

**Registered number: 03166037**

**Charity number: 1062729**

# **New Writing North**

**(A company limited by guarantee)**

## **Annual report**

**Year ended 31 March 2024**

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

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# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Reference and administrative details Year ended 31 March 2024

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**Trustees**

M Antoniou (appointed 4 June 2024)  
L Bird (appointed 11 September 2024)  
I Crow (appointed 7 June 2023)  
H Dalby, Vice Chair (appointed 11 September 2024)  
A Devine, Treasurer (resigned 7 June 2023)  
M Dobson (resigned 6 December 2023)  
M Forster (appointed 7 June 2023)  
C Greenwood Dower (appointed 7 June 2023)  
C Harington  
T Hodgkinson (appointed 4 June 2024)  
S Lloyd  
C Murphy, Vice Chair (resigned 11 September 2024)  
N Orleans-Amissah (resigned 8 September 2024)  
D Roche, Chair (resigned 11 September 2024)  
D Stone  
K Tserkezie (resigned 23 January 2024)  
H Vidal (appointed 6 December 2023)  
N Warwick, Chair (appointed 4 June 2024)  
G Wright, Treasurer (appointed 7 June 2023)

**Company registered number** 03166037

**Charity registered number** 1062729

**Registered office** 120 Squires Building Northumbria University  
Sandyford Road  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 8ST

**Company secretary** Fiona Melvin

**Chief executive officer** Claire Malcolm

**Independent auditor** UNW LLP  
Chartered Accountants  
Citygate  
St James' Boulevard  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE1 4JE

**Bankers** Lloyds  
102 Grey Street  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE99 1SL

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Trustees' report

Year ended 31 March 2024

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The trustees present their annual report together with the audited financial statements of the charitable company for the 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024. The annual report serves the purposes of both a trustees' report and a directors' report under company law. The trustees confirm that the annual report and financial statements of the charitable company comply with the current statutory requirements, the requirements of the charitable company's governing document and the provisions of the Statement of Recommended Practice (SORP) applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (effective 1 January 2019).

Since the charitable company qualifies as small under section 382 of the Companies Act 2006, the strategic report required of medium and large companies under the Companies Act 2006 (Strategic Report and Directors' Report) Regulations 2013 has been omitted.

### Objectives and activities

New Writing North is a powerhouse of new writing, and an engine for the development of talented writers in the North of England.

We lead the development of literature and writing in the North through a wide range of activities that support individuals and communities to engage with creative reading and writing for professional development and for pleasure and wellbeing.

We develop new writers through awards and professional development, enabling many writers to begin and sustain professional writing careers, and we support established writers through commissions and networking opportunities, sustaining viable careers for a wide range of writers. Our alumni and networks include award-winning writers, Oscar-nominated screenwriters, and many people who have gone on to build successful careers in the creative industries.

Our annual programme includes the management of major literary prizes and awards, open-access and targeted talent development programmes, the production of festivals and events, international and translation projects, our substantial and wide-ranging young writers programme, deep rooted work within communities, writing-for-wellbeing activities and work with the NHS, and the commissioning of new writing for publication, performance, and audio.

We are an organisation built on the structure of working in partnership and are proud to have a wide range of partners, supporters, funders and stakeholders that enable our work.

### Vision

We believe that literature is a powerful tool for social change and that it can have a positive influence on many areas of society, supporting wellbeing and bringing people together through shared experiences and dialogue. We aim to be a beacon for literature in the North, to enable access for all, and to lead the region as a centre of excellence for writing.

### Mission

We recognise that talent is everywhere, but opportunities are not.

Our mission is to find and enable talented writers from all backgrounds, and to raise the voices of those whose lived experiences and creative ideas are not yet heard in the mainstream.

We use reading and writing to bring people together to deepen mutual understanding and to encourage the positive impact that engagement with literature can have on individuals and for societal wellbeing.

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Objectives and activities (continued)

#### Values

We are relationship builders. Whether working one-to-one with a writer or in partnership with a large institution, relationships are our greatest asset. We pride ourselves on being good partners. We take a human-centred approach and work with everyone in a way that meets their individual needs.

We are a learning organisation. We like learning both as individuals and as a team. We'll learn from our experiences, listen, respond, and adapt. We will be candid with each other and our partners, and be courageous in holding each other to account to improve what we do.

Our creativity and leadership go together. We are creatively restless and energised by new ideas, and are not afraid to be bold and to strike ahead of the pack. We see ourselves as creatives and leaders, and we encourage all those that work with us to feel the same.

We work transparently and fairly, building trust and delivering on our promises. We recognise that to achieve our mission we may need to take risks, be pre-disposed to action and innovation and, if necessary, be confident to disrupt the systems that have perpetuated inequality and inaction.

#### Strategic approach

From our base in Newcastle upon Tyne, we connect writers and organisations to each other across the North and nationally and internationally. We have a Theory of Change for our work that directs our work to achieve the most impact for those involved. We prioritise work with people and communities who are traditionally not able to engage with arts and culture – whether that be due to social, educational and geographical barriers, or socio-economic realities.

We prioritise new ways of working, and adapt and develop our programmes in response to user interaction. Many areas of our work are co-created with participants.

Our strategy is to deliver work in the following ways:

**Universal Offers:** Open access training, skills and talent development opportunities, awards programmes, digital content, advice and guidance and young writers' activity, benefitting and open to everyone in the North. This ensures that most of our output is free to access and open to all. Within our universal offers, effort is exerted to encourage participation from groups who are not yet well represented within our work.

**Partner Places:** We have identified priority places where we will deepen existing work and build new relationships, building capacity and skills and investing in regular developmental activity.

**Place Based:** Deeply embedded long-term projects such as festivals, young people's programmes, community residencies, skills development activity, and deeper partnership development, which require direct and detailed delivery and which focus investment and developments in our home region of the North East (Gateshead, Newcastle, Durham, Northumberland, North and South Tyneside).

**Networks:** We develop and host many creative networks, both across the North and nationally. Our strategy is to grow and strengthen networks across our work with writers, libraries, organisations, broadcasters, researchers, and the publishing industry, to 'power up' what can be achieved in the North and to give people broader access to opportunities. Some networks we will run directly, others we will support by adding value and empowering others.

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Objectives and activities (continued)

#### Activities undertaken to achieve objectives

This year, we have continued to build our work in the field of audio and committed to new developments in the area of screen. To support these areas of work we have employed Lucie McNeil as our Audio Development Producer and Roxy McKenna as our Screen Development Producer. Both women have brought high-level skills and experience to the organisation, which has enabled significant development across the year.

Partnerships play a key role in New Writing North's business model and creative success. This year, we grew existing work and welcomed new partners into our work. We renewed our significant partnership agreement with Northumbria University, which contributes to a range of joint activities including teaching and the sponsorship of the Northern Writers' Awards, our flagship programme, which celebrated 25 years of achievement in 2024. We are working closely with Northumbria University on our capital ambitions as a key partner, and this close work has deepened our relationship.

This year we began work with Newcastle University, with whom we signed a new agreement to support the Gordon Burn Prize, our international book prize. The prize came home to Newcastle, Burn's birthplace, for a stellar event in spring that profiled writers from around the world. We were also delighted to continue our work with Durham University around the support of Durham Book Festival, a very positive partnership that grows every year.

We also have a significant and very valuable partnership with Hachette UK, with whom we shared office space during the year. We work closely on the delivery of the MA in Publishing that we run with Hachette and Northumbria University. This innovative shared model of work benefits a new generation of young publishers each year, and helps to develop the Hachette workforce in the North East.

Our work with Channel 4 continues to grow across the North of England demonstrating the strong networks that New Writing North has across the region.

New Writing North has been working on capital development plans since before the pandemic, and this year saw some significant steps forward with the project which have drawn our key stakeholders, the North East Combined Authority, Newcastle City Council, and Northumbria University, together to pledge support to hopefully lever resources from central government to greenlight the project. We are grateful to all of our stakeholders for their support this year, especially Mayor Kim McGuinness, who continues to champion the project regionally and nationally. It has been gratifying, in recent months, to see national press coverage of the project and to feel that this project that we have been incubating for a number of years has so much support and so much interest from the public.

The New Writing North team continue to exert leadership with the arts and culture sector through serving on boards. Tess Denman-Cleaver has joined the board of Book Works, Fiona Melvin has joined the board of Screen Yorkshire, Anna Disley is Chair of Newcastle's Cultural Education Partnership, Glow, which delivers access to culture for 0–25 year olds, and a board member of Threads in the Ground, a climate hope organisation, and Living Archive, a creative digital start-up. Claire Malcolm has joined the national council of Creative UK, representing literature and the North of England on this body that seeks to influence government policy around the creative industries. She also serves as a trustee for the Community Foundation for Tyne and Wear, and the North East Cultural Partnership. Rebecca Wilkie has joined the steering group of the Durham Energy Institute.

# **New Writing North**

(A company limited by guarantee)

## **Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024**

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### **Objectives and activities (continued)**

#### **Significant Creative Developments**

##### **Audio Development and Audio Books Production**

In March, New Writing North launched the Sounds Good audio brand as an umbrella to support our audio development (podcast courses, audiobooks, audio narrative drama storytelling) at New Writing North. This year, we have supported 70 writers and researchers to upskill in non-fiction and narrative drama, and podcast production.

Our first course, Getting Started in Podcasts, supported 28 writers to develop ideas and 'From the Page to the Podcast', co-created with award-winning podcast producer Lisa Mainwaring, supported 14 participants from Tyneside, Manchester, Blackpool, Otley and Berwick. We went on to host three masterclasses with award-winning writer and producer Ella Watts, which were attended by 12 people.

With funding from Creative UK via the North of Tyne Combined Authority, we were able to develop new podcast content, supporting nine writers (Becky Howell, Georgia Conlon, Liam James, Amanda Drago, Mark Mackenzie, Suzanne Hyde, Katie Houser, Cinzia Hardy, James Routledge and Sarah Davy) with mentoring support and a bursary of £300. Two of the writers (Becky Howell and Georgina Conlon) went on to receive Emerging Creative Associate funding from New Writing North to further develop their audio ventures.

During the year, we developed a format for training projects that support academic researchers to share their work via podcasts. Work in this area included working with six anthropologist researchers from Durham University's Energy Institute to create the series What Does the Future Hold?, which was launched during Durham Book Festival.

Further funding from Creative UK via the North of Tyne Combined Authority enabled us to run the Sounds Good Audio Stories development programme, which is supporting six writers (Alison Kay, Alys Cummings, Sean McKenna, Hannah Rickman Peddie, Libby Harris and Susannah Ronnie) with bursaries of £2,500 each to develop new audio storytelling projects. This project is produced by Mark Nixon.

