

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY

England & Wales · Charity number 1086471

Details

Other names THE FORGE

Status Registered

Legal form Charitable company

Company number [04027621](#)

Registered 2001-05-03

Register [View on the Charity Commission register](#)

Contact

Address Stanley Education Centre
Stanley
DH9 0HQ

Phone 01207284515

Email enquiries@intheforge.com

Website www.intheforge.com

Activities

Objects: TO FOSTER AND PROMOTE THE MAINTENANCE, IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE KNOWLEDGE, UNDERSTANDING AND PRACTICE OF THE ARTS IN EDUCATION

Activities: County Durham Arts in Education was established in 2001. It trades under the name of The Forge and provides an arts in education service to young people principally in County Durham and the wider region.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information, Sponsors Or Undertakes Research, Acts As An Umbrella Or Resource Body
- **What:** Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science
- **Who:** Children/young People

Geography

- Durham
- Gateshead
- Hartlepool
- Middlesbrough
- Newcastle Upon Tyne City
- North Tyneside
- Redcar And Cleveland
- South Tyneside
- Stockton-on-tees
- Sunderland

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£239,444	£279,424	-	-
2024-03-31	£441,968	£283,311	-	-
2023-03-31	£178,926	£229,074	-	-
2022-03-31	£224,156	£212,996	-	-
2021-03-31	£132,999	£153,399	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
MICHAEL GILBEY	Chair	2013-09-17
Alison Nicholson		2024-02-05
Dr Judy Ann Thomas		2024-01-01
Gillian Elizabeth Callaghan		2019-10-31

Accounts

Company Registration Number 04027621

Registered Charity Number 1086471

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION
AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE**
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
For the year ending 31 March 2025

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2025***

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2025.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity Name	County Durham Arts In Education Agency (trading as The Forge)
Charity registration number	1086471
Company registration number	04027621
Registered office	The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ

Trustees

For the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, the Board of Trustees is the Board of Directors of the charitable company and is referred to as the Trustees throughout this report.

The Trustees of County Durham Arts In Education Agency during the period and to the date of signing this report are as follows:

Mr M Gilbey (Chair)	
Ms G Callaghan	
Mr R Cradock	Resigned 3 February 2025
Ms S Dixon	
Mr B Ebbatson	Deceased 19 July 2024
Ms A Nicholson	
Ms R Robson	Resigned 28 October 2024
Dr J Thomas	

Company Secretary	Mr A Harrington
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Independent Examiner	Pete O'Hara FCA, Chartered Accountant, 26 La Sagesse, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3AF
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2025***

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Documents

County Durham Arts In Education Agency Ltd is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5 July 2000, registered in England and Wales under company number 04027621 and governed by its Articles of Association, originally registered upon incorporation, as amended by Special Resolutions dated 26 March 2001, 23 January 2014 and 26 July 2023.

The charity was registered with the Charity Commission on 3 May 2001.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

Eligibility for membership of the charity, and membership of the Board of Trustees, is governed by the Articles of Association. There are no restrictions in the governing document on the operation of the charity other than those imposed by general charity law.

Structure and Governance

As at 31 March 2025 the charity had a Board of five non-executive Trustees.

The Board meets a minimum of four times per year. The Executive Director is in attendance but has no voting rights. Additional committees and working groups are established from time to time to explore specific issues.

Detailed written Board reports and an agenda are prepared and circulated in advance of meetings.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees

The minimum number of Board Members is three and the maximum is 12.

In the past, potential new Board Members were identified through a mixture of formal and informal means, including discussions and recommendations offered by Trustees, outside advisors to the organisation, peer organisations and Arts Council England as well as through a range of advertising channels. Following an extensive process, including making knowledge of vacancies public through various channels, two new trustees were recruited to the Board in 2024. As part of the Board review process, a working group was established to review our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and our organisational policy and action plan was reviewed.

The Board also identified the need to reflect the characteristics and diversity of the communities we serve in the programmes we develop with those communities. To achieve this, we have identified a working group of teachers and educationalists drawn from the North Durham area. We can draw upon the support and advice from this group in service delivery on an ongoing basis.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees are inducted by the Chair of the Board and Executive Director and are provided with a range of resources and publications to support their understanding of The Forge's activities, including the latest annual report and accounts, a full role description and information on current and past projects.

The organisation also holds periodic Board development days and Trustees are encouraged to take up training opportunities outside the organisation when they become available.

Trustees are also kept informed on an ongoing basis around developments in both the arts in education and wider charity sectors by the dissemination of relevant information and newsletters from Arts Council England and the Charity Commission.

Organisational Structure

Day-to-day responsibility for the management of the organisation is delegated to the Executive Director, who is supported by the Creative Producer and an Administrator. Line management, supervision and appraisal is undertaken of all staff to ensure the team continues to develop their skills and working practices as part of our drive to continually improve quality.

The Board has taken an active approach to succession planning in 2024/25, reflecting the need for continued operation in the case of the absence, for any reason, of existing staff.

To this end, the Board set aside a significant element of reserves to cover the impact of absences, to fund temporary staff when necessary, to cover periods of reduced income in the event of staff absence and turnover, and to fund recruitment of new staff if and when necessary.

In the course of 2024/25, the Board commissioned a specialist agency to review and update current contracts of employment and job descriptions in preparation for any staff changes.

The Board remains heavily involved in the creation and implementation of key policy.

Key Management Personnel

The Board, who give their time freely and have received no remuneration in the year in relation to their role as Trustees, has considered who are the Key Management Personnel (KMP) of the charity. Together with the Board, these KMP are those in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the activities of the charity on a day-to-day basis.

The remuneration of the KMP is reviewed annually. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels of other charities and similar organisations within the sector and the region. Pay levels are set using this information together with the budget and forecast information, ensuring that the charity can afford any proposed increases. The Board then agrees any uplift to remuneration also reflecting indices of inflation.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission and have established the required optimum levels of reserves for the organisation.

The Forge often requires a long lead-in time to plan programmes and projects, working within the expected programming schedules of schools, communities and artists. The reserves policy reflects the need to provide a degree of security to support planning, and to provide confidence to stakeholders that artistic plans are soundly-based and funded.

The Trustees aim firstly to hold a level of unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would crystallise if The Forge's funding were to be interrupted or withdrawn and/or it were unable to continue operating.

Unrestricted Funds – General Funds

The Trustees have allocated £115,500 to enable the organisation to meet contractual liabilities and to maintain continuity in the event of delays with receipt of funding, or severe public sector cutbacks, or schools being less likely to spend money on arts related activities.

It has allocated a dissolution fund of £36,750 which provides for the costs of dissolution should the charity be unable to continue. It will be used to pay notice periods, redundancies and the expenses of running The Forge until closure of the organisation.

The Trustees have also allocated £26,250 to cover costs to mitigate risks associated with the potential loss of long-standing post holders in a small core team, eg succession planning, appointing short term staff to bridge any gaps in staffing, external consultancy, and appointment of new post holders. The Board drew from these funds in 2024/25 to review contracts and job descriptions (referenced above).

The total free reserves required by the organisation are therefore £178,500.

Unrestricted Funds – Designated Funds

In addition, the Trustees have then agreed to retain an additional allowance of £60,000 as Designated Unrestricted Funds, to enable the charity to:

- respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process
- contribute match funding to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Talking Cameras project
- contribute match funding to the Youth Festival

The charity's total unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2025 are £271,542 (2024: £237,647). The charity's 'free' unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2025, defined as non-designated unrestricted funds, excluding the £162 value of unrestricted Tangible Fixed Assets, are £271,380.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis as part of the charity's budgeting processes.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Fundraising Policy

The charity is required to report how it deals with fundraising from the public. The charity does not use a professional fundraiser or commercial participator to raise funds. Any monies raised direct from the public follows all guidelines set out by the Charity Commission and UK law in every respect. We respect the privacy and contact preferences of all public donors.

Grant Making Policy

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

Investment Policy

The Forge's cash reserves, over and above those required for day-to-day working capital, have typically been invested in a combination of a higher-rate, instant access deposit account and various fixed-term cash deposit accounts.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Purpose

County Durham Arts In Education agency's charitable objects are to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

Aims and Objectives

County Durham Arts In Education Agency's charitable objects are to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

The charity aims to fulfil this by creating participatory arts projects that inspire young people to become successful, confident individuals, capable of reaching their full potential and by making cultural programmes that are courageous, relevant and excellent.

Public Benefit

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

- Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits
- Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Public Benefit (Cont.)

The Forge exists to widen access to high-quality arts education and cultural experiences for children, young people, and communities in North East England, particularly in areas of social and economic disadvantage. All of our work this year has been aligned with these charitable aims, ensuring that public benefit remains central to our mission and delivery.

In 2024/25, our programmes provided significant public benefit by increasing access to creative learning, promoting digital and cultural literacy, and strengthening local cultural infrastructure. Through our Grow Future Skills programme in County Durham, we supported six primary schools to integrate digital arts into the curriculum, enhancing pupil engagement and teacher confidence in creative technologies such as animation, Augmented Reality (AR), and game design. These activities have not only improved educational outcomes, but also fostered inclusion, expression, and skill development for children from underserved communities.

Our work at The Dales School, funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, enabled children with additional needs to use photography as a powerful alternative to writing. The project empowered young people to tell their own stories, supported teacher innovation, and contributed to national knowledge exchange through published case studies and professional conferences.

We also extended our public benefit through strategic partnerships with health and housing organisations. In collaboration with the NHS, we co-produced exhibitions in community hospitals to showcase children's creative work, bridging education, well-being, and cultural engagement. With Karbon Homes, we delivered a high-impact placemaking project in Stanley, Home/Hyem, giving children and local residents a visible and valued presence in the public realm.

In addition, we continued to pilot the Artsmark Place-Based programme with two non-Artsmark schools in North Durham, enabling them to develop long-term creative strategies and improve access to cultural learning in rural and semi-rural areas.

Across all projects, we prioritised co-design with communities, embedded professional development for teachers, and maintained a clear focus on equity, inclusion, and long-term sustainability. We also actively evaluated our impact to ensure continued relevance and quality.

The Trustees confirm that they have referred to the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when reviewing The Forge's aims and objectives and in planning future activities. We are proud to continue delivering on our charitable purpose, ensuring that creativity remains a force for education, empowerment, and social good.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Risk Management

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks. Current circumstances have brought new risks, which the Board is actively reviewing as part of a fresh look at the place and role of The Forge in a post-COVID world.

We have a risk management strategy in place which comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate any risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place.

The Trustees have for some years considered the key risks facing the charity and the mitigating actions taken to be as follows:

Long-term absence/resignation of Executive Director, Creative Producer or Trustees

- Increasing artistic team improves succession plans for Executive Director
- Increasing Trustees improves resilience and Trustee succession planning
- Increased Board capacity supports Creative Producer absence / recruitment
- Reserves Policy contains provision to take mitigating action in the event of extended staff absence

Not achieving income targets (trusts and foundations, earned income, individual giving):

- Development of a strategic plan to support further diversification of funding
- Collaboration with national and international partners improves awareness of relevant commissioning and funding opportunities.

Not achieving audience targets:

- Developing a teacher advisory group to support alignment of programme with schools' needs
- Ongoing review of relevance and value of programme
- Developing a robust marketing plan for every project
- Collaborating with venue partners and Audience Agency, to analyse data
- Increased understanding of audiences informs effective marketing.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Risk Management (Cont.)

Not delivering artistic excellence:

- Engaging a highly experienced artist as a mentor for major projects' creative teams
- Implementation of the Arts Council's Quality Principles for children and young people
- Collaborating with exceptional artists
- Sharing work-in-progress with audiences and peers to gain critical feedback
- Evaluating artistic achievements and shortcomings for every project
- Creating plans to continually improve artistic practice.

The Trustees also manage the general financial risks arising by ensuring that:

- Prudent budgets have been set for the next financial year
- The charity maintains a low-cost base
- Regular management accounts are provided, showing the performance against budget
- Contingency plans are in place for the actions which would be taken if income appears unlikely to reach its target
- Reserves policies have been adopted which provide an appropriate amount of uncommitted Reserves which will always enable the charity to meet all its liabilities even if income targets are not achieved.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Achievements in the Year

This year has been one of deepening impact, growing partnerships, and purposeful innovation at The Forge. Against a backdrop of social and educational challenge, our work has remained grounded in community and powered by creativity. Whether embedding digital literacies in primary schools, amplifying children's voices through photography, or contributing to cultural regeneration in Durham, we have continued to deliver programmes that are responsive, inclusive, and future-focused.

Our commitment to place-based working remains central. Across education, health, and housing, we've strengthened relationships and co-designed projects that reflect the identities and aspirations of the communities we serve. We're proud to have supported schools in developing sustainable creative practice, worked alongside national funders to model inclusive pedagogy, and collaborated with local partners to make visible the value of creativity in everyday life.

This review captures some of our key achievements from 2024/25 – the stories, partnerships, and learning that define our work. It also looks ahead to what's next - how we can scale impact, deepen our role as a trusted cultural partner, and continue to advocate for creativity as a powerful force for equity and transformation. We're grateful to all those who have joined us on this journey – especially our partners, artists, educators, and funders.

Expanding Reach through Strategic Collaboration

In 2024, our partnership with Durham County Council to deliver the **Durham International BRASS Festival** Education Programme reached 15,165 pupils across 64 schools. The programme continues to offer children vibrant, live musical experiences that spark curiosity and cultural engagement. The Council has reaffirmed its support following enthusiastic feedback from schools, and we look forward to building on this success to further embed music and creativity into educational settings across the region.

Grow Future Skills: Embedding New Literacies in Primary Education

This year, *Grow Future Skills* (GFS) – a core strand of the *Into the Light* place-based programme – has taken bold steps in reimagining how digital creativity can be embedded into the fabric of primary education in County Durham. Led by The Forge, this initiative supports schools, artists, and educators to co-create meaningful learning experiences where new literacies, from animation to augmented reality, become integral to classroom life.

At its heart, GFS is about **unlocking digital potential** – in children, in teachers, and in the artists who support them. It is rooted in curriculum, but ambitious in scope. This is not a bolt-on enrichment activity, it is a systemic intervention that places creativity, technology, and pedagogy in conversation.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Reimagining Curriculum Through Digital Practice

Over the 2024/25 academic year, six County Durham primary schools participated in bespoke digital residencies. Each programme was co-designed with teaching staff and responded directly to school priorities and pupil needs. From exploring Greek myths through game design, to using AR to deepen reading comprehension, projects aligned closely with English, history, and computing curricula – proving that digital arts can both enrich and extend core learning. Crucially, the artists – Cloe Sparrow, Jo Hislop, and Guy Schofield – brought cutting-edge practices into classrooms. Their work bridged fine art, film, immersive technologies, and artificial intelligence, demonstrating how digital tools can unlock new modes of expression and engagement.

