

# Bristol Playbus Project



## Annual Report 2009-2010

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**A Company Limited by Guarantee**

**Inc No. 1773155**

**Registered Charity No 288551**

**Patron: The Right Hon**

**Lord Mayor of Bristol**

Bristol Playbus Project is a registered charity which has been working with children in South Gloucestershire, Bristol and North Somerset since 1974. We offer mobile learning and play service for families and children aged 0-13.

We work in disadvantaged areas with the aim of using play as a medium for learning and promoting community cohesion. Playbus has worked with Traveller families for fifteen years and the focus of the works is promoting learning and family well-being, for example, we are in the process of developing a healthy lifestyle project.

In the forthcoming year Bristol Playbus will be looking to further develop its partnership work to ensure that we the communities are receiving a full, varied agenda of creative play services. Bristol Playbus will be starting the Bristol Standards for Play and Early Years, to ensure that we are delivering a quality service.

### **The Trustees**

Bristol Playbus is managed by a dedicated team of trustees, who each bring a back ground in relevant understanding early years or play. Playbus has recently reviewed the skills etc of the board and offered the trustees training via Voscur.

### **Chairperson's Report April 2009 to January 2010**

The Bristol Playbus Project has had a successful year and I would like to thank the staff team of core workers, sessional workers and volunteers for their ongoing hard work in making the Playbus projects exciting for the children who attend. Ruth Cornish has been in post for over a year now and is settling into her role as Project Manager and getting to grips with the fundraising needed for the project's survival.

Despite several advertisements we have been unsuccessful in employing an Early Years Deputy to work with Jade and the management group has agreed to extend her hours to 29 hours a week and Ruth has been learning to drive the bus to provide cover for sickness and holidays. This has not thwarted the variety of Early Years sessions delivered by the Playbus at Ashton Vale PEEPs, Broomhill Children's Centre, Northwood, the transition to nursery work at Hewish plus a successful Healthy Lifestyles project at the Highwood site in Patchway. Play Rangers have offered a range of environmental and community cohesion activities throughout the year. Funding came to an abrupt end for the Barton Hill Playrangers team when the Community at Heart project finished in March 2009. Play Ranger work at Lawrence Weston continues giving young people the opportunity to take part in activities to promote their self confidence. A short project at Hillfields School helped children to prepare for the transition to Secondary school and the Northwood Youth Zone project worked with young people from the Travellers site to broaden their horizons and included trips of site.

This year the project attended three festivals, Glastonbury, Womad and Shambala to bring play activities to a wide range of children and families.

A big thanks to all those who supported the project with funds to allow us to keep the wheels rolling to provide play in communities isolated physically or by society.

My thanks also go to the volunteers who make up the management committee who are dedicated in providing sound support for the project. Due to family and work commitments I stepped down as Chairperson at the AGM in January 2010 but will remain on the committee.

### **June Aland, January 2010 – March 2010**

I have been a member of the management committee since the AGM in 2005 and am delighted to have been voted in as Chair for the next year.

There will be many challenges to face in the near future as the recession begins to bite and it is likely that less funding will be available. The well earned reputation of the project will, I hope, help us to maintain our status and I would like to thank everyone, past and present, who has contributed to that reputation and the work that the project does.

I will be spending more time in the office, helping particularly with funding applications and evaluations, in order to try to maintain, if not improve, our current levels of funding. I hope you will take the opportunity to talk to me when I am around.

On a positive note, the project was successful in its bid to 'Aiming High' for funds to run weekend sessions for disabled children in 5 adventure playgrounds across the city and I sincerely hope that this will be only the first of many new initiatives this year.

**With best wishes, June R. Aland  
31<sup>st</sup> March 2010.**

### **Co-ordinators Report 2009/10**

Play is a vital part of children's life as it helps them explore who they are and how they relate to the world. Bristol Playbus team are always exploring new ways to capture the children's imaginations and learning potential.

For example over the summer we worked closely with Steve England to encourage children to engage in the environment. As part of this they were given the responsibility of working with tools and encouraged to consider the importance of using them in a safe and constructive manner.