This year has seen us develop the groundwork to become an audio book production facility with Northumbria University. We have worked closely with Hachette UK to establish high quality facilities and processes led by Lucie McNeil, and were awarded an initial contract from the publisher to produce 24 audio books over the first year. With support from Creative UK, we were able to refurbish and open an audio studio. Production work began in August 2024, with the studios formally launched in November. This exciting development brings audio book production to the North East of England, and will provide high quality work for local actors.

##### **Screen Development**

Screenwriting development activity began in October 2023 with the recruitment of an 'in-house' Screen Development Producer, Roxy McKenna. The ambition of this role and programme of activity was to create an exciting, diverse and industry-ready slate of ideas and talent from the North of England, and then form a pipeline for that talent to reach key industry decision makers.

The programme aims to level the playing field for talented writers who may not yet be industry connected or have access to high-level development. The programme elevates their potential by honing their craft skills, developing their understanding of the commissioning landscape, and priming their ideas for further development. The aim is to see more stories from the North on national screens and more Northern writers building meaningful careers in film and television.

We kickstarted this ambition by creating the ADAPT programme, and by working on and opening a development slate of projects.

Tapping into our extensive networks, ADAPT invited writers from non-screen backgrounds (e.g. playwrights,

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Objectives and activities (continued)

poets, novelists, stand-ups, journalists) to get their existing work/IP, story worlds or characters into a pitch-ready format for further development as projects for film or television.

We recruited four playwrights and one novelist to adapt their work for the screen by supporting them to develop treatments, pitch decks and pilot scripts. We then introduced the projects to leading independent production companies. We are mid-way through this programme, and one project has been picked up for further development with leading production company Red. We also have work in consideration with the production companies Sister, Merman, Tiger Aspect, FilmNation, and many more.

The ADAPT participants, Tamsin Rees, Rebecca Glendenning-Laycock, Conway McDermott, Khatijah Balu and Alex Oates were commissioned in December. The development programme kicked off in February with inspiring talks from leading BAFTA- and Oscar-nominated screenwriters Hossein Amini and Rebecca Lenkiewicz, as well as a talk from Alistair Owen, author of *The Art of Adaptation*. These webinars were followed by a series of four practical workshops in March with Beth McCann of Scriptwriting North, who dived into the nuts and bolts of adapting work for the screen. The workshops were open to the ten longlisted writers, as well as the commissioned writers on ADAPT, extending the impact of the programme. The webinars were open to all and attracted a further 50 attendees.

*"The ADAPT programme has been fundamental in developing myself as a writer for television as well as progressing my career... I have predominantly worked in theatre and writing scripts for the stage, but this programme has given me the confidence in my ability to write for screen and has introduced me to a whole new form and career direction. It has been a challenging and nourishing nine months and I would thoroughly recommend it."* Tamsin Rees, ADAPT participant

Additionally, we began development with another five screenwriters to develop bold original comedy and drama. We mirrored industry in our development processes, taking nascent ideas and developing them to a point where they can go into further funded development with an established production company. These writers have also benefited from development support from leading writers and story editors, including Jeremy Dyson, Philip Shelley and Inez Gordon. The writers on the development slate are Lee Armstrong, Harry May-Bedell, Meghan Doyle, Adam Bennett-Lea and JD Stewart.

*"New Writing North has been so important to my development as a writer. It's not just the paid opportunities, creative support or industry access that has been so helpful, but also motivational emails encouraging me to "just keep going"... and to keep writing, too."* Lee Armstrong, Writer

In March, we held our first Screenwriting Surgeries, which supported six writers via free, one-to-one meetings where writers discussed a screenwriting project they are working on, talked about available funding and development support, and were able to learn more about developing a career as a screenwriter.

During 2024/25, we will be working with Film4 on a Genre Feature Lab, which will develop three feature films with leading producer mentors Ivana Mackinnon and Emily Leo, and a Screenwriting Weekender festival to further develop the skills and industry know-how of 150 writers.

### Leeds Literature Consultancy

We were commissioned by Leeds City Council to explore the literary infrastructure of the city and to make recommendations of how the ecology for reading and writing could be developed in the city. A team from New Writing North, supported by researcher Sarah France, undertook the work, which involved consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, writers and creatives. The report was delivered in June and is now available via the Leeds City Council website. Leeds remains a strong city for literature with the development of the National Poetry Centre, and the British Library North development.



# **New Writing North**

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## **Trustees' report (continued)** **Year ended 31 March 2024**

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### **Objectives and activities (continued)**

#### **Building Audiences in Newcastle**

As we progress our capital project plans, we are building up our public programme in Newcastle upon Tyne and across the North East. We now produce a seasonal brochure giving details of all our activities and our events programme three times a year, which is widely distributed. We are now programming seasonal literary events in Newcastle and this year have made good progress on audience development in this area. We are also reaching new audiences, with 60 per cent of respondents to our events surveyed in April telling us that they had never been to a New Writing North event before. We also met several people at events who had never been to any literary event before. There is more work for us to do to continue to find and develop new audiences, but this has felt like a promising start.

This year, our programme of events included a sold-out appearance to 440 people at Northern Stage from historian Mary Beard, and events at the Biscuit Factory with authors including Francis Spufford and Jennifer Saint. In November, we worked in partnership with English PEN to host the PEN HG Wells Lecture at the Common Rooms in Newcastle. Acclaimed writer Monica Ali presented a specially commissioned essay exploring the threat that AI may pose to novelists and creatives in the future. Her piece was featured in the Guardian. In total, the Newcastle events programmed reached 757 people.

#### **Newcastle Hospitals Trust Residency**

We worked in partnership with Newcastle Hospitals Charity to run a writer-in-residence programme for Newcastle Hospitals staff. Writer in residence, Laura Lindow, hosted writing workshops and drop-in sessions, in-person and online, which provided staff with creative writing skills and editorial support across Newcastle Hospitals.

There were also courses on writing poetry, short stories and fantasy, and one-to-one writing surgeries with NHS staff. The resulting staff writings were published in an anthology, *After the Applause*. Creative results from the project can also be seen on poster sites in four Metro stations: Hebburn, Wallsend, West Jesmond and Longbenton.

Staff from Newcastle Hospitals wrote about the joy and frustration of their professional lives; their personal experience of illness and being a carer; and the value of the NHS. We heard from a consultant in infectious diseases who treated some of the first UK Covid cases; a clinical perfusionist; and a public health consultant who experienced becoming a caregiver when her son developed a chronic illness and complex medical needs. Some staff have continued to write, and many report the positive impact the project had on their wellbeing. Being able to express their thoughts, feelings and ideas, and share them with peers, is something our NHS staff do not make time for.

#### **Public benefit**

As our programmes of work demonstrate, we are driven by the desire to improve access to creative opportunities and good writing for everyone that we work with. All our major talent development programmes, skills-building activities, awards and community engagement projects are free to participate in and open to all.

Where ticket prices or conference fees are charged, these payments contribute directly to the cost of delivering the event. When ticket prices are charged the organisation always offers reduced ticket prices for the elderly, disabled people, the unemployed and those on a low wage.

Free tickets for carers are offered where this is in line with the policies of the host venue. We routinely offer free and reduced-cost bursary places for paid courses, conferences, and training events for those on very low levels of income or benefits.

All work with young people is free to access and for many programmes we provide bursaries, travel costs, meals and other pastoral and practical support to enable those that need it. We also provide all materials needed to

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Objectives and activities (continued)

participate in the activities.

All talent and professional development programmes for writers are free to enter and are open to all in the North. We operate digital submission processes that do not require people to print and post work. We continue to make available both original digital content and captured content from live events, giving people access to events both virtually and after the fact.

### Achievements and performance

Across the year, we awarded 26 Northern Writers' Awards, the David Cohen Prize, and the Gordon Burn Prize, and offered 41 commissions to writers across our programmes. We offered 94 commissions and bursaries across our Writing and Publishing Skills Hub and engagement programmes. We are proud to provide such value to the writing sector and to the many individuals who have received support.

This year we engaged with and paid 356 writers and creatives, an increase of 21 per cent on 2022/23 (295). We spent £110,300 on awards and prizes, £99,257 on commissions and residencies, and £309,678 on fees for programme delivery. In total, £567,523 was paid to writers and creatives, an increase of 65 per cent on 2022/23 (£343,664). This was broken down as follows: £207,581 paid to 75 writers and creatives across our Young Writers' and Communities programme; £153,443 paid to 145 writers and creatives across our Writing and Publishing Skills Hub and engagement programmes; £135,263 paid to 101 writers and creatives across our talent development programmes; and £71,055 paid to 88 writers and creatives across our reader engagement activities.

### Fundraising activities

New Writing North continues to develop and produce programmes of work that meets the objectives of private and public funders and supporters. The organisation benefits from a wide body of different partnerships and relationships that enable our work.

Arts Council England remain our core funder, and this year we received £428,234 from them as part of our National Portfolio Organisation grant, an uplift on the previous year. Arts Council England increased our grant this year to support our organisational development as we head into capital development.

Major private donors for our project work include Amazon UK, Charlotte Aitken Trust, Community Foundation for Tyne and Wear, County Durham Community Foundation, John S Cohen Foundation, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, Kavli Trust, Sir James Knott Trust, Joseph Rowntree Foundation, Newcastle Hospitals Charity, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, the National Foundation for Youth Music, and The Book Trade Charity.

Public funding remains a very important area of resource for the organisation. This year we were in receipt of funds to support work from: Durham County Council, the North of Tyne Combined Authority, North East Screen, South Tyneside Council, Creative UK and Channel 4. Our partnership work with the university sector enabled partnership funding from Northumbria University, Newcastle University, Durham University and the University of York.

Sponsorship and support from commercial partners saw us receive welcome support for projects and programme work from Hachette UK, Hachette Children's Group, The North Literary Agency and Swinburn Maddison.

Individual giving is a relatively new area of income for New Writing North. This year, a significant donation was received from the actor and philanthropist Michael Sheen, to support A Writing Chance. Two writers, Benjamin Myers and Andrew McMillan, who were successful former winners of the Northern Writers' Awards, have

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Achievements and performance (continued)

donated funds to support new writers through the awards. Michael Chaplin and family continue to support the Sid Chaplin Award for working-class writers.

### Factors relevant to achieve objectives

At the heart of our business model, and the main way that we achieve our objectives and widen and deepen the impact of our work, is our relationships with collaborators, funders and supporters. We achieve regional, national and international funding for our work, and deeply value the funders and partners that we have long-term relationships with. Our team is skilled and are experts in their field, and our strong leadership ensures that our work is abreast of sector and societal developments.

