



PETER ASHLEY ACTIVITY CENTRES

FORT PURBROOK AND FORT WIDLEY



**ANNUAL
REPORT** 2019

CONTENTS

Page 3 **Introduction to the Trust**

Page 4 **Meet the Team**

Page 6 **Fort Purbrook Centre
Manager's Report**

Page 8 **Fort Widley Centre
Manager's Report**

Page 10 **Chairman's Report**

Page 12 **Trustees' Annual Report**

Page 15 **Achievements &
Performance**

Page 16 **Monitoring**

Page 18 **Financial Review**

Page 20 **Attendance Analysis**

Page 24 **Testimonials**

Page 26 **Future Developments**

INTRODUCTION TO THE TRUST

It is a pleasure to introduce you to the 2019 Annual Report for the Peter Ashley Activity Centres, it has been a very exciting and busy year for the charity!

Overall, I am now in my seventh year of working for the charity and have been fortunate enough to be in the role of Operations Director for the past three of these. Throughout this relatively short time I have had the privilege of working with a truly inspirational team of staff and Trustees, they really are the backbone of the charity and are the driving force in all that we do.

Our team have worked with record numbers of participants this year and enabled more of the local community to engage with our activities and residential opportunities than ever before. Community is a key focus for the charity, and we have worked hard to ensure that our two Victorian Fortifications, that once protected the community, go on to serve their community now and for many years to come.

Of course, there are challenges for the charity to overcome and we will be focusing heavily on how best the charity can undertake the critical conservation projects to ensure we can continue to use the beautiful fortifications in this unique way. We have been working hard with our friends at Historic England and the Goddard Partnership to undertake the production of a much needed Conservation Management Plan, to better inform this work and support the team. The team and I are excited to start these projects and I look forward to providing you all with an update soon.

I hope you enjoy reading our Annual Report and that this may inspire you to get involved with the work of the charity in any way you can.

Kind regards and happy reading!

Darren Bridgman
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR



MEET THE TEAM

Trustee Board Members



Graham Bryant
CHAIR



Lyn Ashley
PRESIDENT



Colin Brooks
VICE-CHAIR



Robert Cooper



Holly Saunders



Bruce Strugnell



Paul Bishopp



Daniel Hawley



Alan Cufley

Key Management Personnel



Lisa Wheatley
DEPUTY OPERATIONS
DIRECTOR
& CENTRE MANAGER
(FORT WIDLEY)



Darren Bridgman
OPERATIONS DIRECTOR



Jake Philips
CENTRE MANAGER
(FORT PURBROOK)



Charly McCarroll
FINANCE OFFICER



Ann Fry
FINANCE OFFICER



Lydia Tarttelin
EVENTS & OUTREACH
OFFICER



Duncan Judge
HEALTH & SAFETY
OFFICER



Sarah Benson
SENIOR OFFICE
ADMINISTRATOR

FORT PURBROOK CENTRE MANAGER'S REPORT



I am pleased to present the first Centre Manager's annual report from Fort Purbrook. The activity and residential provisions we offer have once again passed inspection with the British Activity Providers Association, as well as continuing to achieve the Learning Outside the Classroom Quality Badge and the Adventure Mark standard.

We at Fort Purbrook continually look at ways to evolve and better serve the people of Portsmouth and the surrounding areas, including ways to increase provisions and better our services. I am pleased to report that we have built stronger links with partners across the City and embrace the new opportunities that this brings. As well as working with partners new and old we continue to support organisations that have similar aims and objectives as us, such as the Portsmouth Anti-Bullying Conference at which we again awarded our Active School Award.

During the past year, we have listened to our customers and have gone the extra mile to meet their requirements, something we continually do in our efforts to provide a quality service to everyone that visits. Although the majority of our instructing work concentrates on delivery to Portsmouth and surrounding area schools, we have also been busy with birthday parties, uniformed groups, youth groups, and more public programmes which include a range of taster and progression activities. The centre continued to work with the Solent Academies which sees 250 young special educational needs students a week use the centre for activities and supporting their watersports provision. Our Holiday Activity programme reached record heights this year and we continue to keep the costs as low as possible to make sure it is affordable for them to come back time and time again to enjoy more outdoor opportunities. During the summer we once again will be playing hosts to the phase two residential section of the National Citizenship Programme ran by Pompey in the Community.

