

News Bulletin

December 2019



Since joining GASP in August 2019, the CEO and Chair of Trustees have worked with the Board to further develop the strategy for the Charity, building on the strong foundations set by Sally Varah and Henry Curwen. Some changes have already been implemented and a further period of consolidation, review and development will continue into the New Year. We recognise the importance of our Patrons, Friends and Supporters, and the need for effective engagement. We very much appreciate your continued support and look forward to you joining us on this exciting journey.

Strategic Update

Following an excellent first Board meeting, the CEO was tasked with reviewing the strategy documents to date, and identifying a process for development and growth for GASP. Consultation has taken place with staff and stakeholders and the first draft of a new strategy was discussed at the Trustee away day in October.

An Organisational Development Needs Analysis has very much informed the GASP strategic review process. Identifying the needs of the young people we work with, stakeholders and employers of the future means that we can best match our offering to their priorities.

The key areas for review are: financial management and resourcing; infrastructure capacity; and programme curriculum and delivery. We are ensuring that all objectives and development plans are aligned with the Vision and Mission of the charity, and identified actions have been prioritised to ensure timely and resource-efficient improvements and implementation. It is anticipated that during this process additional strategic considerations will become apparent and will be integrated into the review process.

Website & Social Media

In October, following the Board meeting, Max Dunne was engaged to redesign and update the GASP website. He has already created a new front page and is working through the rest of the site. We are looking to launch the new website in early 2020. Trustee Ian Digman has set up GASP Motor Project accounts with LinkedIn and Twitter. Training will be provided to in-house staff to manage these and the Facebook page to ensure that we maintain a high digital presence. This will support marketing and fundraising, and raise the profile of the charity.

Recruitment of Fundraiser

External funding has been granted to secure a part-time fundraiser for 12 months. It is anticipated the role will generate sufficient income to become permanent. This will allow GASP to formalise the fundraising and stewardship function, and maximise funding opportunities. This will help future-proof the charity and support the longer term strategic challenges.

Health & Safety Review

Thanks to Trustee Bruce Smith, we have undertaken a full H&S review of the workshop. A number of issues were highlighted and the team are working to action an appropriate plan. This includes the implementation of comprehensive equipment checks, staff training, fit-for-purpose equipment and new safety procedures. Time and funds have been invested to ensure a safe working environment for staff and students.

Partnerships and new opportunities

Following a successful funding bid, GASP is now working with Surrey Young Carers to develop respite services for groups of young people, at the weekend, here at the Albury workshop. We are looking to engage up to 18 young people over three courses of four weeks. These will follow the traditional GASP delivery plan, but with the addition of counselling and information sessions.

Thanks to the support of Sally Varah and Ellie Patterson, GASP has re-engaged with the Surrey Restorative Justice Team, and we are looking to run courses for this specific cohort. The courses will focus on horticultural equipment (lawnmowers, chainsaws – no blades!), enabling the young people to progress onto the Council's gardening reparation programmes.



Financial review and end of year budget

The Board agreed in early 2019 to alter the financial year to fit with the academic cycle, thus necessitating a 17 month financial year in 2018/19. The creation of the period end accounts has required significant input from the CEO alongside the Chair and Treasurer to ensure the 2019/20 budgets are correct.

Purchase of second Mobile Unit

We are delighted to have secured funding to purchase a second mobile unit. Along with the sale of a Ford Anglia, which the students had been repairing, we raised sufficient monies to purchase a 2018 Ford Transit. The van has been fully equipped with made-to-measure racking, new tools and teaching materials. It is anticipated the mobile units will become fully self sufficient without the reliance on workshop equipment.

Communication and engagement with Patrons, Friends and Supporters

Since coming into post, the CEO has focussed on communication within the organisation, and engaging Staff and Trustees. It is important that communication with external supporters is prioritised and as such, GASP is looking to hold a drinks reception in February 2020 to update further on the developments within the Charity. Regular updates will be sent, however, please contact Alex if you have any questions or comments you wish to share

New Staff and Trustees

Alexandra Thompson (CEO)

Alex joined GASP as Chief Executive Officer in August 2019 following roles at SATRO and Royal Society Mencap. Alex has a wealth of experience working with corporate organisations, schools and local stakeholders, facilitating joined up working and realising shared goals.

Ian Watson (Chair of Trustees)

An accountant, Ian joined GASP as Chair of Trustees in August 2019. Ian has extensive experience, sitting on and chairing the Boards of both charities and corporate organisations.

Maggie Jack (Trustee)

GASP is delighted to welcome Maggie to the Board. Maggie has extensive experience as a funder, and sits as a Trustee of the Betty Riseley Foundation. Maggie brings a wealth of knowledge to GASP supporting our development and growth through the eyes of a Funder.

Ian Digman (Trustee)

Ian is an Automotive Engineer who once rebuilt a Mini engine on his mother's kitchen table. He has been in the car industry ever since graduation 25 years ago. His career has spanned Engineering, Business Strategy, Sales and Marketing for Ford, Nissan, and lately as Global Head of Product Management at McLaren.

Bruce Smith (Trustee)

Bruce has spent 46 years in the Automotive Industry before retiring, after holding Directorships at 2 major franchised Motor Groups. The experience gained was not only in general business management but also included a service directorship, where he was responsible for the operation of a network of service departments, generating customer satisfaction through quality and care from a stable well-trained workforce.



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