### Summary of the main achievements during the year

#### Skills and Engagement

Our Writing and Publishing Skills Hub offers a range of courses, events, and development and volunteering programmes in the North East and online. Designed to build skills and provide access to the creative industries, we support writers at all stages of their career, as well as freelancers and small businesses, and young people interested in creative careers. Grace Keane, Senior Programme Manager for Skills and Engagement, leads this work, supported by Programme Manager Amy Robson and Programme Assistant Margot Miltenberger.

#### **Careers in Publishing Roadshows with Hachette**

We partnered with Hachette UK to deliver Careers in Publishing Roadshows to 13 schools in Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland. Hachette publishing staff and Hachette author Daniel Tawse travelled to each school for a live event profiling careers in writing and publishing. Participating schools also received a digital masterclass with Hachette, where editors, publicists, designers and rights executives provided students with insights into a day in the life of their specific roles. Each school also received a selection of Hachette books and accompanying resources as part of New Writing North's Balance the Books diversity reading scheme. In February and March 2024, over 1,200 students attended a live Careers in Publishing event at their school.

*"The opportunity to actually meet those working in the industry was really inspiring for the students. It allowed them to connect their love for reading and books with practical career choices they could make."* Teacher, George Stephenson High School

#### **Creative Associates**

This year, we supported 14 writers and artists to create new work under the Creative Associate and Young Creative Associates programme. We invested £34,000 into bursaries for new creative projects, in addition to mentoring for each associate. Creative Associates in 2023/24 were Arlen Pettitt, Lucy Farfort, Peter Groom, Steph Lyttle and Threads in the Ground Limited. Our Young Creative Associates were Caleb Carter, Hazel Atkinson, Hazel Soper, Ilisha Thiru Purcell, Kym Deyn, Lily Tibbits, Maud Webster and Oisín McKenna.

Kym Deyn was supported to set up The Braag Press. They publish poetry and speculative fiction, with an interest in under-represented writers from the North. The Braag has since published three pamphlets and a range of micro chapbooks, with more titles to publish in 2024/25. Ilisha Thiru Purcell was supported to develop her poetry and received mentoring from Shash Trevett. Following her associateship, she was selected onto the Incubator Poets of Colour programme to further develop the work. The poems will be published in her first pamphlet in 2025.

#### **First Edition work placements**

With support from The Book Trade Charity, we launched First Edition work placements in the publishing industry. We partnered with regional and national publishers and independent bookshops to facilitate five-day, paid work placements for 18–25 year olds. Placements took place in person, online and hybrid, and could be completed alongside studying or work. Ten young people participated with the following literary partners: 404 Ink, Collected

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Achievements and performance (continued)

Books, the Gordon Burn Prize, Hachette UK, Inpress Books, Outspoken Press, the Poetry Book Society, Prototype Publishing and The Braag CIC. One participant said of the experience:

*"The placement definitely solidified the fact that I want to work in publishing, specifically as a marketer. It gave me experience that will help me find other opportunities in the future. I learnt a lot, grew in confidence, and felt like I genuinely helped out during my time with Inpress – it was amazing."*

### Start Writing in Libraries

This year, we ran seven Start Writing courses in libraries in Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland. Start Writing is a six-week introductory writing course, led by a range of professional writers. Activities took place in Blyth, Prudhoe, Whitley Bay, Morpeth, Wooler, West End Library and Community Hub, and with Newcastle Hospitals Trust.

### North East Novelists

In September 2023, we set up North East Novelists. The aim was to create a professional development and networking group that provided business support and high-level teaching for novelists in the region. From September 2023, the group met twice a month, with one session a month facilitated by an expert writer.

Experience in the group ranges from authors who have published three or more books, authors whose debuts were publishing in 2024/25, to writers agented and currently out on submission. The group includes: H F Askwith, author of *A Dark Inheritance* (Penguin), Naomi Kelsey, author of *The Burnings* (HarperCollins), Eirinie Lapidaki, author of *The Wives of Halcyon* (Legend Press), Charles Fernyhough, author of various titles, Hazel Atkinson, author of *Dark Harvest* (Bolinda Audio), Lucy Rose, author of *The Lamb* (forthcoming 2025, Orion), Lauren Wilson, author of *The Goldens* (forthcoming 2025, HarperCollins), Seth Insua, author of *Human, Animal* (forthcoming 2025, Verve Books), Rebecca Philipson, author of *How to Get Away With Murder* (forthcoming 2026, Transworld) and Anca Demeter, represented by Andrew Nurnberg Associates International Ltd.

### Festival and Events

New Writing North's festivals and events programme connects readers in the North East with some of the best books and writers published today. It celebrates great fiction, poetry and non-fiction, and provides a space to explore ideas and to discuss the issues affecting the world and region. Durham Book Festival is a flagship event that takes place each October. Alongside this, we produce a growing programme of literature activity in Newcastle upon Tyne, which includes the annual announcement of the Gordon Burn Prize in March. This work is delivered by Rebecca Wilkie, Senior Manager for Festivals and Events and the director of Durham Book Festival, with the support of Programme Manager, Helena Davidson.

Durham Book Festival 2023 took place 13–15 October in and around the Gala Theatre in Durham. Headline events included appearances from Grace Dent, Jeanette Winterson, Zaffar Kunial and Janina Ramirez. The festival closed with a specially commissioned dramatic reading from Durham author Benjamin Myers' novel, *Cuddy* – his literary love-letter to County Durham. The performance was in partnership with Live Theatre and starred actor Toby Jones with local actor Sam Neale. The reading was accompanied by music from The Shining Levels. It was a memorable and moving finale to the festival and was performed to a packed Gala Theatre.

The festival supported a group of ten young people (aged between 18 and 25) from County Durham via our Turn up for the Books young programmers' scheme, which was funded by the County Durham Community Foundation. They took part in a series of masterclasses with literature industry professionals, including with The Guardian's Lucy Knight, and produced their own event at the festival.

The festival reached 3,316 people, with nearly 40 per cent of speakers coming from under-represented backgrounds. As part of our commitment to making the festival as accessible as possible, all events from Gala Durham were live-streamed and live captioned. Ninety-seven per cent of festival attendees rated their experience at the festival positively; 94 per cent felt the event was inclusive and welcoming; and 100 per cent felt the festival was something Durham County Council should continue to support. Durham Book Festival is a

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Achievements and performance (continued)

Durham County Council festival produced by New Writing North, with support from Durham University and Arts Council England. In 2023, the festival received corporate sponsorship from Swinburne Maddison and Greggs.

*"I was delighted to be able to live-stream, as my disability prevents me attending in person."*

*"It's a local treasure and I wish it many more glorious years in future!"* Audience members.

### Gordon Burn Prize 2024

The Gordon Burn Prize recognises and celebrates fiction and non-fiction books that are fearless in their ambition and execution, which push boundaries, cross genres and challenge readers' expectations. The announcement of the 2024 prize took place on 7 March at Northern Stage in Newcastle upon Tyne and was won by American author Kathryn Scanlan for her book, *Kick the Latch* (Daunt Books). Kathryn received a prize of £10,000 and a writing residency at Gordon Burn's cottage in the Scottish Borders. The judging panel was chaired by journalist, screenwriter and memoirist, Terri White, and was made up of writers Charlie Brinkhurst-Cuff, Sheena Patel and Andrew Hankinson.

The Gordon Burn Prize is sponsored by Newcastle University, whose creative writing students have the opportunity to shadow-read the shortlisted books, attend seminars led by New Writing North about prize culture, and to attend the ceremony. Faber and Faber and the Gordon Burn Trust are also partners in the prize.

### Talent Development

We invest in writers in the North who are developing new writing towards publication and broadcast. Our talent development activities encompass mentoring, peer networking, and relationship-building to create opportunities. Our programmes promote wellbeing and expertise development, driven by a commitment to addressing under-representation and creating opportunities in areas underserved by the arts. We set out to support writers at all career stages and devise bespoke programmes to help them achieve their goals. This area of work is led by Will Mackie, Senior Programme Manager (Talent Development) who was this year supported by Emily Wright (Programme Assistant), Hana Sandhu (Programme Manager) and Shaun Wilson (via a Northern Bridge Placement).

### A Writing Chance #2

This year, we launched the second iteration of this national talent programme to support new working-class and other under-represented writers to enter the professional writing industries. The programme completed its fundraising drive and, by the point of launching, had generated grants, donations and partnerships worth over £400K from Michael Sheen, the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, the Charlotte Aitkin Trust, Northumbria University, Bath Spa University, Faber and Faber, Audible, Substack and the Daily Mirror.

Applications opened in November and we received 1,042 applications, an increase of 40 per cent from the first year of the programme. A promotional video from our supporter and funder Michael Sheen, explaining the background of the programme and encouraging applications, received 249.7k views across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Sixteen writers were selected for the programme, and they hail from across the UK.

On 14 March, we staged a high-profile main stage event at the London Book Fair with Michael Sheen, Audible, Northumbria University and Substack to profile the project within the books industry.

In May, the programme began with a week for all 16 participants at the Arvon creative retreat The Hirst in Shropshire. Each participant has a mentor drawn from the programme's partner organisations and receives pastoral mentoring from New Writing North. They will also each receive bursaries of £2,000. The participants will work for a year with their mentors to progress their work, which will be showcased at the end of the programme.

Alongside the development of the new writers, this iteration of A Writing Chance also has other goals: the creation of a new kitemark-style scheme for creating better access to writing opportunities, and the launch of a

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Achievements and performance (continued)

new home for working-class writers, which will be hosted online. We have appointed the author and journalist Richard Benson to be Editor-in-Chief of this new area of work. The aim will be to create a new literary space for working-class voices and ideas.

#### Channel 4 Writing for Television Awards and the Northern Talent Network

Our three Channel 4 award winners were announced on 21 September 2023 at the Biscuit Factory in Newcastle, at an event run in partnership with North East Screen. The three winners selected were Harriet Ghost (£3,000 award, a placement with production company Rollem, and mentoring from writer Kat Rose-Martin); Joe McNally (£3,000 award, a placement with Bonafide production company, and mentoring from writer Tony Schumacher); and Liz Redwood (£3,000 award, a placement with Lime Pictures and mentoring from producer Kathleen Beedles).

Eight screenwriters joined our Script Development Group, with each receiving a £500 bursary, and access to group meetings, workshops and individual script mentoring from professionals. Script development group members during the year were: Frank Berry, Connie Hughes, Amy Lever, Sophie Marie, Sarah Murray, Ellie Silver, Megan Watson and Amber Hafren.

Through our Northern Talent Network, we programmed professional development events in person in Hartlepool and Newcastle, and online. Overall, 221 writers benefitted from screen-based activity through these programmes.