This year has seen a growth in event and community opportunities thanks to a new appointment of an Events and Outreach Officer, and we are looking forward to seeing this section of the organisation grow. The Fun Day that took place at Fort Purbrook on the 23rd June saw over 1500 people from the local community through the gates and engaging in the day's festivities, this was the largest number we have seen for a Fun Day and this is testament to the positive work the team are doing.



There are many future plans for Fort Purbrook, with some new activities on the horizon for the latter part of 2019 and early 2020. These, along with more conservation work due to take place will continue to preserve and look after this amazing building that we use to serve the community.

Our admin team and staff work to continually develop the services we provide, and this is reflected by the high levels of satisfaction and enjoyment expressed by our many customers.

I look forward to your continued use of Fort Purbrook and the Peter Ashley Activity Centres and the future development that we hope to share with you all soon.

Jake Phillips
CENTRE MANAGER – FORT PURBROOK



I would like to convey my thanks, on behalf of the children and leaders from DABS (Denmead Activities and Bible School), for another great visit to Fort Purbrook last Friday. We all had a thoroughly enjoyable day and I would particularly like to thank Aaron for taking us through our paces in the Initiative Tests and on the Assault Course, and Duncan who gave us a really interesting and informative tour of the Fort.

As you know, I like to bring a group from DABS most years and hope to do so again next year. We always enjoy our visits and the children learn about team work as well as having loads of fun!

Thank you all again.

Gill Barge DABS Youth Group Leader

FORT WIDLEY CENTRE MANAGER'S REPORT



Fort Widley continues to thrive with many new clients. Our clients range from our 2-year-old tiny tot riders who learn about grooming and riding to our older riders at the age of 83 who continue to ride to assist with their mobility. Also, we have a large number of Riding for the Disabled riders. The RDA is an internationally recognised charity that was set up to enrich lives through horses. We have seen many benefits to our riders which include an increase in confidence and physical strength, improving many of the riders core stability.

A significant highlight of the year is the Special Olympic Equestrian team competing in their first competition at Scropton in Derby. The team consists of three riders ranging in age and ability, they compete in two different activities being marked on their ability to undertake the tasks. The team came away with 12 rosettes and have already entered for their next competition in August.

Every year we like to challenge our Pony Club members to something a bit different, so following the success of Prince and Princess day last year we undertook Pirates Day. The children had to dress up in their pirate costumes and participate in many activities and, in doing so, gained valuable social skills by interacting with children of different ages and riding abilities. During these special days we see an increase in the children's desire to learn and improve.

This year we saw a new event, it was an inter-riding school competition. We invited a local riding school over to participate in dressage and show jumping. Fort Widley won this competition and proved to many of our riders that their riding is of an exceptional standard, this in turn boosted their confidence and encouraged them to work hard at continuing to improve. We will hopefully undertake further inter-riding school competitions.

Our evening in-house dressage and show jumping competitions continue to flourish. These have proven to be invaluable for our older riders to develop their interest and give them a reason to keep riding. The competitions consist of 4 shows throughout the year with each show having a winner but with everyone earning points for the overall champion at the end.



This year for the first time we introduced Prix Caprilli which consists of Show jumping and dressage in the same arena. This proved to be a huge success with the younger clients that are not quite brave enough to jump a full set of Show jumps. We are hoping this leads on to them improving their confidence more and wanting to further improve their jumping.

We look forward to welcoming you to Fort Widley over the coming months and supporting the continued growth of the work of the charity.

Lisa Wheatly
CENTRE MANAGER – FORT WIDLEY



Just wanted to write and say how great the party was! All the kids had an awesome day, especially the three birthday boys, they all say it's the best party they've ever had!

The instructors Martin and Anna were brilliant with the kids, and some had special needs but they handled them so well.

Thanks for all your help in the planning, you made it smooth and easy. All our friends were really impressed so hopefully you'll get some more bookings in the future. We will definitely be recommending you for years to come. Thanks again!.