Building Teacher Confidence and Capability

Recognising the importance of teacher learning, GFS prioritised **professional development at every stage**. Each artist-led residency began and ended with CPD sessions tailored to the host school. These sessions provided hands-on exploration of tools and techniques, pedagogical frameworks for digital arts, and space for critical reflection. Teachers responded with enthusiasm and curiosity, and early feedback indicates a **marked increase in confidence** around using creative technologies – especially among educators who previously saw themselves as ‘non-digital’. GFS is not just changing practice; it’s shifting mindsets.

Evaluation for Learning and Impact

The programme was designed with continuous learning in mind. Evaluation was embedded from the outset, capturing both qualitative and quantitative insights into pupil engagement, teacher development, and the role of digital creativity in supporting wider school goals. Regular observation, reflection, and feedback loops have been used to adapt delivery and ensure quality.

What’s emerging is a compelling story: of children becoming authors, animators, and designers of their own learning; of teachers discovering new professional identities; and of schools recognising digital creativity not as a luxury, but as an essential part of future-facing education. With the first year almost complete, the groundwork is in place for broader reach and deeper impact. Year Two will see the recruitment of new schools, with plans to scale teacher development and further integrate **emerging technologies** such as AI, and interactive storytelling.

A strengthened evaluation framework will also track longitudinal impacts on learning, inclusion, and community engagement. *Grow Future Skills* is not just a programme – it’s a proposition: that creative digital literacies are vital for the next generation. And that, with the right support, every school can be a space where technology, imagination, and learning come together to shape brighter futures.

Talking Cameras - Paul Hamlyn Foundation Programme | 2024/25

Throughout 2024/25, our work with children at The Dales School has continued to flourish through a photography-focused strand of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation programme. This innovative approach has placed children’s voices and creative choices at the heart of the project, offering them new tools for expression, communication, and storytelling.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Photography in Practice

This year, we have deepened our focus on **photography as an alternative to writing**. Pupils have used photography to document their learning, whether through classroom projects or off-site visits to partners such as **Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art** and **Clarty Commandos**.

Encouragingly, some teachers are now adopting this method independently, using photography to support alternative forms of assessment and expression in the classroom.

Our photography strand has also been integrated into **Forest Schools activities**, with pupils using cameras to explore the natural environment. This work is supporting the development of digital and observational skills in outdoor settings, expanding the ways children engage with learning beyond the classroom.

Advocacy and Sector Sharing

Our partnership with **nasenConnect**, the national magazine for SEND professionals, has led to the publication of a co-authored article by Assistant Head Liz Sanderson and The Forge, spotlighting our approach and learnings. The article, featured in the Summer 2025 edition, has helped to share best practice nationally with SEND educators and advocates.

We were also pleased to present our Paul Hamlyn Foundation work at the **'Have Some Imagination'** conference for educators and artists, hosted by Baltic and Northumbria University.

This platform enabled us to reflect on our methodologies and share our learning with other practitioners working at the intersection of creativity, education, and inclusion.

NHS Hospital Exhibitions

Working in close collaboration with the staff team of the Dales, the creative team and NHS leads at the Bright Northumbria Healthcare Charity, we have progressed two new photography exhibitions celebrating the creative work of children from Blythdale and Ashdale units. These exhibitions will be held at **Blyth Community Hospital** and **Wansbeck General Hospital**, with launch events scheduled for June 2025. Pupils will be invited to attend alongside staff, and separate invitations will be sent to families via school newsletters.

In addition to the hospital-based shows, we are planning two complementary exhibitions at each school:

- A **permanent outdoor installation** celebrating pupil work in the school grounds
- A **temporary, process-focused exhibition** showcasing how the work was created, highlighting the project's journey as well as its outcomes

These exhibitions represent a major milestone in bringing the children's creative efforts into public and community-facing spaces, while fostering connections between education and health.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Exploring Artsmark in Rural and Semi-Rural Priority Places

Year two of our Artsmark Place-Based Pilot is now well underway, supporting schools in rural and semi-rural areas to develop rich, sustainable creative education offers. The pilot aims to test how the **Artsmark Framework**, supported by Arts Council England (ACE), can be adapted to meet the specific needs of **non-Artsmark schools** in priority communities.

School Partnerships and Artist-Led Programmes

We continue to work closely with **Annfield Plain Junior School** and **Shield Row Primary School**, each undertaking bespoke artist-led projects that reflect their unique school contexts, history, and community priorities.

At **Shield Row Primary School**, artist **John Quinn** is leading a drama-based programme with Year 5 pupils, exploring the story of the **West Stanley Pit Disaster**. This local-history-inspired project will culminate in performances both at the school and at **Beamish Museum** in Summer 2025. The programme has been carefully designed to support staff CPD alongside pupil learning, ensuring that drama skills and techniques are embedded in classroom practice beyond the life of the project.

Meanwhile, at **Annfield Plain Junior School**, **Miscreations Theatre Company** is delivering a new place-based, mask-theatre piece to celebrate the **150th anniversary of the school's founding**. This programme will include mask-making workshops and culminate in a public performance, linking creative expression with local identity and history. In a new development, the school has also agreed to host and help shape **Underground**, Miscreations' latest touring performance, embedding further co-creation and legacy opportunities into the school community.

Sector Engagement and National Interest

This year, we were pleased to host two Artsmark Officers from **Arts Council England**, for a visit to Stanley. Their time with The Forge team and school leaders included classroom observations, discussions on the local socio-economic context, and exploration of the pilot's early impacts. Both officers expressed strong interest in how this model could support **wider engagement with Artsmark in County Durham** and were particularly impressed by the commitment of both school communities to creative education.

Looking Ahead

Both Shield Row Primary School and Annfield Plain Junior School have shown continued enthusiasm and ownership of their creative journeys. We are now in the process of evaluating the pilot's second year, with a view to identifying how the Artsmark framework might be scaled or adapted to support other non-Artsmark schools in **left-behind or underrepresented areas**.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Locality Development in Stanley: Creative Placemaking through Partnership

Home/Hyem and the Forge's Role in Local Cultural Infrastructure

Over the past year, The Forge has deepened its role in supporting creative place development in Stanley, embedding cultural practice within the fabric of local life and strengthening our commitment to long-term, place-based collaboration.

A key strand of this work has been our ongoing partnership with **Karbon Homes**, a major social housing provider whose *Fairer Foundations* strategy places creativity and community voice at the heart of local regeneration. Together, we have helped shape how cultural projects can drive visibility, identity, and pride in communities across the Stanley area.

The *Home/Hyem* project continues to grow in profile and purpose. Originally designed as a participatory photography and storytelling programme with local children, the work has now taken on a more prominent civic role. In collaboration with Karbon, we ensured the children's images and writing – originally displayed on the Old Board School – were carefully reproduced and mounted on the **site-protection hoardings** surrounding the deteriorating building.

This intervention was more than a practical re-siting of artwork. It was a statement: that young people's creative voices deserve public space, and that regeneration can begin with imagination.

The display now holds a more prominent position in the heart of the town, featuring not only the children's visual storytelling but also project recognition and crediting, reinforcing the visibility of the partnership and The Forge's curatorial role in the area.

Growing Local Partnerships: Shutter Art on Front Street

Following the success of *Home/Hyem*, Karbon Homes commissioned The Forge to deliver a new **shutter art programme** along Stanley's Front Street. This hyper-local project brings art directly into public view while responding to local narratives and aspirations.

A Trusted Anchor in the Local Cultural Ecosystem

Our work in Stanley is emblematic of The Forge's wider ambition: to act as a **trusted anchor** for culture-led development in underserved areas. We do this not by importing cultural activity, but by building partnerships that **amplify local voices**, centre community priorities, and bring high-quality, collaborative arts practice to the fore. These projects seed new ways of thinking about place, ownership, and visibility. And they continue to reinforce our role as a responsive, values-led organisation, deeply embedded in the places we serve. Looking ahead, we will continue to build on these foundations, seeking out partnerships where creativity and community are seen not as add-ons, but as essential drivers of change.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Developing our Profile

This year, The Forge was delighted to be **shortlisted for the 2024 North East Culture Awards** in the category of *Best Arts and Business Partnership* for our collaboration with **Karbon Homes**. The nomination recognised our shared commitment to using creative practice as a tool for community development, civic pride, and inclusive regeneration.

The awards ceremony, held at **The Fire Station, Sunderland**, brought together inspiring projects from across the region – a reminder of the richness of cultural activity happening in the North East. While we didn't take home the award on the night, the shortlisting itself was a meaningful acknowledgement of the impact and innovation made possible through cross-sector collaboration.

The nomination has helped increase our visibility across the region and has positioned The Forge as a **key player in community-embedded arts partnerships**. It also affirms the value of our approach – combining strategic partnerships, place-based programming, and participatory arts – in creating lasting cultural and social benefit.

We were also invited by **Karbon Homes** to co-present our work in South Moor during a visit from Culture Secretary **Lisa Nandy MP** and **North Durham MP Luke Akehurst**. The visit spotlighted our *HOME/Hyem* project, and Ms Nandy was so impressed by the children's artwork that she requested postcards to display in her Westminster office—affirming the power of local creative work to inform national conversations.

In the coming year, we will continue to build our regional profile by deepening partnerships with organisations like Karbon Homes, contributing to sector conversations, and showcasing our work through public platforms. Recognition such as this helps us advocate for the power of creativity in transforming places and lives – and strengthens our case for continued investment and collaboration.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
For the year ended 31 March 2025

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Financial Review

The out-turn for the year is an unrestricted surplus of £33,895 (2024: Surplus £15,912). The surplus will be added to Unrestricted Reserves, leaving a balance on Unrestricted Funds, including Designated Funds, at 31 March 2025 of £271,542.

In the course of 2024/25, The Forge Officers and Board continued to work hard to develop the sustainability of the organisation. This included short, mid- and long-term planning and financial modelling. We have a two-pronged approach to income generation which includes:

- Direct earned income for services
- Income generated from external funders to deliver produced programme

We were proactively responding to pressure on school budgets and strengthening our resilience through:

- Developing staff skills
- Raising our academic and research profile
- Development of evidence-based arts interventions that appeal to school leadership priorities
- Securing funding from a wider range of non-arts based social action funding streams
- Deepening our relationship with existing funders through responsive stewardship
- Diversifying and developing our market share to include FE and Sixth Form Colleges

The Finance and HR Sub-Group takes a hands-on approach to resilience and feeds back to the full Board on a quarterly basis. Arts accountancy specialist Pete O'Hara has continued in his role as a financial advisor to the Board.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY

TRADING AS THE FORGE

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

TRUSTEES' REPORT

For the year ended 31 March 2025

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Building on the progress made this year, our focus for the coming period is on deepening impact, strengthening partnerships, and extending access to high-quality arts and cultural learning. Guided by our revised Theory of Change and strategic goals for 2023/26, we will continue to respond to local needs, champion creative equity, and invest in sustainable, community-led programmes that support children, young people, and underserved groups across County Durham.

Organisational Review and Theory of Change

To guide our 2023/26 strategy, we carried out a comprehensive organisational review with input from our Board, service users, and stakeholders. A dedicated Board development day in September supported new members and helped reset priorities. We also refined our Theory of Change to sharpen our focus on improving access to arts and culture for those most in need. Our updated strategic model aligns with Arts Council England's *Let's Create* strategy and reflects a strong understanding of local needs and context.

Our Five Strategic Goals:

1. **Expand Access to High-Quality Arts:** Increase access to cultural learning and participatory arts opportunities in schools and communities, ensuring more young people can experience high-quality arts.
2. **Developing multiliteracies and Tackling Digital Poverty:** Develop targeted photography and digital arts programmes to help young people affected by digital poverty to unlock their creativity.
3. **Tailor Arts Education to Needs:** Offer a range of differentiated, high-quality arts education programmes that support diverse creative ambitions and learning needs.
4. **Co-Create with Lived Experience:** Ensure our programmes are increasingly shaped and led by those with direct, lived experience of poverty or disability, to better address their specific needs.
5. **Drive Sustainable Regional Change:** Lead efforts to strengthen regional infrastructure, optimising and extending the impact of cultural and creative initiatives in the community.

Achieving Our Goals: Key Initiatives

To meet these strategic goals, we will implement research-informed, data-driven programmes that engage and inspire young people, addressing their needs as identified by themselves and by partner agencies, including schools, youth clubs, and organisations supporting those not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Our programmes will build cultural capital, broaden horizons, and support both personal and academic development.

Strengthening Research and Data-Driven Approaches

Our initiatives will draw on robust, peer-reviewed research conducted in partnership with Durham, Newcastle, and Northumbria Universities. We will utilise local data on health and well-being, school attendance, and pupil demographics, along with insights from our community networks, to target our efforts effectively. This approach will also guide our evaluation of impact, using context-sensitive frameworks.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
For the year ended 31 March 2025

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (CONTINUED)

Training for Teachers, Artists, and Cultural Providers

We will continue to enhance training programmes informed by leading research, including our own findings and those of the Durham Commission. These programmes will support educators, artists, and cultural providers in embedding creativity in their practice, in alignment with DfE guidelines, ACE's Quality Principles, and our experience from the Artsmark programme.

New Studios for Expanded Arts Delivery

Building on our experience with photography and writing programs funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, we are establishing The Forge's Mobile Studio. These facilities will enable us to deliver photography, animation, and filmmaking activities to young people in diverse settings and further expand our offerings across visual arts, creative writing, performance, and music.

Strategic Areas of Focus for 2023/2026

1. Creative Programmes in Schools:

We will develop and deliver artist-led programmes designed to enrich the lives of children and young people in County Durham, particularly in three "Left Behind" neighbourhoods. This will include a new programme aligned with the Artsmark framework, a co-created initiative under the County-wide Into the Light Programme, and ongoing SEND-focused projects aimed at using creative tools to support autistic children and those with motor skill challenges.

2. Improving Teaching for Creativity:

We will cascade the learning from our past programmes to educators and cultural providers, advocating for creative teaching practices and sharing insights from our SEND programmes. This will include consultancy and partnerships to embed creative practice in schools across the North East.

3. New Participatory Programs for Young People and Families:

We will create new partnerships and strengthen existing collaborations to promote arts practice locally. Informed by recent consultations, we will launch a new youth and community programme in Stanley in 2024/25.

4. Developing Career Pathways in the Creative Industries:

We will support emerging artists from disadvantaged communities by offering targeted training opportunities and career support, focusing on young people facing barriers due to class, qualifications, disability, or access needs.

5. Driving Sustainable Change through Regional Collaboration:

We will work with local authorities, cultural organisations, and community groups to place culture at the centre of regional planning. Our engagement with various networks will ensure our programs align with local priorities and address the needs and aspirations of young people.

With continued support from Arts Council England and other stakeholders in 2024/25, we are delivering work that is both impactful and transformative. Our renewed vision and strategic goals are enabling us to widen access, foster creativity, and drive lasting change across County Durham. We remain committed to working in partnership with schools, communities, and stakeholders to realise our shared ambitions for a more creative and equitable future.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2025***

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of County Durham Arts in Education Agency for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company 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 in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards 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 operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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. The Trustees 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.