Joe McNally (Channel 4 winner) received a script commission in June 2024 for his pilot episode. *"Tony Schumacher's mentoring has been brilliant. He has given me some really great insights into the industry and screenwriting... The mentoring part of the prize is a real help with boosting confidence when trying to enter the TV world."*

#### Northern Writers' Awards

The 25th anniversary edition of the Northern Writers' Awards were awarded at an event at Northumbria University on 20 June 2023. The event was hosted by Daljit Nagra and featured awards alumni such as Okechukwu Nzelu and Amelia Loulli. The following awards were made:

- Hachette Children's Novel Awards: Rachel Rowlands and Rachel Pattinson. Each writer received £3,000 and long-term mentoring and development from Hachette Children's Group
- Northern Writers' Awards for Fiction: Emma Morgan (£2,000) and Alison Armstrong (£3,000)
- Northern Writers' Awards for Poetry: Liam Bates (£2,500) and Holly Hopkins (£2,500)
- Northern Debut Award for Memoir: Yvonne Reddick (£2,000 and mentoring from Helen Mort)
- Northern Debut Award for Young Adult Fiction: Bridget Hamilton (£2,000)
- Northern Debut Award for Fiction: Anton Rose (£2,000 and mentoring from Sarah Butler)
- Northern Debut Award for Poetry: Carson Wolf (£2,000 and mentoring from Fiona Benson)
- Northern Debut Awards Out-Spoken Press Programme: Alex Mephram and Jane Thomas (£2,000 and mentoring from Anthony Anaxagorou)
- Northumbria University Award: Helen Parker (£2,000)
- Sid Chaplin Award: Louise Powell (£2,000) and Candi Martin (£5,000)
- Finchale Award: Sarah Davy (£1,000)
- Northern Promise Awards: Katja Kaine and Farzana Ghani (TLC Read and £500)
- Word Factory Apprentice Award: Lauren Vevers (£1,000 plus mentoring from Jessie Greengrass)
- Arvon Award: Laura McDonagh
- TLC Free Reads Awards: Jo Flynn, Georgie Evans

The awards see many writers achieve professional progress and publication. Carson Wolfe (who has completed a draft of her collection, Firebath, which is being considered by Cape) wrote: *"I just wanted to thank you for the opportunity to develop my practice, it's been life-changing for me. That I got to work with my poetry hero [Fiona*

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Achievements and performance (continued)

*Benson] means everything. I'm so much braver as a writer because of it. I'm now working on my second collection, and a novel!"*

Katja Kaine secured an agent and a six-figure two-book deal for her YA novels:  
*"I just felt like there was a powerful organisation of caring people, and they had my back."*

The 2024 Awards opened with a launch roadshow that took place on 22 November, with speakers including Fritha Saunders (Footnote Press), former winner Tawseef Khan, and Maddy Belton (Madeline Milburn Associates). We hosted a roadshow with Hachette Children's Group in Newcastle on 28 November 2023 at the Tyneside cinema. This event featured HCG staff, a segment with previous winner James Harries, and opportunities for networking. On 30 January 2024, we ran a fiction-focused roadshow in Stockton-on-Tees, featuring former winners. This event included agent Imogen Morrell and writers Sarah Davy and Carmen Marcus.

We launched the Tempest Prize with a roadshow in Barnsley in March, featuring award founder and sponsor, Andrew McMillan, Prototype Press, and writer Sarah Brooks.

Six writers went on Writing Weekends at Lockhaugh Farm in Rowland's Gill (two groups of three) in September and November 2023.

Awards partners this year were: Northumbria University, Channel 4, Hachette UK, University of York, Newcastle University, Arvon, TLC, Oneworld, Society of Authors, The North, Saraband, Bonafide, Lime, Rollem, Out-Spoken Press, Lockhaugh Farm, ALCS, and The Word Factory

There were 363 beneficiaries at events, roadshows and workshops, and 22 adults received awards.

### The NorthBound Book Award

The NorthBound Book Award was run in partnership with the University of York and Saraband. It opened in August 2023 and closed in October 2023. The award was presented in March 2024. The award was judged by Shaun Wilson (representing New Writing North as part of a Northern Bridge Placement), Sara Hunt (Saraband), Maya Caspari (University of York) and Adam Farrer. We collaborated with the University of York to host an awards ceremony on campus, attended by 51 people.

The winner of the award was Rozie Kelly for her novel *Kingfisher*. Rozie received £5,000 and her novel will be published by Saraband. At the time of her award, Rozie said: *"Winning the Northbound Award is such a gift, and feels like the beginning of something very exciting."*

### David Cohen Prize

The 2023 David Cohen Prize for Literature (£40,000) was awarded to Scottish poet, novelist and memoir writer John Burnside on 9 November 2023 at the Ham Yard Hotel in London. Press coverage included an exclusive interview with John in the Telegraph, a report in the Guardian, the Diary piece in the New Statesman and a special feature by the University of St Andrews, where John worked. The prize was chaired by Hermione Lee, alongside Boyd Tonkin, Aida Edemariam, Malachy Tallack and Helen Mort. The Clarissa Luard Award (£10,000) was made to emerging writer Abigail Peters. 127 literary professionals and members of the press attended the ceremony.

### Publishing MA run with Hachette UK and Northumbria University

We co-produce the MA, which, over the period, was attended by 37 students. Richard T Kelly joined the course as joint Programme Leader with Will Mackie. In semester 1, New Writing North co-led the Introduction to Publishing module. Speakers included Richard Kitson (Deputy CEO of Hachette), Laura Jones-Rivera (Co-Founder of 404Ink), Jenny Geras (Managing Director of Bookouture), Rebecca Folland (Group Rights Director at Hachette) and Lennie Goodings (Chair of Virago).

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Achievements and performance (continued)

#### Young People and Communities

Our work with young people and communities was developed and managed by the Young People and Communities team, which includes Tess Denman-Cleaver (Senior Programme Manager), and two Programme Managers, Jo Hislop and Tearlach Duncanson, both of whom were appointed in June 2023. All the young people and communities' programmes are delivered by a team of 35-40 freelance writers, artists and producers, who work year-round to get to know participants and co-create projects and artworks with them. During this period, we also supported a three-month PhD placement for Northumbria student and poet Jasmine Plumptre, who participated in our Inkubator training programme and went on to lead our Drop-In programme in Newcastle's West End.

The team works with around 2,000 people of all ages each year, to support them to tell their own stories on their own terms, develop creative habits, and have their voices heard. In doing so, our participants improve their wellbeing and literacy, raise their aspirations, build social networks, strengthen their communities and change the narrative of the North. Our approach to this work is human-centred, place-based and involves long-term relationship-building with people and partners. Written into the design of our programmes are progression routes for people to take their next step creatively or pursue careers with our support.

This year, we worked with six partner schools (primary and secondary) in Newcastle's West End and Outer West, and in Central Gateshead, running our award-winning Young Writers City programme, which brings professional writers and artists into school to co-create artworks and lead creative writing activity with pupils. We ran five open access, weekly Young Writers' Groups in Newcastle, Gateshead, North Shields, South Shields, Cramlington, a young performers group in the Outer West of Newcastle and a city centre young songwriters' group. Our First Edition group for 18-25 year olds continued to run every week for young people who want to develop their writing and take their first step on a creative career path. Our Faber Publishing Open Day saw 12 young people visit the Faber office in London to learn about roles and routes into publishing careers.

*"In the sessions we get to express feelings, create feelings, with our words. In the sessions we get to hear other people's stories, stories about other people's cultures. It's important we are representing all the people. We have a diverse community here, my friends are from different backgrounds, we are from a range of different cultures. We represent the world here. We celebrate this and the project helps us celebrate that, too. We help each other with different things, we have a range of different cultures and so we all bring something, we all have different experiences. We learn something new from each other in every session."* Young Writers City participant

During this period, our Paul Hamlyn Foundation-funded community programmes became fully established in the West End and Outer West of Newcastle, with programmes including Brown Girls Write (a writing development programme for women of colour), World Writes (a creative writing group for ESOL speakers), Remembered West (a creative writing group for socially isolated older people), Drop In (a creative writing programme in a local food bank), and Newbiggin Hall Creates, an embedded programme of creative activity in the Newbiggin Hall Estate, aimed at providing cultural community activity and platforming the voices of a community who have been significantly impacted by austerity, a long history of under-investment and the cost of living crisis.

In Gateshead, we piloted a health literacy programme with NHS support, aimed at engaging people whose health is impacted by their low literacy level in creative activity that can support wellbeing and confidence building. This laid the foundations for our ongoing family literacy programmes in primary schools. We also established Safe Space, a partnership programme with Youth Focus North East that provides fortnightly creative activity in a local medical centre for young people who are not in education, employment or training, and who face several major barriers including mental health, poverty, housing, and care experience.

Highlights from the young people and communities programmes this year include:

A Songwriters Showcase at Newcastle College in June, where pupils who have taken part in rap group programmes at Callerton Academy & Excelsior Academy, members of our Young Songwriters programme, and the Callerton Academy Canteen Choir, performed original work to an audience of peers and family members.



# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Achievements and performance (continued)

*"I started coming to choir just after I arrived in the UK and before I spoke any English. I didn't know what anyone was saying and so I just said yes to everything... Having choir to come to while I was waiting to see if we were going to be able to stay [and attain refugee status], meant that I was able to learn English and make friends. I would be singing the songs over and over, all the time, you know when I was coming to school and that. This helped me learn English. It was helpful for me. I was going through so much worrying about whether I could stay in the UK. I felt nervous. When I was singing, I could come down from that worrying and I could relax and be feeling enjoyment."* Young Writers City participant and Canteen Choir member.

Brown Girls Write's sell-out showcase of poetry at Alphabetti Theatre in November.

Over 100 young people applied to our Faber Publishing Open Day, resulting in a decision to double the number who will be able to access this opportunity in subsequent years.

Creative Family Group numbers at Larkspur Primary School have grown to such an extent that the group no longer fits in the designated space, and the school's relationship with parents and carers has been transformed.

*"The family workshops have been incredible, and we have seen engagement from parents and families who we really wouldn't have expected to get involved. New Writing North adapted those sessions to the needs of the parents, which has meant they just keep coming. It was in a classroom at first and we have had to bring it into the hall because it just keeps growing and growing. We have parents who don't speak any English, but because of how adaptive New Writing North are it doesn't matter at all. It can be terrifying for parents engaging with the school, even just setting foot inside the school can be terrifying. The parents have so much less confidence than the children, so for them to be engaging in the workshops, well, it's been a tremendous, an absolutely tremendous success. Because of course if you give the parents a voice, then you give the child a voice too. That is then transformative for the child from both a wellbeing and academic perspective."* Larkspur Primary School Head Teacher

### Financial review

During 2023/24 we raised income of £1,526,308 and spent £1,688,734 on our work. This resulted in a deficit for the year of (£162,426), represented by a restricted deficit of (£66,314) and an unrestricted deficit of (£96,112). This is due to the timings of grant income. For example, income from grants received in-year for expenditure in the subsequent financial year are not reflected in these accounts. This occurs with academic partners who have a different financial year, and a significant grant which was received in February for expenditure the following financial year. As a proportion of this funding is towards running costs this has temporarily impacted the free reserves figure as at the year end 31 March 2024.