Anna and Katy Half Day Party Package

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

One of the most frequently quoted lines from President Kennedy a few years before Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon sums up the lot of being Chairman of PAACT; he said “we choose to do it (land on the moon) not because it is easy, but because it is hard”.

We are still struggling to resolve the issues regarding our lease. Asset transfer to PAACT has been ruled out by Portsmouth City Council. The £250,000 promised by Historic England for “emergency repairs” is still available but cannot be accessed until the lease is sorted. Meanwhile the buildings continue to need structural maintenance. One of only two entrances to Fort Purbrook has been closed for a considerable length of time due to the heavy iron gates coming away from their brackets. Furthermore, there have been drainage problems at both forts. To their credit Portsmouth City Council have been trying to support us in the face of ever-increasing Local Government cuts at the same time as an increased demand for children’s and adult social care services. It has been suggested that we explore the possibility of linking with another charity. This charity, which has greater resources would take ownership of the Forts and then provide us with a more beneficial lease, allowing us to apply for major grants from sources such as the National Lottery. The Trust is at present carefully investigating this proposal. I must stress that our research has just started and there is no guarantee of a successful outcome at this stage.

There is an irony that in spite of all the maintenance issues the work of PAACT goes from strength to strength and all activities are thriving. In the digital age in every area of life we are bombarded with numbers, data and statistics and all our key indicators continue to show considerable improvements: Turnover is up from £730,000 to £920,000. Surplus is up from £90,000 to £140,000. Footfall has increased from 46000 to 49000 visitors. Classes in activities at Fort Purbrook (generally 10 young people) have gone from 2000 to 2400. Fort Widley has seen a small decrease in individual riding lessons but the overall income has increased due to the many other equestrian events and activities that we offer. Of course, all the surplus is re-invested in new equipment, staff training or upgrading of facilities. I am also very proud that we use income to subsidise many activities and events for the disadvantaged and disabled in our local community both at Purbrook and Widley.

There has been much media coverage of the mental health difficulties experienced by many young people. I am sure the kind of activities and challenges we offer here can make a start to alleviating some of these difficulties. They give young people the confidence and resolve to make a success of their lives and help them to become positive citizens of the future.

The Trust has also appointed an Events and Outreach Officer whose brief is to publicise and increase the awareness of our work and show what the Forts can offer the community. Not yet in post a full year her work is already proving fruitful and bringing in new visitors and customers.

The Forts were also the main location for a film about World War 2. It was slightly disconcerting to arrive at Fort Purbrook and discover the entrance to a prison camp!

On a very sad note, I am sorry to report that Peter Kinge who had to retire due to extremely poor health, passed away in September 2019. Peter had been groundsman, handyman and tractor mechanic supreme for over 15 years. If I may be permitted to mangle a metaphor; he was truly a “jack of all trades-master of many”. He had uncomplainingly undertaken any task asked of him often in difficult circumstances and/or poor weather. His skills, work ethic and ingenuity are legendary; a member of staff once told me that give Peter a broken tractor and he would fix the problem with a wire coat hanger and welding torch.

Finally, my thanks and appreciation to all our staff who do a magnificent job in giving young people challenging experiences which either set them up for a lifelong hobby, interest or career or just demonstrate that can be achieved by a positive outlook and determined attitude. Also, my thanks to the Trustees all of whom are volunteers and none of whom receive any payment. They give up their time and energy freely in order that the work of the charity can progress, and historic buildings can be saved.

Graham Bryant
CHAIRMAN



TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT

In shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, the Trustees have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit, including the guidance 'public benefit: running a charity (PB2)'. The charity relies on the income from fees and charges to cover its operating costs. The charity has developed a sustainable approach to securing grant aid, legacy income and donations to support achieving the aims and objectives of the charity; positive and productive relationships have been maintained with Historic England, National Lottery Heritage Fund as well as new relationships being developed with funders such as Social Investment Business.

We endeavour to encourage all within our community to take part in our activities and to attend our events, community days and the wide range of activity opportunities offered by the Trust.

