



The Amber Trust
Music for Blind Children



Report and Accounts

for the year ended
31 March 2024

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

Contents

Chair's Introduction.....	3
About Amber.....	4
Music Awards: Young Musicians' Stories.....	6
Amber's Music Services.....	9
Initiatives and Collaborations.....	12
Fundraising, Events, and Other News.....	13
Objectives and Achievements for the Year.....	16
Plans for the Future.....	17
Thank You.....	18
Summary of Financial Activities.....	19
Structure, Governance and Management.....	20
Financial Statements.....	22
Independent Examiner's Report.....	23
Statement of Financial Activities.....	24
Balance Sheet.....	25
Notes to Financial Statements.....	27
Legal and Administrative Information.....	35



Chair's Introduction



In an educational and social environment that continued to pose challenges for many public services and charities working in these sectors, 2023–2024 was a period of consolidation for The Amber Trust.

Numbers of children and young people accessing our Music Awards and Services continued its gradual increase, while our reserves were reduced somewhat, as we had planned, to enable Amber to access more grant-giving Trusts and Foundations.

Our Annual Concert held at St Paul's Boys' School in May 2023 was, as ever, a great success, with more people attending than ever before, and a number of new faces appearing in the line-up of excellent young performers.

Looking to the year ahead, in addition to the continued growth of our services and diversification of our income base, we have some exciting new initiatives. These include a doctoral study, funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, into strategies for developing and teaching tactile music notation to young children, both as an introduction to the Braille music code and to provide simpler ways of representing music and musical sounds for children who cannot see. The development of a new device for converting movement into sound called the 'MUGO' will continue, with trials taking place with young people across the UK.

Finally, we should note that 2023–2024 will be the last for our current CEO, Angela Voyajolu, who is leaving with our thanks and best wishes to take up a post in higher education. Under Angela's stewardship, Amber has charted a steady course of gradual growth and the stabilisation of the central team who run things so effectively on a day-to-day basis. We will be delighted to welcome Angela's successor, Sophie Amstell, in September 2024. Sophie joins us with a wealth of experience in worlds of performing arts and music education, and will bring fresh perspectives and ideas, no doubt, and as she builds on Angela's work.

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, both directly (through our Awards and Services) and indirectly (through training and resources for teachers).

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

For others, music can provide a medium for enhancing communication, to foster friendships and support emotional regulation.

For all children, music can be fun!



What we do

The Amber Trust's Music Awards for individual blind and partially sighted children and young people 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 306 children through our Music Awards, funding a range of tuition including piano, violin, cello, guitar, clarinet, saxophone, drums, voice, and braille music lessons.

Amber knows that children with a vision impairment, including those with additional disabilities, are less likely than their sighted peers to receive specialist music education. This is often due to unintended 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, reach blind and partially sighted children and young people through music from the early years to the age of 18.

'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.



Charlotte and music practitioner Hannah

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, 402 children have been supported directly 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 2023/24 we supported 708 blind and partially sighted children across the UK

Music Awards: Young Musicians' Stories

Toben's story

Singing is 18-year-old Toben's passion, and The Amber Trust is delighted to have been supporting him since 2019 on our Music Awards scheme.



'I fell in love with singing when I went to see *Carmen* by the Welsh National Opera with audio description and touch tour,' says Toben, who was born with the genetic disorder Leber Congenital Amaurosis Type 8 with nystagmus and keratoconus.

'I began taking singing lessons with Ali Shone and passed my Grade 8 exam. I have sung with the Welsh National Youth Opera, which has been very accommodating, helping me to boost my confidence and performance skills. I have performed three operas with them and loved every moment.'

This experience cemented Toben's enthusiasm and love for his craft. 'I enjoyed opera so much that I decided to study it as an undergraduate,' he says. 'I am looking forward to studying at the Royal Academy of Music from this September. This wouldn't have been possible without the support and funding from The Amber Trust.'

Toben's mother, Julia, says, 'I am hugely proud of Toben's achievements and his drive to push his boundaries. It has not always been easy for him at school or his music practice. We are fortunate to have met a lot of supportive people along the way. Fingers crossed for the future!'

