

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-21



WWW.HACKNEYPLAY.ORG

HPA REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER - 1145960
COMPANY NUMBER - 05957488

ABOUT US

Hackney Play Association was founded in 1972, as a charity working to promote opportunities for local children and young people to access play, which is free at the point of delivery.

Our goal is to improve children and young people's health, well-being and quality of life, through play.

Hackney Play Association's (HPA) aim is to make Hackney a great place for play - particularly for children facing barriers due to poverty, disability, gender and race.

We provide:

- FREE (open access) after school, holiday and youth clubs for children and young people at Homerton Grove Adventure Playground, Pearson Street Adventure Playground and Clapton Park Play and Youth Project
- Weekly family play drop in sessions
- Development and support for Hackney Play Streets
- Training and qualification courses in playwork and related skills for staff, volunteers, trustees and young people
- Information and advice on all aspects of play provision
- Advocacy for quality play and play provision
- Support for disabled children and their families to participate in play provision



MESSAGE FROM JACKIE OUR HPA CHAIR OF TRUSTEES



It has been a challenging couple of years due to the pandemic but we have managed to keep our services running in one form or another.

We have opened the playgrounds in line with the latest guidance at the time and delivered play bags to children and young people when not possible to open.

We have managed to do this due to the dedication and hard work of all the staff at Hackney Play Association and on behalf of the management committee I would like to say a massive thank you to all of you, you have been hard working, dedicated and amazing

Jackie Hoptger



MESSAGE FROM KAY OUR HPA DIRECTOR



We are proud to be a longstanding Hackney based charity (established in 1972) and plan to celebrate with various events across the next 12 months.

The past year has been unique in our nearly 50-year history, the pandemic having a huge impact on the children and families who use our adventure playgrounds, our youth service provision, street play activities, training programmes and parent/carer drop-ins. Our Disabled young people and specialist Forest School use has also been hugely impacted. Hackney has one of the highest percentage of families on the lowest percentile on poverty index, a large proportion living in crowded family accommodation, which no garden, outdoor space or even balcony.

We are proud of the work all staff have delivered, in an extremely challenging year, and our sincere thanks go out to them, for their hard work, passion and commitment in support of children, young people and families in Hackney.

Kay O'Brien



OUR COVID 19 RESPONSE

Having had to comply with the first lockdown from March 2020, meant that the playgrounds and work on the Clapton Park estate had to be paused for face-to-face services.

During this time, we were able to apply for Children in Need emergency funding; which having been successful in getting, were able to provide over 1000 children with home play resources.

We set about buying take away bags and filling them with items for both children and youths to play with, whilst they were confined to home.

For younger children the bags contained, fidget spinners, colouring pencils and books, comics, plasticine and modelling clay, puzzles and jewellery making kits. For our teenage users, we filled bags with mindful colouring books and positive poetry books, jewellery making kits, crossword, sudoku and puzzle books, contact information sheets for support organisations, such as Childline and Young Mind.

These bags were delivered directly to children's houses or flats, all in a socially distanced manner. These deliveries meant that not only did children receive items which they could play with, but they enabled us to have a face-to-face contact with the children and young people, reassure them that we were still thinking of them, were planning to open up the adventure playgrounds as soon as possible and also to check on their wellbeing.



OUR COVID 19 RESPONSE

We were also able to offer several sessions each week online for our youth groups, to check in on how they were doing and to provide a much needed diversion from all the uncertainty, through discussion groups, quiz evenings and guided cooking, arts and crafts and games sessions, facilitated by our staff.

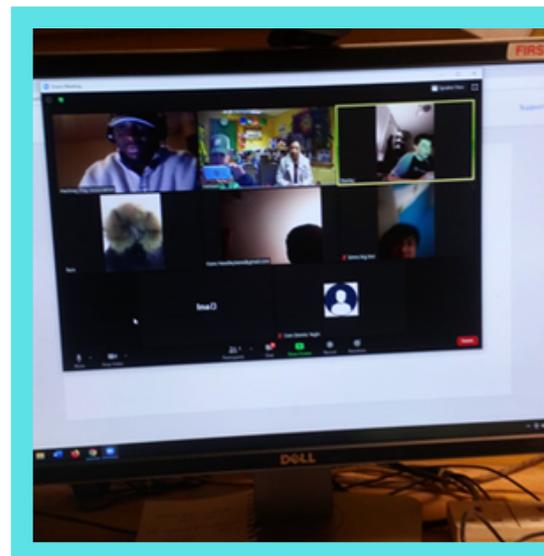
We organised a series of play providers meetings during this time, to update playgrounds in Hackney on the latest position regarding re-opening, latest guidance, where to source PPE and cleaning products and wrote new COVID-19 risk assessments and protocols that were adopted by Young Hackney services and others.



