

# Bristol Playbus Project



## Annual Report 2008-2009

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*A Company Limited by Guarantee*

Inc No. 17731

Registered Charity No 288551

Patron: The Right Hon

Lord Mayor of Bristol

## **Bristol Playbus Project**

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 prompting community cohesion. Playbus has worked with Traveller families for fifteen years and the focus of the works is prompting 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 the communities are receiving a full, varied agenda of creative play services. Bristol Playbus will start to complete the Bristol Standards for Play and Early Years, to ensure that we are delivering a high quality service.

## **The Trustees**

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

New trustees are interviewed by the Project Manager and are subject to references and CRB checks. They also receive an induction to the project and the services it delivers. The Management Committee meets once a month.

## **Chairperson's Report April 2008 to March 2009**

This was a year of change, the project said goodbye to Claire Dowling the Project Manager who left in November 2008. Claire worked for over 14 years for the project, previously holding the position of the office co-ordinator, she knew the work of the project from many angles and encouraged many members of her family to volunteer and help support the project.

I would like to give a big welcome to Ruth Cornish who has taken up the baton as Project Manager and brings with her many new perspectives, especially with her knowledge of youth work. Ruth joined the project in January 2009.

During the months between Project Managers I took on several tasks including the application for funding from the Irish Youth Foundation to supplement bus-running costs. I am glad to say that this was a successful bid. I reported on the 6 month progress for the DION funding of £20,000 for the new bus and £36,690 for the activities and completed the Bristol City Council monitoring forms, so I learned first hand some of the complexities of the Project Manager role. Claire

and I attended the Irish Embassy in May 2008 to collect the DION cheque and we met other projects supported by this grant funding.

During the summer the project launched the new Playbus, after 5 years of fundraising it all came to fruition with a lovely Playbus. On a very wet afternoon on August 5<sup>th</sup> the Lord Mayor helped the project and the many friends and stakeholders of the project to commence a range of activities with refreshments. The following day the Playbus took part in the annual Playday event, which proved a drier, sunnier day.

The project had a successful summer, which started with a fun Glastonbury Festival. The Playbus provided Under Fives activities in the Kidz Field and volunteers had the opportunity to both work and party. Our old bus was converted into a castle for the fairytale theme. The summer programme saw over 2,500 people attending activities provided by the project using both the Playbus and truck. Play Rangers provided tree climbing and fire wok activities based on children taking safe risks at play. In September the project attended the Shambala festival for the first time to work and provide activities for older children.

Funding for Traveller after school sessions from South Gloucestershire local Authority was cut in March 09 and the project continued to support the schools we had been working with, Christ the King Primary and Holy Family Primary using other funding.

During this financial year we were chosen to undergo a financial audit for the Bristol City Council Lottery Funding. This money funded our work in Lawrence Weston and gave funding for the new Playbus.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Playbus Staff, sessional staff and volunteers for their work over the year, without their dedication the project would not be so successful. Thanks also go to the volunteers who made up the management committee and gave their time to provide a strong management structure. Lastly but not least thanks must go to all funders who keep the Playbus project on the road providing services to the hard to reach children and families of Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset.

**Pat Foster**

### **Project Manager's Report**

Bristol Playbus has continued to develop a range of services for children and families who live in the old Avon area. There are two main strands to our work; early years and junior youth, each team is led by an experienced play / early years worker.

The early years team have been working well with the Travellers families and have been developing links with the local children's centres. Our aim is to ease the transition of families into the use of mainstream services. The team have completed their training in PEEP (Peers Early Education Partnership) and the sessions with the parents in Ashton Vale have gone well. The parents have valued the opportunity to learn alongside their child. The Early years team have

received training and have been implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The Play Rangers have been working well within their communities and have now developed good working relationships with local agencies, such as the inclusion team, local police community support officers and children.

Playbus's biggest success this year has been the refitting and launch of our new colourful double decker bus. The bus is fully equipped to provide a nursery and community facility for children of pre-school age and their parents. The bus has the facility to offer family learning ventures as well as a range of creative play opportunities.