The objects employed to achieve the charity's aims are:

- To help young people, particularly but not exclusively through leisure time activities, to develop their physical, mental and social capacities that they may grow to full maturity as individuals and members of society;
- To further or benefit the residents of, and visitors to, South Hampshire without differentiating on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, race, disability or of political, religious or other opinions by associating together the said residents and the local authorities, voluntary and other organisations in a common effort to advance education and to provide facilities in the interests of social welfare for recreation and leisure time occupation with the objective of improving the conditions of life for the residents;
- To establish or secure the establishment of an activity centre or centres and to maintain and manage the same, whether alone or in co-operation with any local authority, persons or organisations, in furtherance of the objects

Significant Activities

Putting these strategies into action we have two core areas of activity which are: Leisure Activities (including our residential provision) and Equestrian Activities. To complement our core areas of activities the charity generates income from other trading activities, these include:

- Adult Leisure
- Catering income
- Miscellaneous income – Leisure & Equestrian



- Adult riding
- Rental income – Purbrook
- Rental income – Widley

By ensuring there is a wide range of income streams into the charity we are able to heavily subsidise the cost associated with participating in our core activities. Our programme of activities described below focuses on providing opportunities to engage in activities, as well as to learn and understand more about the buildings' heritage for a wide range of visitors.

Leisure Activities

We seek to provide a wide range of activities within our Leisure Department, based at Fort Purbrook, for the community to engage in. This programme achieves a well-balanced mix of physical activities and team building events. Key to the ongoing success of the programme has been our ability to provide accessible activities to a wide range of disabled service users. Our leisure activity programme includes:

- Indoor and Outdoor Archery
- Bouldering
- Indoor and Outdoor Rifle Shooting
- On-site & Off-site Mountain Biking
- On-site & Off-site Orienteering
- Kayaking & Canoeing
- Bushcraft & Survival Training
- Laser Tag
- Adult and Junior Assault Course
- Initiative Tests and String Trails Activities
- Multi-Sport Programmes
- School Holiday Activity Programmes
- Birthday Party Packages
- Family Adventure Days



The leisure activities also include a comprehensive club offering, which includes:

- Senior & Junior Archery Club
- Senior & Junior Rifle Shooting Club
- Senior & Junior Karate Club
- Senior & Junior Judo & Kata

Equestrian Activities

Our Equestrian provision continues to grow year on year. The continued development of our RDA programme has enriched the programme offer and allows the Trust to provide cost effective access to equestrian activities for disabled service users. Our Equestrian programme includes:

- Individual Private Lessons
- Semi- Private Lessons (2-3 people booking together)
- Group Lessons
- Walk-Outs
- Mechanical Simulator
- Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA) Lessons
- Own a Pony Days
- Tiny Tots (Under 5 years Old)
- Indoor & Outdoor School Hire
- Show Jumping Competitions
- Dressage Competitions
- Hacking

The Equestrian activities also include a comprehensive club offer, this includes:

- Pony Club Ridden Sessions
- Pony Club Stable Management Sessions
- Saddle Club



ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

The Trust is pleased to report that the total visitor engagement for 2018/19 was 50,108 for the year (see Attendance Analysis on page 20). When compared to the engagement figure of 46,648 for the 2017/18 period, we have seen growth of over 7% in engagement within the Trust's activities. This is a major achievement given the ongoing and uncertain economic backdrop and is attributed to the quality of opportunities on offer and the place the Trust has in the community. Our staff deserve considerable credit and praise for their skilful and enthusiastic efforts to provide a successful programme for our service users.

Over the 2018/19 period we have seen the attendance figures grow for the Leisure Department by 13% compared to 2017/18. This growth has been linked to the continued growth in the number of youth activity sessions that have been delivered throughout the year. The department continues to grow its provision for participants with additional needs and has seen positive and productive relationships established with local Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) schools. We are pleased to report growth associated with our residential provision, with record numbers of young people from our local community accessing the provision.

The Trust's Equestrian provision continues to engage with a wide range of service users from our local community. We have seen an increase of over 8% when compared to the 2017/18 period. The established RDA programme continues to be well attended; we have seen a significant increase in the number of semi-private lessons being attended this year. The programme of shows and events has continued to be very popular; this has seen our Dressage League and Show Jumping League well attended.