In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by Section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed by order of the Trustees



**M Gilbey
Chair/Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621**

18 August 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

I hereby report to the Trustees/Members of County Durham Arts In Education Agency (Charity Registration Number 1086471) on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025 set out on pages 21 to 34.

Responsibilities and Basis of Report

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

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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



**Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales**

26 La Sagesse, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3AF

18 August 2025

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Income					
Income from Investments	3	1,187	-	1,187	1,852
Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies	4	102,554	132,103	234,657	386,554
Income from Charitable Activities	5	3,600	-	3,600	53,562
Total Income		107,341	132,103	239,444	441,968
Expenditure					
Expenditure on Raising Funds	6	37,989	-	37,989	39,804
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	7	35,457	205,978	241,435	243,507
Total Expenditure		73,446	205,978	279,424	283,311
Net Income/(Expenditure)		33,895	(73,875)	(39,980)	158,657
Balance brought forward at 1 April		237,647	192,659	430,306	271,649
Balance carried forward at 31 March	13	£271,542	£118,784	£390,326	£430,306

The notes on pages 23 to 34 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
BALANCE SHEET/STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 MARCH 2025**

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets	10	162	9,896
Current Assets			
Debtors	11	73,493	215,004
Cash At Bank & In Hand		363,804	254,975
		<u>437,297</u>	<u>469,979</u>
Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year	12	(47,133)	(49,569)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>390,164</u>	<u>420,410</u>
Total Net Assets	13	<u>£390,326</u>	<u>£430,306</u>
Represented by:			
Unrestricted General Funds	14	211,542	177,647
Unrestricted Designated Funds	14	60,000	60,000
Restricted Funds	14	118,784	192,659
		<u>£390,326</u>	<u>£430,306</u>

The notes on pages 23 to 34 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2025 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

These financial statements were approved and signed by a Member of the Board of Trustees on 18 August 2025.



**M Gilbey
Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621**

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Accounting Policies

Charity Information

County Durham Arts In Education is a private company, limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ.

The charity is a public benefit entity.

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 2 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Such income is only deferred when the donor or funder has specified that the grant or donation can only be used in future accounting periods or where the donor or funder has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Investment income, including interest on funds held on deposit, is recognised on a receivable basis.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised when a liability is incurred.

- Expenditure on raising funds are those costs of seeking potential funders and applying for funding.
- Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the planning and delivery of artistic productions and associated activities. This includes both the direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.
- Support or Indirect costs are those costs incurred in support of the charitable objectives. These have been allocated to the resources expended on a consistent basis that fairly reflects the true use of those resources within the organisation, such as allocating staff costs by time spent and other costs by their usage.
- Governance costs are those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements.

Pensions

The charity contributes to two pension schemes; one is a multi-employer defined benefit final salary scheme and the other is a defined contribution scheme. Further details can be found in Note 9.

The assets of the multi-employer scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. However, it is not possible to identify the charity's specific share of the underlying assets and liabilities. Consequently, the scheme has been accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme; and in accordance with FRS17 the costs of the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities.

For the defined contribution scheme the amount charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

Furniture, Fittings, IT & Office Equipment - 25% straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind which qualify as basic financial instruments. Such instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

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 charity.

Designated Funds comprise unrestricted funds set aside by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Restricted Funds reflect income received which a funder or donor requires must be spent on a particular purpose or where funds have been raised for a specific purpose. Such income and associated expenditure is shown as Restricted in the Statement of Financial Activities, whilst any unspent balances at the year-end are carried forward as Restricted Funds.

Taxation

County Durham Arts In Education Agency meets the definition required of a charitable company for UK Corporation Tax purposes. Consequently, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively for charitable purposes.

2. Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the circumstances of the charity and consider that adequate resources continue to be available to fund the activities of the charity for the foreseeable future. The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

3. Income from Investments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	1,187	-	1,187	1,852
	£1,187	£-	£1,187	£1,852

The 2024 total of £1,852 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

4. Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Donations	-	-	-	-
Grant Income				
Arts Council England – National Portfolio Organisation	89,054	-	89,054	89,054
Arts Council England – Artsmark Pilot Research	-	23,500	23,500	5,000
Culture Bridge North East – County Durham Cultural Education Partnership	-	10,000	10,000	16,500
Durham CC – Grow Future Skills / Into The Light	-	97,603	97,603	-
Durham CC – Culture Bridge North East Partnership	-	-	-	15,000
Durham County Council Adult & Community Services	13,500	-	13,500	13,500
Newcastle CC – Culture Bridge North East Partnership	-	1,000	1,000	10,000
Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Talking Cameras	-	-	-	237,000
UK Parliament - Speakers Art Fund	-	-	-	500
	£102,554	£132,103	£234,657	£386,554

Of the 2024 total of £386,554, £103,054 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £283,500 to Restricted Funds.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

5. Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Consultancy Fees	-	-	-	27,250
Critical Friend Income	3,600	-	3,600	3,600
DurhamWorks Fees	-	-	-	19,600
Education Programme	-	-	-	2,000
Speaking Fees	-	-	-	500
	-	-	-	612
	£3,600	£-	£3,600	£53,562

The 2024 total of £53,562 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

6. Expenditure on Raising Funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
	£	£	£	£
Salaries & On Costs	37,989	-	37,989	39,804
	£37,989	£-	£37,989	£39,804

The 2024 total of £39,804 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

7. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2025 £	Total 2024 £
Artistic Production/Project Costs				
Programme Costs	1,450	126,089	127,539	127,187
Salaries & On Costs	17,474	71,167	88,641	88,520
Support Costs				
Premises Costs	4,390	-	4,390	5,583
Administration & Office Costs	6,935	-	6,935	7,935
Depreciation	1,012	8,722	9,734	10,678
Governance Costs				
Independent Examiner's Fees	1,200	-	1,200	1,200
Other Finance/Accountancy Fees	442	-	442	264
Board Development	1,000	-	1,000	1,475
Consultancy	720	-	720	-
Governance Meeting Costs & Expenses	834	-	834	665
	£35,457	£205,978	£241,435	£243,507

Of the 2024 total of £243,507, £102,752 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £140,755 to Restricted Funds.

8. Net Income/(Expenditure)

	2025 £	2024 £
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Independent Examiner's Fees – current year	1,200	1,200
Depreciation of owned Tangible Fixed Assets	9,734	10,678

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

9. Staff Costs & Trustees' Remuneration

	2025	2024
	£	£
Gross Salary Costs	113,337	115,642
Employer's National Insurance	7,168	6,827
Employer's Pension Contributions	6,125	5,855
	£126,630	£128,324

Remuneration of Key Management Personnel, defined as the Chief Executive, was £54,217 including Employer's Pension Contributions (2024: £54,301). No employee received gross remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2024 - Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	2025	2024
	No.	No.
Fundraising	1	1
Artistic Production and Support	2	2
	3	3

In the year to 31 March 2025, £8,800 (2024: £13,000) in freelance fees were invoiced to the charity by Ms Sally Dixon, a Trustee, for work as a consultant and a freelance programme producer. At 31 March 2025 £Nil was owing to Ms Dixon (2024: £5,800).

In the course of 2024/25 and 2023/24, there were two occasions where the above-named Trustee was appointed to deliver work for which they were funded directly or indirectly by the Forge.

The first related to work done for the County Durham Cultural Education Partnership. The appointment was by the Partnership, the work overseen by the Partnership and the report was to the Partnership, but, for reasons of administrative convenience, the Partnership funds passed through The Forge's accounts and so were paid by The Forge to the Trustee concerned. In this case full and explicit agreement of the arrangement was made and formally recorded at a Forge Board meeting. This was in the full understanding that because the appointment and work were not for The Forge, there was no conflict of interest.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025**

9. Staff Costs & Trustees' Remuneration (Cont.)

The second related to a contract with Karbon Homes, (see below) for which we were put under severe time pressure. We approached four local consultants, who were all competent to do the work, to see if they were available to complete it within the very short timescale. Only one responded positively: they were a Forge Trustee. Other Trustees were approached (outside the meetings structure, because of the pressure of time) and agreed the proposal. The Trustee concerned attended no meetings, took no part in any decisions and received no information, until after the final conclusion of the project.

No other remuneration has been paid to any Trustees in the year (2024: £Nil).

No reimbursement was made in the year to Trustees for Travel and Subsistence expenses incurred in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2024: £Nil).

Pension benefits for senior staff are provided through Durham County Council Pension Fund, which is a defined benefit scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2025, on the advice of Durham County Council, County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of Nil% (2024: Nil%) of pensionable pay.

Pension benefits for other staff are provided through a Group Personal Pension Scheme, which is a defined contribution scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2025 County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of 10% of pensionable pay, provided that the employee made a minimum contribution of 5%. These amounts are paid over to the scheme on a monthly basis.

Contributions of £766 were outstanding at 31 March 2025 (2024: £732).

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	IT & Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2024	46,309	46,309
Additions in year	-	-
Disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2025	46,309	46,309
Accumulated Depreciation		
At 1 April 2024	36,413	36,413
Charge for year	9,734	9,734
Disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2025	46,147	46,147
Net Book Value		
At 31 March 2025	£162	£162
At 1 April 2024	£9,896	£9,896

11. Debtors

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade Debtors	900	36,012
Other Debtors	-	30,893
Prepayments	1,331	1,099
Accrued Income	71,262	147,000
	£73,493	£215,004

12. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year

	2025 £	2024 £
Trade Creditors	34,386	34,445
Other Creditors	1,177	809
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	1,010	879
Accruals	10,560	13,436
	£47,133	£49,569

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

13. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	162	-	162	9,896
Debtors	2,231	71,262	73,493	215,004
Cash at Bank and In Hand	293,846	69,958	363,804	254,975
Creditors – Amounts Due Within 1 Year	(24,697)	(22,436)	(47,133)	(49,569)
	£271,542	£118,784	£390,326	£430,306

14. Analysis of Charitable Funds

	Fund at 1 April 2024	Income in Year	Expended/ Transfers in Year	Fund at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds				
General Funds	125,647	107,341	(73,446)	211,542
Designated Funds				
Strategic Development Fund	60,000	-	-	60,000
	237,647	107,341	(73,446)	271,542
Restricted Funds				
ACE - Artsmark Pilot Research	3,169	23,500	(10,905)	15,764
Children In Need	8,722	-	(8,722)	-
Culture Bridge North East - CDCEP	13,925	10,000	(18,936)	4,989
Durham CC – Are You Listening?	3,850	-	-	3,850
Durham CC – Into The Light	-	97,603	(83,437)	14,166
Durham CC / Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	6,604	1,000	(7,604)	-
Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Talking Cameras	156,389	-	(76,374)	80,015
Total Restricted Funds	192,659	132,103	(205,978)	118,784
Total Funds	£430,306	£239,444	£(279,424)	£390,326

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14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)

Name of Designated Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Designated Fund
Strategic Development Fund	Towards the cost of exploring new ways of working and new partnerships and creating a provision for match funding for specific projects
Name of Restricted Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Restricted Fund
Arts Council England - Artsmark Pilot Research	Towards the costs of undertaking Artsmark Pilot Research
Children In Need	Towards the cost of equipment for use with Children & Young People
Culture Bridge North East - CDCEP	Towards the costs of the County Durham Cultural Education Partnership
Durham CC – Are You Listening?	Towards the cost of the Are You Listening project
Durham CC – Into The Light	Towards the cost of the Into The Light project
Durham CC / Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	Towards the cost of a culture-led mental health wellbeing programme
Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Teaching Cameras	Towards the cost of Talking Cameras

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15. Related Party Transactions

The charity has a close working relationship with Arts Council England which is a registered charity and has provided significant project funding which enables the charity to carry out its charitable objectives. In total, grant funding of £112,554 (2024: £94,054) from Arts Council England was recognised in the year.

At 31 March 2025, £22,262 was owing to County Durham Arts In Education Agency from Arts Council England (31 March 2024: £Nil).

16. Taxation

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

17. Financial Commitments

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial periods.

18. Company Limited by Guarantee

The charity is incorporated under the Companies Act 1985 and is limited by guarantee, each member having undertaken to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1 as may be required in the event of the company being wound up whilst he or she is still a member or within one year thereafter.

There are currently 5 members of the company (2024 - 7 members).

Accounts

Company Registration Number 04027621

Registered Charity Number 1086471

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REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
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**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2024***

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2024.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity Name	County Durham Arts In Education Agency (trading as The Forge)
Charity registration number	1086471
Company registration number	04027621
Registered office	The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ

Trustees

For the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, the Board of Trustees is the Board of Directors of the charitable company and is referred to as the Trustees throughout this report.

The Trustees of County Durham Arts In Education Agency during the period and to the date of signing this report are as follows:

Mr M Gilbey (Chair)	
Ms G Callaghan	
Mr R Cradock	Appointed 1 January 2024
Mrs S Campbell	Resigned 31 December 2023
Ms S Dixon	
Mr B Ebbatson	Deceased 19 July 2024
Ms A Nicholson	Appointed 5 February 2024
Ms R Robson	
Dr J Thomas	Appointed 1 January 2024

Company Secretary	Mr A Harrington
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Independent Examiner	Mr P O'Hara FCA, Chartered Accountant, 26 La Sagesse, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3AF
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**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Documents

County Durham Arts In Education Agency Ltd is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5 July 2000, registered in England and Wales under company number 04027621 and governed by its Articles of Association, originally registered upon incorporation, as amended by Special Resolutions dated 26/03/2001, 23/01/2014 and 26/7/2023.

The charity was registered with the Charity Commission on 3 May 2001.

This year we undertook a full review of the governing documents of the organisation with specialist consultant Charlie Catrell. The governance documents were redrafted and submitted to the Charity Commission and Companies House in July 2023.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

Eligibility for membership of the charity, and membership of the Board of Trustees, is governed by the Articles of Association. There are no restrictions in the governing document on the operation of the charity other than those imposed by general charity law.

Structure and Governance

As at 31 March 2024 the charity had a Board of seven non-executive Trustees.

The Board meets a minimum of four times per year. The Executive Director is in attendance but has no voting rights. Additional committees and working groups are established from time to time to explore specific issues.

Detailed written Board reports and an agenda are prepared and circulated in advance of meetings.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees

The minimum number of Board Members is three and the maximum is 12.

In the past, potential new Board Members were identified through a mixture of formal and informal means, including discussions and recommendations offered by Trustees, outside advisors to the organisation, peer organisations and Arts Council England as well as through a range of advertising channels. Following an extensive process, including making knowledge of vacancies public through various channels, two new trustees were recruited to the Board in 2023. As part of the Board review process, a working group was established to review our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and our organisational policy and action plan was reviewed.

The Board also identified the need to reflect the characteristics and diversity of the communities we serve in the programmes we develop with those communities. To achieve this, we have identified a working group of teachers and educationalists drawn from the North Durham area. We can draw upon the support and advice from this group in service delivery on an ongoing basis.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees are inducted by the Chair of the Board and Executive Director and are provided with a range of resources and publications to support their understanding of The Forge's activities, including the latest annual report and accounts, a full role description and information on current and past projects.