We wish Toben all the best in his studies and look forward to following his musical journey.

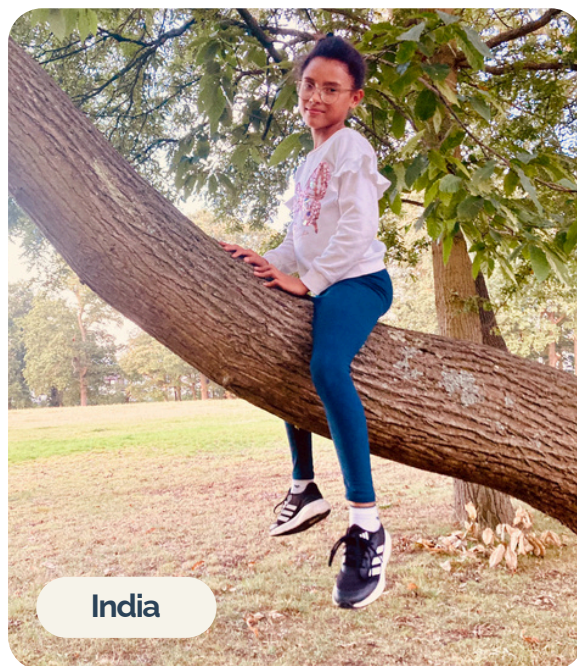
Music Awards: Young Musicians' Stories

India's story

India, 10, has a real passion for music and has a clear sense of what she would like to achieve. She is partially sighted and has been supported by The Amber Trust via the Music Awards scheme since 2020.

'I started piano when I was 6,' says India. 'Before I started, I got a toy keyboard for Christmas and I really enjoyed playing it, so I asked my parents if I could have a proper one. For my birthday, The Amber Trust and my parents managed to get me a digital piano. I was so excited!'

An Amber Music Award can fund the provision of musical instruments, as well as music tuition. In December 2020, Amber was delighted to provide India with an electric keyboard so that she could continue nurturing her passion.



'I started my lessons at the age of 6 with my piano teacher, Sam,' continues India. 'He has helped me pass all of my exams and has taught me how to compose, improvise, and learn different piano pieces. I am about to learn my Grade 5 pieces as I passed my Grade 4 exam recently.'

India's mother, Kym, says, 'I am very proud of her. A huge thank you to everyone at Amber, as none of this would have been possible without The Amber Trust. An emerging talent exists because of your support. Sincerely, thank you.'

India has big plans and aspirations for her interest in music. 'I hope that in the future I will be able to compose my own pieces and become a well taught, amazing pianist, and help to teach others,' she says.

We have no doubt that India will achieve her musical goals and will share her knowledge of music with others.

Music Awards: Young Musicians' Stories

Paige's story

Paige, 7, loves music and is nurturing a real talent for the piano. She has Septo-Optic Dysplasia, autism, and is severely vision impaired.

She was initially matched with Lucia Vernon-Long on our Little Amber scheme. When Paige turned 5, she moved on to an Amber Music Award and continued her work with Lucia.



‘Paige has always been musical – it has always been the way she communicates with the world,’ says her mother, Molly.

‘She sang before she spoke, and her first song was “See Saw Margery Daw”. She started playing the piano just before her 6th birthday.’

‘A year on and Paige now listens to songs she likes and mimics them on the piano, completely by herself,’ Molly continues. ‘She is always surprising her schoolteachers with what she has learnt. With the help of Lucia, Paige is truly given the knowledge, guidance and support she needs to flourish and show off her talent.’

Paige has had a big impact on Lucia in their three years of working together. ‘It’s not an exaggeration to say Paige has become one of the most treasured people in my life,’ says Lucia.

Paige's grandmother, Sheelagh, bought her a keyboard for Christmas. ‘Within a few weeks I could sing her a simple song and she’d play it back to me straight away, almost note-perfect, in multiple keys,’ says Lucia. ‘She can now play whole pieces. One of her favourites is ‘Do Re Mi’ from *The Sound of Music*.