After many years working for Bristol Playbus Claire Dowling left the project in November. The project would like to give Claire our thanks for all her efforts over the years. In January 09 I took on the role of project manager. My aim for the first few months was to develop an understanding of Playbus and start to work with the management committee and the staff on developing a strategic plan for the future. As part of this process we have reviewed our financial monitoring systems to ensure that we can be more accountable to our funders.

Over the next year we will be looking as a project to see how we can increase our partnership work and develop a wider portfolio, for example, developing work with children's centres and offering a range of school holiday programmes. The play ranger teams are exploring different ways of leaving a legacy in the parks such as murals and gardens. The early years are developing learning diaries which the Traveller families can keep a visual story of how their child has progressed.

Over the next twelve months the team will be undertaking further professional training courses to ensure that Bristol Playbus has a highly motivated and skilled workforce and that we are meeting the needs of the community and providing a high quality service.

**Project Manager - Ruth Cornish**

## **WHAT HAVE WE BEEN UP TO IN 2008-2009?**

### **Preschool Sessions**

- 42 pre-school sessions at Hewish Traveller site with 22 different children attending
- 63 pre-school sessions at Northwood with 19 children attending
- 35 Ashton Vale storytelling sessions with 25 different children attending
- 6 Healthy Lifestyle sessions at Patchway Traveller site with 15 different children and their parents/carers attending

### **Afterschool Sessions**

- 33 sessions at Christ the King Primary School in Thornbury with 86 different children attending
- 34 afterschool sessions at Holy Family Primary School in Patchway with 70 different children attending

### **Play Rangers**

We continued the Play Ranger project in Lawrence Weston started in September 2008 and the launch of our play Ranger project in Barton Hill.

- In Lawrence Weston we ran 128 sessions with a total of 228 different children attending.
- In Barton Hill we ran 102 sessions with 337 different children attending

### **Bookings and Open Play Sessions**

Over the Easter and summer holidays we ran bookings and open play sessions across the City.

- Open Space Arts Festival, over 50 child
- Trinity Mayfest, over 100 children attending
- Tribe of Doris Refugee week, 120 children attending
- Filton Fun Day, 135 children
- Freshways Preschool Fun Day, 35 children
- Muslim Conference Creche, 7 children
- Freshways Fun Day, 40 children
- Crockerne School in Pill, 30 children
- Rawsley Park Play Day, 100 children
- 7 open play days in Hillfields with 163 attendances

We participated in the Harbourside Festival where we had over 600 children attending our Playbus marquee.

We attended Play Day with our bus, truck and Play Rangers providing activities and had over 2000 children taking part in our activities.

In all, 462 Bristol Playbus sessions with over 4182 children making use of the project's play facilities.

## **Pre-school sessions**

This year has seen many changes to the Early Years work carried out by Playbus. In August we took delivery of our newly converted Playbus, which, after years of fundraising, planning and designing was successfully launched, to the public in August 2008. Our new bus was designed to make full use of all the space and includes welcoming areas such as the open plan kitchen where parents can meet. This appeals to adults and helps create a family friendly environment in line with government initiatives such as 'stay and play' at children's centres. We now have running water, changing facilities for babies and large outdoor awnings, which create a sheltered outdoor play space. We have received very positive feedback from both parents and children who have enjoyed playing on the new bus.

In September the new Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum came into force providing a framework curriculum for education from birth to five years. Staff attended training courses to help implement and deliver the EYFS, which works alongside the Every Child Matters five outcomes.

Over the last year Playbus has delivered a wide variety of early years sessions including Healthy Lifestyles, PEEP, and crèches, which are designed to prepare Traveller children for starting school. We have linked with many different organisations and professionals such as health visitors, dentists, Traveller Education Services (ACTES), first aid trainers and staff from local playgroups and schools to ensure a multi-agency approach to our work.