The main risks for us remain our ability to achieve fundraising targets to meet our core staffing and cash flowing programme where income is received once expenditure has been defrayed.

Our fundraising targets are ambitious, but we feel our track record prepares us for the challenge as does the appointment of a new Director of Communications and Development who has supported fundraising work from Summer 2023.

A new 15-month cash flow structure has been implemented which reduces risk.

During the previous year an independent review of our financial procedures, processes and our full-cost recovery methodology was completed with a charity finance specialist. This review was greatly beneficial and found our procedures and processes to be fit for purpose, and we have continued to embed some of the suggestions for improvements throughout 2023/24.

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Reserves

Reserves are those funds not invested in fixed assets and designated and restricted funds. In line with best practice and Charity Commission guidance the reserves policy is reviewed annually in line with budget setting. The level of reserves is based on a review of salary and accommodation overheads for a three-month period. The charity's target reserves were established as £184,269 in March 2024. The trustees believe that this level of reserve would adequately cover the costs for the charitable company if it had to be dissolved.

At the year end the charity held total reserves of £396,158, of which £274,767 are restricted for future projects and £40,000 have been designated by the Trustees for future projects and organisational development. The unrestricted "free" reserves (excluding amounts tied up in fixed assets) amount to £73,580 which is below the target set. However, the Trustees are satisfied with the cash balances held and the flexibility they have over the designated funds.

The organisation now has four designated funds, which exist to offer contingencies against fundraising plans and to enable the organisation to plan new areas of work. The current status of these funds is as follows:

- Core Projects Contingency: this fund stands at £10,000 and is in place to support the Creative Associates Programme. This fund will continue to be allocated during 2024/25;
- Organisational development: a fund stands at £5,000 and is in place to support the replacement of obsolete IT equipment 2023 onwards;
- Capital Development: £15,000 is designated to support the capital development project;
- Staffing: £10,000 has been set aside to support ongoing staff development..

### Going concern

After making appropriate enquiries, the trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future. For this reason, they continue to adopt the going concern basis in preparing the financial statements. Further details regarding the adoption of the going concern basis can be found in the accounting policies.

### Principal funding

Arts Council England, North East provided a revenue grant of £428,234.

Income is generated through public grants and contracts, sponsorships, and private funding and investment. A small element of our income is generated from earned income from live events and publications. We have a good reputation with many funders and a strong track record for fundraising.

A fundraising plan to support delivery of the targets in the budget exists and progress this year continues to be strong. Our ongoing challenge, however, is always to cover the core costs of our staff and overheads through project grants as many funders are not able to cover these costs to the level that we require to continue to grow and to cover rising overheads. The charitable company works to a Full Cost Recovery process to establish a working system throughout the organisation for reclaiming core costs from funding bids. This enables all staff involved with planning and fundraising to be empowered to build in realistic costs when planning projects and bids.

The context for income generation in 2024/25 remains hard to predict. We are confident that we can continue to be competitive in the challenging environment of securing both public and private grants and awards.

### Risk management

Our risk management system is created using the methodology of the Charity Commission's good practice guide for identifying, quantifying and scoring risks. Our system also indicates the direction of travel of risks, to aid board assessment and actions in response.

# **New Writing North**

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## **Trustees' report (continued)** **Year ended 31 March 2024**

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The Risk Register is reviewed in detail by the Executive Team on a month-by-month basis, and is formally presented, via the Finance and Risk Sub-Committee, to the board twice a year. An annual review of risks is managed through a systematic assessment of the procedures that are in place to mitigate the risks.

Our risks are divided into the categories of governance, operational, managerial, financial and compliance. They range from fundraising falling out of step with operational needs, to a failure to meet the legislative requirements of charities.

Our capital development plans bring new financial and operational risks to the charitable company, which we have considered and which remain under review.

We acknowledge the on-going risks around safeguarding, even with good management processes, policies and insurances in place. We operate a coherent framework of training and support for staff and freelancers who work in this area in our policies and procedures and in wider good practice guidance. A nominated Lead Trustee for Safeguarding (Caroline Greenwood Dower), and the People Sub-Committee oversee a detailed review of safeguarding policies and procedures annually.

To mitigate risk and to ensure a responsible operating environment, the charitable company has a suite of policies and policy framework documents that are updated and added to as new priorities and responses to good practice emerge. All policies are monitored and developed by the Executive Team, with input and advice from relevant board sub-committees, and approved and reviewed on a regular basis by the board. We develop new policies when we identify operational gaps or develop new areas of work that require us to do so. The next major policy review is scheduled for spring/summer 2025.

### **Structure, governance and management**

#### **Constitution**

New Writing North is registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee and is a registered charity.

#### **Governance**

Our board of trustees represents a range of professional skills, lived experience and diversity. We have developed the board in-line with our business development ambitions. Writers and creatives are represented, as are local advocates and experienced creative industry and business professionals drawn from a range of specialisms. We ensure that the views and ideas of young people are represented in governance via our Youth Voice policy and framework, which brings the views of the older young people that we work with into our planning.

We monitor the diversity of trustees, and this benchmarking informs our decision-making on succession to support balanced and representative governance for the organisation.

The board meets four times per year and undertakes one strategic away day. Trustees are expected to join at least one sub-committee with an additional three to four meetings per year, and to participate in occasional task and finish groups. Board meetings take place during working hours. Trustees are expected to attend a minimum of 75 per cent of board meetings per year and to participate in working groups as appropriate. Trustees are expected to attend events to experience the creative work of the charitable company and to advance advocacy for the organisation within their own networks.

The role of trustee is unpaid. Trustees are recompensed for travel and, if necessary, accommodation costs associated with attending meetings and for any other costs incurred whilst undertaking duties on behalf of New Writing North. Trustees work to fixed terms of engagement and undertake an annual appraisal with the Chair. Board meetings are run both digitally and 'in real life', with trustees congregating in Newcastle for two meetings a

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Structure, governance and management (continued)

year, including the away day. This balance of delivery has worked well for the organisation, making an efficient use of people's time, reducing expenditure on travel, and having a positive impact on our carbon usage.

The new year brought positive changes to our governance, with a recruitment campaign resulting in the onboarding of Neil Warwick as our new Chair, Helen Dalby as a new incoming Vice Chair, and the appointment of new trustees Maria Antoniou, Ted Hodgkinson, and Livia Bird. The transition of Chair and Vice Chair took place at the September 2024 board meeting, and we gave a heartfelt goodbye to Chair David Roche and Vice Chair Caroline Murphy, who have both been with New Writing North for their full terms and who have contributed a great deal to the organisation's strength and resilience. As our former Chair and Vice Chair prepared to leave the board, New Writing North won the Trustee Board of the Year award at the North East Charity Awards, a fitting tribute to the achievements of the year.

In early 2024 the board completed a self-assessment process and trustee appraisals. In spring the board undertook a two-day strategic away day to consider organisational development to bring together the full board of trustees for face-to-face team building.

Trustees are active on a range of sub-committees that support oversight of key areas of work. During the year, we operated groups focusing on Environmental Sustainability, Finance and Risk, Capital (which also has external advisors), Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity, and People. We currently have an occasional sub-committee working on Data and Impact. The Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer meet regularly with the Chief Executive and other members of the Executive Team to discuss strategy and to support the organisation.

The Capital sub-committee has been very active, and has met monthly, overseeing business planning and capital development work. This sub-committee has welcomed external members to support it with skills and experience.

### Methods of appointment or election of trustees

During the year, we worked with the consultant Kate Bradley to undertake a sustained recruitment process for our new Chair, Vice Chair and board members. Succession planning for new trustees is actively monitored by the board via the People sub-committee.

### Induction and training of trustees

Potential trustees are invited to attend a board meeting as an observer prior to being invited to become a trustee. They are provided with an induction pack of information and supporting documents and policies, which introduce them to the role of trusteeship and signpost them to good practice guides produced by the Charity Commission and other organisations. The basis of trusteeship at New Writing North is set out in a trustee job description and a code of conduct.

When appointed, trustees are offered an induction meeting, during which they are briefed on their role and responsibilities, the operating and funding context in which New Writing North operates, and the range of programmes delivered. Trustees are welcomed to events and provided with opportunities to gain direct experience of the work.

Trustees are offered training opportunities to build their governance knowledge, and throughout their term of office they are offered access to professional development activities. We have encouraged and supported many trustees to take their first steps into charity governance. All trustees undertake an annual skills audit and appraisal with the Chair, and outcomes from this are presented and discussed by the Chair and the Chief Executive and brought to the board for discussion, if relevant.

We aim to provide consistency of governance with fixed terms, to ensure governance remains fit for purpose, is representative of the communities that New Writing North serves, and encompasses the strategic knowledge we need to achieve our mission. Trustees are appointed for a term of three years. After this time, they may remain

# New Writing North

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## Trustees' report (continued) Year ended 31 March 2024

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### Structure, governance and management (continued)

in post for up to a maximum of a further two terms of three years – a total term of nine years – after which they must stand down. Remaining in post after each individual term is not automatic and is awarded subject to a successful performance review conducted by the Chair.

In extraordinary circumstances, identified trustees who have served for nine years may have their term extended by co-option for one year by a majority vote of the board. The term extension can last a maximum of three years (three, additional, one-year terms). This applies to the positions of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer. Extraordinary circumstances may include:

- The unanticipated resignation of multiple trustees leaving the board with gaps in expertise and knowledge
- An inability to recruit for a replacement Trustee[s] within a specialist skill set within a set time frame
- An urgent or priority business need which the trustee's skillset is uniquely required to address
- A time-limited period of strategic development e.g., capital development which necessitates continuity and knowledge of existing trustees whilst the planning is active.

Extraordinary circumstances will be defined by the Chair and discussed at a Trustees meeting where a vote will be made with exceptions noted in this report annually.

### Organisational structure

The organisation is led by an Executive Team of three women: Chief Executive Claire Malcolm MBE; Executive Director (Programme & Impact) Anna Disley; and Director of Finance and Operations Fiona Melvin, and is a female majority charitable company at senior level. During the year, they were joined by Eugene Grant as Director of Communications and Fundraising.

The New Writing North team continues to grow and this year we have made new appointments at all levels. The leadership of the organisation is strong, with key people working at a high level of leadership, which is enabling the ambitious stretch that the organisation is now involved in.

Staff undertake an annual away-day and participate in externally and internally facilitated training and planning workshops to develop operational and creative plans and strategy.