The organisation also holds periodic Board development days and Trustees are encouraged to take up training opportunities outside the organisation when they become available.

Trustees are also kept informed on an ongoing basis around developments in both the arts in education and wider charity sectors by the dissemination of relevant information and newsletters from Arts Council England and the Charity Commission.

Organisational Structure

Day-to-day responsibility for the management of the organisation is delegated to the Executive Director, who is supported by the Creative Producer and an Administrator. Line management, supervision and appraisal is undertaken of all staff to ensure the team continues to develop their skills and working practices as part of our drive to continually to improve quality.

The Board remains heavily involved in the creation and implementation of key policy.

Key Management Personnel

The Board, who give their time freely and have received no remuneration in the year in relation to their role as Trustees, have considered who are the Key Management Personnel (KMP) of the charity. Together with the Board, these KMP are those in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the activities of the charity on a day-to-day basis.

The remuneration of the KMP is reviewed annually. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels of other charities and similar organisations within the sector and the region. Pay levels are set using this information together with the budget and forecast information, ensuring that the charity can afford any proposed increases. The Board then agrees any uplift to remuneration also reflecting indices of inflation.

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission and have established the required optimum levels of reserves for the organisation.

The Forge often requires a long lead-in time to plan programmes and projects, working within the expected programming schedules of schools, communities and artists. The reserves policy reflects the need to provide a degree of security to support planning, and to provide confidence to stakeholders that artistic plans are soundly-based and funded.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Reserves Policy (Cont.)

The Trustees aim firstly to hold a level of unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would crystallise if The Forge's funding were to be interrupted or withdrawn and/or it were unable to continue operating.

Unrestricted Funds – General Funds

The Trustees have allocated £110,000 to enable the organisation to meet contractual liabilities and to maintain continuity in the event of delays with receipt of funding, or severe public sector cutbacks, or schools being less likely to spend money on arts related activities.

It has allocated a dissolution fund of £35,000 which provides for the costs of dissolution should the charity be unable to continue. It will be used to pay notice periods, redundancies and the expenses of running The Forge until closure of the organisation.

The Trustees have also allocated £25,000 to cover costs to mitigate risks associated with the potential loss of long-standing post holders in a small core team, eg succession planning, appointing short term staff to bridge any gaps in staffing, external consultancy, and appointment of new post holders.

The total free reserves required by the organisation are therefore £170,000.

Unrestricted Funds – Designated Funds

In addition, the Trustees have then agreed to retain an additional allowance of £60,000 as Designated Unrestricted Funds, to enable the charity to:

- respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process
- contribute match funding to the Paul Hamlyn Foundation Talking Cameras project
- contribute match funding to the Youth Festival

The charity's total unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2024 are £237,647. The charity's 'free' unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2024, defined as non-designated unrestricted funds, excluding the value of unrestricted Tangible Fixed Assets, are £176,541.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis as part of the charity's budgeting processes.

Fundraising Policy

The charity is required to report how it deals with fundraising from the public. The charity does not use a professional fundraiser or commercial participator to raise funds. Any monies raised direct from the public follows all guidelines set out by the Charity Commission and UK law in every respect. We respect the privacy and contact preferences of all public donors.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (CONTINUED)

Grant Making Policy

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

Investment Policy

The Forge's cash reserves, over and above those required for day-to-day working capital, have typically been invested in a combination of a higher-rate, instant access deposit account and various fixed-term cash deposit accounts.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Charitable Purpose

County Durham Arts In Education agency's charitable objects are to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

Aims & Objectives

County Durham Arts In Education Agency's charitable objects are to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

The charity aims to fulfil this by creating participatory arts projects that inspire young people to become successful, confident individuals, capable of reaching their full potential and by making cultural programmes that are courageous, relevant and excellent.

Public Benefit

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

- Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits
- Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

The Forge has been actively involved in a range of innovative programs throughout 2023-2024, aimed at enhancing cultural engagement, supporting creative learning, and fostering community development. Through these efforts, The Forge continues to demonstrate its commitment to enriching the cultural landscape of County Durham and empowering local communities through creative education and engagement.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Public Benefit (Cont.)

The Forge's diverse programmes reflect a strategic focus on promoting arts education and creative development across multiple fronts. For example, our commission from Durham County Council to schedule the education programme of the **Durham International Brass Festival** showcases the agency's ability to engage a wide audience through large-scale events, reaching over 14,944 pupils across 62 schools. This initiative not only supports music education, but also reinforces the importance of cultural engagement in the broader educational landscape.

The organisation's leadership in delivering the Artsmark Training for Schools and the Artsmark Place-Based Pilot Programme illustrates its commitment to providing sustainable frameworks for arts education, particularly in underrepresented areas. The pilot programme, focused on schools in semi-rural, economically disadvantaged regions, highlights the innovative use of the Artsmark framework to address specific local challenges, such as limited access to cultural resources and a lack of cultural capital among pupils.

By positioning schools as co-researchers, The Forge fosters a collaborative approach that empowers educators and ensures that the programme's outcomes are relevant and impactful.

The **Talking Cameras** programme, funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, provides a model of inclusive, SEND-focused arts education that leverages co-creation and shared learning methodologies. The involvement of a diverse team of artists, teachers, and staff in developing the programme underscores The Forge's emphasis on fostering a community of enquiry, where different stakeholders contribute to a shared understanding and expertise. This programme's success in upskilling both artists and teaching staff demonstrates the potential of arts education to build capacity and enhance educational practices.

Similarly, participatory programmes like **Home** and the **Stanley Young People's Programme** emphasise The Forge's dedication to community-driven creative projects. These initiatives not only provide artistic opportunities for children and young people, but also address broader social issues, such as identity, belonging, and representation. The use of photography, writing, and animation in these projects allows participants to explore personal and communal narratives, fostering both self-expression and social cohesion.

Furthermore, The Forge's strategic collaboration with organisations like Karbon Homes on projects such as the **Fair Foundations Strategy** demonstrates its role in driving cultural regeneration and community revitalisation. By combining research-based approaches with creative programming, The Forge helps local stakeholders envision new possibilities for cultural and social development in the region.

The **Partnership Investment Programme** and the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Audit** reflect The Forge's commitment to addressing broader societal challenges, such as mental health and sustainable development, through culture-led initiatives. These programmes not only highlight the potential of the arts to contribute to public health and sustainability objectives, but also position The Forge as a leader in the field of cultural education and policy innovation.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Public Benefit (Cont.)

The Forge's extensive range of programmes over the past year demonstrates its strategic commitment to advancing arts education, cultural engagement, and community development in County Durham. From large-scale events like the Durham International Brass Festival to targeted initiatives addressing social, educational, and economic inequalities, The Forge leverages its expertise to make a significant impact across various domains. By fostering partnerships, promoting inclusivity, and championing creative expression, The Forge continues to play a vital role in shaping the cultural and educational landscape of the region. Looking ahead, the organisation is well-positioned to further its mission of enriching lives through the arts, creating lasting change, and inspiring future generations.

All of these benefits are clear, evidenced and relate directly to the charity's aims. In addition, the Trustees do not consider that any significant detriment or harm flows from The Forge's work.

Risk Management

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks. Current circumstances have brought new risks, which the Board is actively reviewing as part of a fresh look at the place and role of The Forge in a post-COVID world.

We have a risk management strategy in place which comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate any risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place.

The Trustees have for some years considered the key risks facing the charity and the mitigating actions taken to be as follows:

Long-term absence/resignation of Executive Director, Creative Producer or Trustees

- Increasing artistic team improves succession plans for Executive Director
- Increasing Trustees improves resilience and Trustee succession planning
- Increased Board capacity supports Creative Producer absence / recruitment.

Not achieving income targets (trusts and foundations, earned income, individual giving):

- Development of a strategic plan to support further diversification of funding
- Collaboration with national and international partners improves awareness of relevant commissioning and funding opportunities.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Risk Management (Cont.)

Not achieving audience targets:

- Developing a teacher advisory group to support alignment of programme with schools' needs
- Ongoing review of relevance and value of programme
- Developing a robust marketing plan for every project
- Collaborating with venue partners and Audience Agency, to analyse data
- Increased understanding of audiences informs effective marketing.

Not delivering artistic excellence:

- Engaging a highly experienced artist as a mentor for major projects' creative teams
- Implementation of the Arts Council's Quality Principles for children and young people (CYP)
- Collaborating with exceptional artists
- Sharing work-in-progress with audiences and peers to gain critical feedback
- Evaluating artistic achievements and shortcomings for every project
- Creating plans to continually improve artistic practice.

The Trustees also manage the general financial risks arising by ensuring that:

- Prudent budgets have been set for the next financial year
- The charity maintains a low-cost base
- Regular management accounts are provided, showing the performance against budget
- Contingency plans are in place for the actions which would be taken if income appears unlikely to reach its target
- Reserves policies have been adopted which provide an appropriate amount of uncommitted Reserves which will always enable the charity to meet all its liabilities even if income targets are not achieved.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Achievements in the Year

We believe in the power of creativity to shape young minds and strengthen communities. Last year's initiatives are perfect examples of this commitment, each program a story of discovery, growth, and connection.

Working with Durham County Council to deliver the Durham International Brass Festival

The 2023 Durham International BRASS Festival Education programme was a great success, running from Tuesday, July 11 to Friday, July 14. Over these four days, ten brass bands visited 62 schools across County Durham, engaging with 14,944 pupils. Feedback from the schools was overwhelmingly positive, highlighting the festival's impact on students' cultural education and appreciation for music. Durham County Council, the commissioning organisation, expressed their delight with the programme's outcomes and the enthusiasm it generated in the community.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Artsmark Training for Schools

During Spring and Summer 2023, we continued to play a leading role in delivering the Artsmark programme in the North East. Our work helped schools integrate creative learning into their curricula until Autumn 2023, when we transitioned this responsibility to Goldsmiths, University of London, Arts Council England's new delivery partner for the national award programme.

Continuing our relationship with Artsmark and Arts Council England

After completing our Artsmark delivery contract, we were awarded a new place-based pilot programme commission by Arts Council England (ACE). This initiative aims to explore how the Artsmark framework can better support schools in semi-rural, economically disadvantaged areas. We are partnering with two schools in Stanley, Shield Row Primary School and Annfield Plain Junior School, to identify how Artsmark can help overcome place-based barriers and enhance pupils' cultural capital. Both schools are positioned as co-researchers in this two-year programme, and findings will be disseminated widely across various networks to support broader learning and impact.

Talking Cameras: A New SEND Programme

We have successfully completed the first two terms of our new Paul Hamlyn Foundation funded SEND programme, "Talking Cameras," at two Dales settings: Blythdale and Ashdale. Artists Madeleine Waller, Lindsay Duncanson, and Victoria Doyle collaborated closely with teachers to deliver this innovative programme. At its inception, we established a "Community of Enquiry" involving teachers, senior leaders, teaching assistants, artists, and The Forge staff to ensure shared agency and ownership. A series of training sessions were scheduled to support skills development. This included induction training for artists, photography skills training for school staff, and photovoice training shared across both groups, fostering a common understanding and upskilling all participants.

Throughout the year, our artists worked with various classes to test new approaches for engaging children with their curriculum, building their confidence and creativity. The results of this work were shared with parents and the wider school community through scheduled events. In recognition of our expertise in developing authentic co-creations, The Forge was invited to present the "Talking Cameras" project and its Community of Enquiry methodology to other Paul Hamlyn Foundation Arts-Based Learning grantees in March 2024.

Exploring the Meaning of Home

In partnership with Karbon Homes, we embarked on a journey to explore what "home" means to children in Stanley. Two schools, Annfield Plain Junior School and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, became the creative hubs where photographer Madeleine Waller and writer Dr Bob Beagrie guided the students through photography and writing exercises. The children captured their thoughts, feelings, and images of home, turning them into powerful works of art. The project culminated in a large-scale public exhibition on the walls of the Old Board School in Stanley.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

This event, held in March 2024, was more than just an art show; it was a celebration of the children's voices and their ability to convey the significance of home in ways that resonated deeply with the community. The launch event was lively, with children from St Joseph's acting as cub reporters and photographers, documenting the event for their school newspaper. The project not only showcased their creative talents, but also strengthened their ties to their community.

Amplifying Young Voices in Stanley

Our commitment to engaging young people in Stanley continued with a new programme for older youth at South Stanley Youth Club. Responding to ongoing conversations with local organisations like PACT House, we developed a six-week photography workshop specifically for LGBTQI+ youth (ages 17-21). Led by photographer Lindsay Duncanson, the workshops provided a safe space for young people to explore their identities and develop new skills. The sessions were a hit, inspiring participants to express themselves through the lens of a camera. To ensure our future programmes are aligned with the needs of Stanley's youth, we also conducted in-depth research, including interviews and surveys with youth club attendees and leaders. The findings from this research will help shape future creative programmes, ensuring they remain relevant and impactful.

Bringing Democracy to Life Through Animation

Understanding democracy is essential for young citizens, but teaching it in an engaging way can be challenging. Thanks to a grant from the Speaker's Art Fund, we co-developed a unique animation project with animator Sheryl Jenkins and the Deputy Head of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School. Year 5 children explored the key elements of democracy, translating complex ideas into accessible imagery and sound. The result was the film "Democracy," a child's-eye view of how our democratic system works and the importance of voting and making one's voice heard.

Celebrating the Environment with Northumbria in Bloom

When Stanley Town Council sought to enhance their Northumbria in Bloom entry, they turned to The Forge for help. We designed a visual arts program at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School to create environmentally themed banners. Working alongside animator Sheryl Jenkins, the children developed imaginative cartoon characters to deliver conservation messages, which were displayed around the school. Their creativity not only brightened up the high street, but also contributed to Stanley's improved gold award in the competition.

Nurturing Emerging Artists and Supporting Vulnerable Youth

Our commitment to fostering creative talent extends to vulnerable young people across County Durham. This year, we completed the final year of our DurhamWorks' funded training courses, pairing each young person with an artist mentor for one-on-one support. The results were outstanding: three participants earned their Bronze Arts Award qualifications, and others produced creative work ranging from writing, filming and editing a short film, developing a professional show-reel, or publishing a first novel. This programme has been a transformative experience, opening up new possibilities and pathways for young people who need it most.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Reimagining Stanley's Future Through Creative Regeneration

Recognising our expertise in cultural engagement, Karbon Homes commissioned us to explore regeneration opportunities for their newly acquired property, the Old Board School. Our research provided a roadmap for revitalising these areas through creative initiatives, from identifying potential partners and funding, to learning from successful urban regeneration projects across the UK. This strategic approach aims to breathe new life into Stanley, aligning with Karbon's Fair Foundations Strategy.

Building Stronger Foundations for Positive Mental Health for Young People

Collaborating with key partners, including the County Durham Cultural Education Partnership, Culture Bridge North East and Durham County Council, we delivered a two-year culture-led mental health wellbeing program in three North Durham schools. This initiative aimed to create scalable and sustainable solutions to mental health challenges using creative engagement. Our research framework, expanded in the second year, was evaluated by Professor Mike Fleming from Durham University, affirming its success and setting a strong foundation for future work.