‘Music is the beating heart of Paige – it seems to radiate from her. It is her way of communicating and gives her so much enjoyment. Seeing her open up to the world through music has been one of the greatest privileges of my working life.’

Amber's Music Services

Amber's music services are aimed at encouraging musical development by supporting children and their families at home.

In 2023/2024 we worked with 96 children in the early years and their families on the Little Amber scheme. Through AmberPlus, our service for blind and partially sighted children with complex needs between the ages of five and 18, we reached 92 children and their families. We worked with a further 22 children and families on our With Music in Mind service for children and young people with neurodegenerative conditions.

Feedback from families and practitioners has shown that our music services have a positive impact on musical development, while also providing children with an avenue of self-expression and communication with others. Parents and carers consistently share that sessions are helping them to embed music into their child's daily life.



Amber was delighted to work with 12 organisations over the past year, including schools and community groups, through music workshops. As well as providing opportunities for children to make music together, we aim to support professionals to build music into their practice, extending impact beyond the sessions provided by Amber.

We reached 192 children through our workshops.

'By observing the practitioner, working alongside her as a team ... the staff have increased confidence now to deliver music to our most complex pupils. The various songs are catchy, and the staff are automatically using these now throughout the school day, even outside of a set music session which is lovely for the pupils.'

Feedback on one of our workshops from a school staff member

This year we reached 402 children and families through our music services.

Little Amber: Amelia's Story

Three-year-old Amelia has been on our Little Amber scheme for a year and is supported by music practitioner, Zsuzsanna Hörcsög.

Amelia has Unbalanced Translocation of 2p25.3 deletion, and 11q13.4-25 duplication. She is the only known person with this genetic condition and has a long list of over 20 complex diagnoses.

Registered blind, Amelia has congenital glaucoma and Peters' Anomaly in her left eye. 'She is a true miracle!' says her mother, Sian.



Amelia enjoys interacting with anything sensory and has a sensory room at home, a relaxed and special place to play with her musical instruments. Her baby brother, Atlas, loves to join in too, and regularly attends Amelia's Little Amber sessions.

Little Amber provides support to children aged 0–5 years, including those with additional disabilities. Families on the scheme receive home visits with a specially trained music practitioner, a set of starter percussion instruments, and a set of activity cards.

'We are so thankful to Little Amber for providing the musical cards and instruments and pairing us with Zsuzsanna,' says Sian. 'Amelia thrives on listening to musical instruments, songs, and moving her body. She is always copying sounds and interacting with the sessions positively.'

'Amelia is such a happy ray of sunshine,' Sian continues. 'Everyone who knows Amelia always describes her as content and cheeky! We look forward to more sessions in the future as a family.'

Reflecting on her work with Amelia, Zsuzsanna says, 'How wonderful it has been to be able to work not only with Amelia, but with the whole family. I have witnessed so much transformation within our work, thanks to the eager participation of both parents, who are present in all our sessions and encourage their children's musical exploration.'

AmberPlus: Sam's Story

Sam, 13, has Angelman Syndrome and Cerebral Vision Impairment. He has been enjoying his AmberPlus sessions for almost two years, working with music practitioner Hannah Murray.

AmberPlus supports the musical development of blind and partially sighted children and young people between the ages of five and 18, who also have additional complex needs. Children on the scheme receive regular home visits with a music practitioner, involving the whole family as much as possible.



'Sam responds well to music and his ability to concentrate and play in meaningful ways is improving with time,' says his mother, Emma.

'Hannah first introduced Sam to the trumpet. He clearly requested more as he looked at himself in the instrument's reflection, feeling the notes vibrating.'

Sam's musical engagement also supports his vocal skills. 'Hannah has worked consistently to develop Sam's voice using a microphone,' explains Emma. 'As Sam is non-verbal, he initially focused on exploring the buttons and feedback on the amplifier. The vibrations were especially interesting to him.'

'However, in his own time, he has managed to vocalise using a microphone and will pass it back to Hannah to hear her sing. This has been a real highlight. Sam continues to amaze us, and we are very grateful to AmberPlus.'