We undertake annual appraisals, and staff are offered individual development opportunities to grow and develop their professional skills that align with the needs of the business and the changing landscape and challenges of our work.

We operate an open work culture and a supportive working environment that offers staff a great deal of flexibility as to how and where they work, and we support flexible working and working from home. We monitor staff wellbeing and mental health. To build our capacity to respond to need, we have trained a member of staff to be a mental health first aider and are signed up to a programme for staff support, counselling and wellbeing

### Pay policy for key management personnel

The pay and remuneration of staff is agreed by the board during the annual budgeting process and is linked to both appraisals and an independent survey of relevant market and sector information and considerations alongside our financial performance and affordability. Cost of Living is considered annually, and expectations are built into budget planning.

# **New Writing North**

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## **Trustees' report (continued)** **Year ended 31 March 2024**

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### **Structure, governance and management (continued)**

#### **Membership of a wider network**

Regionally we maintain strong working relationships with peer relationships and offer mutual support with a range of other peer arts, culture, charity, and educational organisations which strengthen our work, forge productive collaborations, and widen our knowledge. Executive and Senior staff are active in supporting regional and national networks and giving time to sector and regional developments.

Nationally, New Writing North is part of an informal national network with six other writing agencies in England. We engage with both regional and national and international networks to develop opportunities for writers and to promote writing from the North of England nationally and internationally. We work with many literary organisations across the country and internationally including publishers of all scales, festivals, and event promoters.

#### **Trustees' indemnities**

The charitable company carries Trustee indemnity insurance.

#### **Relationships with other groups, charities and individuals**

Our major stakeholder is Arts Council England, and their core funding through our National Portfolio Organisation multi-year agreement is key to our resilience. Arts Council England income represents under a third of our turnover, which benchmarks us as a high-performing organisation in our sector.

Our relationship with the North of Tyne Combined Authority has seen us receive support for our capital development work, and they have granted us significant skills funding.

We have significant financial relationships with Durham County Council and Durham University, who commission and contribute significant funds to the annual Durham Book Festival.

Our continued partnership with Northumbria University is very important to the sustainability and development of our work, enabling, as it does, affordable accommodation and project support alongside opportunities to galvanise and participate in research activities.

We enjoy ongoing relationships with the John S Cohen Foundation and the Kavli Trust, who are two of our largest funders for specific areas of work.

We are also grateful for the support of the Newcastle Culture Investment Fund, who are also significant funders of our activities through multi-year grants, and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Joseph Rowntree Foundation for their significant grants that support key areas of work.

We work in partnership with publishers and broadcasters and this year have extended our work with Channel 4, and with Hachette UK and Faber and Faber.

Regionally, staff work collaboratively and generously with other arts organisations and participate in local arts and culture networks and events.

#### **Plans for future periods**

##### **Centre for Writing Capital Development**

We have advanced our plans for establishing a Centre for Writing and Publishing in Newcastle. This year, work was focussed on identifying and acquiring a building to develop, and working with regional stakeholders to establish funding contributions to the project. Our plan is to work with Northumbria University as a joint venture partner to acquire a building and to refurbish it to become the Centre for Writing: a nationally significant home for

# **New Writing North**

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## **Trustees' report (continued)** **Year ended 31 March 2024**

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### **Plans for future periods (continued)**

writing and production.

Our close working partnership with Northumbria University underpins the project and in spring we made an offer to buy Cross House, on Westgate Road in Newcastle upon Tyne, from the Dickinson family for £2.25M. This offer was accepted, and work began on surveys and due diligence. Cross House sits next door to the GX Arena, a large-scale music venue, and acoustics had arisen as a potential issue with the site. Following an initial acoustic survey and then a more detailed assessment, we regrettably had to retract our offer for purchase, as the work that would be required to mitigate the noise issues would be invasive to the integrity of the building and was not cost effective in terms of the overall development costs.

We undertook another property search and began to look at Bolbec Hall, a Grade II listed building, which is located next door to the independent library of the Literary and Philosophical Society on Westgate Road. Following an options appraisal it was agreed that this building met the needs of the project, and we began work on negotiations with the owner and built a business case and operational plan that illustrated how the Centre for Writing could operate successfully on this site.

With the support of the new Mayor for the North East Combined Authority, Kim McGuinness, we have managed to achieve £3M of pledged investment from the new combined authority (£2M) and from Newcastle City Council (£1M). This matches the £2.2M pledged by Northumbria University. With this support confirmed in summer, we applied for £5M from the DCMS/Arts Council England Cultural Development Fund. At the time of writing, we are awaiting the outcome of this grant and have also submitted an Expression of Interest to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for £5M. A great deal of work in building up business cases and assessing the economic impact of the project took place with consultants during the year, which has meant that we were prepared for the demands of capital funding bids.

### **Disclosure of information to auditor**

Each of the persons who are trustees at the time when this trustees' report is approved has confirmed that:

- so far as that trustee is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the charity's auditor is unaware, and
- that trustee has taken all the steps that ought to have been taken as a trustee in order to be aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the charity's auditor is aware of that information.

### **Auditor**

Pursuant to section 487(2) of the Companies Act 2006, the auditor will be deemed to be reappointed and UNW LLP will therefore continue in office.

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 4 December 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

**N Warwick**  
(Chair of Trustees)

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Statement of trustees' responsibilities Year ended 31 March 2024

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The trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial . Under company law, the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles of the Charities SORP (FRS 102);
- make judgments and accounting estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards (FRS 102) have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements;
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping adequate accounting records that are sufficient to show and explain the charitable company's transactions and disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by order of the members of the board of trustees on 4 December 2024 and signed on its behalf by:

**N Warwick**  
(Chair of Trustees)





## **Independent auditor's report to the members of New Writing North**

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### **Opinion**

We have audited the financial statements of New Writing North ('the charitable company') for the year ended 31 March 2024 which comprise the statement of financial activities, the balance sheet, the statement of cash flows and the related notes, including a summary of significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in their preparation is applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

In our opinion the financial statements:

- give a true and fair view of the state of the charitable company's affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure for the year then ended;
- have been properly prepared in accordance with United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice; and
- have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

### **Basis for opinion**

We conducted our audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK) ('ISAs (UK)') and applicable law. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report. We are independent of the charitable company in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to our audit of the financial statements in the United Kingdom, including the Financial Reporting Council's Ethical Standard, and we have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

### **Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, we have concluded that the trustees' use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work we have performed, we have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

Our responsibilities and the responsibilities of the trustees with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this report.



## **Independent auditor's report to the members of New Writing North (continued)**

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### **Other information**

The other information comprises the information included in the annual report other than the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon. The trustees are responsible for the other information contained within the annual report. Our opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and, except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in our report, we do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon. Our responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or our knowledge obtained in the course of the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If we identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, we are required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work we have performed, we conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, we are required to report that fact.

We have nothing to report in this regard.

### **Matters on which we are required to report by exception**

We have nothing to report in respect of the following matters where the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 requires us to report to you if, in our opinion:

- the information given in the trustees' report is inconsistent in any material respect with the financial statements; or
- sufficient accounting records have not been kept; or
- the financial statements are not in agreement with the accounting records and returns; or
- we have not received all the information and explanations we require for our audit.

### **Responsibilities of trustees**

As explained more fully in the trustees' responsibilities statement, the trustees (who are also the directors of the charitable company for the purposes of company law) are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view, and for such internal control as the trustees determine is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial statements, the trustees are responsible for assessing the charitable company's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the trustees either intend to liquidate the charitable company or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

### **Auditor's responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

We have been appointed as auditor under section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 and report in accordance with the Act and relevant regulations made or having effect thereunder.

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

Irregularities, including fraud, are instances of non-compliance with laws and regulations. We design procedures in line with our responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of irregularities,



## **Independent auditor's report to the members of New Writing North (continued)**

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including fraud. The extent to which our procedures are capable of detecting irregularities, including fraud is detailed below:

Based on our understanding of the company and industry, we identified that the principal risks of non-compliance with laws and regulations related to direct laws and regulations for example Companies Act 2006 and UK tax legislation, and we considered the extent to which non-compliance might have a material effect on the financial statements. We evaluated management's incentives and opportunities for fraudulent manipulation of the financial statements (including the risk of override of controls), and determined that the principal risks were related to posting inappropriate journal entries, or through management bias in manipulation of accounting estimates with the aim of improving performance. Audit procedures performed by the engagement team included:

- Inquiry of management around actual and potential litigation claims;
- Reviewing financial statement disclosures and testing to supporting documentation to assess compliance with applicable laws and regulations;
- Reviewing meeting minutes to identify any potential non compliance;
- Identifying and testing journal entries, in particular any journal entries with unusual account combination; and
- Challenging assumptions and judgments made by management in their significant accounting estimates.

A further description of our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council's website at: [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of our auditor's report.

### **Use of our report**

This report is made solely to the charitable company's trustees, as a body, in accordance with Part 4 of the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008. Our audit work has been undertaken so that we might state to the charitable company's trustees those matters we are required to state to them in an auditor's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charitable company and its members, as a body, for our audit work, for this report, or for the opinions we have formed.

**Anne Hallowell BSc DChA FCA (Senior Statutory Auditor)**  
**for and on behalf of UNW LLP, Statutory Auditor**

Chartered Accountants  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
Date: 4 December 2024

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Statement of financial activities (incorporating income and expenditure account) Year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
<b>Income from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	4	508,088	690,576	1,198,664	1,276,731
Charitable activities	5	76,678	235,497	312,175	187,512
Investments	6	15,469	-	15,469	-
<b>Total income</b>		<b>600,235</b>	<b>926,073</b>	<b>1,526,308</b>	<b>1,464,243</b>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Raising funds	7	115,821	-	115,821	57,213
Charitable activities	8	750,379	822,534	1,572,913	1,479,682
<b>Total expenditure</b>		<b>866,200</b>	<b>822,534</b>	<b>1,688,734</b>	<b>1,536,895</b>
<b>Net (expenditure)/income</b>		<b>(265,965)</b>	<b>103,539</b>	<b>(162,426)</b>	<b>(72,652)</b>
Transfers between funds	17	169,853	(169,853)	-	-
<b>Net movement in funds</b>		<b>(96,112)</b>	<b>(66,314)</b>	<b>(162,426)</b>	<b>(72,652)</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds:</b>					
Total funds brought forward		217,503	341,081	558,584	631,236
Net movement in funds		(96,112)	(66,314)	(162,426)	(72,652)
<b>Total funds carried forward</b>		<b>121,391</b>	<b>274,767</b>	<b>396,158</b>	<b>558,584</b>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.

The notes on pages 29 to 46 form part of these financial statements.