Aligning with Global Goals for Local Impact

Partnering with Durham University, we participated in a groundbreaking project to measure the social and economic impacts of cultural heritage against the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This "Shared Regional Approach" has allowed us to reflect on our progress, enhance our practices, and demonstrate the value of culture in achieving broader social objectives.

Continuing the Drive for Cultural Excellence in County Durham

As The Forge moves forward, we remain dedicated to enhancing cultural opportunities throughout County Durham. Tony Harrington, our Executive Director, has recently stepped down as Chair of Culture Durham, having successfully overseen a comprehensive review of its structure and objectives. However, his passion for the arts remains unwavering, as he continues to lead and support numerous cultural initiatives across the region through his roles as Chair of the Durham and Darlington Music Education Hub and Tin Arts, and as a Trustee for Durham based charity Northern Heartlands.

Looking Ahead

At The Forge, every programme, every partnership, and every project is a step toward a more vibrant and inclusive cultural landscape. We look forward to building on these successes, deepening our impact, and continuing to inspire creativity in all corners of our community.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Financial Review

The out-turn for the year is an unrestricted surplus of £15,912 (2023: Deficit £16,010). The deficit will be deducted from Unrestricted Reserves, leaving a balance on Unrestricted Funds, including Designated Funds, at 31 March 2024 of £237,647.

In the course of 2023/24, The Forge Officers and Board continued to work hard to develop the sustainability of the organisation. This included short, mid and long-term planning and financial modelling. We have a two-pronged approach to income generation which includes:

- Direct earned income for services
- Income generated from external funders to deliver produced programme

We were proactively responding to pressure on school budgets and strengthening our resilience through:

- Developing staff skills
- Raising our academic and research profile
- Development of evidence-based arts interventions that appeal to school leadership priorities
- Securing funding from a wider range of non-arts based social action funding streams
- Deepening our relationship with existing funders through responsive stewardship
- Diversifying and developing our market share to include FE and Sixth Form Colleges

The Finance and HR Sub-Group takes a hands-on approach to resilience and feeds back to the full Board on a quarterly basis. Arts accountancy specialist Pete O'Hara has continued in his role as a financial advisor to the Board.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

Securing a New Era of Growth and Impact

This year marked a significant milestone for our organisation as we secured National Portfolio Organisation funding from Arts Council England for the next three years. This funding reflects a new period of ambition and commitment, as we continue to enhance creative and cultural opportunities for children and families in County Durham's most underserved areas.

Organisational Review and Theory of Change

To guide our work for 2023-26, we undertook an extensive organisational review with input from our Board, service users, and stakeholders. Through this collaborative process, we developed a Theory of Change to sharpen our focus on improving access to arts and culture for those most in need. Our new strategic model is aligned with the Arts Council's "Let's Create" strategy and is shaped by our deep understanding of the local context and community needs.

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PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (CONTINUED)

Our Five Strategic Goals

1. **Expand Access to High-Quality Arts:** Increase access to cultural learning and participatory arts opportunities in schools and communities, ensuring more young people can experience high-quality arts.
2. **Developing multiliteracies and Tackling Digital Poverty:** Develop targeted photography and digital arts programmes to help young people affected by digital poverty to unlock their creativity.
3. **Tailor Arts Education to Needs:** Offer a range of differentiated, high-quality arts education programs that support diverse creative ambitions and learning needs.
4. **Co-Create with Lived Experience:** Ensure our programs are increasingly shaped and led by those with direct, lived experience of poverty or disability, to better address their specific needs.
5. **Drive Sustainable Regional Change:** Lead efforts to strengthen regional infrastructure, optimising and extending the impact of cultural and creative initiatives in the community.

Achieving Our Goals: Key Initiatives

To meet these strategic goals, we will implement research-informed, data-driven programmes that engage and inspire young people, addressing their needs as identified by themselves and by partner agencies, including schools, youth clubs, and organisations supporting those not in education, employment, or training (NEET). Our programs will build cultural capital, broaden horizons, and support both personal and academic development.

Strengthening Research and Data-Driven Approaches

Our initiatives will draw on robust, peer-reviewed research conducted in partnership with Durham, Newcastle, and Northumbria Universities. We will utilise local data on health and well-being, school attendance, and pupil demographics, along with insights from our community networks, to target our efforts effectively. This approach will also guide our evaluation of impact, using context-sensitive frameworks.

Training for Teachers, Artists, and Cultural Providers

We will continue to enhance training programmes informed by leading research, including our own findings and those of the Durham Commission. These programmes will support educators, artists, and cultural providers in embedding creativity in their practice, in alignment with DfE guidelines, ACE's Quality Principles, and our experience from the Artsmark programme.

New Studios for Expanded Arts Delivery

Building on our experience with photography and writing programs funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, we are establishing The Forge's new Studio and Mobile Studio. These facilities will enable us to deliver photography, animation, and filmmaking activities to young people in diverse settings and further expand our offerings across visual arts, creative writing, performance, and music.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
For the year ended 31 March 2024

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (CONTINUED)

Strategic Areas of Focus for 2023-2026

1. Creative Programmes in Schools:

We will develop and deliver artist-led programmes designed to enrich the lives of children and young people in County Durham, particularly in three "Left Behind" neighbourhoods. This will include a new programme aligned with the Artsmark framework, a co-created initiative under the County-wide Into the Light Programme, and ongoing SEND-focused projects aimed at using creative tools to support autistic children and those with motor skill challenges.

2. Improving Teaching for Creativity:

We will cascade the learning from our past programmes to educators and cultural providers, advocating for creative teaching practices and sharing insights from our SEND programmes. This will include consultancy and partnerships to embed creative practice in schools across the North East.

3. New Participatory Programs for Young People and Families:

We will create new partnerships and strengthen existing collaborations to promote arts practice locally. Informed by recent consultations, we will launch a new youth and community programme in Stanley in 2024-2025.

4. Developing Career Pathways in the Creative Industries:

We will support emerging artists from disadvantaged communities by offering targeted training opportunities and career support, focusing on young people facing barriers due to class, qualifications, disability, or access needs.

5. Driving Sustainable Change through Regional Collaboration:

We will work with local authorities, cultural organisations, and community groups to place culture at the centre of regional planning. Our engagement with various networks will ensure our programs align with local priorities and address the needs and aspirations of young people.

With the support of the National Portfolio Organisation funding, we are poised to make a transformative impact over the next three years. Our renewed vision and strategic goals set the stage for expanding access, fostering creativity, and driving sustainable change across County Durham. We look forward to working with our partners, stakeholders, and the community to achieve these shared ambitions.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2024***

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of County Durham Arts in Education Agency for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company 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 in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards 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 operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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. The Trustees 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.

In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by Section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed by order of the Trustees



**M Gilbey
Chair/Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621**

28 October 2024

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

I hereby report to the Trustees/Members of County Durham Arts In Education Agency (Charity Registration Number 1086471) on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2024 set out on pages 18 to 31.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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



**Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales**

26 La Sagesse, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne NE2 3AF

28 October 2024

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income					
Income from Investments	3	1,852	-	1,852	2,272
Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies	4	103,054	283,500	386,554	102,054
Income from Charitable Activities	5	53,562	-	53,562	74,600
Total Income		158,468	283,500	441,968	178,926
Expenditure					
Expenditure on Raising Funds	6	39,804	-	39,804	33,087
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	7	102,752	140,755	243,507	195,987
Total Expenditure		142,556	140,755	283,311	229,074
Net Income/(Expenditure)		15,912	142,745	158,657	(50,148)
Balance brought forward at 1 April		221,735	49,914	271,649	321,797
Balance carried forward at 31 March	13	£237,647	£192,659	£430,306	£271,649

The notes on pages 20 to 31 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
BALANCE SHEET/STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets	10	9,896	20,283
Current Assets			
Debtors	11	215,004	11,159
Cash At Bank & In Hand		254,975	291,397
		<u>469,979</u>	<u>302,556</u>
Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year	12	(49,569)	(51,190)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>420,410</u>	<u>251,366</u>
Total Net Assets	13	<u>£430,306</u>	<u>£271,649</u>
Represented by:			
Unrestricted General Funds	14	177,647	109,735
Unrestricted Designated Funds	14	60,000	112,000
Restricted Funds	14	192,659	49,914
		<u>£430,306</u>	<u>£271,649</u>

The notes on pages 20 to 31 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2024 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

These financial statements were approved and signed by a Member of the Board of Trustees on 28 October 2024.



M Gilbey
Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

1. Accounting Policies

Charity Information

County Durham Arts In Education is a private company, limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ.

The charity is a public benefit entity.

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 2 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Such income is only deferred when the donor or funder has specified that the grant or donation can only be used in future accounting periods or where the donor or funder has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Investment income, including interest on funds held on deposit, is recognised on a receivable basis.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised when a liability is incurred.

- Expenditure on raising funds are those costs of seeking potential funders and applying for funding.
- Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the planning and delivery of artistic productions and associated activities. This includes both the direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.
- Support or Indirect costs are those costs incurred in support of the charitable objectives. These have been allocated to the resources expended on a consistent basis that fairly reflects the true use of those resources within the organisation, such as allocating staff costs by time spent and other costs by their usage.
- Governance costs are those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements.

Pensions

The charity contributes to two pension schemes; one is a multi-employer defined benefit final salary scheme and the other is a defined contribution scheme. Further details can be found in Note 9.

The assets of the multi-employer scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. However, it is not possible to identify the charity's specific share of the underlying assets and liabilities. Consequently, the scheme has been accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme; and in accordance with FRS17 the costs of the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities.

For the defined contribution scheme the amount charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

Furniture, Fittings, IT & Office Equipment - 25% straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind which qualify as basic financial instruments. Such instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

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 charity.

Designated Funds comprise unrestricted funds set aside by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Restricted Funds reflect income received which a funder or donor requires must be spent on a particular purpose or where funds have been raised for a specific purpose. Such income and associated expenditure is shown as Restricted in the Statement of Financial Activities, whilst any unspent balances at the year-end are carried forward as Restricted Funds.

Taxation

County Durham Arts In Education Agency meets the definition required of a charitable company for UK Corporation Tax purposes. Consequently, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively for charitable purposes.

2. Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the circumstances of the charity and consider that adequate resources continue to be available to fund the activities of the charity for the foreseeable future. The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

3. Income from Investments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	1,852	-	1,852	2,272
	£1,852	£-	£1,852	£2,272

The 2023 total of £2,272 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

4. Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Donations	-	-	-	-
Grant Income				
Arts Council England – National Portfolio Organisation	89,054	-	89,054	58,554
Arts Council England – Artsmark Pilot Research	-	5,000	5,000	-
Arts Council England – Culture Durham Review	-	-	-	10,000
Culture Bridge North East – County Durham Cultural Education Partnership	-	16,500	16,500	-
Durham CC – Are You Listening?	-	-	-	7,000
Durham CC – Culture Bridge North East Partnership	-	15,000	15,000	-
Durham County Council Adult & Community Services	13,500	-	13,500	13,500
Newcastle CC – Culture Bridge North East Partnership	-	10,000	10,000	10,000
Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Talking Cameras	-	237,000	237,000	-
Newcastle CC – Creative Schools Bursary	-	-	-	3,000
UK Parliament - Speakers Art Fund	500	-	500	-
	£103,054	£283,500	£386,554	£102,054

Of the 2023 total of £102,054, £72,554 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £29,500 to Restricted Funds.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

5. Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Artsmark Development Days	-	-	-	28,000
Consultancy Fees	27,250	-	27,250	-
Critical Friend Income	3,600	-	3,600	3,600
DurhamWorks Fees	19,600	-	19,600	24,400
Education Programme	2,000	-	2,000	18,300
Speaking Fees	500	-	500	300
	612	-	612	-
	£53,562	£-	£53,562	£74,600

Of the 2023 total of £74,600, £46,600 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £28,000 to Restricted Funds.

6. Expenditure on Raising Funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2024	2023
	£	£	£	£
Salaries & On Costs	39,804	-	39,804	33,087
	£39,804	£-	£39,804	£33,087

The 2023 total of £33,087 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

7. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Artistic Production/Project Costs				
Programme Costs	34,829	92,358	127,187	67,284
Salaries & On Costs	48,896	39,624	88,520	99,260
Support Costs				
Premises Costs	5,583	-	5,583	8,558
Administration & Office Costs	7,935	-	7,935	7,308
Depreciation	1,905	8,773	10,678	11,505
Governance Costs				
Independent Examiner's Fees	1,200	-	1,200	1,200
Other Finance/Accountancy Fees	264	-	264	240
Board Development	1,475	-	1,475	102
Governance Meeting Costs & Expenses	665	-	665	530
	£102,752	£140,755	£243,507	£195,987

Of the 2023 total of £195,987, £104,349 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £91,638 to Restricted Funds.

8. Net Income/(Expenditure)

	2024 £	2023 £
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Independent Examiner's Fees – current year	1,200	1,200
Depreciation of owned Tangible Fixed Assets	10,678	11,505

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

9. Staff Costs & Trustees' Remuneration

	2024	2023
	£	£
Gross Salary Costs	115,642	105,129
Employer's National Insurance	6,827	6,684
Employer's Pension Contributions	5,855	20,534
	£128,324	£132,347

Remuneration of Key Management Personnel, defined as the Chief Executive, was £54,301 including Employer's Pension Contributions (2023: £64,363). No employee received gross remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2023 - Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	2024	2023
	No.	No.
Fundraising	1	1
Artistic Production and Support	2	2
	3	3

In the year to 31 March 2024, £13,000 in freelance fees (2023: £Nil) were invoiced to the charity by Ms Sally Dixon, a Trustee, for work as a consultant and a freelance programme producer. At 31 March 2024 £5,800 was owing to Ms Dixon (2023: £Nil).

In the course of 2023/24, there were two occasions where the above-named Trustee was appointed to deliver work for which they were funded directly or indirectly by the Forge.

The first related to work done for the County Durham Cultural Education Partnership. The appointment was by the Partnership, the work overseen by the Partnership and the report was to the Partnership, but, for reasons of administrative convenience, the Partnership funds passed through The Forge's accounts and so were paid by The Forge to the Trustee concerned. In this case full and explicit agreement of the arrangement was made and formally recorded at a Forge Board meeting. This was in the full understanding that because the appointment and work were not for The Forge, there was no conflict of interest.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

9. Staff Costs & Trustees' Remuneration (Cont.)

The second related to a contract with Karbon Homes, (see below) for which we were put under severe time pressure. We approached four local consultants, who were all competent to do the work, to see if they were available to complete it within the very short timescale. Only one responded positively: they were a Forge Trustee. Other Trustees were approached (outside the meetings structure, because of the pressure of time) and agreed the proposal. The Trustee concerned attended no meetings, took no part in any decisions and received no information, until after the final conclusion of the project.

No other remuneration has been paid to any Trustees in the year (2023: £Nil).

No reimbursement was made in the year to Trustees for Travel and Subsistence expenses incurred in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2023: £Nil).