The summer is always busy for a play project and this year Playbus worked with ACTA and the other play ranger teams on 6 community play days. Playbus helped to organise three play days as part of the process we enlisted the ideas of the children for example at Gaunts Ham they were encouraged to draw a site map and consider all health and safety aspects of the day.

To enable the team to deliver a range of safe and fun play activities it is important that the organisation has a skilled workforce. This year Playbus encouraged and supported all of the team to undergo professional training, in play, first aid, management etc. Playbus is committed to delivering a quality service to children and families, which means we started the process of doing the Bristol Play Standards and reviewed many of policies and procedures.

Playbus received a capital grant from the lottery to purchase a new van, this has enabled us to work in areas that are not accessible in the Play Truck and to be able to transport large pieces of equipment and staff to sessions.

This year has seen an increase in the number of projects that we deliver in partnership with other services such as children centre work and we hope to continue to develop partnership work to ensure that we are providing a service which is integrated into the community's that we work.

Over the year we have seen over 3000 children, had 8174 attendances and delivered 613 sessions.

### **Feedback**

***“What I have seen I have felt very comfortable with especially the inclusive culture / environment”*** C Barlow

***The children who attend the session have increased their social skills learning mentor.***

***“I wish I could come here every day”*** 8 year boy who attends Play Rangers.

***“I have the chance to learn what I can do”*** 10 year boy who attends Play rangers.

## **Partnership working with Children Centres**

2009 saw Playbus working closely with two children centres to ensure that families who live in communities that are not within pram pushing distance from a centre or who are reluctant to access centres have a service nearer to their homes, are reluctant to access centres could access services.

The sessions are run as stay and play sessions; this means that parents are encouraged to encourage their child to engage with a range of activities with their child that they may not have tried at home. The parents are involved in the planning of the activities for the sessions, which means that the sessions are based around the child's and parent's interests.

For example, one child painted his first picture on the Bus and he and his mum was very proud of their work. The families were encouraged to get involved in imaginative play together such as making puppets and then inventing story times.

## **Healthy Lifestyles**

Improving our health is a challenge for all of us and English and Irish Travellers still have a significantly lower life expectancy than the housed community. There are also reports of more childhood illness and accidents. Dion had given us funding to run a healthy lifestyle programme. We designed a programme that was six weeks long for all of the local sites and would cover topics such as healthy eating, childhood illnesses etc.

When planning any new project even short term projects, Playbus endeavours to consult and work with the communities ideas and not surprisingly the most popular aspect of health was relaxation and feeling good. This meant that the massage, and beauty sessions were the most popular sessions on the sites. We ran six week programmes on varied topics on four Traveller sites.

We worked closely with other agencies to deliver the sessions for example, the health visitors ran the session on childhood illnesses. This was invaluable; on one site as it highlighted to the health visitor why the mothers were not accessing mainstream health care. The dental nurse ran sessions on oral hygiene and how to get a NHS dentist.

The sessions provided the women with signposting to the mainstream services and helped them consider ways of changing their lifestyle. At the same time the crèche enabled the pre-school children to play and make new friends. This was very beneficial for a little girl who at the start of the sessions would not even allow her mother to be at the other end of the bus, by the end of the six weeks she was able to play and engage happily with the other children.

## **Moorland Park Traveller Site**

2009 saw a change in how Playbus record pre-school children's achievements. Every child who attends a crèche session now has a learning diary. This enables the team to track the child's interests and developments in the six area of learning and development. The diaries are pictorial, which means that parents who have challenges with literacy they can still see what their child has learnt whilst they are on the Bus.

The families have really enjoyed the diaries. We have found the diaries have been helpful for aiding a child's transition to mainstream services.

The project has been working alongside Rachel Balam who works at the pre-school and the infant school which means the parents and children have a consistent face that they can trust in all three projects. The result has been that there has been a significant uptake in pre-school places. A local councillor indicated that the families from the site are increasingly becoming part of the wider community.

Children aged 3-4 have structured group time where a worker focus on skills such as sharing co-operation and language skills. For example the children are encouraged to describe things, recognise patterns and work together as a team, enabling them to develop vital skills for school.

