



Registered Charity Number: 1176708

**Trustee Annual Report
& End of Year Accounts**

1st of June 2019 to 31st May 2020

Year Three

End of Year Accounts
1st of June 2019 to 31st May 2020

<u>Description</u>	Income	<u>Outgoing</u>
Attendance Fees & Workshops	1325.50	1,636.80
Rent		910.00
Equipment, Toys, Craft Supplies	2.99	1316.59
Sports Sessions	625	360
Trips	638.75	620.50
Fundraising Supplies		175.37
Miscellaneous Expenses (Website, DBS Insurance etc)	916.41	1893.79
Donations	116.57	73.50
Training (excluding ASDAN)		1,565.80
ASDAN	1,650.00	977.44
SUB TOTALS	£5275.22	£9529.79
Project (Restricted) Funds	£10,300.00	£6,223.70
TOTALS	£15,575.22	£15,753.49

Annual Trustee Report 2019 - 2020

What a year it has been! No-one could have predicted we would be writing this report during a global pandemic crisis. It has been an eventful year, to say the least!

The third year of Mountain Movers has seen the continued rise in demand for our services building on from previous years. The renewed political interest in seeking regulation over home education ended with Welsh Government withdrawing its proposed new Statutory Guidance, for now. Whilst it is good news that we are currently not having to campaign against this document, it is fair to say, there is a sense of weariness over this tiresome cycle that we know from experience, this will all start again in a year or so's time, as it has done every couple of years since the Badman Review.

Mountain Movers' trustees have experienced a huge increase in the demand for advocacy support for electively home educating families, challenging institutional discrimination in practises and attitudes against these families based solely on the educational philosophy.

We have achieved a successful referral pathway for electively home educated children to the newly formed Neurodevelopment Team Referral Team, working with the different departments and supported by Welsh Government to achieve a process that does not discriminate against an electively home educated child by providing third party reports on behaviour/needs as witnessed at Mountain Movers sessions that warrant professional investigation. Although the numbers are small, to date we have achieved a 100% success rate of getting those children we have referred accepted onto the neurodevelopmental team waiting list. These children have met the criteria and have been diagnosed and are now accessing appropriate therapies.

In light of this service demand, our chair has undertaken independent advocacy training and achieved a level 2 city and guilds certification. The city and guilds certificate being recognised within the advocacy field as a standard for independent advocacy work.

The trustees are seeking funding to allow an investigation project into the need to provide further independent advocacy for electively home educating families to change attitudes and institutionalise discrimination against these families were necessary to achieve positive and fair working relationships between professional bodies/services and electively home educated families, including higher-level advocacy training.

Meeting Charitable Aims

Over the past 12 months, Mountain Movers has met its charitable aims in the following ways:

Aim 1} To advance education for children who are being educated otherwise than at school, in particular, but not exclusively, those children with disabilities through co-operative learning opportunities, enrichment arts and sporting activities, enabling the children to participate as fully as possible in society with a positive sense of community and belonging.

We started our third year with the fantastic news of achieving funding via the **National Lottery** Community Awards for All scheme for our biggest project to date! Our **Mindfully Creative Learning Project** launched in September 2019 and aimed to run until June 2020. At weekly sessions at Rhos Community Centre over 30 children accessed sessions run by a qualified tutor and published author as well as a qualified Mindfulness tutor, following a course designed specifically for home educated children which combined mindfulness and resilience with creativity. The children achieved certificates in following either the **MISP Paws b or Dot. B**

mindfulness courses as well as being guided through learning opportunities using a variety of different creative mediums and workshop opportunities. Feedback taking midway through was again outstanding. Unfortunately, COVID lockdown restrictions resulted in dramatic and abrupt changes to the project in ways we had never considered in planning. We adapted and brought the groups together for 6 weekly Zoom sessions where they learnt **digital illustration** via the ArtRage software. This proved to be extremely popular and successful with the participants and so we adapted further by combining with the tutor to deliver a 5-week creative writing course adapted to use the amazing **CLICKER 8** accessible word processing software. Feedback has again proven to be popular, however, more training is needed for parents and learners to get the most out of the software although all could see huge benefits with it improving their children's learning. This is being investigated with Crick and will help shape possible future projects.

The results of the entire project have been combined into two books that have been produced. Each child received a copy which was reported to be a positive self-esteem boost for them. A digital version of the books is also available on our website.

Community Leader's Project - British Science Association

Another success, our Chair was awarded a place as one of only 12 places on the British Science Association Community Leaders Project, 2019-2020! This wonderful project involved multiple training and supportive services for the chair, learning more about how to run science projects, funding bids, social media, and so much more. There was also an award of £1000 to run a longer-term Science-based Project as part of British Science Week.