## **Moorland Park – Hewish**

Playbus has continued to visit Moorland Park every Tuesday providing pre-school sessions where children have the opportunity to learn through play. These sessions are funded by North Somerset Council who supports our vital role in preparing children for starting school. We achieve this by structuring our sessions to a routine similar to what children will experience in school. They include register and welcome time where we sing a 'hello song' to everyone. We then provide the children with the opportunity to take part in free play or planned arts and crafts activities. A new and very important part of the session is 'school time' where the children who will be starting school in September practice sitting at a table playing educational games. This promotes skills such as sharing and taking turns whilst developing numeracy, literacy and other academic abilities.

The expansion of the Moorland Park site has made 2008/09 our busiest year to date with 31 different children accessing our service. Age's range from a few months to 4 years and the sessions are now being attended by both English and Irish Travellers. The presence of Playbus has provided the opportunity for families situated on the established site and from the new site extension to mix. The children play together on the bus and parents interact with each other when they drop off and collect their children.



**Playing with Musical Instruments**



**Children Taking Part in 'School Time'**

Playbus continues to adopt a multi-agency approach to its work by linking with health visitors from local practices, The Glebe School and pre-school. We are now working alongside a member of staff from the local playgroup whose role is to help ease the Travellers transition from home to playgroup onto school. ACTES have visited sessions providing support for the children and links to the Traveller Families so that together we can make sure their educational needs are being met.

### **Northwood Park – Winterbourne**

The summer term was a great success with attendance at its highest level since the crèche began. 26 different children attended the sessions aged between 3 months and 4 years. The children were making good progress in all areas of development encouraged by our range of exciting play experiences, from arts and crafts to construction. At the end of term we threw a party, the children helped prepare the food and we invited the parents along who enjoyed looking at photos we had taken of the children playing throughout the year.



**Soft Play Session on the Playbus**



**Free Play Time**

This year, working at Northwood Park has provided several challenges. Building work to improve the site and its facilities without notice during the summer holidays, so Playbus sessions were halted until we could find an alternative site within easy reach.

We were given permission from a local leisure centre to park our Playbus in their car park. This allowed us to resume our service but it meant the Travellers would have to find a way of transporting their children to and from the crèche. Many of the families were unable to do so, although car sharing took place our numbers of attendance inevitably dropped. We were very grateful to the families who continued to support the project and felt this was testament to the good relationship we had built with them.

We were due to return to the site in September but for health and safety reasons we have been prohibited. We are still waiting to hear when we can return to the site so, in the mean time, are continuing to deliver sessions from the local leisure centre car park. We have developed a relationship with one of the local schools attended by an ex-playbus pupil with Downs Syndrome and have been working collaboratively to ensure that her needs are being met. This has involved the completion of a Makaton course to encourage and enable communication between the child and Playbus Staff.

### **Ashton Vale – PEEP**

The sessions in Ashton Vale began as Story Telling sessions where Playbus linked the Bristol Libraries Service to deliver a fun family play time with integrated story time and book lending. However, later in the year, due to funding issues the library service had to withdraw their involvement but we have continued providing story time, which are enjoyed by all.

Playbus has since adopted a new approach to the sessions by incorporating PEEP (Peers Early Education Partnership). This involves encouraging parental participation in all areas of children's play and development. We planned our sessions with a PEEP co-ordinator and included group games such as 'sound lotto' and activities for the parents and children to do together such as puppet making. Parents stated that PEEP sessions helped to boost their confidence levels and the children said they enjoyed playing and making things with their parents. One mother who had recently moved to the area said Playbus provided a great opportunity to meet new families and for her child to play with children of a similar age.



**Children and parents enjoy story time**



**Working together to make sound boxes**

We have made numerous visits to the local Traveller site to encourage them to attend sessions but for various reasons they have been unable to come. Funding has been a major problem for continuing the sessions at Ashton Vale and parents are aware of this. They would like the service to continue as there is no provision in the area offering free drop in play sessions – the local children centres are not within easy walking distance, inaccessible for those with health problems.