My son had a fantastic birthday party here, great instructors, great price for 4 activities and 12 children. He says it's the best party he's ever had.

Anna Jasper Half Day Party Package

MONITORING

The Trustees regularly monitor and assess the Trust's performance against the following criteria:

Impact Assessment

The impact our offer has on the service users in relation to the aims and objectives of the Trust is monitored closely. Throughout this process the Trust uses three main data collection opportunities; participant feedback, targeted questioning and case studies. All the data collected is reviewed, with changes and improvements to our opportunities undertaken as identified.

Increased Participation

The Trust continues to focus on increasing awareness of the Trust. A key indicator to this is to assess the number of participants accessing the facilities and monitoring its growth. The Trust seeks to develop a wider understanding of where the service users originate from and as such uses data to analyse our impact on both the local and wider communities.

Financial Sustainability

It is important that the financial sustainability is assessed throughout the year. Consequently, it is reviewed bi-monthly by the Trust and performance is measured both compared to the budgets and year to year comparison. The Trust's principle aim of budget setting is to achieve a break-even position at the end of the fiscal year. To better safeguard the Trust's finances the Trust continues to incorporate a 5% contingency fund in to the 2019/20 budgets.



We just wanted to say a huge thank you to the whole team for last week. We had a brilliant time and the kids loved the experience. Everything from the accommodation, food, staff and activities were ideal (the kids are still talking about the incredible macaroni cheese!) Honestly, we really did have the best time and the staff got the measure of our kids very quickly. They can be challenging at times but not one person was phased (or offended!) Thank you all again.

Zoe Adams Admiral Lord Nelson School



FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Trust's principle aim of budget setting is to achieve a break-even position at the end of the fiscal year. The Trust is pleased to announce that 2018/19 has been a very successful year, continuing from the previous year's successes.

In 2018/19 the Trust moved from a break-even position and posted an overall surplus of £169,588 from its activities, inclusive of Grants, Donations and Legacies.

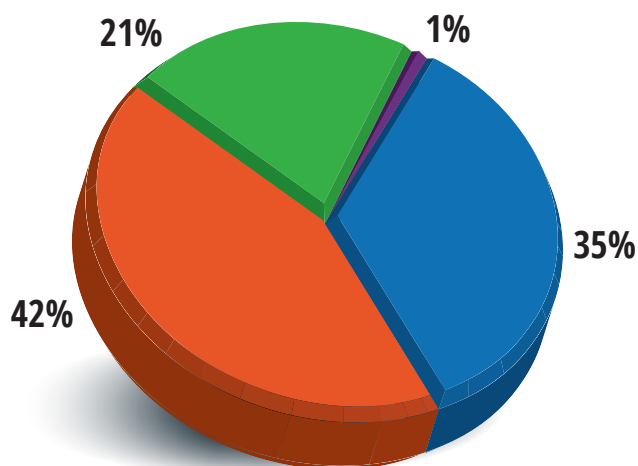
The primary income to the Trust itself comes from its Charitable Activities; with Leisure income achieving £337,890 this represents over a 13% increase compared to the previous year. Income from our Equestrian activities has grown significantly and reached £169,975. This is representative of over 22% growth compared to the previous year's income and the Trust is very proud of the achievement; with other trading and investment income totalling £311,331. In addition to this income there were £1,468 of Donations, £32,150 of Grant income as well as £117,999 in legacy income.

The Trust continues to maintain an appropriate reserves policy of holding three-month operating costs whenever possible, in case the Trust becomes insolvent. The Trustees are pleased to report that as of 31st March 2019 the unrestricted reserves were at an appropriate level to achieve this. At that date, the Trust held £431,890 of unrestricted reserves. This includes the addition of a 10% contingency fund for emergency works and resources due to the risks highlighted in our Risk Management Strategy. The Trust also holds £15,657 of restricted reserves.

