



The Amber Trust
Music for Blind Children

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

for the year
ended
31 March
2023

Music is not
just a pastime,
it's a lifeline

Contents

A Word from the Chair	1
About Amber	2-3
Music Awards: Young Musician's Stories	4-5
Amber's Music Services	6-7
Initiatives and New Collaborations	8
Fundraising, Events and Other News	9-11
Objectives and Achievements	12
Plans for the Future	13
Thank You	14
Summary of Financial Activities	15
Structure, Governance and Management	16-17
Financial Statements	18
Statement of Directors' Responsibilities	18
Independent Examiner's Report	19
Statement of Financial Activities	20
Balance Sheet	21
Notes to the Financial Statements	23
Legal and Administrative Information	29

A Word from the Chair



The last 12 months have seen a period of consolidation and steady growth under the first year of Dr Angela Voyajolu’s leadership as CEO. We reached 662 blind and partially sighted children and young people through our Music Awards and Music Services. We diversified our donor base and saw an increase in the grants from trusts and foundations who supported us for the first time, and the number of individuals making regular donations increased substantially. To meet our growing needs as an organisation, we recruited two new part-time staff.

A highlight of the year was Lucy’s remarkable success in Channel 4’s series *The Piano*. Her exceptional musicality was celebrated both by the judges, Lang Lang and Mika, and by the public as a whole, with millions of views on social media. This brought awareness of The Amber Trust’s work to a wider audience, and has resulted in more families getting in touch and widened our circle of supporters.

We are extremely grateful to all our donors, old and new, for their generosity, and for the tireless work of the volunteers who arrange concerts on our behalf and assist at events. They help to make Amber the warm and welcoming, family-based charity that we are. I look forward to the year ahead with a sense of optimism and excitement as we continue to grow and evolve to meet the ever-changing challenges faced by vision-impaired children and young people in 21st century Britain as they seek to fulfil their musical potential.

Professor Adam Ockelford, *Chair of Trustees*

About Amber

The Amber Trust was founded in 1995 with the aim of providing blind and partially sighted children, including those with additional disabilities, the best possible chance to meet their musical needs and aspirations. There are 25,000 vision impaired children and young people in the UK, and it is our aim to enhance the lives of as many of these children as possible through high quality music provision.



For some children, learning to play an instrument or to sing can add immeasurably to their lives. With the right encouragement, these children can develop their talents to remarkable ends, breaking down barriers, promoting social inclusion and helping them to fulfil their potential as individuals and musicians.

What we do

The Amber Trust's core activity is providing Music Awards for individual blind and partially sighted children and young people. The Awards can fund:

- instrumental and singing lessons
- the purchase of musical instruments or items of specialist musical technology
- tickets and assistance with attending concerts for those in receipt of an award
- travel and accommodation to access opportunities for making music

This year we reached 266 children via our Music Awards, funding a range of lessons including piano, harp, violin, cello, guitar, clarinet, saxophone, drums, voice, and braille music lessons.

Amber knows that children with sight loss, including those with additional disabilities, are less likely than their sighted peers to receive music tuition. This is often due to discrimination brought about through people's misunderstandings about disability. Moreover, as many blind children in the UK live in relative poverty, they can suffer a double disadvantage, since their families cannot afford to give them the musical experiences that can make such a difference to their lives.



Amber's Music Services, established throughout the UK, allow us to reach blind and partially sighted children and young people through music as early as possible. 'Little Amber' is for families of children with a vision impairment aged 0-5, 'AmberPlus' for those with complex needs aged 5-18 and 'With Music in Mind', for those with neurodegenerative conditions. Each scheme has two elements. The first is freely available resources that can be viewed online or downloaded and are open to all families and professionals in the UK and beyond. The second is the provision of music sessions in the child's home, aimed at involving the whole family. These sessions are facilitated by a specially trained practitioner.

Alongside these programmes, we are pleased to be working in partnership with other charities and special schools for blind and partially sighted children by providing music workshops.

Over the year, 396 children have been supported both through our music services and workshops.

The Amber Trust receives no statutory funding; we rely entirely on fundraising and the generosity of our donors. At a time when many public services are declining or have disappeared altogether, The Amber Trust has never been needed more.

In 2022/2023 we supported 662 blind and partially sighted children across the UK

Music Awards: Young Musician's Stories



Chapman's Story

Chapman, thirteen, is an accomplished pianist. He has been blind since birth with no light perception and presents symptoms consistent with autism due to a rare disease affecting his vision, speech and learning abilities.

'His love for music blossomed at the tender age of five,' says his father, Chun. 'Gifted with exceptional hearing and nimble fingers, he taught himself "It's a Small World" on a toy piano after a visit to Disneyland.'

At eleven, Chapman passed his Piano Grade 8 exam with Distinction, 'a testament to his can-do spirit,' notes Chun. His accomplishments have awarded him music scholarships and a nomination for the 2021 Hong Kong Spirit Award.

To support Chapman's musical aspirations, his family relocated from Hong Kong to London in 2021, where he was granted an Amber Music Award. He performed in Amber's 2022 Annual Concert, which sparked his interest in public performing, and he is now pursuing advanced qualifications in piano performance.

Chapman has showcased his talent throughout London, performing at venues such as Westfield, the Queen Mary Hospital and Selfridges, and at events including the Wimbledon International Music Festival. His first piano solo recital at the Westminster Music Library in 2022 was a significant milestone. 'This marked an important highlight of the first year of his life in the UK,' says Chun.