## **Northwood Park Early Years**

The whole aim of the crèche sessions is to promote the child's welfare and development. The team endeavour to do this by working with partner organisations.

One 3 year old boy has reduced movement on his left side. This meant that whilst he attends a Bus session the team actively encouraged him to use the left side of his body. The team recorded his progress. The doctor commented on how useful the logo was and thought that attending the Playbus sessions were highly beneficial to promoting the child's physical development and increasing his range of movement.

Playbus also provided the additional support needed to a child with Down's syndrome. This involved linking with a speech therapist, attending Makaton training and supporting the transition into a special school. Staff from the school visited the Playbus sessions and took photos to add to the child's communication book. The early year's leader also visited the special school to learn more about how to support the child's additional needs.

Traveller families and children rarely go on outings together so once a year a family outing to a venue such as Cattle Country is an invaluable event. The trips also ensure that the staff is able to develop good relationships with the parents. This helps when planning and discussing any issues relating to the child.

Since working on Northwood there has been an increase uptake in the number of children attending pre-school for example one family of seven children, the oldest three children did not attend a pre-school. Since being involved with Playbus all of the youngest children attended pre-school giving them a better chance of reaching the same level of learning and development as children from the settled community.

## **Glastonbury 2009**

One of the most important dates in the Playbus calendar, Glastonbury!

What better opportunity to finally show off our brand new bus at the biggest festival of the year.

Jade was eventually persuaded to part with her new luxury bus, with a promise that we would return it as clean as we found it, and it was free to make its debut trip to Glastonbury. True to our word there wasn't a drop of mud in site this year, we were blessed with fantastic sunshine for most of the week.

## **New Bus at Glastonbury**

So many people have welcomed our old bus up to Glastonbury year after year and lots of children were eager to see inside the new bus and mums who can remember happy times on our old bus keen to see how things had moved on. Everyone was suitably impressed.

We chose a 'Jungle' theme. Management committee members, volunteers and Playbus staff all pulled together to decorate the new bus and to transform the soft play area into a jungle decorated with palm trees and monkeys. Everyone set to work cutting out hundreds of monkeys and tropical birds for the children to link together and decorate.

By the end of the week the whole 'Jungle' was festooned with multi-coloured Monkeys, parrots and birds of paradise.

Another successful year at Glastonbury.



## **Northwood Youth Zone**

Many of the school age children on Northwood Park are home educated. This means that they seldom leave the site. As part of the Playbus offer to the children we were able to take them on a range of trips and activities. The idea was to improve the children's social confidence and to encourage them to participate in a range of activities that they would not normally be able to do. For example, we took them back stage at the Old Vic and showed them how props and special affects are achieved.

Playbus was able to offer the children a range of co-operative activities based on their interests. This helped the children learn new skills and develop their social skills for example on the first session one boy threatened another child with some glass because he was disappointed at losing a game. By the end of the project he was able to negotiate his feelings and concerns with the other children.

## **Hillfields – Exploring our natural world**

Hillfields is an area of Bristol that has been identified as being lacking in services and facilities for children. Before starting the project Playbus team went to the youth centre and wanted some of the children to discuss their ideas for the summer. The theme of the 'environment' was the top favourite. This meant we worked alongside an environmentalist to deliver a range of back to nature activities.

Playbus was awarded a grant from BYCA to deliver a summer project for the children. As part of preparation the team went to the youth centre to ask the children what they would like to do on their holidays. They chose to do projects that would teach them about the environment.

For most of the sessions we had a diverse aged ranging from 5-16. Most of the boys / young men were keen to show that they were street wise; however they soon learn that to use the sharp woodworking tools involved responsibility and consideration. The sessions using the tools combined with discussions about fighting and the consequences helped them to reflect on some aspects of city living

The girls very quickly learnt how to use the tools and light fires. One young lady fondly brought her log 'Thingy' to ever session to be reshaped and carved.

## **Horfield – playing together.**

Upper Horfield is an area of Bristol that has recently been developed to be a densely populated area. Bristol Community Housing Foundation identified a problem of children having few services and facilities and the community complaining about anti-social behaviour.

We were invited to work in the area for four months offering a range of play activities for the children based on their areas of interests and to run a community summer event. The event was planned as part of a consultation process for possible re-developments of Poets Park.