Our playstreet project was still active during this time, with over 60 requests for support from those wishing to run their own play street during lockdown.

Due to gathering restrictions the local authority were hesitant to allow these to take place which was challenging. We did however provide information, support and guidance to allow people to prepare for when restrictions were eased.

We offered face-to-face training sessions during the summer in Haggerston and Homerton, that were well attended by prospective play streets. The training covered, how to run your play street, the benefits of playing out to children and their communities, safe stewarding, risk assessment and games and activities.



SUMMER 2020

In July, before all year groups had returned to school, we re-opened the adventure playgrounds for a summer of fun. This required a great deal of pre-panning and alternations to way we operated the playgrounds. Staff were contacted to ask who was willing to return for summer (HPA paid all staff in full for April, even though we were in lockdown.) Most staff were then furloughed in May and June, returning to the playgrounds in July. Beginning with a staff day, at which we had invited a Hackney clinical phycologist to talk with the staff team, to answer questions, reassure, and begin to make sense of the previous few months. We spent the next two weeks preparing for the summer re-opening, deep cleaning the buildings and sites, ensuring that PPE was fully stocked and available, staff training on the newly written Covid-19 operating protocols, booking in children in 'bubbles' and re-working opening hours into different sessions, targeting those families we knew we most in need of services. Usually larger families, with no access to outdoor space.

It became apparent during this time that families with younger children (under 6's), without access to outdoor play space were in need of respite from the confinement of home too. We were able to work alongside London Play to benefit from their 'Play Haven' project, which provided us with funding to use the adventure playgrounds as a bookable family back garden space; working with up to six different families at each site per day.



BACK TO SCHOOL 2020

Once September arrived and schools were beginning to return in year form groups, we re-opened with after school and youth-based sessions, all delivered entirely outdoors. Activities during this time included open fire cooking, youth BBQ's, treasure hunts, obstacle courses, physical challenges, such as skipping marathons, roller-skate relays and solo dancing competitions, as well as being able to burn off steam on the adventure playground structures and around the site.

During this time, we were very active on our social media platforms, reminding everyone of the (now obvious) vital role of play in children and young peoples lives.

Throughout all lockdowns we had posted a daily new play idea to do at home on our Instagram and Twitter platforms, which received a great deal of positive feedback.

The period since has seen a return to more settled service, with sessions not now needing to be pre-booked; and numbers returning to their pre-lockdown heights.

Around 500 children, young people and their families visit one of our playgrounds each week.



IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

4706

Attendances by
children & young
people

86%

of parents/carers said
their child/young
person were safe at
when at HPA¹

1000

Play Bags
Distributed

75%

of children/young
people said they
made friends²

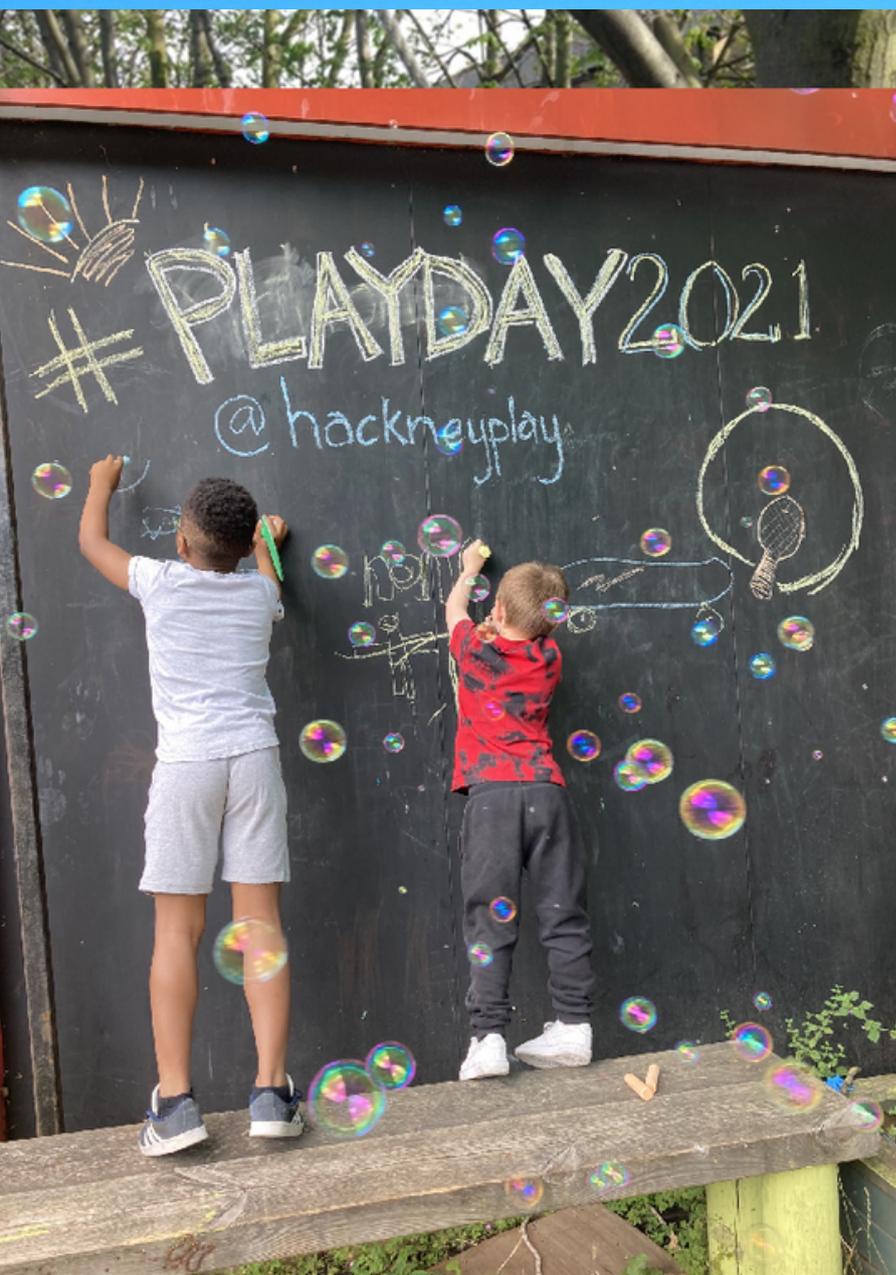
OVER
2000

Hours of Play

Survey Samples

¹ 82 parents/carers surveyed

² 71 children and young people surveyed



HPA FINANCE

Statement of financial activities (including income and expenditure account) year end 31 March 2021.



	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Income and Endowments from:				
Donations and Legacies	10,691	69,678	80,369	213,594
Charitable Activities	249,578	-	249,578	262,223
Total	260,269	69,678	329,947	475,817
Expenditure on:				
Raising Funds	(6,621)		(6,621)	-
Charitable Activities	(182,422)	(64,578)	(247,000)	(466,486)
Total	(189,043)	(64,578)	(253,621)	(466,486)
Net Income	71,266	5,100	76,326	9,331
Reconciliation of funds				
Total Funds brought forward	185,745	22,028	207,773	198,442
Total Funds carried forward	256,971	27,128	284,099	207,773