### **Healthy Lifestyle sessions**

The aim of this project is to reach as many different Traveller families as possible to promote the importance of healthy lifestyle. We decided to tour around four Traveller sites, spending 6 weeks at each, delivering a different health related topic at each. Before starting we visited the sites to carry out a consultation to establish the needs and wants of the Traveller families. We worked with a range of health care professionals such as dentists, health visitors and first aid instructors to deliver a variety of sessions. Some involved both the parents and the children and some were aimed just at the parents, where we provided a crèche for the children.



**Learning First Aid**



**Practicing Teeth Brushing**

Parents learnt invaluable skills such as resuscitation. They received advice and information on local services and health-related matters. The children also benefited by taking part in play activities, which helped to promote learning and development. At the end of the 6 weeks spent at each site we asked for feedback from the families, they stated they really enjoyed the sessions and would have liked the project to run for longer.

### **Barton Hill Play Rangers 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 to 30<sup>th</sup> March 2009**

April 2008 saw the launch of the partnership between Playbus and Barton Hill Settlement forming a new Play Ranger team - Barton Hill Play Rangers. Building upon the success of the initial project in the Urban Park, the partnership is running 7 sessions per week across 6 parks in the East Central 3 locality. The Playbus team started out in one park two days a week and then moved to two parks to extend the project to Easton and to support the Pathfinder development of Owen's Square. The first year of the project has been highly successful in promoting outdoor play in Gaunts Ham Park and Owens Square. As well as providing exciting environmental sessions using elements such as fire we did arts and crafts, running games and sports. The play rangers have been supporting the PCSO's and local organisations to provide a safer park for the young people who use it. The park had become a hostile place for the younger children to be in due to youths using intimidating behaviour, and using and selling drugs. The team has had significant impact in contributing to the dispersal of the youths and encouraging the use of the park.

### **Glastonbury 2008**

The weather can't possibly be as bad as last year can it? However the weather turns out this will be a memorable year as it the last time we will be taking our faithful old bus to a festival. Our theme this year is knights and princesses and we are turning our bus into a castle!

It took two days of sawing, painting, drilling, holding and fixing but the bus became a castle and looked very good at the top of the Kidz field. It is also bore a "bus for sale" sign, which prompted lots of questions from our visitors about what would be there in our place. It was gratifying to find out how disappointed people would be if the Playbus wasn't at Glastonbury. It was a great pleasure to be able to tell them that, after years of fundraising, funding applications, scrimping and saving, we will have a newer, bigger, better bus next year.

The sun shone (for most of the time) and lots of knights with shields and cloaks and princesses in pretty skirts and headdresses were to be seen playing out fairy stories all over the Kidz field.

Oh and the dismantled castle provided firewood for the security staffs' brazier all through the night!

## **Shambala 2008**

This is the first time that Bristol Playbus project has been invited to Shambala and we were to provide outside play and some craft activities. This was a major outing for the Playtruck, not only because the festival is some four hours or so drive away in Northamptonshire, but because such a vehicle is even more unusual than a Playbus!

The team did a wonderful job of making a very attractive enclosed area with lots of activities approached through a decorated, shady, adult high, entry tunnel. At times this proved to be a very useful shelter from both the sun and the rain!

The area attracted children of all ages throughout the whole of the time that it was open and they all seemed to be enjoying themselves on the wide variety of equipment constructed for them. 'Making in the Marquee' produced lots of the usual skirts and headdresses, but this time bracelets seemed to be the mood of the moment.

The weather was mixed but fortunately with more sun than rain so things didn't stay soggy for long. I hope we get invited back next year because, although this is a much smaller festival than Glastonbury, it is held in beautiful grounds and has a very family friendly atmosphere.

## **Play Day – Bus Launch**

We held two official launches for our long awaited new Playbus, the first of which was attended by local councillors, play organisations, and those who helped fund the new bus. This included a speech given by our patron, the Lord Mayor.