Reflecting on her work with Sam, Hannah says, 'Right from the start, Sam was a keen sensory explorer. We explore music on iPad apps, with percussion, piano and guitar, but Sam's favourite is using a microphone, feeling vibrations from low and funny sounds.'

'Lately, Sam has been intentionally singing into the microphone, feeling his own voice through the amplifier,' Hannah continues. 'He enjoys repeated piano patterns, guitar strumming and hearing his name in song. The sound worlds we enter are a lesson to us all in how vast we can be in our creativity.'

Initiatives and Collaborations

Statisticians for Society

In 2023 The Amber Trust was delighted to join the Royal Statistical Society's Statisticians for Society scheme. Statisticians for Society is a pro bono scheme that connects professional statisticians and charitable organisations, providing the appropriate tools and guidance needed to gain insights into data. Amber is working with statistician Folasade Ariyibi, who is helping us to organise and maximise our data for analysis so that we can improve our monitoring and evaluation processes.

This valuable collaboration is a key step towards enabling us to more fully demonstrate the impact of our work. Fola has shared, 'as a statistician it has been a pleasure to use my skillset to support a charity in this way. I commend The Amber's Trust's proactiveness to utilise the efficiencies gained from good data management, and this project has seen me also develop a better understanding of the great work the charity does, and the continued promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion.'



Trinity Awards and Certificates in Musical Development

The Amber Trust was thrilled to become a validated centre for Trinity College London's groundbreaking Awards and Certificates in Musical Development. Trinity's new, fully inclusive qualifications for schools and other settings are designed for those with learning difficulties, across the whole spectrum of abilities and needs.

The qualifications, based on the Sounds of Intent framework, enable everyone to have their musical achievements and progress formally recognised, with no age restrictions or other limitations.

As a validated centre, The Amber Trust can facilitate the certification process for children and young people who are blind and partially sighted and are currently in receipt of a Music Award or on one of our Music Services.



Accessible musical instruments

In partnership with Percussion Play and The Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC), The Amber Trust collaborated on a project to make outdoor musical instruments even more accessible. The aim was to create a brand-new instrument as an outcome of this collaboration.

The RSBC held two workshops for blind and partially sighted children and young people at their Life Without Limits Centre in London. Music practitioner Gennie Joy facilitated these sessions, exploring Percussion Play's outdoor instruments and collecting feedback on their accessibility.

Dr Angela Voyajolu, CEO of The Amber Trust, says 'It is important that the voices and opinions of children with vision impairment are represented. We are enthusiastic that the young people involved in this project will impact the development of Percussion Play's innovative instruments.'

'This collaboration will help more people discover the joy of playing percussion in the great outdoors,' says Jody Ashfield, CEO of Percussion Play.



Fundraising, Events, and Other News

Thank you to Nurse Sharon Birkin

Nurse Sharon Birkin raised an impressive £300 in aid of Amber by working an additional shift at her hospital.

'I wanted to do some fundraising for The Amber Trust, but time ran away from me,' says Sharon. 'Instead, I decided another way to donate would be to work an additional shift at the hospital and donate what I got paid to Amber.'

'I wanted to say thank you for all the support you have given my son Oliver over the years,' Sharon continues. 'Thank you for the opportunities you have given him and for the difference you have made in his life. Music has been a key part of unlocking his speech and helping him to regulate his emotions.'

“My colleagues on Rainforest Ward at Lincoln County Hospital were a great support to me that day and helped me to raise awareness.

Thank you, Amber, for the fantastic work that you do.’

We are immensely grateful to Sharon and her fundraising efforts, and for the hard work and dedication that went into her extra shift.



Bradfield College raised £7,434 for Amber

Bradfield College student, Arion, researched The Amber Trust as part of his Extended Project Qualification on vision impairment in music. Due to this work, The Amber Trust was selected as Bradfield College’s nominated charity for their annual Jazz on a Summer’s Evening concert.

The College’s musicians impressed the audience with a mix of jazz, blues, and soul. They were joined by Amber Music Awardee Ashleigh, who performed George Gershwin’s ‘I Got Rhythm’.