'Chapman has emerged with newfound confidence in public performing and collaborating with fellow musicians,' Chun continues. 'In September 2022, he joined the London Youth Folk Ensemble, propelling him to larger stages. The nurturing and support of The Amber Trust have facilitated Chapman's seamless adaptation to his new life, empowering him to embark on his musical adventure in the UK.'



Lydia's Story

Seventeen-year-old Lydia is a wonderful singer and pianist. She has Leber Congenital Amaurosis (LCA), a type of inherited retinal condition affecting approximately 1 in 80,000 children, causing the specialised light-sensing photoreceptor cells at the back of the eye to stop working. A characteristic of LCA is nystagmus, where the eyes move from side to side uncontrollably. For Lydia, who is a braille and long cane user, this means that she has light perception only.

'My journey with The Amber Trust began with my singing lessons, which started in Year 7,' says Lydia. 'I had been pestering my mum for singing lessons since my grandpa and I would sing songs on Sunday afternoons.'

Lydia is the recipient of an Amber Music Award, which funds her music tuition. 'I was overjoyed when The Amber Trust awarded me the grant! From that point onwards, I was able to apply actual technique to an activity that I had been partaking in for years before. I have, because of this funding, been able to get to Grade 7, and I am hoping to sit my Grade 8 before 2024.' Lydia passed her Singing Grade 7 exam with Distinction in November 2022.

'I have further been able to grasp braille music and accessible music technology because The Amber Trust also fund lessons for me in that area. I will always be grateful to them for making this possible, as music is, and always has been, one of my favourite things to do.'



Lucy's story

At thirteen, Lucy made her TV debut in February 2023 by appearing on Channel 4's new show, The Piano. During the series, contestants performed at one of the public pianos located at various train stations across the UK.

Lucy was diagnosed with cancerous tumours of the eyes when she was born and has been blind since birth. She also has a chromosome 16 duplication, which affects her ability to communicate.

Appearing in an episode located at Leeds Station, Lucy performed Chopin's Nocturne in B flat minor, stunning judges Lang Lang and Mika, as well as the audience. The performance was shared by Channel 4 on Twitter and amassed millions of views in the space of days.

'It was one of those moments when the whole world stops,' said Candice, Lucy's mother. 'There were people missing their trains just to listen to my daughter.'

Lucy was selected to progress to the final of The Piano, performing at the Royal Festival Hall alongside three other contestants. During her performance, she captivated the audience with Debussy's Arabesque No. 1, for which she received a standing ovation and was awarded 'Performance of the Night.' The show gifted each of the finalists a piano to take home.

The internationally acclaimed pianist Lang Lang referred to Lucy as a 'real genius.' Speaking of Lucy's time on the show, Candice said, 'It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience. It was literally life changing.' The Amber Trust is incredibly proud of Lucy, who has been the recipient of an Amber Music Award for the last eight years. We are delighted that she has had the opportunity to share her talent with the nation.

Amber's Music Services



Amber's music services are aimed at working with children and their families together, focusing on the ever-important elements of music education that take place in the home environment. In 2022/2023 we worked with 106 children in the early years and their families on the Little Amber scheme. Through AmberPlus, our scheme for blind and partially sighted children with complex needs between the ages of 5 and 18, we reached 88 children and their families. We worked with a further 19 children and families on our With Music in Mind service for children and young people with neurodegenerative conditions.

A unique aspect of our music services is that they enable us to reach children in the early stages of development, help us to identify exceptional musical abilities early on and provide long-term opportunities for continued musical engagement. Since Little Amber's first year in 2017, 31 children have moved on to a Music Award and 31 children have continued sessions on the AmberPlus scheme. Furthermore, AmberPlus has seen 14 children move onto a Music Award since 2018.

Amber has been pleased to provide music workshops in five schools, as well as a one-day workshop with 'Sight for Surrey' and monthly online music sessions with the charity Sense. These group sessions provide opportunities for blind and partially sighted children with additional disabilities to experience making music with others and encourage play, communication and socialisation. We reached 183 children via our workshops.

Evie, a child who attends online music workshops facilitated by Sense and Amber, enjoys exploring a variety of musical instruments and activities. 'Evie loves her Amber sessions,' says her mother. 'She loves listening to her friends and having the opportunity to communicate back to them.'

This year we reached 396 children and families through our music services and workshops.

Little Amber: Grace's Story

At the age of two, Grace loves music. 'It is one of her favourite things,' says her mother, Sarah-Jane. Grace has cortical vision impairment (CVI) and delayed visual maturation. The vision in her right eye is weaker, and she is registered as severely sight impaired. When she was fifteen months old, she joined our Little Amber scheme, receiving home visits with music practitioner Amy Swallow.

'Grace and her family are a joy to work with,' says Amy. 'Grace clearly loves exploring sound - she is proactive in using a variety of sound makers, and we have shared some lovely interactions vocalising and playing instruments.'

Grace's Little Amber sessions are helping her physical development. 'She actively uses both of her arms to play the instruments,' says her mother. 'This is massive for Grace as she struggles with coordinating movement in her arms. Her concentration is also brilliant during the sessions.'

During her visits, Amy provides Grace with the opportunity to explore different instruments. 'Her favourites are the chimes, ukulele and piano,' notes Sarah Jane. 'It has encouraged us to find more musical events for her - she has just enjoyed her first Disney concert.'

