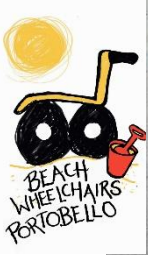


Beach Wheelchairs Annual Report 2020



Beach Wheelchairs
Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC046190
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Thanks to our generous funders and supporters and all our individual fundraisers!



Beach Wheelchairs has pleasure in presenting their report together with the financial statement for 5 April 2019 to 4 April 2020.

Reference and Administrative Information

Charity Name and No:

Beach Wheelchairs

Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation SC046190

Registered Address:

North Berwick Community Centre, Law Road, North Berwick, EH39 4PN.

Charity Trustees

Alison Brown (chair)

Melanie Kay (secretary and vice chair)

Bryony Capaldi (treasurer)

Phylis Conway

Katie Garret

Debbie Gibb

Dave Gibb

Kevin Bowie

Fiona Walter

Bankers:

The bankers for Beach Wheelchairs at the start of the period were The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) Bank. From February 2020 the bankers are now Royal Bank of Scotland (RBS).

Structure, Governance & Management

Legal Status and founding document:

Beach Wheelchairs is registered with the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator as a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO) and as such is governed by a written constitution.

The structure of the organisation consists of:-

- a. The MEMBERS – who have the right to attend members' meetings (including any Annual General Meeting) and have important powers under the constitution; in particular, the members appoint people to serve on the board and take decisions on changes to the constitution itself;
- b. The BOARD – who hold regular meetings, and generally control the activities of the organisation; for example, the board is responsible for monitoring and controlling the financial position of the organisation. The

people serving on the board are referred to in this constitution as CHARITY TRUSTEES.

Purpose

The purpose of Beach Wheelchairs is set on in our constitution as follows:

To provide beach wheelchairs and supporting facilities with the object of improving the conditions of life for wheelchair users by allowing them to access the beach.

The provision of beach wheelchairs for hire at no cost will provide relief to those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage.

Chairs Report

I am proud to present another Annual Report on behalf of Beach Wheelchairs. 2020 was a year like no other but as I write this my feelings about our little charity are as proud, if not prouder than ever.

Like the rest of the world we made the difficult but inevitable decision to close our doors on the 16th March. As restrictions begin to ease we had lots of chats and meetings as a Board about what we should do. Spending time in the outdoors and at the seaside is something all of us have a right too; whether we require mobility aides to get around or not. I know the Board felt the considerable weight of responsibility of ensuring customer and volunteer safety and I thank them all so much for their guidance and encouragement and for adapting to Zoom Board meetings! Re-opening on the 15th July felt nerve-wracking but we all became used to our 'new normal' of face masks, wipes and physical distancing. Our first few hires and trips back to the beach were particularly emotional this year!

I would like to thank our fantastic volunteers at both the Beach Hut and the container in Portobello who hire out wheelchairs to our customers. Time and again they went above and beyond to provide more than just a service but a whole fantastic experience for our customers. They often juggle their own family life to ensure they can help, sometimes at the drop of a hat, and always with a big smile on their face! Thank you 😊

This year we were able to support our volunteers again through temporary seasonal staff at both Portobello and North Berwick. This year more than ever this felt a real lifeline as we all juggled the temporary return to our 'new' normal. A massive thank you to Abby and Kevin who both worked really hard and dealt with whatever the summer threw at them!

Thank you too to our customers who came and used our wheelchairs again this year. Trusting us to keep them safe the whole time and so often sharing in their special family time.

Through all the difficult times there were also moments of real joy in the Beach Wheelchairs family this year. We were delighted to celebrate the births of Roman and Dugald. Two precious little fella's born to our volunteers and reminding us all of the hope that continues in the world.

We were also delighted to see the opening of a new Beach Wheelchair hire scheme in Fleetwood, Lancashire and proud that we were able to share our experiences. 2021 also looks to be the year of the opening of a new scheme in Dornoch, after considerable hard graft behind the scenes! This year I hope to be able to visit some of our friends around the country.

As I write this we are again in the position were unfortunately we are unable to hire out our wheelchairs. Our last hire was for myself with my son on Christmas Eve in North Berwick. We went out as a family with my son's friend and carer for a Christmas Eve picnic. As our service continues to be limited by Covid restrcitions we will do what we can to change and adapt, to make a small, everyday normal activity in the reach of as many people as possible as soon as it is safe to do so.

Best wishes, take care, take heart and see you on the beach soon,

Alison

North Berwick

Despite Lockdown, Covid and a wet summer North Berwick had over 100 bookings of our beach wheelchairs in 2020! We were so disappointed that we had to close but also that some groups were unable to return and outings were cancelled in 2020. We particularly missed our friends from Leuchie House and Dunbar Day centre who had regularly been using our service and missed helping out on school, scout and other organised trips that have become a highlight of our summer!

As we came out of lockdown we quickly put in place new procedures and purchased PPE to ensure the safety of both customers and volunteers. I'm delighted to say that all customers told us that they felt safe during the hire period.