Pension benefits for senior staff are provided through Durham County Council Pension Fund, which is a defined benefit scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2024, on the advice of Durham County Council, County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of Nil% (2023: 30.3%) of pensionable pay.

Pension benefits for other staff are provided through a Group Personal Pension Scheme, which is a defined contribution scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2024 County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of 10% of pensionable pay, provided that the employee made a minimum contribution of 5%. These amounts are paid over to the scheme on a monthly basis.

Contributions of £732 were outstanding at 31 March 2024 (2023: £697).

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	IT & Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2023	46,018	46,018
Additions in year	291	291
Disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2024	46,309	46,309
Accumulated Depreciation		
At 1 April 2023	25,735	25,735
Charge for year	10,678	10,678
Disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2024	36,413	36,413
Net Book Value		
At 31 March 2024	£9,896	£9,896
At 1 April 2023	£20,283	£20,283

11. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade Debtors	36,012	5,150
Other Debtors	30,893	-
Prepayments	1,099	1,009
Accrued Income	147,000	5,000
	£215,004	£11,159

12. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade Creditors	34,445	24,820
Other Creditors	809	697
Income Received In Advance	-	6,000
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	879	1,251
Accruals	13,436	18,422
	£49,569	£51,190

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

13. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	1,106	8,790	9,896	20,283
Debtors	68,004	147,000	215,004	11,159
Cash at Bank and In Hand	202,526	52,449	254,975	291,397
Creditors – Amounts Due Within 1 Year	(33,989)	(15,580)	(49,569)	(51,190)
	£237,647	£192,659	£430,306	£271,649

14. Analysis of Charitable Funds

	Fund at 1 April 2023	Income in Year	Expended/ Transfers in Year	Fund at 31 March 2024
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds				
General Funds	109,735	158,468	(90,556)	125,647
Designated Funds				
Project Fund	67,000	-	(67,000)	-
Strategic Development Fund	45,000	-	15,000	60,000
	221,735	158,468	(142,556)	237,647
Restricted Funds				
Arts Council England (ACE) – Culture Durham Review	3,865	-	(3,865)	-
ACE - Artsmark Pilot Research	-	5,000	(1,831)	3,169
Children In Need	17,495	-	(8,773)	8,722
Culture Bridge North East - Artsmark	-	10,000	(10,000)	-
Culture Bridge North East - CDCEP	4,500	16,500	(7,075)	13,925
Durham CC – Are You Listening?	3,850	-	-	3,850
Durham CC / Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	14,005	15,000	(22,401)	6,604
Durham CC/Stamley AAP – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	6,199	-	(6,199)	-
Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Talking Cameras	-	237,000	(80,611)	156,389
Total Restricted Funds	49,914	283,500	(140,755)	192,659
Total Funds	£271,649	£441,968	£(283,311)	£430,306

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024

14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)

Name of Designated Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Designated Fund
Strategic Development Fund	Towards the cost of exploring new ways of working and new partnerships and creating a provision for match funding for specific projects
Name of Restricted Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Restricted Fund
Arts Council England – Culture Durham Review	Towards the costs of carrying out a review of Culture Durham
Arts Council England - Artsmark Pilot Research	Towards the costs of undertaking Artsmark Pilot Research
Culture Bridge North East - Artsmark	Towards the costs of managing the Artsmark scheme
Culture Bridge North East - CDCEP	Towards the costs of the County Durham Cultural Education Partnership
Children In Need	Towards the cost of equipment for use with Children & Young People
Durham CC – Are You Listening?	Towards the cost of the Are You Listening project
Durham CC / Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	Towards the cost of a culture-led mental health wellbeing programme
Durham CC/Stamley AAP – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	Towards the cost of Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives
Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Teaching Cameras	Towards the cost of Talking Cameras

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2024**

15. Related Party Transactions

The charity has a close working relationship with Arts Council England which is a registered charity and has provided significant project funding which enables the charity to carry out its charitable objectives. In total, grant funding of £94,054 (2023: £68,554) from Arts Council England was recognised in the year.

At 31 March 2024, Nil was owing to County Durham Arts In Education Agency from Arts Council England (31 March 2023: £Nil).

16. Taxation

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

17. Financial Commitments

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial periods.

18. Company Limited by Guarantee

The charity is incorporated under the Companies Act 1985 and is limited by guarantee, each member having undertaken to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1 as may be required in the event of the company being wound up whilst he or she is still a member or within one year thereafter.

There are currently 7 members of the company (2023 - 6 members).

Accounts

Company Registration Number 04027621

Registered Charity Number 1086471

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION
AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE**
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
For the year ending 31 March 2023

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2023***

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2023.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity Name	County Durham Arts In Education Agency (trading as The Forge)
Charity registration number	1086471
Company registration number	04027621
Registered office	The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ

Trustees

For the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, the Board of Trustees is the Board of Directors of the charitable company and is referred to as the Trustees throughout this report.

The Trustees of County Durham Arts In Education Agency during the period and to the date of signing this report are as follows:

Mr M Gilbey (Chair)	
Ms G Callaghan	
Mrs S Campbell	
Ms S Dixon	
Mr B Ebbatson	
Prof M Fleming	Resigned 1 December 2022
Ms R Robson	

Company Secretary	Mr A Harrington
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Independent Examiner	Mr P O'Hara FCA, Chartered Accountant, 4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG
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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims & Objectives

County Durham Arts In Education Agency's charitable objects are to to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

The charity aims to fulfil this by creating participatory arts projects that inspire young people to become successful, confident individuals capable of reaching their full potential and by making cultural programmes that are courageous, relevant and excellent.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2023***

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Documents

County Durham Arts In Education Agency Ltd is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5 July 2000, registered in England and Wales under company number 04027621 and governed by its Articles of Association, originally registered upon incorporation, as amended by Special Resolutions dated 26/03/2001 and 23/01/2014.

The charity was registered with the Charity Commission on 3 May 2001.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

Eligibility for membership of the charity, and membership of the Board of Trustees, is governed by the Articles of Association. There are no restrictions in the governing document on the operation of the charity other than those imposed by general charity law.

Charitable Purpose

County Durham Arts In Education agency's charitable objects are to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

Structure and Governance

The charity currently has a Board of six non-executive Trustees.

The Board meets a minimum of four times per year. The Executive Director is in attendance but has no voting rights. Additional committees and working groups are established to explore specific issues.

Detailed written Board reports and an agenda are prepared and circulated in advance of meetings.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees

The minimum number of Board Members allowed is three and the maximum is 12.

In the past, potential new Board Members were identified through a mixture of formal and informal means, including discussions and recommendations offered by Trustees, outside advisors to the organisation, peer organisations and Arts Council England as well as through a range of advertising channels.

We are currently in a phase of actively looking for new Board Members. To that end we have advertised the role on our website and through a range of other communication channels, in order to spread the net widely and attract potential Trustees from across the community. This process is ongoing, and we are working to an open-ended timescale, because we intend to identify and embed new Board Members over time. Particular emphasis is placed on identifying individuals who can fill any skills gaps within the Board.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees (Continued)

Under the original Articles of Association, at each Annual General Meeting one third of the Trustees retire by rotation, but they may offer themselves up for re-election. This principle is currently under review as we refresh and renew our governing documents.

As part of the Board review process, a working group was established to review our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and an organisational policy and action plan was created.

The Board also identified the need to reflect the characteristics and diversity of the communities we serve in the programmes we develop with those communities. To achieve this, in addition to the current recruitment exercise, we plan to establish working groups of service users, including teachers, educationalists and young people.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees are inducted by the Chair of the Board and Executive Director and are provided with a range of resources and publications to support their understanding of The Forge's activities, including the latest annual report and accounts, a full role description and information on current and past projects.

The organisation also holds periodic Board development days and Trustees are encouraged to take up training opportunities outside the organisation when they become available.

Trustees are also kept informed on an ongoing basis around developments in both the arts in education and wider charity sectors via the dissemination of relevant information and newsletters from Arts Council England and the Charity Commission.

Organisational Structure

Day-to-day responsibility for the management of the organisation is delegated to an Executive Director, who is supported by a Creative Producer and a Finance and Administration Manager. Line management, supervision and appraisal is undertaken of all staff to ensure the team continues to develop their skills and working practices as part of our drive to continually improve quality.

The Board remains heavily involved in the creation and implementation of key policy.

Key Management Personnel

The Board, who give their time freely and have received no remuneration in the year, have considered who are the Key Management Personnel (KMP) of the charity. Together with the Board, these KMP are those in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the activities of the charity on a day-to-day basis.

The remuneration of the KMP is reviewed annually. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels of other charities and similar organisations within the sector and the region. Pay levels are set using this information together with the budget and forecast information, ensuring that the charity can afford any proposed increases. The Board then agrees any uplift to remuneration.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission and have established the required optimum levels of reserves for the organisation.

The Forge often requires a long lead-in time to plan programmes and projects, working within the expected programming schedules of schools, communities and artists. The reserves policy reflects the need to provide a degree of security to support planning, and to provide confidence to stakeholders that artistic plans are soundly-based and funded.

The Trustees aim firstly to hold a level of unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would crystallise if The Forge's funding were to be interrupted or withdrawn and/or it were unable to continue operating.

The Trustees have allocated £134,000 to cover a nine-month period to enable the organisation to meet contractual liabilities and to maintain service provision in the event of delays with receipt of funding (£105,000) or should it have to close, resulting in redundancy payments (£29,000).

In addition, the Trustees have then agreed to retain an additional allowance of £85,000 as Designated Unrestricted Funds, as follows:

- Project Funds (£52,000) - to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process to:
 - maintain performance despite an economic downturn and severe public sector cutbacks, as schools are currently less likely to spend money on arts related activities (£30,000)
 - provide funds that can be designated to specific projects (£22,000) including contributions to specific projects (eg Paul Hamlyn Foundation, project to start Autumn 2023), social media consultancy (contract started July 2023), a governance review (contract started May 2023) and investment in new office premises, which may be needed during 2023/24.
- Professional Development Fund for Young People (£33,000) – In response to identified gaps in professional development for young people and experience gained from delivering artist training programmes, we will trial an arts-based training programme over 2023/24 and 2024/25 for the young people of County Durham, which, if successful, will unlock further funding streams.

The total reserves required by the organisation, including designated funds, are therefore £219,000.

The charity's total unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2023 are £221,735. The charity's 'free' unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2023, defined as non-designated unrestricted funds, excluding the value of unrestricted Tangible Fixed Assets, are £219,015.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis as part of the charity's budgeting processes.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Grant Making Policy

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

Fundraising Policy

The charity is required to report how it deals with fundraising from the public. The charity does not use a professional fundraiser or commercial participator to raise funds. Any monies raised direct from the public follows all guidelines set out by the Charity Commission and UK law in every respect. We respect the privacy and contact preferences of all public donors.

Investment Policy

The Forge's cash reserves, over and above those required for day-to-day working capital, have typically been invested in a combination of a higher-rate, instant access deposit account and various fixed-term cash deposit accounts.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Public Benefit

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

- Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits
- Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

There is clear evidence of a demand for our work as we continue to grow the number of school partners from County Durham and across the North East and increase the number of participants engaging in our programme. We have moved to a blended delivery model which included face to face and online delivery. We have worked with 184 schools and 424 children in the year directly through our programmes and 55,200 children indirectly through Artsmark and wider programmes. We have trained 141 teachers through CPD sessions and Artsmark.

By targeting our work using census and school data, we support those who face the most challenges in access and economic well-being. We use census data and information from the indices of deprivation (alongside DfE school data on SEND and pupil premium ratios) to focus our engagement and impact.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (Continued)

Public Benefit (Cont.)

This focus can also be seen in our Artsmark recruitment and in the siting of our participatory programmes. As well as extending our reach to schools new to The Forge, we continue to work with schools we know, particularly those serving North Durham's former mining communities. We have continued our partnership with DurhamWorks, developing programmes for young people not in Employment, Education or Training (NEET), with a specific focus on supporting those facing additional challenges as a result of SEND related learning barriers, or specific mental health issues. We have also continued to collaborate with our long-term SEND partner school (The Dales), successfully applying for further Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) funding to enable us to continue our photography-based research and intervention programmes.

All of these benefits are clear, evidenced and relate directly to the charity's aims. In addition, the Trustees do not consider that any significant detriment or harm flows from The Forge's work.

Risk Management

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks. Current circumstances have brought new risks, which the Board is actively reviewing as part of a fresh look at the place and role of the Forge in a post-COVID world.

We have a risk management strategy in place which comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate any risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place.

The Trustees have for some years considered the key risks facing the charity and the mitigating actions taken to be as follows:

Long-term absence/resignation of Executive Director, Creative Producer or Trustees

- Increasing artistic team improves succession plans for Executive Director
- Increasing Trustees improves resilience and Trustee succession planning
- Increased Board capacity supports Creative Producer absence / recruitment.

Not achieving income targets (trusts and foundations, earned income, individual giving):

- Development of a strategic plan to support further diversification of funding
- Collaboration with national and international partners improves awareness of relevant commissioning and funding opportunities.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (Continued)

Risk Management (Continued)

Not achieving audience targets:

- Developing a teacher advisory group to support alignment of programme with schools' needs
- Ongoing review of relevance and value of programme
- Work with CBNE and other partners to ensure that Artsmark activity is developed
- Developing a robust marketing plan for every project
- Collaborating with venue partners and Audience Agency, to analyse data
- Increased understanding of audiences informs effective marketing.

Not delivering artistic excellence:

- Engaging a highly experienced artist as a mentor for major projects' creative teams
- Implementation of the Arts Council's Quality Principles for children and young people (CYP)
- Collaborating with exceptional artists
- Sharing work-in-progress with audiences and peers to gain critical feedback
- Evaluating artistic achievements and shortcomings for every project
- Creating plans to continually improve artistic practice.

The Trustees also manage the general financial risks arising by ensuring that:

- Prudent budgets have been set for the next financial year
- The charity maintains a low-cost base
- Regular management accounts are provided, showing the performance against budget
- Contingency plans are in place for the actions which would be taken if income appears unlikely to reach its target
- Reserves policies have been adopted which provide an appropriate amount of uncommitted Reserves which will always enable the charity to meet all its liabilities even if income targets are not achieved.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Achievements in the Year

Durham International Brass Festival

The 2022 BRASS Education Festival ran from Tuesday 12 July to Friday 15 July 2022 with eight bands visiting 56 schools and 11,443 pupils. The commissioning organisation Durham County Council were delighted with the sold-out programme.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (Continued)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Artsmark Training for Schools

We continue to play a leading role in the delivery of Artsmark, the only creative quality standard for schools and education settings, accredited by Arts Council England in the North East and beyond and have sustained 24% Artsmark penetration in this region across the year.

At the end of March 2023, we had 280 active Artsmark schools in the North East (24%) – this figure continues to represent the highest proportion of Artsmark schools across all the ACE Bridge regions. We were particularly pleased to see that our targeted recruitment of new schools was successful, resulting in us surpassing our recruitment target for 2022-2023.