'We know Grace can see the piano and the chimes, and her interaction with these instruments is totally different compared to other instruments. Music is the one thing that always calms Grace. She has an eclectic taste!'

'Amy is fantastic! She emails us to see what Grace has been up to music-wise so she can plan ahead for the next session. She has even quickly learnt to play the Braveheart theme before a session, as Grace had been listening to it with her granddad. Things like that mean the world to us.'

Little Amber supports babies and children until the age of five, including those with additional disabilities.



Initiatives and Collaborations



AmberPlus: Ellie's story

Seven-year-old Ellie was born with hydrocephalus and has complex learning difficulties and cerebral visual impairment (CVI). She was enrolled on our Little Amber scheme at the age of three and transferred to AmberPlus when she turned five.

AmberPlus aims to support children and young people between the ages of five and eighteen in their musical development. Children on the scheme receive regular home visits with a music practitioner, who will involve the whole family to support them in engaging with music between sessions.

Under the guidance of music practitioner Hannah Murray, Ellie is flourishing. 'I have been working with Ellie and her family for just over a year,' says Hannah. 'It is an honour to watch her musical journey. In our initial sessions, we engaged for minutes of music at a time, and now make music consistently for over thirty minutes!'

During Ellie's regular sessions, which take place at home, Hannah brings a variety of musical and sensory items for her to explore. 'Ellie loves funny, upbeat music and has recently really enjoyed using a microphone,' says Hannah. 'She enjoys vocalising (increasingly in call and response), hearing her name, feeling vibrations through the amp, and hearing the voices of loved ones. I have learned so much from this incredible family unit.'

Ellie's mother, Hayley, says that 'Ellie really enjoys feeling the different instruments and experiencing the different vibrations, textures and sounds they make. Ellie's favourite thing about her music sessions is hearing her voice on the microphone. She has become a lot more vocal over the years, which is amazing.'



Amber attended the Batten Disease Family Association Conference

The Amber Trust joined the BDFA Family Conference in September 2022, facilitating a specialist music session run by music practitioner Steve Harper.

Steve said, 'It was a very warm, supportive environment with the youngsters supported by a team of carers, as their parents participated in discussions and activities in another room.'

Twelve children of a range of ages and abilities attended the session with 'bags of enthusiasm and excitement.' They sang and moved to a variety of songs and enjoyed sensory-based activities, such as exploring the saxophone and large floor drums, amongst other instruments. During the session, Steve had one-to-one time with each child and ended with a finishing song and a chat about the session's best moments.

When the parents came to collect their children, Steve said that 'it was lovely to touch base with them' and commented that he also gained valuable insights from the day himself.

With Music in Mind is an Amber service providing musical support for children with vision impairment and neurodegenerative disease. Children on the scheme will receive activity cards, a resource pack, a record book and other items to record memories, and one-to-one sessions with a specially trained music practitioner.



Amber's Practitioner Training Day, hosted by the Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC) with specialist training from The Baluji Foundation

We were pleased to hold our Annual Training Day in February 2023, for practitioners who work across our Music Services. The training day was held at the Royal Society for Blind Children's 'Life Without Limits Centre' in London. The Centre's innovative space is dedicated to supporting blind and partially sighted children and their families and was an ideal venue for our training. We are incredibly grateful to the RSBC for their generous hospitality.

Twenty practitioners attended the training from across the UK and topics included the Sounds of Intent framework of musical development, skill sharing, and a session on introducing blind children to new musical instruments, led by Baluji Shrivastav OBE, of the Baluji Music Foundation. The Baluji Music Foundation is a blind-led, inclusive arts organisation encouraging participation in music by people from different cultural perspectives. Baluji guided individual practitioners to learn instruments with closed eyes, which was described as a 'powerful learning experience' from those who had the opportunity to take part. We are so grateful to the Baluji Music Foundation for being a part of the day and for sharing their expertise.

Fundraising, Events and Other News



An Amber Amble in South Wales

Chris Lovell arranged a walk from Hay-on-Wye to the banks of the River Severn in September 2022. 'When I reached the age of 70, I intended to celebrate by walking the lower third of the Offa's Dyke path with some musical friends, singing in some of the delightful churches en route to raise funds in aid of The Amber Trust,' said Chris.

The group enjoyed some spectacular locations on their musical amble. 'We sang some mediaeval pieces among the picturesque ruins of Llanthony Priory to an appreciative audience of sparrows, who listened attentively and later showed us how to sing properly. We enjoyed rehearsing in the beautiful white church of Llangattock Lingoed and sang Evensong in the impressive church at Llantilio Crossenny.'

As an amateur musician, Chris is 'impressed and humbled' by the achievements of the Amber children. 'The Amber Trust plays a very important role in supporting many children with vision impairment with impressive results.'

'I am most grateful to all who supported me by walking, singing or donating (and in many cases all three!).'

We are incredibly appreciative of Chris's support, which raised £360 for Amber.

A beautiful concert in aid of Amber

Maggie and Peter Chambers organised a concert in aid of The Amber Trust in May. Held at Anson Primary School, the concert featured the talents of Derek Paravicini, Poppy McGhee, Shona Beecham, the Anson School Choir, and Amber award recipients Ivan and Chapman.

Maggie said, 'The school hall was packed. Everyone enjoyed the wonderful and varied music.' After the concert, most of the attendees stayed for drinks and refreshments.

Brent Council's 'Love Where You Live' department donated £300 to help pay for the concert's expenses. We are exceedingly grateful to Maggie and Peter for arranging the concert, which raised a total of £2,030 for The Amber Trust.