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Balance sheet At 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	13	7,811	12,968
		<u>7,811</u>	<u>12,968</u>
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	14	310,010	153,497
Cash at bank and in hand		350,511	504,190
		<u>660,521</u>	<u>657,687</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	15	(272,174)	(112,071)
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>388,347</u>	<u>545,616</u>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		<u>396,158</u>	<u>558,584</u>
<b>Total net assets</b>		<u><u>396,158</u></u>	<u><u>558,584</u></u>
<b>Charity funds</b>			
Restricted funds	17	274,767	341,081
Unrestricted funds	17	121,391	217,503
<b>Total funds</b>		<u><u>396,158</u></u>	<u><u>558,584</u></u>

The entity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006.

The members have not required the entity to obtain an audit for the year in question in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006. However, an audit is required in accordance with section 144 of the Charities Act 2011.

The trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to entities subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by the trustees and signed on their behalf by:

Date: 4 December 2024

**N Warwick**  
(Chair of Trustees)

Company registered number: 03166037  
The notes on pages 29 to 46 form part of these financial statements.

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Statement of cash flows Year ended 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>			
Net cash used in operating activities	19	(151,351)	(175,938)
<b>Cash flows from investing activities</b>			
Purchase of tangible fixed assets		(2,328)	(3,533)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		(2,328)	(3,533)
<b>Cash flows from financing activities</b>			
Repayments of borrowing		-	(50,000)
<b>Net cash provided by/(used in) financing activities</b>		-	(50,000)
<b>Change in cash and cash equivalents in the year</b>		(153,679)	(229,471)
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		504,190	733,661
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year</b>	20	350,511	504,190

The notes on pages 29 to 46 form part of these financial statements

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

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### 1. General information

New Writing North ('the charitable company') is engaged in supporting and developing the performing arts.

The charitable company is a private company limited by guarantee, incorporated in the United Kingdom and registered in England and Wales. The address of the registered office is given in the company information page of this annual report.

### 2. Accounting policies

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all periods presented, unless otherwise stated.

#### 2.1 Basis of preparation of financial statements

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) - Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

New Writing North meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy.

The financial statements are presented in pounds sterling which is the functional currency of the company and are rounded to the nearest £1.

#### 2.2 Company status

The charitable company is a company limited by guarantee. The members of the charitable company are the governors named on page 1. In the event of the charitable company being wound up, the liability in respect of the guarantee is limited to £1 per member of the charitable company.

#### 2.3 Going concern

The charitable company recorded a small net deficit of expenditure over income in the year ended 31 March 2024 and net assets at the year end of £396k (2023: £559k) with a positive cash position. At the year end there were no loan balances outstanding (2023: £nil).

Management have prepared financial forecasts and projections covering a period of at least twelve months from the date of approval of these financial statements. These show that the charitable company should retain sufficient financial resources to meet its financial liabilities as they fall due.

The trustees have a reasonable expectation that the charitable company has adequate resources to continue to meet its liabilities as they fall due for the foreseeable future. Consequently, they continue to believe the going concern basis of accounting is appropriate in preparing these financial statements.

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

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### 2. Accounting policies (continued)

#### 2.4 Income

All income is recognised once the charitable company has entitlement to the income, any performance conditions attached to the items of income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount of income receivable can be measured reliably.

Donations are received by way of grants and donations and are included in full in the statement of financial activities on a receivable basis.

Contract funding and grants are included in the statement of financial activities on a receivable basis. The balance of income received for specific purposes but not expended during the period is shown in the relevant funds on the balance sheet. Where income is received in advance of entitlement of receipt, its recognition is deferred and included in creditors as deferred income. Where entitlement occurs before income is received, the income is accrued.

Where the donated good is a fixed asset, it is measured at fair value, unless it is impractical to measure this reliably, in which case the cost of the item to the donor should be used. The gain is recognised as income from donations and a corresponding amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset class and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the charitable company's accounting policies.

On receipt, donated professional services and facilities are recognised on the basis of the value of the gift to the charitable company which is the amount it would have been willing to pay to obtain services or facilities of equivalent economic benefit on the open market; a corresponding amount is then recognised in expenditure in the period of receipt.

#### 2.5 Expenditure

Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been included under expense categories that aggregate all costs for allocation to activities. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular activities they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of the resources.

Support costs are those costs incurred directly in support of expenditure on the objects of the charitable company. They include governance costs, which are incurred in connection with the administration of the charitable company and compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements.

Expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to transfer economic benefit to a third party, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is classified by activity. The costs of each activity are made up of the total of direct costs and shared costs, including support costs involved in undertaking each activity. Direct costs attributable to a single activity are allocated directly to that activity. Shared costs which contribute to more than one activity and support costs which are not attributable to a single activity are apportioned between those activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources. Central staff costs are allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use.

Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by the charitable company to raise funds for its charitable purposes and includes costs of all fundraising activities events and non-charitable trading.



# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

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### 2. Accounting policies (continued)

#### 2.5 Expenditure (continued)

Expenditure on charitable activities is incurred on directly undertaking the activities which further the charitable company's objectives, as well as any associated support costs.

All expenditure is inclusive of irrecoverable VAT.

#### 2.6 Leases

All of the company's leasing arrangements are operating leases. Rental payments under operating leases are charged to the profit and loss account on a straight-line basis over the lease term, even if payments are not made on such a basis.

#### 2.7 Employee benefits

##### **Short-term benefits**

Short-term benefits, including holiday pay and other similar non-monetary benefits are recognised as an expense in the period in which the employee's entitlement to the benefit accrues.

##### **Defined contribution pension plan**

The company operates a defined contribution pension plan for its employees. Contributions are recognised as an expense when they fall due. Amounts due but not yet paid are included within creditors on the balance sheet. The assets of the plan are held separately from the company in independently administered funds.

#### 2.8 Interest receivable

Interest on funds held on deposit is included when receivable and the amount can be measured reliably by the charitable company; this is normally upon notification of the interest paid or payable by the institution with whom the funds are deposited.

#### 2.9 Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £750 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is provided on all tangible fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the cost less estimated residual value of fixed assets over their expected useful lives as follows:

Fixtures and fittings	-	20% straight line
Computer equipment	-	33% straight line

Asset residual values and useful lives are reviewed at the end of each reporting period, and adjusted if appropriate. The effect of any change is accounted for prospectively.

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

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### 2. Accounting policies (continued)

#### 2.10 Debtors

Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

#### 2.11 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

#### 2.12 Liabilities and provisions

Liabilities are recognised when there is an obligation at the balance sheet date as a result of a past event, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefit will be required in settlement, and the amount of the settlement can be estimated reliably.

Liabilities are recognised at the amount that the charitable company anticipates it will pay to settle the debt or the amount it has received as advanced payments for the goods or services it must provide.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation. Where the effect of the time value of money is material, the provision is based on the present value of those amounts, discounted at the pre-tax discount rate that reflects the risks specific to the liability. The unwinding of the discount is recognised in the statement of financial activities as a finance cost.

#### 2.13 Financial instruments

The charitable company only enters into financial instruments transactions that result in the recognition of basic debt financial assets and liabilities, such as trade and other debtors and creditors, cash and bank balances and loans to or from related parties.

All financial instruments are due within one year at inception and are measured, initially and subsequently, at the transaction price.

At the end of each reporting period debt financial assets are assessed for impairment, and their carrying value reduced if necessary. Any impairment charge is recognised in the profit and loss account.

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

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### 2. Accounting policies (continued)

#### 2.14 Fund accounting

General funds are unrestricted funds which are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charitable company and which have not been designated for other purposes.

Designated funds comprise unrestricted funds that have been set aside by the trustees for particular purposes. The aim and use of each designated fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Restricted funds are funds which are to be used in accordance with specific restrictions imposed by donors or which have been raised by the charitable company for particular purposes. The costs of raising and administering such funds are charged against the specific fund. The aim and use of each restricted fund is set out in the notes to the financial statements.

Investment income, gains and losses are allocated to the appropriate fund.

### 3. Critical accounting estimates and areas of judgment

Estimates and judgments are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

#### ***Significant judgments in applying the charitable company's accounting policies***

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees do not consider there to have been any other significant judgments that were required in the process of applying the charitable company's accounting policies.

#### ***Key sources of estimation and uncertainty***

Estimates included within these financial statements include the depreciation rates and asset impairments. None of the estimates made in the preparation of these financial statements are considered to carry significant estimation uncertainty, nor to bear a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amount of assets and liabilities within the next financial year.

### 4. Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Donations	24,165	-	24,165
Grants	483,923	690,576	1,174,499
	<u>508,088</u>	<u>690,576</u>	<u>1,198,664</u>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 4. Income from donations and legacies (continued)

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Donations and in kind support	14,295	-	14,295
Grants	523,522	738,914	1,262,436
	<u>537,817</u>	<u>738,914</u>	<u>1,276,731</u>

### 5. Income from charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Contract income	4,800	235,497	<b>240,297</b>
Trading activities in furtherance of objects	71,878	-	<b>71,878</b>
	<u>76,678</u>	<u>235,497</u>	<u><b>312,175</b></u>

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Contract income	-	116,400	116,400
Trading activities in furtherance of objects	71,112	-	71,112
	<u>71,112</u>	<u>116,400</u>	<u>187,512</u>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 6. Investment income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £	Total funds 2023 £
Rental income	13,750	<b>13,750</b>	-
Interest receivable	1,719	<b>1,719</b>	-
	<u>15,469</u>	<u><b>15,469</b></u>	<u>-</u>

### 7. Expenditure on raising funds

#### Costs of raising voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Fundraising costs	3,939	<b>3,939</b>
Fundraising salaries	111,882	<b>111,882</b>
	<u>115,821</u>	<u><b>115,821</b></u>

#### Costs of raising voluntary income

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Fundraising costs	306	306
Fundraising salaries	56,907	56,907
	<u>57,213</u>	<u>57,213</u>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 8. Analysis of expenditure on charitable activities

#### Summary by fund type

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Project delivery	750,379	822,534	1,572,913

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Project delivery	894,454	585,228	1,479,682

### 9. Analysis of expenditure by activities

	Activities undertaken directly 2024 £	Support costs 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Project delivery	957,709	615,204	1,572,913

	Activities undertaken directly 2023 £	Support costs 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Project delivery	749,948	729,734	1,479,682

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 9. Analysis of expenditure by activities (continued)

#### Analysis of support costs

	Activities 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Staff costs	441,295	<b>441,295</b>
Depreciation	7,485	<b>7,485</b>
General administration	41,928	<b>41,928</b>
Rent	23,333	<b>23,333</b>
Capital project fees	21,905	<b>21,905</b>
Legal and professional	14,111	<b>14,111</b>
IT and website	11,966	<b>11,966</b>
Governance costs	53,181	<b>53,181</b>
	<b>615,204</b>	<b>615,204</b>

  

	Activities 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Staff costs	330,160	330,160
Depreciation	6,509	6,509
General administration	19,005	19,005
Rent	14,383	14,383
Capital project fees	301,336	301,336
Legal and professional	(2,364)	(2,364)
IT and website	11,607	11,607
Consultancy fees	13,233	13,233
Governance costs	35,865	35,865
	<b>729,734</b>	<b>729,734</b>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 10. Auditor's remuneration

	2024 £	2023 £
Fees payable to the charitable company's auditor for the audit of the charitable company's annual accounts	<b>12,500</b>	12,000

### 11. Staff costs

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	<b>637,964</b>	503,433
Social security costs	<b>57,182</b>	48,668
Contribution to defined contribution pension schemes	<b>19,174</b>	16,068
	<b>714,320</b>	568,169

The average number of persons employed by the charitable company during the year was as follows:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
Engaged on charitable activities	<b>17</b>	15
Engaged on management and administrative	<b>4</b>	3
	<b>21</b>	18

The number of employees whose employee benefits (excluding employer pension costs) exceeded £60,000 was:

	2024 No.	2023 No.
In the band £60,001 - £70,000	<b>1</b>	-

### 12. Trustees' remuneration and expenses

No trustees gain from their role as trustees. However, see note 24 for related party transactions, including those with trustees.