The second launch was at Play Day where around a thousand children took turns playing on the bus for the first time. The new bus proved very popular and throughout the day we provided arts and craft activities as well as outdoor play. We received lots of positive feedback from both children and parents who came on the bus, everyone thought it a fantastic play space.

## **Lawrence Weston Play Rangers**

This year has seen the continuation of the Play Ranger project in Lawrence Weston funded by the Big Lottery. Guy Dobson, who previously led the team, left Bristol Playbus in October 2008 and Rosalind King took over in January 2009. The Play Rangers have become established within the community, linking with other local agencies and schools.

The team have continued to work in 3 parks across Lawrence Weston providing open access play sessions for children aged 5-13 years. We have provided a range of outdoor and environmental play activities such as cooking on fires, hammocks, den building, art and crafts, circus skills and sports. We have continued to build on our relationships with the children and young people attending sessions,

including many who are at risk of offending. This has been challenging work, but we have noticed a considerable improvement in the children's behaviour.

Over the year we have also been involved with the refurbishment of Mancroft Park, where some of our sessions are held. Mancroft Park, now a pathfinder Park, reopened in May 2008 as Bristol's first Natural Play Area. The park was designed in consultation with local children and young people much of which took place during our sessions. We took part in activities such as community tree planting and workshops to create bespoke play equipment, seating and totem poles. Our sessions have been well attended with 1642 attendances between April 08 and March 09.

### **Extended schools at Holy Family and Christ the King**

Funded by South Gloucestershire Council, weekly after school sessions were held at 2 primary schools in South Gloucestershire; Holy Family, Patchway and Christ The King, Thornbury. These schools are attended by Traveller children from Northwood Park in Winterbourne. This was part of the Extended Schools initiative and was aimed at helping the Traveller children integrate into the school community.

On average there were 25 children at each session, with children from Reception to Year 6 including, Traveller and non-Traveller children. The sessions were held in the school grounds, enabling the children to experience a range of outdoor play opportunities such as group games, building and cooking on fires, art and craft, obstacle courses and den building. The schools indicated that the Traveller children were participating more actively in school with a reduction in non-attendance. One of the schools has gone on to develop their own play policy.

### **Hillfields Summer Play Scheme 2008**

Over the summer holidays sessions were held twice weekly at a green in Hillfields. The sessions were an opportunity to showcase the recently acquired 'Out of Bounds' play truck and to continue the work Playbus had previously carried out in the area, focusing on integrating the various ethnic communities and on dealing with issues of anti-social behaviour. The sessions were open access and aimed at children aged 5 to 13. We delivered a range of environmental, physical and creative play opportunities including hammocks in trees, den building, obstacle races, football, cardboard city and parachute games.

### **Bristol Playbus Project**

<b>Data for 2008/09</b>	
The number of sessions delivered across all the projects	<b>316</b>
The number of individual children across all the projects	<b>3407</b>

## **Statement of benefit to the public**

A statement to confirm that Bristol Playbus Project as a charity have complied with our duty to have due regard to publish our public benefit.

Bristol Playbus Project provides services that benefit the public by raising the profile of play with children and families and promotes the importance of play and equality of access to play. As a project we encourage children to value their environment and community by offering safe play opportunities in a supported environment that aims to address the isolation of many parents and their children. The project works to encourage good health and wellbeing in disadvantaged areas and works with Travellers and other disadvantaged groups to discourage anti social behaviour and encourage positive play opportunities.

## **Feedback from a child who works with the play rangers**

*“Thank you for providing us with this lovely bus and games. I am very grateful to all of you, thank you. I had so much fun..... We will always remember the fun that we have had”*

## **Quotes from Mothers at Northwood**

### **What do you think of Playbus?**

*“Playbus is very good for the kids, I suffer from depression so when my three kids come on it pleases me a lot. They’ve really come on because of the Playbus. They have learned colours, sounds, they can draw and paint – it is brilliant on the Playbus!”*

*“Its really, really good its good for the children, it gets them off their (trailer) plots for a while and gives them a bit of education”*