Amber's 2022 Annual Concert

The Amber Trust's 2022 Annual Concert was a wonderful afternoon showcasing the extraordinary talents of our young musicians and supporters.

Derek Paravicini joined us for some exceptional performances, and fundraising champion, Dan Li, played a spectacular piece of Rachmaninoff. We were treated to a double violin concerto from golden fundraiser Poppy McGhee and Amber Award recipient Lilly K, accompanied by Ashleigh, also a Music Award holder, on piano.

Nikhil, an Amber Music Award recipient, performed in our concert for the first time, having felt 'inspired' when he attended the 2021 concert as a member of the audience. 'I was ecstatic when I was chosen to play,' he said. 'I counted down the days to the concert.' Nikhil played the ukulele and was joined by Lily B and Ashleigh for a lively performance of "I'm Yours".

'I was so happy to meet Derek, who is my favourite. I was so excited to perform and felt on top of the world.'

The concert ended with a beautiful rendition of "What a Wonderful World", performed by all of the young musicians and the audience. We are delighted to say that the event raised £2,254 for The Amber Trust. We are incredibly grateful to Parky TV for live streaming the event, and to St Paul's School for allowing us to use the Wathen Hall as our venue. We also want to thank the young people and their families for taking part and making the concert such a spectacular event.

Staff changes

This year has seen Amber's core team grow from a team of four part-time employees to a team of six part-time employees. We were thrilled to welcome Hannah Cykowski, Communications and Events Officer, and Dominic Millard, Music Administrator, to the team in September 2022. They joined Dr Angela Voyajolu, CEO; Ying Lin, Finance Officer; Elissa Turay, Music Awards Manager; and Dr Hannah Marsden, Music Services Manager.

Objectives and Achievements for the Year

- To maintain an annual income of at least £300,000 to provide sufficient funds for Amber's charitable activities. **Amber's total income was £349,001.**
- To gradually expand the scope of Music Awards and current Music Services, where possible, to meet the needs of an increasing number of blind and partially sighted children and families throughout the UK. **This year we reached 662 children through our Music Awards and Music Services compared to 610 children in 2021/2022.**
- To grow and diversify our donor base, exploring new avenues of income such as proxy-statutory funding. **We have begun to diversify our donor base and are grateful for an increase in regular donors and for grants from trusts and foundations new to our charity.**
- To hold an annual concert highlighting the talented young musicians we support, providing opportunities for children and young people who have not previously joined the event. **Our 2022 Annual Concert welcomed children and young people who were both new to the event and who had performed previously.**
- To continue to develop relationships with other organisations throughout the UK that will enable us to reach more vision impaired children, both directly and indirectly via our music resources. **Our relationships with the charities Camsight, Sense, Vision Norfolk and the Batten Disease Family Association have continued over the year.**
- To continue to take every opportunity to respond to government papers and research into music education in relation to blind and partially sighted children and young people with a view to promoting equality of opportunity for them all. **We have been pleased to be one of the organisations supporting the RNIB's Music Advisory Service in their upcoming report in response to the New National Plan for Music Education issued by the Westminster government in 2022.**
- To strengthen our infrastructure, putting in place the resources necessary to conduct the daily administrative needs of the charity as beneficiary numbers increase. **We have increased our infrastructure from four part-time staff to six part-time staff.**
- To continue to monitor our risk register to ensure the best possible services can be maintained and protected, particularly in the event of further disruption. **A comprehensive risk register is being maintained.**

Plans for the Future

- To maintain an annual income of at least £350,000 to provide sufficient funds for Amber's charitable activities.
- To continue to gradually increase the reach of Music Awards and Music Services, where possible, to meet the needs of at least 700 blind and partially sighted children and families throughout the UK.
- To continue to develop relationships with other organisations, fostering collaboration in order to reach more blind and partially sighted children in the UK through activities such as workshops and knowledge exchange.
- To work with external advisors to update our IT processes and systems in order to ensure an optimal standard of cyber security.
- To improve the monitoring and evaluation of our work in order to demonstrate impact by reviewing and updating the collection, analysis and reporting of both qualitative and quantitative data in consultation with external advisors.
- To create a Youth Board in order to increase the opportunity for the blind and partially sighted young people we work with to share their voices and provide insight into the work that we do.
- To improve the accessibility of The Amber Trust's communications for all audiences by reviewing and upgrading our website, branding and social media channels.
- To become a Validated Course and Assessment Provider for the new fully inclusive Trinity College London Awards and Certificates in Musical Development.
- To support the Sound Moves project in collaboration with TiME (Technology in Music Education), exploring the development of a midi-based instrument which will enable children with Batten disease to make music more easily and consistently over the course of their lifetime.

Thank You

Volunteers contribute to Amber’s activities in many ways and their support has again been invaluable to us this year. We are grateful to Priscilla Asirifi for reviewing the year-end financial accounts; to Gina and Alan Miller for providing the design and production of our Annual Report and other literature and to all the volunteers who made our Annual Concert possible.

The Amber Trust is incredibly grateful for the generous support provided by trusts and foundations, community organisations, corporate donors, individuals and regular donors. We wholeheartedly thank all those who have given so generously, including those who supported Amber by taking part in a challenge, those who gave their time and energy to organise events in aid of Amber, and those who donated in memory of a loved one. Every donation makes a difference and helps us empower blind and partially sighted children across the UK to engage in and pursue their love of music. On behalf of us all at The Amber Trust, thank you.