During the year ended 31 March 2024, expenses totalling £1,544 were reimbursed or paid directly to 4 trustees (2023: £1,569 to 3 trustees). These expenses were reimbursements of travelling costs.

The charity considers its key management personnel comprise the trustees, the Chief Executive, the Executive Director (Programme and Impact) and the Director of Finance and Operations. The total employment benefits of the key management personnel were £159,099 (2023: £157,524).



# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 13. Tangible fixed assets

	Fixtures and fittings £	Computer equipment £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1 April 2023	5,039	48,775	53,814
Additions	-	2,328	2,328
Disposals	-	(2,590)	(2,590)
At 31 March 2024	5,039	48,513	53,552
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1 April 2023	5,039	35,807	40,846
Charge for the year	-	7,485	7,485
On disposals	-	(2,590)	(2,590)
At 31 March 2024	5,039	40,702	45,741
<b>Net book value</b>			
At 31 March 2024	-	7,811	7,811
At 31 March 2023	-	12,968	12,968

### 14. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	86,968	34,194
Other debtors	4,605	1,605
Prepayments and accrued income	218,437	117,698
	310,010	153,497

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

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### 15. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade creditors	29,070	28,203
Other taxation and social security	17,289	14,296
Other creditors	12,665	36,197
Accruals and deferred income	213,150	33,375
	<u>272,174</u>	<u>112,071</u>
	2024 £	2023 £
Resources deferred during the year	<u>147,974</u>	<u>-</u>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 16. Summary of funds

#### Summary of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
Designated funds	40,000	4,800	(25,685)	20,885	40,000
General funds	177,503	595,435	(840,515)	148,968	81,391
Restricted funds	341,081	926,073	(822,534)	(169,853)	274,767
	<u>558,584</u>	<u>1,526,308</u>	<u>(1,688,734)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>396,158</u>

#### Summary of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
Designated funds	140,000	354,590	(301,336)	(153,254)	40,000
General funds	105,494	370,739	(650,331)	351,601	177,503
Restricted funds	385,742	738,914	(585,228)	(198,347)	341,081
	<u>631,236</u>	<u>1,464,243</u>	<u>(1,536,895)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>558,584</u>

### 17. Statement of funds

#### Statement of funds - current year

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Core projects contingency	15,000	-	-	(5,000)	10,000
Organisational Development	15,000	-	-	(10,000)	5,000
Capital Development	10,000	4,800	(25,685)	25,885	15,000
Staffing	-	-	-	10,000	10,000
	<u>40,000</u>	<u>4,800</u>	<u>(25,685)</u>	<u>20,885</u>	<u>40,000</u>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 17. Statement of funds (continued)

#### General funds

General funds	177,503	595,435	(840,515)	148,968	81,391
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<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<b>217,503</b>	<b>600,235</b>	<b>(866,200)</b>	<b>169,853</b>	<b>121,391</b>
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#### Restricted funds

Writing and enterprise	5,755	-	(676)	(6,367)	(1,288)
Sky Writes	7,523	-	(723)	(6,800)	-
Northern Writers Awards	4,875	44,561	(79,162)	65,033	35,307
Young Writers	134,647	149,115	(28,904)	(152,280)	102,578
Newcastle Communities	61,236	91,940	(99,812)	(6,300)	47,064
Skills and Engagement	(28,100)	229,377	(159,765)	(44,606)	(3,094)
Young Writers City - Newcastle	18,469	5,000	(34,387)	13,000	2,082
Young Writers Development programme	6,894	210	(4,047)	2,500	5,557
Proud Words	604	-	-	8,832	9,436
Gateshead Young Writers	6,087	-	(59,933)	45,192	(8,654)
Young Writers City - Durham	12,177	-	(3,213)	(8,456)	508
Community and Callerton	21,703	2,000	(31,820)	15,000	6,883
A Writing Chance	-	67,789	(29,828)	(3,561)	34,400
Durham Book Festival	5,363	136,341	(63,200)	(78,699)	(195)
Podcasts	32,617	10,390	(42,067)	17,555	18,495
Gordon Burn Prize	-	35,831	(32,689)	(5,000)	(1,858)
Channel Four Partnership	38,407	33,972	(36,627)	(12,881)	22,871
Hospital Residency	-	25,000	(13,405)	(2,900)	8,695
Other small restricted funds	12,824	94,547	(102,276)	(9,115)	(4,020)
	341,081	926,073	(822,534)	(169,853)	274,767
<b>Total of funds</b>	<b>558,584</b>	<b>1,526,308</b>	<b>(1,688,734)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>396,158</b>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 17. Statement of funds (continued)

#### Statement of funds - prior year

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers in/out £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<b>Designated funds</b>					
Core projects contingency	15,000	-	-	-	15,000
Organisational Development	15,000	-	-	-	15,000
Capital Development	55,000	354,590	(301,336)	(98,254)	10,000
Staffing	55,000	-	-	(55,000)	-
	<u>140,000</u>	<u>354,590</u>	<u>(301,336)</u>	<u>(153,254)</u>	<u>40,000</u>
<b>General funds</b>					
General funds	<u>105,494</u>	<u>370,739</u>	<u>(650,331)</u>	<u>351,601</u>	<u>177,503</u>
<b>Total Unrestricted funds</b>	<u>245,494</u>	<u>725,329</u>	<u>(951,667)</u>	<u>198,347</u>	<u>217,503</u>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 17. Statement of funds (continued)

#### Restricted funds

Writing and enterprise	2,073	-	(1,318)	5,000	5,755
Sky Writes	9,217	-	(1,694)	-	7,523
Northern Writers Awards	(12,532)	50,333	(78,858)	45,932	4,875
Young Writers	41,453	157,617	(40,591)	(23,832)	134,647
Newcastle Communities	-	96,259	(36,023)	1,000	61,236
Skills and Engagement	-	75,061	(102,630)	(531)	(28,100)
Young Writers City - Newcastle	26,579	13,000	(37,110)	16,000	18,469
Young Writers Development programme	7,856	180	(1,642)	500	6,894
Proud Words	27,463	-	(9,683)	(17,176)	604
Gateshead Young Writers	113,239	8,210	(47,898)	(67,464)	6,087
Young Writers City - Durham	16,843	1,000	(13,674)	8,008	12,177
Community and Callerton	40,379	9,000	(40,676)	13,000	21,703
Climate Change	4,004	5,200	(6,468)	(2,736)	-
Leeds Consultancy	-	16,360	(1,377)	(14,983)	-
Durham Book Festival	23,560	185,359	(88,110)	(115,446)	5,363
Podcasts	10,059	20,000	(7,442)	10,000	32,617
Gordon Burn Prize	11,568	10,319	(11,654)	(10,233)	-
Channel Four Partnership	24,090	54,140	(28,403)	(11,420)	38,407
Hospital Residency	1,920	2,461	(3,212)	(1,169)	-
Other small restricted funds	37,971	34,415	(26,765)	(32,797)	12,824
	<u>385,742</u>	<u>738,914</u>	<u>(585,228)</u>	<u>(198,347)</u>	<u>341,081</u>
<b>Total of funds</b>	<u>631,236</u>	<u>1,464,243</u>	<u>(1,536,895)</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>558,584</u>

All restricted funds relate to specific project delivery, as indicated by the fund title.

Transfers between funds during the year relate to projects where restricted funds have been spent as agreed with the funding partner on staff time, or where unrestricted funds have been used in delivery of a restricted activity.

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

### 18. Analysis of net assets between funds

#### Analysis of net assets between funds - current period

	Unrestricted funds 2024 £	Restricted funds 2024 £	Total funds 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	7,811	-	7,811
Current assets	288,728	371,793	660,521
Creditors due within one year	(175,148)	(97,026)	(272,174)
<b>Total</b>	<b>121,391</b>	<b>274,767</b>	<b>396,158</b>

#### Analysis of net assets between funds - prior period

	Unrestricted funds 2023 £	Restricted funds 2023 £	Total funds 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	12,968	-	12,968
Current assets	316,606	341,081	657,687
Creditors due within one year	(112,071)	-	(112,071)
<b>Total</b>	<b>217,503</b>	<b>341,081</b>	<b>558,584</b>

### 19. Reconciliation of net movement in funds to net cash flow from operating activities

	2024 £	2023 £
Net expenditure for the year (as per statement of financial activities)	(162,426)	(72,652)
<b>Adjustments for:</b>		
Depreciation charges	7,485	6,509
Increase in debtors	(156,513)	(59,143)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	160,103	(50,652)
<b>Net cash used in operating activities</b>	<b>(151,351)</b>	<b>(175,938)</b>

# New Writing North

(A company limited by guarantee)

## Notes to the financial statements Year ended 31 March 2024

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### 20. Analysis of cash and cash equivalents

	2024 £	2023 £
Cash at bank and in hand	350,511	504,190
<b>Total cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>350,511</b>	<b>504,190</b>

### 21. Analysis of changes in net debt

	At 1 April 2023 £	Cash flows £	At 31 March 2024 £
Cash at bank and in hand	504,190	(153,679)	350,511

### 22. Operating lease commitments

At 31 March 2024 the charitable company had future minimum lease payments due under non-cancellable operating leases for each of the following periods:

	2024 £	2023 £
Not later than 1 year	1,946	2,085

### 23. Related party transactions

During the year one trustee, D Stone, was paid £175 for mentoring as part of project delivery for the charity.

In the prior year one trustee, D Stone, was paid £400 for services in running a recruitment panel and speaking at an event as part of project delivery for the charity