## **Case Study Early Years**

*“Playbus has provided RM with the opportunity to look at books and this has helped to develop her language and literacy skills. She is learning new words and her speech is becoming much clearer. RM sometimes gets frustrated when she is not able to communicate her wants and needs so it is important to support and nurture this development*

## Statement of Financial Activities 2008/09



### Income

Grants & Service Level Agreements	£192,469
Donations & Fundraising	£ 3,949
Donations & Fundraising	£ 3,962
Bank Interest	£ 3,298
Other Income	£ 143

### Expenditure

Salaries & Wages	£105,478
Sessional Staff	£ 12,507
Recruitment & Training	£ 3,369
Travel & Subsistence	£ 877
Session Mileage	£ 1,100
Vehicle Running Costs	£ 15,826
Materials & Equipment	£ 5,533
Rent, Rates & Telephone	£ 7,833
Office Costs	£ 5,399
Subscriptions & Publications	£ 488
Bank Interest & Charges	£ 31
Audit & Accountancy	£ 1,840
Management Costs	£ 141
Depreciation	£ 45,150
Session Sundries	£ 672

Total Income £203,821

Total Expenditure £206,244

Net movement in funds (£2,423) Funds at 1<sup>st</sup> April 08 £273,085 Funds at 31<sup>st</sup> March 09 £270,662\*

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 £14,120 Designated for staff contingency £51,600 Carry over for existing projects £15,888

## Bristol Playbus Project Ltd

### Balance sheet

As at 31 March 2009

	Note	£	2009 £	2008 £
<b>Tangible Fixed Assets</b>	6		<b>132,511</b>	167,129
Current Assets				
Debtors	7	<b>28,524</b>		21,068
Cash at Bank and in Hand		<b>115,605</b>		89,927
			<b>144,129</b>	110,995
<b>Creditors: Amounts Due Within 1 Year</b>	8	<b>5,978</b>		5,039
<b>Net Current Assets</b>			<b>138,151</b>	105,956
<b>Net Assets</b>			<b>270,662</b>	273,085
<b>Funds</b>	10			
Restricted Funds			<b>58,540</b>	64,772
Unrestricted Funds:				
Designated Funds			<b>154,126</b>	165,664
General Funds			<b>57,996</b>	42,649
<b>Total Funds</b>			<b>270,662</b>	273,085

#### Reserves Policy

The management committee have set a target of holding approximately three months' expenditure in reserves. This is designed to help the charity to continue to operate in the event of a drop in funding. At 31 March 2009 £51,600 was held as a designated fund (Contingency Fund) for this purpose.

#### Risk Statement

The management committee have considered the key risks facing the charitable company and, where possible, have taken steps to mitigate them.

## **People**

Pat Foster - Chair  
June Aland - Secretary  
Jane Burgoyne - Treasurer  
Sue Russell  
Julian Tucker  
Gillian Western  
Jaki Collard  
Simon Fry

## **Staff Team**

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

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

Amelia Beaton  
Ian Southby  
Lee Brodie  
Ian South

Gillian Mayne  
Rose-Anne Faragher  
Luke Moffat  
Stewart Wright

Jan Papper  
Nadia Hillman  
Jaki Collard

## **Volunteers**

Amy Blythe  
Anna Knowles  
Lucy Bryant

Tash Burden  
Nicola Perugi  
Kate Sheeley

Katie Mack  
Natasha Holden

# THANKYOU



## **To all our funders:**

Bristol City Council Youth and Play Services, South Gloucestershire Council, North Somerset Council, The Big Lottery, The Irish Youth Foundation, The DION, Bristol City Council Gypsy and Traveller Unit, BBC Children In Need, Sea Mills Childrens Centre, The Local Network Fund and Quartet Community Foundation

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

Simon Munden for providing us with bus and truck parking, 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, Bristol City Council Parks Department, ACTA and Easton Community Centre

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

Margaret Taylor, Society of Merchant Venturers, Portishead Nautical Trust, G & T Charity Group, Eden Ventures, John James Foundation, Trustees of JA Pye, Tesco,