address	The Hub Centre, Hartswell, South Street, Wiveliscombe, Taunton, TA4 2NE

7. Trustees and Directors

Directors and Trustees of the charitable company (“the charity”) are its trustees for the purpose of charity law and throughout this report are collectively referred to as the trustees.

The trustees who served during the period are as follows:

- Ashley Martin Wills

- Holly Cressida Sutton (Chair)
- Molly Roberts

Nick Harvey is employed as the charity manager and undertakes the day-to-day management and operation of the charity.

The Independent Examiner is Tim Green.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, I would like to thank the board of trustees, charity manager, staff team and volunteers for their hard work and contributions. We have made some incredible developments in 2024 and continued to deliver a wide variety of quality youth provision.

We look forward to continuing to make a difference to the lives of children, young people, their families, and our communities in 2025. I look forward to seeing these progress and our continued developments as we proceed into 2025.

Please see enclosed a copy of our Impact Report for the year 2024.