This year we had more repeat customers than before, more staycation-ers and helped with a number of longer term loans.



'We had a fantastic time. My father was visiting from Leeds and normally if we wanted to go for a walk on the beach we would have had to leave him in the car or sat in the café. Because of the chair he was able to be involved in the family walk and get to see his grandchildren play in the sea. Also because we had the electrical chair (x8) it gave him independence!! Bryony was fantastic and even was happy to let us keep the chair an hour and a half longer!'

This year we had our first outing of our Splashy seat. This was a bit of kit that we purchased to help small children to sit comfortably on the sand where they might need a bit of extra support. Lachlan and his family used the seat in the summer and hired our hippocampe wheelchair too to access the beach.



“Lachlan loved the feel of the sand on his toes and it was a first to get down and help his siblings build a sandcastle!”

We were so delighted to find Abby as a superb employee for the summer months and that she so quickly got the hang of things – taking the pressure off our volunteers. The feedback time and again was of what a great help she was, and how she went above and beyond so that families could have a fun, safe time on the beach together.

This year was our fifth anniversary of operating in North Berwick. A major milestone that we couldn't celebrate quite the way that we would have liked to. As we look to what 2021 it is obviously with quite a lot of uncertainty. We have plans to replace our Beach Hut which is beginning to be not quite so weatherproof. It is also time for us to look at replacing some of our old equipment that are ready to retire from service. Apart from that we hope to get as many people back onto the beach as we can when it is safe to do so.

Portobello

We were so pleased to reopen our doors at Portobello on the 15th July and start welcoming customers back straightaway. We were delighted that Kevin worked for us over the summer months, taking some of the pressure off our volunteers and also providing a service that allowed people just to pop in and use a wheelchair without pre-booking.

Understandably we were not able to welcome back our friends from Lauder Lodge in 2020, who we saw so much of in 2019. We look forward to a time when it is safe for them to return. We also missed welcoming school trips as we have done in other years.

'This is the first time in 6 years we have been able to get on the beach so thank you so much it was wonderful and Kevin is so helpful and kind'.

'Of all the places I have taken Anna that is the most stimulated I have seen her so thank you. We may become regular users as Anna does not mind bad weather!'



As well as helping with family walks, picnics and outings this year we had a Beach Wheelchairs first – helping out with a christening of an adult wheelchair user on the beach allowing him to go right into the water!

In 2021 we hope to continue to build on our customer base in Portobello and continue with marketing this scheme. We will also add an additional hippocampe beach wheelchair to our fleet. This is made possible by the very generous donation from St.Columba's church in Blackhall. We hope that this will allow both multiple families to go out at the same time when our Scottish

summer seems so limited but will also allow us to help with more groups and

school trips and allow us to provide our wheelchairs for longer term hires when requested. The Boathouse in Portobello has also been a very generous supporter of Beach Wheelchairs again and also a good friend to us just along the prom 😊



Andrew enjoying a paddle!

Plans to have a power wheelchair are beginning to progress in Portobello. The first step in realising this dream is to have a power supply for our wheelchair. We have commissioned a report by Zero Waste Scotland to investigate possible solutions for providing either renewable or efficient energy at this site. Exciting that this project is now in motion!

Seton Sands

Like the rest of the tourism industry Haven has been hard hit by the pandemic. At the time of writing the caravan park is again closed to all customers. We are delighted that they were able to reopen mid-July and that the beach wheelchairs were used a number of times with their customers. Unfortunately non-residents have not been allowed on site all year. As soon as we can we hope to strengthen ties with Haven and make links between them and the local community.

"When we asked about the beach wheelchairs the leisure staff had one sanitised and ready for us within the hour which was brilliant. Also the ranger who ran the nature activities was fantastic. "

Comment from Seton Sands Beach Wheelchair customer 2020

Fundraisers, Funding and Thanks

We are indebted to our many, many supporters for all their generous donations.

- SLR consulting,
- St.Columba's Church, Blackhall
- The Boathouse,
- Sainsbury's,
- Our generous customers and other local fundraisers.

We continue to work with partners in East Lothian Council, Edinburgh City Council and North Berwick Harbour Trust and are grateful for their continued support and advice.

Beach Wheelchairs Charity No SC046190

Accounts for the year ended 4 April 2020

Statement of Receipts and Payments

	Note	Unrestricted Funds 2020	Total funds last period 2019
A1: Receipts			
Donations		17,800	26,507
Grants		5,700	1,748
Gift Aid recovery		490	100
Fund raising activities		0	0
A2: Receipts from Charitable Activities			
		0	0
Total receipts		23,990	28,355
A3: Payments			
Payments directly related to charitable activities		13,528	33,988
Governance costs			
Independent Examiner		0	0
Marketing		239	433
Expenses for fundraising activities		0	0
Bank charges		104	72
Total payments		13,871	34,493
Surplus / (deficit) for year		10,119	(6,138)