With active input from the children and parents, the **Life of Bread Project** was created. The project ran over multiple sessions taking children through time on the processes of creating a loaf of bread!

With a trip to St Fagans including participation in their workshops, meeting their miller and baker, an art session where they created their apron, completing a level two certificate in food safety with Esky Online Training. Ending with a cooking session making different recipes of bread and investigating the difference between organic and non-organic ingredients! A celebration video was created by a wonderful child member to mark the success of the project and the awarding of **ASDAN** certificates to the children. A second cooking session was due to take place the week lockdown came into effect so unfortunately this was cancelled. The trustees felt it was not appropriate to try and hold the cooking session via Zoom at a time when families were already struggling with the food shortages of the pandemic, however, the recipes were freely given upon request.

32 children completed this project earning their certificates and the feedback was outstanding!

ASDAN

We have continued in providing UK wide access to ASDAN courses with a sustained increase in demand for access. We have volunteer moderators who donate their time freely. Whilst this keeps the costs of providing these courses accessible to families, with the increasing workload there has continued to be a pressure to meet the demands on time. The trustees have had to decide to no longer pursue opening the COPE & AOPE qualification side of the courses to the elective home education community and have reduced the number of courses we are offering families. The trustees are investigating possible funding possibilities to allow for more moderators to be trained and build on capacity perhaps with funded moderators instead of volunteers to achieve a more consistent approach.

LC2 sports sessions continued after their scaling back last year to much greater success.

Aim 2} To reduce social isolation of both the children and their families by providing a regular safe and confidential setting to allow the development of social skills as well as providing support, advice and signposting to additional services

Mountain Movers have provided a safe and confidential setting for home educating families to meet every Friday for 47 weeks of the year as well as the other sports activities and trips.

Our average weekly attendance over the past year is 49, of which on average 95% attend with at least one child with a disability.

Trustees continue to engage and keep up to date with other services. We continue to ensure that all trustees and all other volunteers hold enhanced DBS certificates along with a range of health and safety certificates such as Designated Person's Safeguarding Children, First Aid, First Safety etc.

Covid brought the need for many adaptations. Moving to weekly online projects to help children stay in contact and continue to provide support for families. This has been difficult given the high level of need for adaptive technology and the financial exclusion poverty brings to accessing these resources. We are working tirelessly to source adaptations and alternatives to reduce access barriers.

Aim 3} To improve the skills and knowledge of parent/carers who have taken legal responsibility for the education of their child(ren) through the providing of access to training, advice and support so they are better equipped to educate their child(ren) in a rounded and informed manner and 5) To promote greater understanding of elective home education to reduce hostility and the associated isolation for this minority group

Mountain Movers continued to engage with consultations impacting home educating families in Wales. Giving media interviews when appropriate and submitting to the government call for evidence in all parts of the UK.

As a charity, the need for support and advocacy services continues to grow and so we have identified the need for advocacy qualifications to allow us to support this need.

Aim 4} To reduce poverty and ease the financial burden faced by families who take legal responsibility for educating their child(ren) through the facilitation of educational opportunities and training as well as the sharing of educational resources

Mountain Movers continues to operate on a low-cost basis and the trustees work hard to achieve external funding wherever they can to reduce costs to families as well as securing third party discounts to activities to the benefit of members.

Over the past 12 months, Mountain Movers have provided support to families in financial hardship to enable their participation in both Mountain Movers activities and access to ASDAN courses.

Through the facilitation of our regular Friday sessions, there is an open sharing of resources, support and knowledge reducing the cost to families on purchasing educational materials.

At these Friday sessions, Mountain Movers have taken part in the Fareshare Food scheme, providing access to families of substantial free food as well as providing a hot lunchtime meal priced at under £1 per person!

During the 12 months, we have supported families in crises with food and resource gift parcels and referrals to food banks and other crisis organisations.

With the move to online activities and the increase in families experiencing financial hardship, we are operating on a free to access basis as much as possible.

Future direction

The COVID pandemic, as the rest of the world has also experienced, has caused the need for a period of reflection and reinvention. At Mountain Movers, we are focusing on projects that can be run no matter what pandemic restrictions are in place to keep with our charitable purpose and aims.

The move to more online activities has highlighted the need to invest in digital skills training, a working website and parent support to develop confidence and resilience with a fast-changing landscape.

Children and young people have been hit hard by the COVID restrictions, impacting their day to day lives in a substantial capacity than those children who are used to meeting in one building Monday to Friday. They are socially and emotionally vulnerable and due to their disabilities are predisposed to have mental health difficulties. Parent carers are lacking in any support and have been forgotten in this pandemic as have any children who do not access state school education.

Mountain Movers are focusing on services to support wellbeing to whole family units to overcome any fears and anxieties that the pandemic.