The concert raised an incredible £7,434 in aid of The Amber Trust. We are hugely grateful to Bradfield College for their support, to Arion and the College’s exceptionally talented pupils, and to Ashleigh for representing Amber.



Amber's 2023 Annual Concert

We were treated to a wide repertoire of music at Amber's 2023 Annual Concert, from Bach, Gershwin, Mozart and K.D. Lang. Our doors opened to the largest audience yet, providing a warm and enthusiastic atmosphere for our young musicians.



The concert is an excellent opportunity for the musicians supported by Amber to meet new friends and make music together. Some adopted the role of accompanist to support each other, rehearsing their performances the morning of the concert.

Survivor's 'Eye of the Tiger' saw Nikhil on drums, Lily B on voice, Ashleigh on the keyboard and Derek Paravicini on the piano. Many of our musicians (and the audience!) took part in the ensemble finale, 'Fly Me to the Moon'.

We are sincerely grateful to everyone who took part, making our 2023 Annual Concert so special, and would like to thank the High Master and St Paul's School for generously allowing us to use the Wathen Hall once again.

Staff changes

Amber has a core team of seven part-time employees. After five years on the team, Music Services Manager Hannah Marsden resigned from Amber to pursue a career in British Sign Language (BSL) interpretation. Patrick Shepherd joined as Music Services Manager in March 2024. We welcomed Hannah ElMohankr, Fundraising Assistant in January 2024.

Our team also includes Angela Voyajolu, CEO; Hannah Cykowski, Communications and Events Officer; Ying Lin, Finance Officer; Dominic Millard, Music Administrator and Elissa Turay, Music Awards Manager.

Objectives and Achievements for the Year

- To maintain an annual income of at least £350,000 to provide sufficient funds for Amber's charitable activities. **Amber's total income was £314,328.**
- 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. **This year we reached 708 children through our Music Awards and Music Services compared to 662 children in 2022/2023.**
- 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. **We have enjoyed strengthening relationships with organisations including the Batten Disease Family Association, the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB), and the Royal Society for Blind Children (RSBC).**
- To work with external advisors to update our IT processes and systems in order to ensure an optimal standard of cyber security. **In August 2023 Amber received Cyber Essentials Plus Certification and began working with external IT support provider Qlic IT.**
- To improve the monitoring and evaluation of our work to demonstrate impact by reviewing and updating the collection, analysis and reporting of both qualitative and quantitative data in consultation with external advisors. **We are working with Statisticians for Society, who are helping us to maximise our data for analysis so that we can improve our monitoring and evaluation processes.**
- To create a Youth Board 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. **This remains in process, to be completed in 2025.**
- To improve the accessibility of The Amber Trust's communications for all audiences, reviewing and upgrading our website, branding and social media channels. **Our communications have been overhauled regarding their visual accessibility and providing accessible formats for our publications.**

- To become a Validated Course and Assessment Provider for the new fully inclusive Trinity College London Awards and Certificates in Musical Development. **Amber became a Validated Centre in September 2023.**
- To support the Sounds 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. **The first phase of this collaborative project began in January 2024.**

Plans for the future

- To maintain an annual income of at least £400,000 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 750 blind and partially sighted children and families throughout the UK.
- To set up a Youth Board of young people who benefit from the awards and services that Amber offers, with Trustee representation, to ensure that the voices of those we serve are at the heart of what we do.
- To take the midi-based instrument for children and young people with Batten disease and other conditions (now named a 'MUGO') that limit movement to the next stage of development, trialing prototypes with different potential users across the country, and to develop a partnership with a manufacturer to see the device ultimately put into production.
- To ensure that all the children and young people whom Amber supports, who wish to, are entered for a Trinity Award.
- To work with the newly constituted Music Hubs in England to ensure they are aware of the needs of vision impaired children and young people in their region and of the services that Amber provides, and to support and encourage them to meet the needs of blind and partially sighted pupils and students themselves.