A BIG THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS AND DONORS



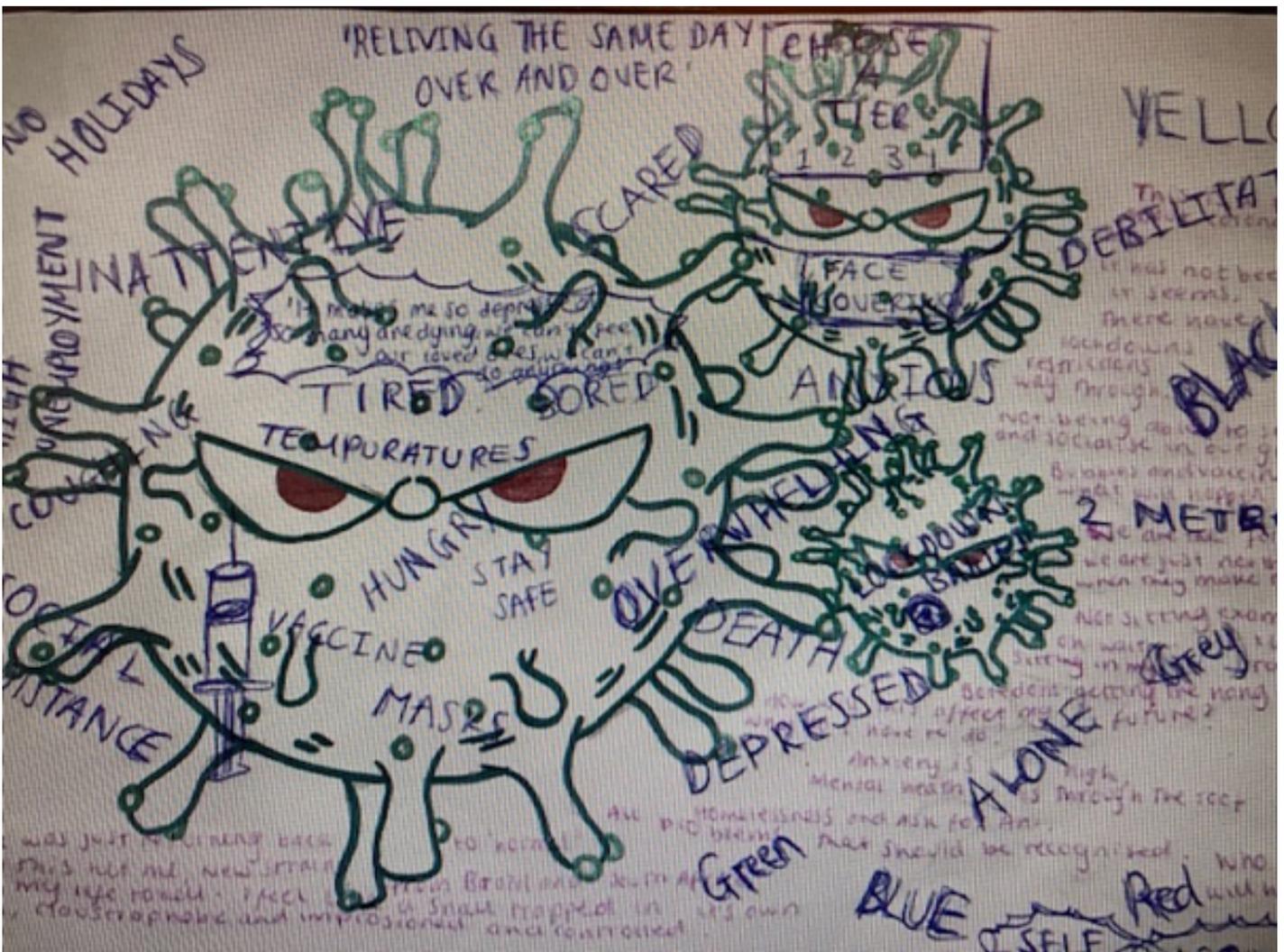
COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Our new HPA Community Champion Project, funded through Hackney Giving, was an opportunity to share current information with our users on COVID-19 Test, Track and Trace, the vaccine and healthier lifestyles.