Grants from Trusts and Foundations are crucial for Amber to reach as many blind and partially sighted children as possible. For their vital support this year, we thank:

- The Albert van den Bergh Charitable Trust
- The Annett Trust
- The Charles Hayward Foundation
- The de Laszlo Foundation
- The David and Myrtle Franklin Charitable Trust
- The Douglas and Elaine Biart Charitable Trust
- The Douglas Arter Foundation
- The GC Gibson Charitable Trust
- The Grey Court Trust
- The Harebell Centenary Fund
- The JK Foundation
- The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust
- The Linbury Trust
- London Pearly Kings & Queens Society Charity Fund
- MariaMarina Foundation
- The Patricia Routledge Foundation
- The Rachel & David Barnett Trust
- The RN & G Maini Charitable Trust
- Sir John Eastwood Foundation
- The Thomas J. Horne Memorial Trust
- Vision Foundation

We also thank those who have given generously but prefer no public acknowledgement

Summary of Financial Activities

Charitable Activities

During the year to 31 March 2023, the charity raised funds of £341,979 including funds raised for specific projects of £210,125 which have been classified as restricted funds. The charity also received investment income of £7,022.

The directors spent £397,307 on charitable activities and raising funds (with £222,168 pledged but not yet paid at the year-end) and £3,913 on the governance of the charity. The deficit incurred is due to an increase of £31,904 in committed unpaid awards to beneficiaries at the 2022/2023 year-end in comparison to 2021/2022 and an investment loss of £19,233.

Investment performance

The investments held by the charity at 31 March 2023 decreased in value by £24,657 compared to the start of the year. During the year, the charity sold investments realising a profit on sale of £10,575. The market value of investments at the year-end of £284,326 represents an increase in value of £92,819 when compared to the book cost of £191,507. At 31 March 2023 the charity also held cash with the charity’s bankers and stockbrokers of £367,938 with sales proceeds and investment income due to be received shortly after the year-end of £1,960.

Internal and external factors

In common with many charities, The Amber Trust dealt with factors related to the cost-of-living crisis of 2022. There are no other significant internal or external factors currently affecting the charity.

Investment and Reserves Policy

The Trustees reviewed the charity’s needs for reserves in line with guidance issued by the Charity Commission. In September 2022, the Trustees agreed to move from an 18–24 months reserves policy, to a period of 12-months. In making this change, Trustees considered the commitment to our beneficiaries, the increase in operational costs which have occurred as our charitable activities have grown and the voluntary nature of our income. The charity is reliant on income from Charitable Trusts, individual donors, and its own fundraising activities. This is difficult to predict, and it is therefore the policy of the trustees to maintain a general reserve sufficient to cover 12 months’ operational costs. This is in addition to the monies committed at any one time to cover the awards made to beneficiaries, which can be between 1 and 12 months in the future. The directors have no plans to accumulate reserves. At 31 March 2023 the charity held £99,172 in restricted funds, and £111,656 in designated funds, to be used for specific projects (see note 11 of the Financial Statements). The remaining funds are available for distribution and expenses necessarily incurred in furtherance of the charity’s objectives.

Principal funding sources

The charity’s funds are derived from its fundraising activities and investment income.

Structure, Governance and Management

Governing Instrument

The Amber Trust was established by a Trust Deed dated 9 June 1994 and was incorporated as a private limited company registered with Companies House on 25 October 1995. The Trust's Memorandum and Articles of Association were amended by special resolution on 26th October 2022 to provide for the appointment of a vice chair and to bring the Trust's governing documents in line with current company and charity law and good practice.

Recruitment and Appointment of New Directors

The power to appoint new directors of the charitable company is vested in the directors who are its trustees for the purpose of charity law. Under the requirements of the Articles of Association, one third of the directors are required to retire from office each year and are eligible for re-appointment. Angelica Bomford, Elizabeth Renshaw-Ames and Julia Walport retired this year by rotation. Angelica Bomford, being eligible, stood for re-election and was re-appointed. Julia Walport and Elizabeth Renshaw-Ames both retired this year and did not seek re-appointment. Adam Ockelford was appointed Chair on 1st April 2022. Three new directors were appointed this year, Victoria Oruwari on 16th May 2022, Veronica Franklin-Gould on 17th January 2023 and Chun Wai Shum on 17th January 2023. In looking for new directors, the directors will bear in mind the experience and qualifications of the existing directors and possible candidates. The successful candidates are appointed by a meeting of the existing directors.

Induction and Training of New Directors

The directors share responsibility for the induction and training of all new directors of the charity. New directors will be provided with copies of:

- The Articles of Association
- The latest accounts of the charity
- The Trustees Handbook

New directors are asked to read and familiarise themselves with Charity Commission guidance notes CC3 – The Essential Trustee. In addition, directors are encouraged to read Charity Commission and other newsletters and to attend courses designed to keep them abreast of their duties and responsibilities.

Organisational Structure

The directors of the charitable company are the same as its company law members. The directors manage the charity generally and together with the Chief Executive Officer, ensure that the charity delivers its aims and objectives and take responsibility for the charity's performance and strategy. Day to day activities are the responsibility of the Chief Executive who reports to the trustees. Angela Voyajolu is Chief Executive. Stephen Hough is Company Secretary and Adam Ockelford is Chair.

Wider Network

The charity is not part of a wider network.