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 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 Arts Council via the Royal National Institute of Blind People
- The Blue Skies Charitable Trust
- The Douglas and Elaine Biart Charitable Trust
- Charles Hayward Foundation
- CMS Social Impact Fund
- The de Laszlo Foundation
- Fitton Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Global's Make Some Noise
- The GC Gibson Charitable Trust
- The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust
- The Linbury Trust
- MariaMarina Foundation
- The Patricia Routledge Foundation
- The RN and G Maini Charitable Trust
- The Thomas J. Horne Memorial Trust
- The Torns Charitable 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 2024, the charity raised funds of £303,688 including funds raised for specific projects of £146,875 which have been classified as restricted funds. The charity also received investment income of £10,640. The directors spent £532,472 on charitable activities and raising funds (with £276,363 pledged but not yet paid at the year-end) and £7,977 on the governance of the charity. The planned deficit aimed to reduce reserves that exceeded our policy limits, which was preventing the charity from applying to some major funders. We also saw an increase in the number of committed awards across all programmes to beneficiaries in the 2023/2024 financial year.

Investment performance

The investments held by the charity on 31 March 2024 increased in value of £34,082 compared to the start of the year. During the year, the charity sold investments realising a profit on sale of £18,564. The market value of investments at the year-end of £318,408 represents an increase in value of £94,861 when compared to the book cost of £223,547. At 31 March 2024 the charity also held cash with the charity's bankers and stockbrokers of £180,774 with sales proceeds and investment income due to be received shortly after the year-end of £4,144.

Internal and external factors

In common with many charities, The Amber Trust dealt with factors related to the cost-of-living crisis of 2023. There are no other significant internal or external factors currently affecting the charity.

Investment and Reserves Policy

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, which are only a portion of our overall costs towards charitable activities. In addition to this there are 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 beyond those it currently holds. At 31 March 2024 the charity held £66,669 in restricted funds, and £15,270 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. Fiona Costa, Stephen Hough, and Will Walker-Arnott retired this year by rotation. Fiona Costa and Will-Walker Arnott being eligible, stood for re-election and were re-appointed. Stephen Hough retired and did not seek re-appointment. Will Walker-Arnott subsequently retired on 31st December 2023. In looking for new directors, the directors 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 are 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 was Company Secretary until 2nd October 2023 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 Research Centre for Teaching, Learning and Human Development at the University of Roehampton to fund specific projects. Adam Ockelford, a director of The Amber Trust is Professor of Music in the School of Education. 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 SEMPRE, an organisation that encourages 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 and discussed. 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 2023 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), Will Walker-Arnott (Vice-Chair until 31st December 2023), Angelica Bomford, Fiona Costa, Veronica Franklin-Gould, Stephen Hough (until 2nd October 2023), Chun Wai Shum (Vice-Chair from 1st January 2024), Victoria Oruwari, Simon Vincent.

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.

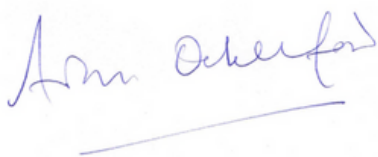
Statement of Directors' Responsibilities in Respect of the Accounts

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

30 September 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Amber Trust

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024, 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 Association of Chartered Certified Accountants. 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 FCA
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 2024 including income and expenditure accounts

		31.03.24 £			31.03.23 £
	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
Incoming resources:					
Donations	3	108,162	146,875	255,037	295,343
Income from fundraising events	3	48,651	-	48,651	46,636
Investments		10,640	-	10,640	7,022
Total incoming resources		167,453	146,875	314,328	349,001
Resources expended:					
Charitable activities	4a)	252,060	179,378	431,438	324,739
Raising funds	4a)	101,034	-	101,034	72,568
Governance costs	4b)	7,977	-	7,977	3,913
Total resources expended		361,071	179,378	540,449	401,220
Net incoming/(outgoing) resources for the year		(193,618)	(32,503)	(226,121)	(52,219)
Other recognised gains/(losses)					
Gains/(losses) on investment assets	6	21,027	-	21,027	(19,233)
Net movement in funds		(172,591)	(32,503)	(205,094)	(71,451)
Funds brought forward at 1 April		332,884	99,172	432,056	503,507
Funds carried forward at 31 March		160,293	66,669	226,962	432,056