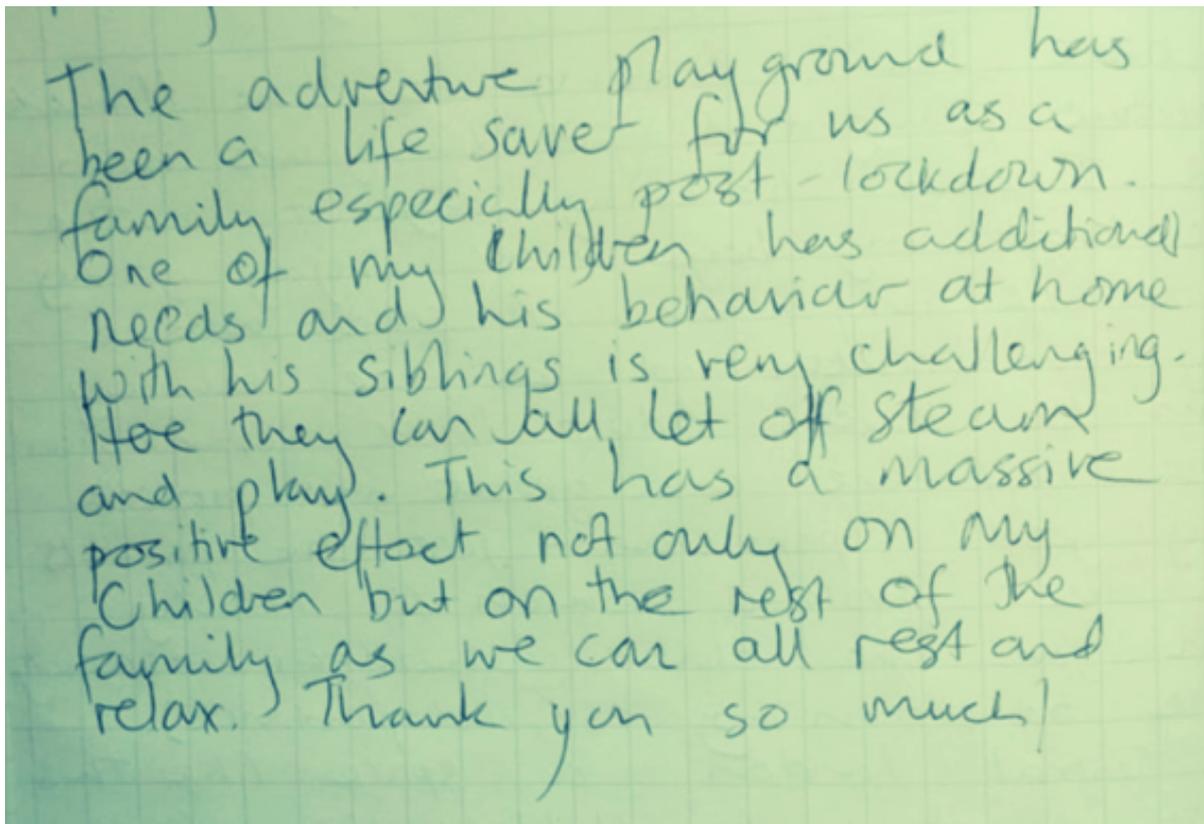
Through the project we gave children and young people the space to share their thoughts and feelings, engaged them in discussions, offered interactive healthy lifestyle activities, we produced a monthly HPA bulletin and alongside our Community Champion staff employed 2 young people to support the project.

One of the opportunities offered was children and young people expressing their feelings towards the pandemic through art and writing

The image below was put together by our community champion who asked peers words they associated with the pandemic in March 2021.



THE FINAL WORD FROM OUR HPA USERS & WITH SOME OF THEIR COMMENTS



'I find it really fun because lockdown has been hard so when I come here am very happy and play with all my friends'

Child/Young Person

'Pearson street adventure has the most amazing staff, can't thank them enough, my children are always stimulated and happy to be there'

Parent/Carer

'Homerton Grove is a great environment for children with disabilities, they can run around in a safe space and I feel comfortable with my son playing here, staff are friendly and very welcoming. Love it!'

Parent/Carer

"This time I really noticed adults using the playstreet, a man in a wheelchair was enjoying being in the road not on the pavement, an older man was really excited that he 'was allowed' to join and go into the PlayStreet, and many young people and older children were welcomed in from the Kingsland Road end to enjoy space and free food which was given out by StreetBox and volunteer bakers' - Play Streets Participant

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If you would like to make a donation to
Hackney Play Association then
please email info@hackneyplay.org

HACKNEY
PLAY
ASSOCIATION

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Company Number - 05957488