Profit and Loss Accounts	2019	2018
Income and Endowments from Donations, Grants and Legacies	151,617	40,685
Charitable Activities:		
Leisure	337,890	296,833
Equestrian	169,975	139,014
Other Trading Activities	310,982	251,989
Investment Income	349	48
Total	970,813	728,569
Expenditure on Raising Funds	8,193	20,552
Charitable Activities:		
Leisure	178,024	161,120
Equestrian	195,509	184,635
Administration	105,325	81,398
Building Costs	304,559	178,648
Finance Costs	9,615	9,306
Total	801,225	635,659
Net Income (Expenditure)	169,588	92,910

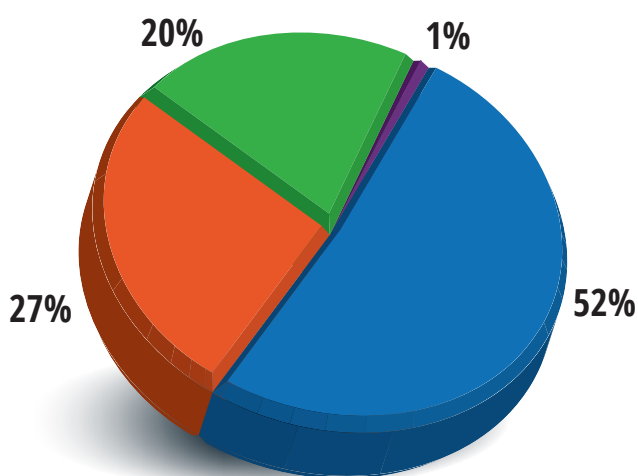
ATTENDANCE ANALYSIS

2018/19 event attendance figures broken down by postcode analysis and type:



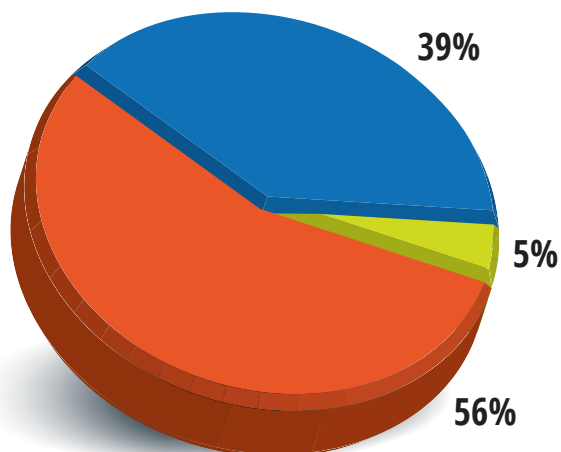
Fort Purbrook Activity & Residential Users
Postcode analysis 2018/19

- Out of City (PO7-20)
- City (PO1-6)
- National
- International



Fort Purbrook Public Climbing Users
Postcode analysis 2018/19

- Out of City (PO7-20)
- City (PO1-6)
- National
- International



Equestrian Users
Postcode analysis 2018/19

- Out of City (PO7-20)
- City (PO1-6)
- Out of Area



	2017-2018				2018-2019			
Fort Purbrook Clubs	Child	Adult	Student	Total	Child	Adult	Student	Total
Climbing (Public)	1289	2433	433	4155	1188	1890	336	3414
Archery	260	819	-	1079	433	760	-	1193
Karate	932	168	-	1100	584	55	-	639
Kata	58	21	-	79	55	31	-	86
Rifle	173	368	-	541	1249	361	-	1610
Judo	1558	307	-	1865	233	533	-	766
Holiday Activities	741	-	-	741	833	-	-	833
	TOTAL ATTENDANCE:			9560	TOTAL ATTENDANCE:			8541

Fort Purbrook Sessions	Sessions Run (TOTAL)		Sessions Run (TOTAL)	
Climbing	402		392	
Assault Course	218		219	
Archery	604		579	
Rifle	143		167	
Initiative Test	153		132	
String Trail	92		93	
Laser	157		203	
Mountain Biking	49		37	
Orienteering	39		43	
Tour	27		40	
Sports	12		34	
Bush Craft	87		85	
Problem Solving	10		40	
Water Sports	78		370	
	TOTAL SESSIONS:	2071	TOTAL SESSIONS:	2434
	TOTAL AVG. ATTENDANCE:	20710	TOTAL AVG. ATTENDANCE:	24340
FP Residential	TOTAL ATTENDANCE:	2102	TOTAL ATTENDANCE:	2169
Open Day	TOTAL ATTENDANCE:	1484	TOTAL ATTENDANCE:	1107
	TOTAL:	24296		27616