The sessions were well attended by children ranging from age 3-16. This meant that the older children were encouraged to support and look after the younger children. The older girls did the face painting at the community event and the older children helped with the setting and taking down of the equipment.

The parents felt that the presence of the play rangers made the park a safer place for their children to play.

## **Waring House – music, festival and fun**

Play although a simple activity it can have many beneficial effects for the children and the community. The play inclusion officer suggested that we worked in this area due to problems with racist graffiti and other racial incidents. Playbus worked alongside two Somalian workers who live in the flats to deliver a range of activities and their efforts ensured that the Somalian community participated in the project.

Over the summer holidays Playbus delivered a range of co-operative and creative activities designed with the aim of supporting children to make new friends and to learn new skills such as basic music recording techniques. On one of the sessions the children all made shakers and drums, which they then used to make a cacophony of sound. The music work was supported by a musician who was able to enthuse the children with music making possibilities. The children's pre-recorded music was played at the festival.

Feedback from other agencies working in that area was that issues around community tension had improved following the summer of sound.

## **School Transition – project**

Changing schools can be very daunting for many children. We delivered a six month project designed to help them consider what the transition would mean for them and to develop their social skills.

Playbus worked very closely with the school team. At the first session the children were asked what their concerns were about moving schools, the same questions were asked at the end of the project. There was a significant reduction in the number of concerns that they had about the secondary school.

We invited year seven pupils to the after schools sessions so that they could participate in the project and whilst engaging in the activities talk about their experiences. Towards the end of the project there was one session where year six pupils directly asked year seven questions such as 'How do I get my dinner?'

The children were encouraged to participate in co-operative activities such as puppet making, putting together mini shows, sports. The largest project was the completion of a mural so that year six could leave a legacy of their achievements in the school.

The teachers feedback was that all of the children developed social skills and in social responsibility. This was particular true for the year 7 pupils who had assisted with the project.

### **Promoting Traveller integration into school life**

Traveller children can find it difficult to adapt to school life, as the environment and expectations can be so different from their home life. They are often bullied at school. This can result in them achieving academically significantly less well than all of the other children.

Bristol Playbus worked into two schools providing a wide range of risky play activities such as cooking on fires, team games etc. The children were encouraged to lead on some of the games, for example when of them would choose a game such as creep mouse and then facilitate the game.

The after school project had the desired effect of encouraging the Traveller children to participate more fully in school life. Truancy rate improved. For one school it lead them to re-evaluate play in their school which has meant that the children are allowed out in the school grounds when it was wet. They have written a play policy and are in the process of redesigning the play gound.

### **Lawrence Weston**

Playrangers actively engage the children in the environment, encouraging them to learn about nature. Activities included wild food forays, tree planting in Mancroft park and making natural dyes. We even tried painting with paints made from vegetables!!

Scavenger hunts to find rubbish proved to be very popular and encouraged them to learn about recycling and the impact of litter. The rubbish was then used for art work.

The main highlight of the year was the Wild West coming to Mancroft Park. With the help of children and ACTA the park was transformed by giant hand made cacti, pianos, hay bales and music. The children joined in the dances and raced each other across the park on space hoppers etc.

Children's ideas and imagination is central to Playbus's work. This means we endeavour to plan activities around their interests or adapt on the day to the

needs of the group. Children are always keen to go on trips and this year they chose to go to Noahs Ark.

Many of the children who attend the Playbus sessions have been attending for the duration of the project and see themselves as mini rangers.