Public Benefit Statement

The directors consider that the charity's activities, as set out in its Objectives and Achievements for the Year are for the public benefit. The directors confirm that they have complied with their duty under s17(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the guidance published by the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Related parties

The charity works closely with the Applied Music Research Centre at the University of Roehampton to fund specific projects. Adam Ockelford, a director of The Amber Trust is Professor of Music and Director of the Applied Music Research Centre. Professor Ockelford received no personal benefit from the grants. The charity has no subsidiaries.

Professor Ockelford and Simon Vincent are trustees of the charity Sounds of Intent, which promotes the music education of young people with a focus on learning difficulties. Professor Ockelford is a trustee of Live Music Now, a UK-wide charity offering music for social benefit, and a trustee of SEMPRESS who encourage music education and music psychology research.

Risk Management

The directors have a duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. At each directors' meeting the significant risks of the charity are discussed including a report on any Safeguarding issues presented by the charity's Designated Safeguarding Lead. Where appropriate, risks are reported on and discussed in subsequent meetings. The directors have reviewed the risks to which the charity is exposed and consider that they have established sufficient systems and procedures to mitigate those risks.

Amber's President

In 2022 Amber's President, Her Majesty the Queen (formerly HRH the Duchess of Cornwall), continued to be a great support to Amber. Her involvement has been invaluable in ensuring that Amber's important work with blind and partially sighted children maintains a high profile.

Directors

The following directors held office during the year:

Adam Ockelford (Chair - appointed 1 April 2022)	Elizabeth Renshaw-Ames (until 4 Oct 2022)
Will Walker-Arnott (Vice-Chair)	Chun Wai Shum (Appointed 17 Jan 2023)
Angelica Bomford	Victoria Oruwari (Appointed 16 May 2022)
Fiona Costa	Simon Vincent
Veronica Franklin-Gould (Appointed 17 Jan 2023)	Julia Walport (until 4 Oct 2022)
Stephen Hough	

The directors who held office at the end of the financial period have no beneficial interest in the Company. All new directors are elected on the collective agreement of its present directors.

Financial Statements

Independent Examiner

The accountants, Messrs Burgess Hodgson, have indicated their willingness to continue in office and a resolution concerning their appointment will be proposed in due course at the appropriate juncture.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small entities.

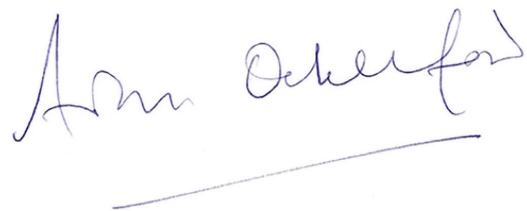
Statement of Directors' Responsibilities in Respect of the Accounts

Company law requires the directors to prepare accounts for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company and of the surplus or deficit of the company for that period. In preparing those accounts the directors are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- prepare the accounts on a going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the company will continue in business.

The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records, which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the company and to enable them to ensure that the accounts comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

APPROVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND SIGNED ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD



Professor Adam Ockelford
Chair

2 October 2023

Independent Examiner's Report

Independent Examiner's Report to the trustees of The Amber Trust Charitable Company

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023, which comprise the statement of financial activities, statement of financial position and the related notes.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees (and also its directors for the purposes of company law), you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act').

In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent examiner's statement

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe:

- (a) accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 386 of the Companies Act 2006; or
- (b) the accounts do not accord with these records; or
- (c) the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
- (d) the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (FRS102)

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Colin Reid, Independent Examiner

Burgess Hodgson LLP, Chartered Accountants, Camburgh House, 27 New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 3DN

The Amber Trust – Statement of financial activities for the year ended 31 March 2023 including income and expenditure account

	Notes	31.03.23 £			31.03.22 £
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
Incoming resources:					
Donations	3	85,218	210,125	295,343	257,075
Income from fundraising events	3	46,636	-	46,636	37,486
Investments		7,022	-	7,022	5,163
Total incoming resources		138,876	210,125	349,001	299,724
Resources expended:					
Charitable activities	4a)	93,959	230,780	324,739	240,013
Raising funds	4a)	72,568	-	72,568	60,925
Governance costs	4b)	3,913	-	3,913	3,560
Total resources expended		170,440	230,780	401,220	304,499
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		(31,564)	(20,655)	(52,218)	(4,775)
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Gains/(losses) on investment assets	6	(19,233)	-	(19,233)	13,462
Net movement in funds		(50,796)	(20,655)	(71,451)	8,687
Funds brought forward at 1 April		383,680	119,827	503,507	494,820
Funds carried forward at 31 March		332,884	99,172	432,056	503,507

All of the company's activities are classed as continuing and there are no other recognised gains and losses other than the net movement of funds for the financial periods presented.

The Amber Trust – Balance sheet as at 31 March 2023

	Notes	31.03.23 £	31.03.22 £
Current assets:			
Debtors	7	1,960	1,798
Investments	6(b)	284,326	308,983
Cash at bank and in hand		367,938	382,990
		654,224	693,771
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	(222,168)	(190,264)
Net current assets		432,056	503,507
The funds of the charity:			
Unrestricted - undesignated funds	11	221,227	333,901
Unrestricted - designated funds	11	111,656	49,779
		332,883	383,680
Restricted funds	11	99,172	119,827
Total charity funds		432,056	503,507

The Amber Trust – Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023

1. Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention, in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with FRS 102 1A for smaller entities and in accordance with the Companies Act 2006.