	2017-2018			2018-2019		
Fort Widley	Child	Adult	Total	Child	Adult	Total
Private Rides	1280	2008	3288	1633	1585	3218
Group Rides	3249	358	3607	3357	315	3672
Semi Rides	91	57	148	272	181	453
RDA	733	32	765	511	88	599
RDA Assessment	14	14	28	18	20	38
Hack	72	20	92	0	92	92
Walk Out	110	83	193	260	10	270
Pony Club	650	-	650	686	-	686
Saddle Club	1062	-	1062	1177	-	1177
Own a Pony	139	-	139	159	-	159
Shows	115	-	115	-	-	432
Parties	451	-	451	381	-	381
Stable Management	-	-	-	111	-	111
Tiny Tots	-	-	-	115	-	115
Special Olympics	-	-	-	58	-	58
Building users	589	1591	2180	502	1988	2490
	TOTAL ATTENDANCE		12718	TOTAL ATTENDANCE		13951
	TOTAL AUDIENCE		46574	TOTAL AUDIENCE		50108



TESTIMONIALS



We have been taking pupils from St Francis special school to participate in weekly activities at The Peter Ashley Centre for a few years now and I cannot praise them enough! All of our pupils have severe learning difficulties and due to the staff at The Peter Ashley Centre our pupils have been able to enjoy and access activities such as bouldering, archery, kayaking and problem solving to name but a few. The staff are creative in their approach in meeting our pupil's diverse needs adapting sessions so that all pupils can participate.

We have also had the pleasure of taking groups of pupils to The Peter Ashley Centre for residential trips. Last week I took a group of KS4 pupils for a 3 day residential. The staff could not have done more to ensure we had all that we needed for an enjoyable stay. The activities were great as usual and the food was amazing! The opportunity for our pupils to go on a residential is not come by easily due to diverse needs including significant medical needs. However, we have complete confidence in using The Peter Ashley Centre for this as we know that the staff will be sensitive and understanding if any issues should arise.

We look forward to using The Peter Ashley Centre for years to come.

Imogen Sanpanid Assistant Head Yeacher at St Francis



I meant to email you sooner to say thank you to you and your staff for three fantastic trips this year! All three have been a fantastic success and the kids have taken a lot from the sessions.

I will be arranging a meeting after half term with my Headteacher to discuss future trips so will be in contact again for the next academic year.

Thanks again and please pass this on to your staff

Miss J. Jordan Teacher of Physical Education - Priory Southsea



This has been the first full year that the Troop has been meeting at the Fort and things have gone really well with a Troop of 36 Scouts and 9 Leaders. The Troop has continued to operate with a steady inflow of new members coming from both Cub Scouts and youngsters new to Scouting and the older Scouts leaving us to move onto Explorer Scouts where we have received excellent reports on their levels of Scouting Skills.

These skills have been gained with the, considerable, support from the Fort and the Staff who have been very welcoming and done everything possible to support us which is much appreciated by both the leaders and the Scouts. The facilities available to us on our Troop evenings varying from Meeting Rooms to the Parade ground and the Western Moat enable us to run a really Scout based adventurous and challenging programme without having to go further afield to find these facilities, this has resulted in 7 of our Scouts achieving their Chief Scout Gold Awards in the last year which is more than we have had in the last 5 years combined which we believe is totally down to our move from a Church Hall to the Fort and the support provided.

Scout Leader 73rd Portsmouth Scout Troop



My daughter Amelia who is now 15 has been coming to Fort Widley Equestrian Centre for just over a year, and I can honestly say it has been a turning point in her life.

She has autism, ADHD and a significant working memory disorder, and discovering horses has almost saved her, in my eyes.