One young man said '**I wish I could here every day!**'

## Statement of Financial Activities 2009/10



### Income

Grants & Service Level Agreements	£181,184
Grants for replacement bus	£ 20,000
Donations & Fundraising	£ 439
Bank Interest	£ 159
Other Income	£ 2,876
Bus Bookings	£ 8,500

### Expenditure

Salaries & Wages	£133,578
Recruitment & Training	£ 3,558
Travel & Subsistence	£ 1,451
Session Mileage	£ 874
Vehicle Running Costs	£ 21,082
Materials & Equipment	£ 12,139
Rent, Rates & Telephone	£ 8,127
Office Costs	£ 3,298
Subscriptions & Publications	£ 327
Bank Interest & Charges	£ 15
Audit & Accountancy	£ 1,880
Management Costs	£ 1,301
Depreciation	£ 50,298
Session Sundries	£ 222

Total Income £213,158

Total Expenditure £238,150

Net movement in funds (£24,993) Funds at 1<sup>st</sup> April 09 £270,662 Funds at 31<sup>st</sup> March 10 £245,669

All of the above results are derived from continuing activities. There were no other recognised gains or losses other than those stated above. Movements in funds are disclosed in Note 10 to the financial Statements. If anyone would like to see a full set of accounts, please apply to the Bristol Playbus Project, 24 Bright Street, Barton Hill, Bristol, BS5 9PR.

\*Designated bus fund £13,425 Designated for staff contingency £51,320 Carry over for existing projects £6,525

## Bristol Playbus Project Ltd

### Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2010

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	Note	£	2010 £	2009 £
<b>Tangible Fixed Assets</b>	6		<b>102,816</b>	132,511
Current Assets				
Debtors	7	<b>22,369</b>		28,524
Cash at Bank and in Hand		<b>126,835</b>		115,605
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			<b>149,204</b>	144,129
<b>Creditors: Amounts Due Within 1 Year</b>	8	<b>6,351</b>		5,978
			<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net Current Assets</b>			<b>142,853</b>	138,151
			<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Net Assets</b>			<b>245,669</b>	270,662
			<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Funds</b>	10			
Restricted Funds			<b>66,076</b>	58,540
Unrestricted Funds:				
Designated Funds			<b>123,357</b>	154,126
General Funds			<b>56,236</b>	57,996
			<hr/>	<hr/>
<b>Total Funds</b>			<b>245,669</b>	270,662
			<hr/>	<hr/>

## **People**

June Aland - Chair  
Pat Foster - Secretary  
Charlotte Clewlow - Treasurer  
Sue Russell  
Gillian Western  
Jaki Collard  
Simon Fry  
Robert Aland

## **Staff Team**

Ruth Cornish - Project Manager  
Jade Sheeley - Early Years Play Leader  
Rosalind King - Junior Youth Worker & PR Leader  
Samantha Hay - Play Ranger Leader  
Sharon Stone - Admin Support  
Fiona Tainton - Office Coordinator  
Katie Hanchard-Goodwin - Play Ranger Leader

## **Sessional Pre-School and Play Workers**

Iris West  
Rose-Anne Faragher  
Luke Moffat  
Stewart Wright

Gillian Mayne  
Nadia Hillman  
Jaki Collard

Jan Papper  
Karen Luck  
Sara Ellis

## **Volunteers**

Amy Blythe  
Anna Knowles  
Paul Reid

Tash Burden  
Rebecca Le Fey

Lucy Lant  
Esther Keene

# THANKYOU



## **To all our funders:**

Bristol City Council Youth and Play Services, South Gloucestershire Council, North Somerset Council, The Big Lottery for the van, bus funding and Lawrence Weston Play Ranger funding, The Irish Youth Foundation, The DION, The Barton Hill Settlement, BBC Children In Need, The Local Network Fund and Quartet Community Foundation, BYCA, Scrapstore for the Playpod work, Extended Schools Partnership.

## **To organisations and Individuals who provided help and support:**

Simon Munden for helping us with bus and truck challenges throughout the year, Premier Bus and Truck for all their work keeping our vehicles on the road, Avon Consortium for Traveller Education Services, National Playbus Association, Childrens Scrapstore, BAND, PEYTU, Barton Hill Settlement. Kambe Events, Eventuality (Glastonbury), Shambala, Rolls Royce plc, Karen Underwood, Bristol City Council Parks Department, Brislington, Whitchurch and Bishopsworth Childrens Centres, ACTA and Easton Community Centre, Mrs McVey – parent of Ashton Vale, CSV, Lawrence Weston Young Action for trip funding, Northern Arc, UWE and Train to Gain for funding towards staff training.

## **For Donations and Gifts in Kind**

Sun Life and Axa, BT Community Connections.