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 2024

	Notes	31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
Current assets:			
Debtors	7	4,144	1,960
Investments	6(b)	318,407	284,326
Cash at bank and in hand		180,774	367,938
		503,325	654,224
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	8	(276,363)	(222,168)
Net current assets		226,962	432,056
The funds of the charity:			
Unrestricted - undesignated funds	11	145,024	221,227
Unrestricted - designated funds	11	15,270	111,656
		160,293	332,884
Restricted funds	11	66,669	99,172
Total charity funds		226,962	432,056

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.

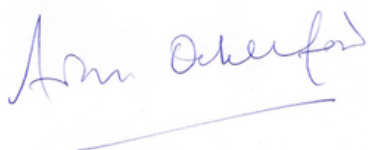
The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

- 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 30 September 2024.

Signed on behalf of the board



Professor Adam Ockelford
Chair

30 September 2024

The Amber Trust - notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024

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 Committees have 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 2024 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 Amber Trust - notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 *continued*

3. Incoming resources

			31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Total
Donations:				
From Trusts and Foundations	39,004	145,500	184,504	272,250
From individual donors	41,985	1,375	43,360	16,789
Corporate	11,000	-	11,000	1,170
Legacy	-	-	-	10
Gift Aid recovery	16,173	-	16,173	5,124
	108,162	146,875	255,037	295,343
Income from fundraising events:				
Major fundraising events	29,058	-	29,058	26,688
Community fundraising	19,594	-	19,594	19,949
	48,651	-	48,651	46,636
Investments	10,640	-	10,640	7,022
Total incoming resources	167,453	146,875	314,328	349,001

The Amber Trust - notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 *continued*

4. Resources expended

a) Analysis of total resources expended

			31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
	Direct activity	Support costs	Total	Total
Charitable activities				
Expenditure on programmes:				
Music Awards	207,137	34,765	241,902	194,336
Little Amber	27,522	24,829	52,351	46,657
AmberPlus	26,635	24,829	51,464	42,478
With Music in Mind	17,664	12,890	30,554	26,607
Workshops	39,752	6,546	46,299	14,662
	318,710	103,859	422,568	324,739
Discretionary	205	-	205	-
Development of resources	8,664	-	8,664	-
	327,579	103,859	431,438	324,739
Cost of raising funds:				
Fundraising and events	25,846	72,662	98,508	70,097
Investment fees	2,526	-	2,526	2,471
Governance costs	7,977	-	7,977	3,913
	363,928	176,521	540,449	401,220

The Amber Trust - notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 *continued*

b) Analysis of total support costs

				31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
	Charitable activities	Cost of raising funds	Governance	Total	Total
Music programmes management	103,859	-	-	103,859	79,334
Fundraising events	-	11,160	-	11,160	5,778
Fundraising administration	-	24,699	-	24,699	14,554
Office Costs/ General Administration	-	52,414	-	52,414	46,430
Office IT costs	-	12,760	-	12,760	5,806
Legal fees/bank charges	-	-	6,019	6,019	2,303
HR/Audit fees	-	-	1,958	1,958	1,610
	103,859	101,034	7,977	212,870	155,815

c) Wages and salaries

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

	31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
Wages and salaries	162,289	122,847
Social security costs	9,426	6,049
Pension costs	4,806	3,686
	176,521	132,582

Average headcount during the year was 6.5 (2023:5).

The Amber Trust - notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 *continued*

5. Directors' fees and expenses

No remuneration was paid to the Directors during the year.

6. Realised and unrealised investment gains and losses

a) Realised gains and losses

	31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
Profit/(loss) on sale of investments	18,564	10,575

b) Unrealised gains and losses

	31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
Market value of investments at beginning of year	284,326	308,983
Less: value of investments sold	(33,470)	(26,206)
Add: cost of investments purchased	65,088	31,356
Adjusted value at beginning of year	315,944	314,133
Market value of investments at end of year	318,408	284,326
Unrealised gain/(loss)	2,464	(29,807)

7. Debtors

	31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
Investment income	4,144	1,960

8. Creditors - amounts falling due within one year

	31.03.24 £	31.03.23 £
Grants approved but unpaid at end of year	276,363	222,168

The Amber Trust - notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 *continued*

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.