2. Accounting policies

a) Income

Donations are recognised as income when received. If paid under covenant or gift aid, the related tax recoverable is recognised when the original donation is received.

Other income is recognised when received.

b) Expenditure

Charitable activities are those activities undertaken to achieve the charity's objectives. Expenditure on charitable activities is recognised when the Charity's Music Awards Committee has agreed a grant to a beneficiary or when payment is due.

Expenditure on raising funds comprises costs incurred in generating voluntary income, including fundraising events.

Governance costs are incurred on constitutional and statutory requirements.

Support costs have been allocated to charitable activities and fundraising activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

c) Funds

The charity's funds have been classified as unrestricted and restricted. Unrestricted funds may be used at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the charity's objectives and aims. Where the trustees have set aside a part of the unrestricted fund to be used for specific projects, this fund is described as 'designated'. Restricted funds may only be used in accordance with the donor's wishes.

d) Investment valuation

Investments are valued at their 31 March 2023 market values.

e) Taxation

No provision has been made for either income tax or corporation tax, the company being exempt as a registered charity. The Amber Trust is not registered for Value Added Tax.

The trustees are satisfied that the charity is entitled to exemption from the provisions of the Companies Act 2006 (the Act) relating to the audit of the financial statements for the year by virtue of section 447, and no member or members have requested an audit pursuant to section 476 of the Act.

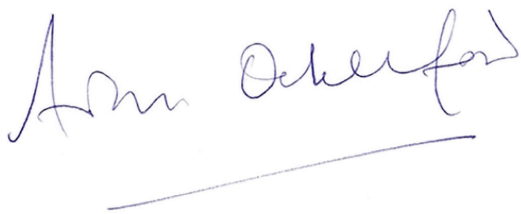
The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- I. ensuring that the charity keeps proper accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act; and
- II. preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

These statements have been prepared in accordance with FRS 102 1A for smaller entities.

These accounts were approved by the board of directors on 4 October 2023.

Signed on behalf of the board



Professor Adam Ockelford
Chair

2 October 2023

The Amber Trust – Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 continued

3. Incoming resources

	31.03.23 £			31.03.22 £
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
Donations:				
From Trusts and Foundations	63,250	209,000	272,250	242,360
From individual donors	15,664	1,125	16,789	9,927
Corporate	1,170	-	1,170	1,500
Legacies	10	-	10	-
Gift Aid recovery	5,124	-	5,124	3,287
	85,218	210,125	295,343	257,075
Income from fundraising events:				
Major fundraising event	26,688	-	26,688	15,835
Community fundraising	19,949	-	19,949	21,651
	46,637	-	46,637	37,486
Investments	7,022		7,022	5,163
Total incoming resources	138,876	210,125	349,001	299,724

The Amber Trust – Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 continued

4. Resources expended

a) Analysis of total resources expended

	31.03.23 £			31.03.22 £
	Direct activity	Support costs	Total	Total
Charitable activities				
Expenditure on programmes:				
Music Award	169,768	24,567	194,335	162,123
Little Amber	26,171	20,486	46,657	23,079
AmberPlus	21,992	20,486	42,478	26,207
Music Makers	(3,065)	3,065	-	6,690
With Music in Mind	17,139	9,468	26,607	18,905
Workshops	13,400	1,262	14,662	-
	245,406	79,334	324,739	237,004
Development of resources	-	-	-	339
	245,406	79,334	324,739	237,343
Cost of raising funds:				
Fundraising and events	17,861	52,235	70,096	60,926
Investment fees	2,471	-	2,471	2,670
Total resources expended	265,738	131,569	397,306	300,939

b) Analysis of total support costs

	31.03.23 £				31.03.22 £
	Charitable activities	Cost of raising funds	Governance	Total	Total
Music programmes administration	79,334	-	-	79,334	51,201
Office costs	-	50,358	-	50,358	42,368
Travel and subsistence	-	230	-	230	199
Website + systems development	-	1,648	-	1,648	1,974
Bank charges	-	-	90	90	54
HR/accountant fees	-	-	3,823	3,823	3,506
	79,334	52,235	3,913	135,483	99,303

The Amber Trust – Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 continued

c) Wages and Salaries

Total support costs include the following amounts in respect of staff costs:

	31.03.23 £	31.03.22 £
Wages and salaries	122,847	84,418
Social security costs	6,049	2,513
Pension costs	3,686	2,529
	132,582	89,460

Average headcount during the year was 5 (2022:3).

5. Directors’ fees and expenses

No remuneration, benefits or expenses were paid to the Directors during the year.

6. Realised and unrealised investment gains and losses

a) Realised gains and losses

	31.03.23 £	31.03.22 £
Profit/(loss) on sale of investments	10,575	3,527

b) Unrealised gains and losses

	31.03.23 £	31.03.22 £
Value of investments at beginning of year	308,983	293,574
Less: value of investments sold	(26,206)	(2,320)
Add: cost of investments purchased	31,356	7,794
Adjusted value at beginning of year	314,133	299,048
Market value of investments at end of year	284,326	308,983
Unrealised gain/(loss)	(29,807)	9,935

7. Debtors

	31.03.23 £	31.03.22 £
Investment income	1,960	1,798

The Amber Trust – Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 continued

8. Creditors – amounts falling due within one year

	31.03.23 £	31.03.22 £
Grants approved but unpaid at end of year	222,168	190,264

9. Capital

The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital. Each member has a liability limited to £1 for payment of the company’s debts if the company is wound up or dissolved.