She is very wary and anxious around people especially new people, and from the second she stepped onto the yard, she was made welcome. The support all the staff give is amazing. They have all taken on board her needs, and always go above and beyond to help in any way they can. Being around horses has been helping Amelia's anxiety, they help her remain calm and feel safe.

All four of my children have additional needs and enjoy walkouts in the school holidays, and have wonderful experiences.

Fort Widley has changed my relationship with my daughter Amelia, it has helped me connect with her, and has shown her life can be enjoyable.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

The Trust continues to work closely with Portsmouth City Council to establish a way forward regarding the ownership and/or lease arrangements of both Fortifications. As reported previously these negotiations have taken place over several years and the Trust is keen to have this development concluded during the next financial year. It is still the Trust's ambition to seek funding for larger scale capital and revenue projects and to establish longer term development aims and the future financial viability of both Forts for current and future generations (see plans below). It should be noted that almost all these plans will require external funding or sponsorship to enable them to proceed, as much of the Trust's income is expended supporting the activities undertaken. The Trustees maintain a Development Plan to identify projects and to monitor progress.

Short Term Plans (2019-2020)

Secure a long-term ownership and/or lease arrangement to both Fortifications.

Fort Purbrook – Undertake repairs to the barrack room bridges which are currently supported structures due to the danger of collapse. The development phase of this work is now complete, the Trust will look to work with the Local Authority to action the conservation work.

Fort Widley – Efforts are being made to resolve similar issues with the bridges. A full conservation management plan is now being undertaken at Fort Widley with the local authority funding this work.

Education – Trustees are looking to provide a fully resourced heritage information arrangement for both Forts. These will provide information and possibly interactive facilities promoting the history, culture and stories of both Fortifications. It is hoped that this will permit school parties to link their curriculum subjects with the Forts' resources for history, biology, geography and other subjects.

The Riding School, Fort Widley – although the School regularly passes its British Horse Association inspections and achieves accreditation, it is currently installing an exercise circle to keep the horses in top condition. This development has been made possible from the Legacy left to the charity earlier in the year.

Intermediate Plans (2020-2022)

Conservation – The hope is that Fort Widley can be brought to the same standard as Fort Purbrook allowing the use of all rooms with the possibility of providing residential accommodation at Fort Widley to allow overnight and longer stays by study groups and others.



The Development of Camping Pods at Fort Widley has been investigated over the past six months, it is the Trust's plan to start a fundraising campaign to enable this development to take place.

Civil Defence Bunker – This hidden gem at Fort Widley – a reminder of the cold war era – needs to be carefully catalogued, restored and made safe for viewing. Once the Trust have established a clear ownership and/or lease arrangement with the Local Authority the Trustees will be seeking National Lottery Heritage Funding for Fort Widley including this and the other aspects mentioned above.

Sustainability – Continued effort is being made to assess the viability of solar and wind turbines as well as other forms of eco-energy that can be harnessed to reduce the Forts reliance on the National Grid.

The Riding School, Fort Widley - Achieving the top level of RDA accreditation will require the installation of a hydro-pool. This would make the Riding School a first-class facility and would also improve and enhance the welfare of the horses ensuring they remain fit, able and willing to carry their riders. It may also be possible to achieve additional income by allowing use of the pool to external horse owners.

Longer Term Plans (2022 and beyond)

Accessibility – Trustees maintain their desire to be able to allow all users access to most areas. The lift at Fort Purbrook allows wheelchair access to the lower levels. This is something they wish to achieve at Fort Widley as well as improved toilet facilities across both sites.

Conservation – The aim of securing a clear way forward regarding the ownership and/or lease arrangements will enable the Trust to make bids for funding (independently or in partnership) on a much larger scale that could be used in conjunction with an approved conservation management plan to secure the future of the forts as assets for the wider community and to promote their part in the history and culture of Portsmouth.



Fort Purbrook

Peter Ashley Lane, Portsdown Hill Road,
Portsmouth PO6 1BJ

Tel: 023 9232 1223

Fort Widley

Portsdown Hill Road,
Portsmouth PO6 3LS

Tel: 023 9232 4553



www.peterashleyactivitycentres.co.uk