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

11. Funds

An analysis of the company's assets at 31 March 2024 by fund is provided in the table below:

	Restricted	Unrestricted		Total
		Undesignated	Designated	
Current assets	167,082	320,331	15,913	503,325
Creditors amounts falling due within one year	(100,413)	(175,307)	(643)	(276,363)
Net assets	66,669	145,024	15,270	226,962

The Amber Trust - notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 *continued*

Movements on restricted and unrestricted designated funds during the year ended 31 March 2024 are analysed in the table below:

	At 1 April 2023	Income	Expenditure	At 31 March 2024 £
Restricted funds source				
MariaMarina Foundation	29,217	70,000	(83,224)	15,993
The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust	31,557	33,000	(58,882)	5,676
Vision Foundation	6,959	1,000	(7,959)	-
The de Lazslo Foundation	759	4,000	(2,288)	2,471
The Linbury Trust	30,182	-	(22,874)	7,308
Individual Donor	498	1,375	(858)	1,015
CMS Social Impact Fund	-	500	(500)	-
Global's Make Some Noise	-	5,000	(449)	4,551
Arts Council England via RNIB	-	6,000	(1,844)	4,156
Garfield Weston Foundation	-	25,000	-	25,000
Florence Nightingale Aid in Sickness Trust	-	1,000	(500)	500
	99,172	146,875	(179,378)	66,669
Designated funds source				
The Carmen Butler-Chateris CT	4,463	-	(4,463)	-
Designated funds 30k for new workshops scheme	21,574	-	(21,574)	-
The Thomas J Horne Memorial Trust	4,119	5,500	(4,119)	5,500
The JK Foundation	1,500	-	(1,500)	-
Trustees meeting 16.05.23 approved £50K designated funds for AmberPlus	50,000	-	(50,000)	-
Trustees meeting 16.05.23 approved £30k designated funds for Little Amber	30,000	-	(20,230)	9,770
	111,656	5,500	(101,887)	15,270

The Amber Trust - notes to the financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2024 *continued*

Notes to the Restricted funds:

The awards from the MariaMarina Foundation are being used to fund the development of the charity's infrastructure, Music Awards and Little Amber programmes.

Funds from The Julia and Hans Rausing Trust are being used to fund The Julia and Hans Rausing Scholarships and Music Awards.

The award from Vision Foundation was used to fund the workshops at Joseph Clarke School.

The funds from The de Laszlo Foundation are being used to fund 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 Music Awards.

The fund from Global's Make Some Noise is being used to fund the charity's impact and evaluation.

The fund from Arts Council via the Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) is being used towards a teacher directory development project.

The grant from the Garfield Weston Foundation will be used towards Little Amber and AmberPlus Programmes.

The award from the Florence Nightingale Aid in Sickness Trust is being used to co-fund two students' musical instruments.

Notes to the Designated funds:

The legacy grant from the Carmen Butler-Charteris Charitable Trust has been designated by the trustees to fund the AmberPlus programme.

The fund of £30k was designated to the 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.

The Trustees meeting on 16.05.23 approved £50k of designated funds for the AmberPlus scheme and £30k of 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, Julia Walport.
Directors and Trustees	Adam Ockelford (Chair), Angelica Bomford, Fiona Costa, Veronica Franklin Gould, Stephen Hough (Resigned on 02/10/2023), Victoria Oruwari, Chun Wai Shum, Simon Vincent, Will Walker-Arnott (Resigned on 31/12/2023).
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



The Amber Trust

64a Princes Way, London, SW19 6JF

Registered Charity No: 1050503

Company No: 03117803



@TheAmberTrust

Printing costs kindly sponsored by
www.scmdirect.com

sc
m | **DIRECT**
for smart investors


MONEY SHE
smart women invest