10. Related party transactions

Adam Ockelford, a director of The Amber Trust, is Professor of Music and Director of the Applied Music Research Centre at the University of Roehampton. The University has undertaken research and development projects for The Amber Trust, payments for which are negotiated and approved by other Trustees of the Trust. Professor Ockelford receives no personal benefit from these payments.

Simon Vincent, Trustee of The Amber Trust, was Chair of the DM Thomas Foundation for Young People when their award was made to The Amber Trust in 2020. However, Mr Vincent was not involved in the grant discussion and decision when the award was made.

There have been no other related party transactions in the year.

11. Funds

An analysis of the company’s assets at 31 March 2023 by fund is provided in the table below:

	Restricted	Unrestricted		Total
£		Undesignated	Designated	
Current assets	219,808	321,426	112,990	654,224
Creditors amounts falling due within one year	(120,636)	(100,198)	(1,334)	(222,168)
Net assets	99,172	221,228	111,656	432,056

The Amber Trust – Notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023 continued

Movements on restricted and unrestricted designated funds during the year ended 31 March 2023 are analysed in the table below:

£	At 1 April 2022	Income	Expenditure	At 31 March 2023
Restricted funds source				
MariaMarina Foundation	3,884	84,000	(58,667)	29,217
The GC Gibson Charitable Trust	2,827	-	(2,827)	-
The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	82,865	85,000	(136,308)	31,557
Vision Foundation	-	9,000	(2,041)	6,959
Society of the Holy Child Jesus CIO	8,840	-	(8,840)	-
The de Laszlo Foundation	324	3,000	(2,565)	759
The Linbury Trust	21,087	28,000	(18,905)	30,182
Individual donor	-	1,125	(627)	498
	119,827	210,125	(230,780)	99,172
Designated funds source				
DM Thomas Foundation	6,298	-	(6,298)	-
The Carmen Butler-Charteris CT	43,481	-	(39,018)	4,463
Designated funds 30k for new workshops scheme		30,000	(8,426)	21,574
Thomas J Horne Memorial Trust 2023 (Designated for LA)		5,500	(1,381)	4,119
The JK Foundation (Designated for LA)		1,500		1,500
Trustees meeting 16.05.23 approved £50K designated funds for AP		50,000		50,000
Trustees meeting 16.05.23 approved £30k designated funds for LA		30,000		30,000
	49,779	117,000	(55,123)	111,656

- The awards from the MariaMarina Foundation are being used to fund development of the charity’s infrastructure; music awards; and the Little Amber programme. £14k for cost of living.
- Funds from The GC Gibson Charitable Trust are being used to provide resources for children with Batten disease and other neurodegenerative conditions.
- Funds from The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust are being used to fund The Julia and Hans Rausing Scholarships and Music Awards. £30k for cost of living.
- The award from Vision Foundation was used to fund the workshops at Joseph Clarke School.
- The award from the Society of the Holy Child Jesus CIO was used to fund expenditure on the Little Amber programme.
- The fund from The de Laszlo Foundation is being used to fund 10 new music awards for children who have had no first-hand experience of music lessons.
- The award from The Linbury Trust is being used to fund the With Music in Mind programme.
- The donation from an individual donor is being restricted to a Music Award.
- The legacy grant from the Carmen Butler-Charteris Charitable Trust has been designated by the trustees to fund the Amber Plus programme.
- The legacy grant from the DM Thomas Foundation for Young People has been designated by the trustees to fund musical instruments through the Music Awards scheme.
- The fund of £30k was designated to the new workshops programme by the trustees on 30.09.2022.
- The award from The Thomas J Horne Memorial Trust has been designated by the trustees to fund part of the Little Amber programme.
- The award from the JK Foundation is designated to the Little Amber programme.
- Trustees meeting on 16.05.23 approved £50k designated funds for the AmberPlus scheme and £30k designated funds for the Little Amber scheme.

12. Controlling party

The directors are the ultimate controlling party.

Legal and Administrative Information

President	Her Majesty the Queen (formerly HRH the Duchess of Cornwall)
Patrons	Roderic Hill, Jools Holland OBE, James Lisney, Derek Paravicini, Nic Paravicini DL, Lady Eleanor Shearing
Directors and Trustees	Adam Ockelford (Chair), Angelica Bomford, Fiona Costa, Veronica Franklin Gould, Stephen Hough, Victoria Oruwari, Elizabeth Renshaw-Ames, Chun Wai Shum, Simon Vincent, Will Walker-Arnott, Julia Walport
Email	contact@ambertrust.org
Website	www.ambertrust.org
Registered Address	64a Princes Way, London, SW19 6JF
Charity Registration Number	1050503
Company Registration Number	03117803
Status	Company limited by guarantee
Bankers	CAF Bank Ltd, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4TA
Independent Examiner	Burgess Hodgson Chartered Accountants, 27 New Dover Road, Canterbury, Kent, CT1 3DN
Solicitors	Bates Wells, 10 Queen Street Place, London, EC4R 1BE
Investment Advisers	Rathbone Investment Management Ltd, Fiennes House, 32 Southgate Street, Winchester, SO23 9EH

Designed and produced by Nick Roberts

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

for the year
ended
31 March
2023

**Music is not
just a pastime,
*it's a lifeline***



The Amber Trust
Music for Blind Children

The Amber Trust

64a Princes Way, London SW19 6JF

Registered Charity No: 1050503 • Company No: 03117803



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