The percentage of secondary schools taking up Artsmark has improved on our previous year's figures, with seven LEA areas now having a minimum of 20% of their secondary schools active Artsmark schools. School evaluations of our online training and support packages continue to be hugely positive with participants regularly awarding us full marks for content and delivery.

Training for Emerging Artists and Vulnerable Young People

In 2022-2023, The Forge successfully delivered the second of our young artist training courses for vulnerable young people in County Durham. Delivered in partnership with DurhamWorks, this second "Working in the Arts" training programme offered young people from County Durham, aged 16-24 and designated as NEET, the opportunity to train with an experienced professional participatory artist to develop the skills needed to gain arts industry employment. Two differentiated programmes were delivered: one for those with additional SEND needs (DurhamWorks3 programme), the other for those NEET learners without these additional challenges (DurhamDirections programme). Bronze Arts Award training and accreditations were offered to all those on our DW3 programme with a 50% take up. As of March 2023, 80% of students have completed their training.

Participatory Programmes for Children, Young People and their Families

Everyday Heroes Everyday Lives

As part of our work funded by Stanley Area Action Partnership, we developed a large-scale photography exhibition and participatory school programme to celebrate some of Stanley's 'everyday heroes'. Inspired by the legacy of the pitman poet, Tommy Armstrong, The Forge commissioned renowned photographer Madeleine Waller to celebrate exceptional contributors to Stanley's community (adults and children) through an exhibition on the outside of the Old Board School on Stanley Front Street. As part of this programme, we delivered singing workshops with children from Bloemfontein Primary School and St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, teaching the children Tommy Armstrong songs which they sang at the launch event. Animated films, celebrating pride of place, which we developed with primary partners, were also shared at the launch event, bringing together pupils, their families and the wider community. A further workshop, focusing on identity, was delivered by photographer Madeleine Waller to an LGBTQi+ youth group in Stanley as part of the Everyday Heroes celebrations.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (Continued)

Achievements in the Year (Continued)

Creative Schools

We were commissioned by Culture Bridge North East to deliver a cultural leadership training programme for schools that focused on improving a range of identified outcomes for children, including developing pupils' creative confidence and improving their mental health and well-being. Working with five North East school teachers, we supported them to plan, develop, manage and evaluate their own targeted arts interventions in school and then to share their learning from the programme with other artists, educators and cultural organisations via a commissioned film and a school sharing event.

Partnership Investment Programme

The Forge has been working in close partnership with Culture Bridge North East, Durham County Council and other cultural partners to devise and deliver a two-year culture-led mental health wellbeing programme across three schools in Stanley, one of the most deprived areas in the County. The aim of the programme is to develop an innovative culturally led solution to some of the mental health and wellbeing challenges facing young people in schools that is scalable, replicable, and sustainable. During 2022-2023, we have developed creative programmes in three schools, established a research framework, and continued to provide a support infrastructure for County Durham Cultural Education Partnership (CDCEP).

Sustainable Development Goals – a Durham Cultural Audit

We participated in an innovative programme with our Durham University partner that trialled a "Shared Regional Approach for the Collection, Analysis, and Sharing of the Social and Economic impacts of Cultural and Natural Heritage in County Durham". Focusing on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), this project examined whether the SDGs could be used to recognise and frame impacts in arts and cultural organisations across County Durham, showcasing the ways in which we recognise, record, and report impact. Data produced through our engagement with the project will enable us to reflect on our progress against identified SDG, amending practice where necessary.

Supporting the Development of Durham's Cultural Infrastructure

Executive Director Tony Harrington has continued to Chair Culture Durham and secured the funding to initiate a review of the Partnership. This was an extensive consultation and the outcome will underpin future direction and activity of the Partnership for the next three years.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (Continued)

Achievements in the Year (Continued)

Financial Review

The out-turn for the year is an unrestricted deficit of £(16,010) (2022: Surplus £7,739). The deficit will be deducted from Unrestricted Reserves, leaving a balance on Unrestricted Funds, including Designated Funds, at 31 March 2023 of £221,735.

In the course of 2022/23, The Forge Officers and Board continued to work hard to develop the sustainability of the organisation. This included short, mid and long-term planning and financial modelling. We have a two-pronged approach to income generation which includes:

- Direct earned income for services
- Income generated from external funders to deliver produced programme

We were proactively responding to pressure on school budgets and strengthening our resilience through;

- Developing staff skills
- Raising our academic and research profile
- Development of evidence-based arts interventions that appeal to school leadership priorities
- Securing funding from a wider range of non-arts based social action funding streams
- Deepening our relationship with existing funders through responsive stewardship
- Diversifying and developing our market share to include FE and Sixth Form Colleges

The Finance and HR Sub-Group takes a hands-on approach to resilience and feeds back to the full Board on a quarterly basis. Arts accountancy specialist Pete O'Hara has continued in his role as a financial advisor to the Board.

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

This year the organisation secured National Portfolio Organisation funding from Arts Council England for a further three years. We outlined a vision for 2023-26 that signals a new period of ambition and commitment for the organisation. As part of the process, we undertook an organisational review with our Board, service users and stakeholders to develop a Theory of Change to improve creative and cultural opportunities for children and their families in County Durham's most left behind areas. This model has been informed by our contextual understanding of the region's needs and is informed by the Arts Council's Let's Create strategy.

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PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (Continued)

We outlined five strategic goals:

- More young people have access to high quality arts in their school and in their communities through expanded cultural learning and participatory arts opportunities
- Young people experiencing digital poverty are given the opportunity to develop their creativity through targeted photography and digital arts programmes
- Children and young people have access to a range of differentiated high quality arts education programmes tailored to support their creative ambitions as well as their learning needs
- Our participatory activities are increasingly influenced, co-created and led by people with a direct understanding including lived experiences of the direct and indirect impacts of poverty, or disability on the lives of children and young people
- Drive sustainable change through leading and supporting regional infrastructures to optimise and extend community impacts.

We will achieve these goals through research-informed, data-driven programmes that can support, engage and inspire young people, and address needs identified by the CYP themselves and by the agencies who work with CYP including schools, youth clubs, PRUs, organisations working with NEETs. These programmes will enrich young people's cultural capital, extend their horizons, develop their creativity, support their personal and academic development and engage their criticality. Two programmes will also identify and remove barriers that prevent working class young people from accessing careers in the arts.

These ambitions will be achieved by strengthening our existing relationships with Durham, Newcastle and Northumbria Universities so that the design of our participatory programmes is informed by rigorous, peer-reviewed research. We will ensure that our programmes respond to local data about health and well-being, school data relating to absences and pupil premium populations, and rich narrative data supplied by our school and community networks. Direct consultation with local young people through our new Youth Forum, and indirectly through mediated discussions involving schools, teachers and youth-worker channels, will ensure that the views of young people strongly influence our work. We will target participatory programmes using Insight information from Durham County Council, www.gov.uk school data on absences and pupil populations, and knowledge gained from our peer partners in schools and the voluntary sector to help us identify those most at risk. This knowledge base will also help us evaluate the impact of our work using the most appropriate context-sensitive evaluation frameworks.

Our training programmes for teachers, artists and other cultural providers will continue to be informed by extant research (including our own research and the Durham Commission report), by DfE guidelines, by ACE's Quality Principles, by our previous experience of working on the Artsmark programme here in the North East, and by our Creative Producer's current doctoral research into the impact of arts-based training on teacher pedagogy.

Building on our five years of learning from our Paul Hamlyn Foundation photography and writing based programmes, we will establish The Forge's new Studio and Mobile Studio. These will enable us to deliver photography, animation and film-making activities to groups of young people across a range of settings. We will also build upon our long experience of other art forms including creative writing, performance, visual arts and music to co-create a wide range of in-school projects.

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PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (Continued)

Our activity will be delivered across these strategic areas:

1. Creative Programmes in Schools:

We will develop and deliver inspirational imaginative co-devised artist led programmes to enrich the lives of CYP and communities in Durham with a hyper-local focus on the three Left Behind Neighbourhoods in North Durham. The first step in this journey will be a photography-based project with schools in Stanley, Craghead/South Moor and Annfield Plain. This will be informed by the emotional well-being and mental health needs identified by our school partners. A new SEND focused project will be co-created with our artists, staff and pupils from the two Northumberland Dales schools (based in Ashington and Blyth). This three-year programme will build on our longstanding relationship with these partners and is in response to a rise in autistic pupils on school rolls. We will focus on how photography and cameras can be used to help autistic children and children who lack fine motor skills access more equitable ways of learning, communicating and creating. In years two and three we will disseminate our learning to other SEND settings through a range of CPD events. In consultation with DCC early years advisors, early years professionals, artists and infant reception class staff, we will devise a new early years intervention programme in Stanley, exploring how arts engagement (music, movement and mark-making) supports children's communication and early language skills. This research will feed into early years programming and delivery in years 2 and 3.

2. Improve Teaching for Creativity in Schools:

Over the next three years we will cascade the learning from our five years of PHF programmes to educationalists and cultural providers from County Durham and beyond. We will also share the research from our SEND focused programmes to other SEND and mainstream settings, focusing on the use of the camera as a "levelling up" tool within the curriculum. This will be designed and delivered in consultation with SEND teachers, artists, and the young autistic students themselves. We will continue to act as consultants and delivery partners to schools in the North East who are looking to embed creative practice and teaching for creativity. This work will continue to advocate for the importance of "creative chaos" and "messy play" alongside development of arts skills and will enhance schools' understanding of how these and other approaches (youth-focused identity-driven work, flattening the hierarchy to share agency between teacher and learner) lead to improved learning and well-being outcomes for children.

3. Develop New Participatory Programmes for CYP and their Families:

We will create new partnerships and strengthen existing collaborations to promote, support and develop arts practice locally in North Durham, and regionally where appropriate. We will develop these programmes with community stakeholders, youth and community groups, school leads, DCC's Community Arts Manager and Area Action Partnership officers to identify gaps in provision and opportunities for impactful community engagement. Following our consultations with youth leaders in Stanley during 2021-2022, we will develop a new youth and community programme, focusing on climate change and the importance of environmental responsibility, by taking The Forge's new mobile photography studio into youth clubs and other youth settings.

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PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (Continued)

4. Developing Career Pathways within the Creative Industries - Early Career Artists and Young Aspiring Artists

We support young artists early in their careers as well as supporting emerging, working-class artists and young people from disadvantaged communities. We will continue to work strategically with DurhamWorks and other partners to identify unemployed young aspiring artists and unemployed early career artists who are struggling to find a foothold in the industry due to issues around class, qualifications, disability or access needs. Over the next three years we will develop specific training opportunities for disadvantaged young people, focusing on the most vulnerable groups. The Forge's new youth forum, with representation from the disabled youth community, will inform this work.

5. Driving Sustainable Change Through Leading and Supporting Regional Infrastructures

As part of our 2023-2026 activity we will galvanise all cultural, educational and local authority partners to place culture at the strategic centre of local authority planning. We will work with our networks to identify specific collaborations that will improve creative and cultural offers for children and young people in this region. In 2023-2024, this will include a Stanley-based community programme designed and delivered in partnership with East Durham Creates. We will engage with Youth Focus North East, Children North East and Stanley Youth Council and The Forge's new Youth Forum, as well as engaging with Stanley Area Action Partnership officers and the Northern Child Health and Wellbeing Network to ensure that our programmes respond to young people's views, to local needs and to local health and well-being priorities.

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RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of County Durham Arts in Education Agency for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company 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 in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards 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 operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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. The Trustees 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.

In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by Section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed by order of the Trustees



**M Gilbey
Chair/Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621**

25 July 2023

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

I hereby report to the Trustees/Members of County Durham Arts In Education Agency (Charity Registration Number 1086471) on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2023 set out on pages 17 to 29.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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



Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales
4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

25 July 2023

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income					
Income from Investments	3	2,272	-	2,272	1,285
Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies	4	72,554	29,500	102,054	50,975
Income from Charitable Activities	5	46,600	28,000	74,600	171,896
Total Income		121,426	57,500	178,926	224,156
Expenditure					
Expenditure on Raising Funds	6	33,087	-	33,087	31,995
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	7	104,349	91,638	195,987	181,001
Total Expenditure		137,436	91,638	229,074	212,996
Net Income/(Expenditure)		(16,010)	(34,138)	(50,148)	11,160
Balance brought forward at 1 April		237,745	84,052	321,797	310,637
Balance carried forward at 31 March	13	£221,735	£49,914	£271,649	£321,797

The notes on pages 19 to 29 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
BALANCE SHEET/STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 MARCH 2023

	Notes	2023 £	2022 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets	10	20,283	31,720
Current Assets			
Debtors	11	11,159	4,741
Cash At Bank & In Hand		291,397	331,826
		<u>302,556</u>	<u>336,567</u>
Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year	12	(51,190)	(46,490)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>251,366</u>	<u>290,077</u>
Total Net Assets	13	<u>£271,649</u>	<u>£321,797</u>
Represented by:			
Unrestricted General Funds	14	109,735	125,745
Unrestricted Designated Funds	14	112,000	112,000
Restricted Funds	14	49,914	84,052
		<u>£271,649</u>	<u>£321,797</u>

The notes on pages 19 to 29 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2023 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

These financial statements were approved and signed by a Member of the Board of Trustees on 25 July 2023.



M Gilbey
Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

1. Accounting Policies

Charity Information

County Durham Arts In Education is a private company, limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ.

The charity is a public benefit entity.

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 2 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Such income is only deferred when the donor or funder has specified that the grant or donation can only be used in future accounting periods or where the donor or funder has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Investment income, including interest on funds held on deposit, is recognised on a receivable basis.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised when a liability is incurred.

- Expenditure on raising funds are those costs of seeking potential funders and applying for funding.
- Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the planning and delivery of artistic productions and associated activities. This includes both the direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.
- Support or Indirect costs are those costs incurred in support of the charitable objectives. These have been allocated to the resources expended on a consistent basis that fairly reflects the true use of those resources within the organisation, such as allocating staff costs by time spent and other costs by their usage.
- Governance costs are those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements.

Pensions

The charity contributes to two pension schemes; one is a multi-employer defined benefit final salary scheme and the other is a defined contribution scheme. Further details can be found in Note 9.

The assets of the multi-employer scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. However, it is not possible to identify the charity's specific share of the underlying assets and liabilities. Consequently, the scheme has been accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme; and in accordance with FRS17 the costs of the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities.

For the defined contribution scheme the amount charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

Furniture, Fittings, IT & Office Equipment - 25% straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind which qualify as basic financial instruments. Such instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

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 charity.

Designated Funds comprise unrestricted funds set aside by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Restricted Funds reflect income received which a funder or donor requires must be spent on a particular purpose or where funds have been raised for a specific purpose. Such income and associated expenditure is shown as Restricted in the Statement of Financial Activities, whilst any unspent balances at the year-end are carried forward as Restricted Funds.

Taxation

County Durham Arts In Education Agency meets the definition required of a charitable company for UK Corporation Tax purposes. Consequently, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively for charitable purposes.

2. Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the circumstances of the charity and consider that adequate resources continue to be available to fund the activities of the charity for the foreseeable future. The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

3. Income from Investments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	2,272	-	2,272	1,285
	£2,272	£-	£2,272	£1,285

The 2022 total of £1,285 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

4. Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Donations	-	-	-	-
Grant Income				
Arts Council England – NPO	58,554	-	58,554	58,554
Children In Need	-	-	-	47,152
Arts Council England – Culture Durham Review	-	10,000	10,000	-
Durham CC – Are You Listening?	-	7,000	7,000	-
Durham CC – CBNE Partnership	-	-	-	20,000
Durham CC – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	-	-	-	800
Durham CC/Stanley AAP – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	-	-	-	21,890
Durham County Council Adult & Community Services	13,500	-	13,500	13,500
Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	500	9,500	10,000	10,000
Newcastle CC – Creative Schools Bursary	-	3,000	3,000	-
	£72,554	£29,500	£102,054	£171,896

Of the 2022 total of £171,896, £72,854 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £99,042 to Restricted Funds.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

5. Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Arts Award	-	-	-	475
Artsmark Development Days	-	28,000	28,000	28,000
Critical Friend Income	3,600	-	3,600	3,600
DurhamWorks Fees	24,400	-	24,400	16,000
Education Programme	18,300	-	18,300	2,000
Speaking Fees	300	-	300	900
	£46,600	£28,000	£74,600	£50,975

Of the 2022 total of £50,975, £22,975 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £28,000 to Restricted Funds.

6. Expenditure on Raising Funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2023	2022
	£	£	£	£
Salaries & On Costs	33,087	-	33,087	31,995
	£33,087	£-	£33,087	£31,995

The 2022 total of £31,995 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

7. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Artistic Production/Project Costs				
Programme Costs	29,654	37,630	67,284	55,290
Salaries & On Costs	54,025	45,235	99,260	95,984
Support Costs				
Premises Costs	8,558	-	8,558	9,040
Administration & Office Costs	7,308	-	7,308	6,021
Depreciation	2,732	8,773	11,505	11,487
Governance Costs				
Independent Examiner's Fees	1,200	-	1,200	1,200
Other Finance/Accountancy Fees	240	-	240	470
Board Development	102	-	102	1,000
Governance Meeting Costs & Expenses	530	-	530	509
	£104,349	£91,638	£195,987	£181,001

Of the 2022 total of £181,001, £72,858 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £108,143 to Restricted Funds.

8. Net Income/(Expenditure)

	2023 £	2022 £
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Independent Examiner's Fees – current year	1,200	1,200
Depreciation of owned Tangible Fixed Assets	11,505	11,487

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

9. Staff Costs & Trustees' Remuneration

	2023	2022
	£	£
Gross Salary Costs	105,129	101,838
Employer's National Insurance	6,684	6,294
Employer's Pension Contributions	20,534	19,847
	£132,347	£127,979

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2022 - Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	2023	2022
	No.	No.
Fundraising	1	1
Artistic Production and Support	2	2
	3	3

No remuneration has been paid to any Trustees in the year (2022: £Nil).

No reimbursement was made in the year to Trustees for Travel and Subsistence expenses incurred in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2022: £Nil).

Pension benefits for senior staff are provided through Durham County Council Pension Fund, which is a defined benefit scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2023 County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of 30.3% of pensionable pay.

Pension benefits for other staff are provided through a Group Personal Pension Scheme, which is a defined contribution scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2023 County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of 10% of pensionable pay, provided that the employee made a minimum contribution of 5%.

These amounts are paid over to the scheme on a monthly basis.

Contributions of £697 were outstanding at 31 March 2023 (2022: £665).

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	IT & Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2022	45,950	45,950
Additions in year	68	68
Disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2023	46,018	46,018
Accumulated Depreciation		
At 1 April 2022	14,230	14,230
Charge for year	11,505	11,505
Disposals	-	-
At 31 March 2023	25,735	25,735
Net Book Value		
At 31 March 2023	£20,283	£20,283
At 1 April 2022	£31,720	£31,720

11. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade Debtors	5,150	2,275
Other Debtors	-	1,846
Prepayments	1,009	620
Accrued Income	5,000	-
	£11,159	£4,741

12. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year

	2023 £	2022 £
Trade Creditors	24,820	29,080
Other Creditors	697	665
Income Received In Advance	6,000	6,000
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	1,251	845
Accruals	18,422	9,900
	£51,190	£46,490

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

13. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	2,720	17,563	20,283	31,720
Debtors	6,159	5,000	11,159	4,741
Cash at Bank and In Hand	248,640	42,757	291,397	331,826
Creditors – Amounts Due Within 1 Year	(35,784)	(15,406)	(51,190)	(46,490)
	£221,735	£49,914	£271,649	£321,797

14. Analysis of Charitable Funds

	Fund at 1 April 2022	Incoming Resources in Year	Resources Expended/ Transfers in Year	Fund at 31 March 2023
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds				
General Funds	125,745	121,426	(137,436)	109,735
Designated Funds				
Project Fund	67,000	-	-	67,000
Strategic Development Fund	45,000	-	-	45,000
	237,745	121,426	(137,436)	221,735
Restricted Funds				
Arts Council England – Culture	-	10,000	(6,135)	3,865
Durham Review				
Artsmark - CBNE	-	28,000	(28,000)	-
Children In Need	26,268	-	(8,773)	17,495
Durham CC – Are You Listening?	-	7,000	(3,150)	3,850
Durham CC / Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	25,893	3,000	(14,888)	14,005
Durham CC/Stamley AAP – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	20,890	-	(14,691)	6,199
Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership		9,500	(5,000)	4,500
Northern Writes Animation 2	1,501	-	(1,501)	-
Teaching Things Differently - PHF	8,000	-	(8,000)	-
Teaching Tool	1,500	-	(1,500)	-
Total Restricted Funds	84,052	57,500	(100,411)	49,914
Total Funds	£321,797	£178,926	£(229,074)	£271,649

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)

Name of Designated Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Designated Fund
Project Fund	Towards the cost of specific project initiatives
Strategic Development Fund	Towards the cost of building capacity and exploring new ways of working and new partnerships
Name of Restricted Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Restricted Fund
Arts Council England – Culture Durham Review	Towards the costs of carrying out a review of Culture Durham
Artsmark - CBNE	Towards the costs of managing the Artsmark scheme
Children In Need	Towards the cost of equipment for use with Children & Young People
Durham CC – Are You Listening?	Towards the cost of the Are You Listening project
Durham CC / Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	Towards the cost of a culture-led mental health wellbeing programme
Durham CC/Stanley AAP – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	Towards the cost of Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives
Northern Writes Animation 2 - Durham County Council	Towards the cost of Northern Writes Animation 2
Teaching Things Differently – Paul Hamlyn Foundation	Towards the cost of Teaching Things Differently
Teaching Tool - Community Foundation	Towards the cost of Teaching Tool

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

15. Related Party Transactions

The charity has a close working relationship with Arts Council England which is a registered charity and has provided significant project funding which enables the charity to carry out its charitable objectives. In total, grant funding of £57,496 (2022: £57,496) from Arts Council England was recognised in the year.

At 31 March 2023, Nil was owing to County Durham Arts In Education Agency from Arts Council England (31 March 2022: £Nil).

16. Taxation

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

17. Financial Commitments

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial periods.

18. Company Limited by Guarantee

The charity is incorporated under the Companies Act 1985 and is limited by guarantee, each member having undertaken to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1 as may be required in the event of the company being wound up whilst he or she is still a member or within one year thereafter.

There are currently 6 members of the company (2022 - 7 members).

Accounts

Company Registration Number 04027621

Registered Charity Number 1086471

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION
AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE**
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS
For the year ending 31 March 2022

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2022***

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2022.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity Name	County Durham Arts In Education Agency (trading as The Forge)
Charity registration number	1086471
Company registration number	04027621
Registered office	The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ

Trustees

For the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, the Board of Trustees is the Board of Directors of the charitable company and is referred to as the Trustees throughout this report.

The Trustees of County Durham Arts In Education Agency during the period and to the date of signing this report are as follows:

Mr M Gilbey (Chair)
Ms G Callaghan
Mrs S Campbell
Ms S Dixon
Mr B Ebbatson
Prof M Fleming
Ms R Robson

Company Secretary	Mr A Harrington
Independent Examiner	Mr P O'Hara FCA, Chartered Accountant, 4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims & Objectives

County Durham Arts In Education Agency's charitable objects are to to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

The charity aims to fulfil this by creating participatory arts projects that inspire young people to become successful, confident individuals capable of reaching their full potential and by making cultural programmes that are courageous, relevant and excellent.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2022***

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Documents

County Durham Arts In Education Agency Ltd is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5 July 2000, registered in England and Wales under company number 04027621 and governed by its Articles of Association, originally registered upon incorporation, as amended by Special Resolutions dated 26/03/2001 and 23/01/2014.

The charity was registered with the Charity Commission on 3 May 2001.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

Eligibility for membership of the charity, and membership of the Board of Trustees, is governed by the Articles of Association. There are no restrictions in the governing document on the operation of the charity other than those imposed by general charity law.

Charitable Purpose

County Durham Arts In Education agency's charitable objects are to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

Structure and Governance

The charity currently has a Board of seven non-executive Trustees.

The Board meets a minimum of four times per year. The Executive Director is in attendance and has no voting rights. Additional committees and working groups are established to explore specific issues.

Detailed written Board reports and an agenda are prepared and circulated in advance of meetings.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees

The minimum number of Board Members allowed is three and the maximum is 12.

Potential new Board Members are identified through a mixture of formal and informal means, including discussions and recommendations offered by Trustees, outside advisors to the organisation, peer organisations and Arts Council England as well as through a range of advertising channels

Particular emphasis is placed on identifying individuals who can fill any skills gaps within the Board.

Under the Articles of Association, at each Annual General Meeting one third of the Trustees retire by rotation, but they may offer themselves up for re-election.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2022***

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees (Cont.)

As part of the Board review process, a working group was established to review our approach to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) and an organisational policy and action plan was created.

The Board also identified the need to reflect the characteristics and diversity of the communities we serve in the programmes we develop with those communities. To achieve this, we have pledged to add new voices from the area to the Board of Trustees and also to establish working groups of service users, including teachers and educationalists and young people.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees are inducted by the Chair of the Board and Director and are provided with a range of resources and publications to support their understanding of County Durham Arts In Education Agency activities, including the latest annual report and accounts, a full role description and information on current and past projects.

The organisation also holds an annual Board development day and Trustees are encouraged to take up training opportunities outside the organisation when they become available.

They are also kept informed on an ongoing basis around developments in both the arts in education and wider charity sectors via the dissemination of relevant information and newsletters from Arts Council England and the Charity Commission.

Organisational Structure

Day-to-day responsibility for the management of the organisation is delegated to an Executive Director, who is supported by a Creative Producer and a Finance and Administration Manager. Line management, supervision and appraisal is undertaken of all staff to ensure the team continues to develop their skills and working practices as part of our drive to continually improve quality.

The Board remains heavily involved in the creation and implementation of key policy.

Key Management Personnel

The Board, who give their time freely and have received no remuneration in the year, have considered who are the Key Management Personnel (KMP) of the charity. Together with the Board, these KMP are those in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the activities of the charity on a day-to-day basis.

The remuneration of the KMP is reviewed annually. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels of other charities and similar organisations within the sector and the region. Pay levels are set using this information together with the budget and forecast information, ensuring that the charity can afford any proposed increases. The Board then agrees any uplift to remuneration.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
For the year ended 31 March 2022

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission and have established the required optimum levels of reserves for the organisation.

The Forge often requires a long lead-in time to plan programmes and projects, working within the expected programming schedules of schools, communities and artists. The reserves policy reflects the need to provide a degree of security to support planning, and to provide confidence to stakeholders that artistic plans are soundly-based and funded.

The Trustees aim firstly to hold a level of unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would crystallise if The Forge's funding were to be interrupted or withdrawn and/or it were unable to continue operating.

The Trustees have allocated £120,000 to cover a nine-month period to enable the organisation to meet contractual liabilities and to maintain service provision in the event of delays with receipt of funding (£105,000) or should it have to close, resulting in redundancy payments (£15,000).

In addition, the Trustees have then agreed to retain an additional allowance of £112,000 as Designated Unrestricted Funds, as follows:

- Project Funds (£67,000) - to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process to:
 - maintain performance despite an economic downturn and severe public sector cutbacks (£25,000)
 - to provide funds that can be designated to specific projects including digital innovation, to include marketing and communications rebrand/investment in social media freelance support, international collaboration and staff development (£42,000)
- Strategic Development Fund (£45,000) - the Trustees believe that this is a time of high risk and high opportunity for The Forge. On the one hand, fiscal constraints and economic difficulties, combined with high inflation, put pressure on our budgets and restrict our options for income generation. On the other, the momentum in the County resulting from the 2025 bid, and the profile of the organisation within the County developed as the bid was made, present a rich vein of opportunities. We need to look to the medium and long term in our strategic thinking.

To respond effectively to those opportunities within the economic environment and secure the longer-term future of the organisation will require us to change the organisation in a variety of ways. We need to build capacity and to explore new ways of working and new partnerships.

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*For the year ended 31 March 2022***

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Reserves Policy (Cont.)

In the short term this is likely to mean that expenditure will outstrip income.

Over three years the sum of £55,000 will be invested in a range of proactive and responsive activities (2022/23: £15,000, 2023/24: £15,000, 2024/25: £15,000).

The total reserves required by the organisation, including designated funds, are therefore £232,000.

The charity's total unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2022 are £237,745.

The charity's 'free' unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2022, defined as non-designated unrestricted funds, excluding the value of unrestricted Tangible Fixed Assets, are £232,293.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis as part of the charity's budgeting processes.

Grant Making Policy

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

Fundraising Policy

The charity is required to report how it deals with fundraising from the public. The charity does not use a professional fundraiser or commercial participator to raise funds. Any monies raised direct from the public follows all guidelines set out by the Charity Commission and UK law in every respect. We respect the privacy and contact preferences of all public donors.

Investment Policy

The Forge's cash reserves, over and above those required for day-to-day working capital, have typically been invested in a combination of a higher-rate, instant access deposit account and various fixed-term cash deposit accounts.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Public Benefit

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

- Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits
- Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

There is clear evidence of a demand for our work as we continue to grow the number of school partners from County Durham and across the North East and increase the number of participants engaging in our programme. We have moved to a blended delivery model which included face to face and online delivery. We have worked with 82 schools and 167 children in the year directly through our programmes and 20,654 children indirectly through Artsmark and wider programmes. We have trained 183 teachers through CPD sessions and Artsmark.

By targeting our work using census and school data, we support those who face the most challenges in access and economic well-being. We use census data and information from the indices of deprivation (alongside DfE school data on SEND and pupil premium ratios) to focus our engagement and impact. At least 95% of the schools' programme is in places with the least engagement, as defined by the Active People data.

This focus can also be seen in our Artsmark recruitment and in the siting of our participatory programmes. As well as extending our reach to schools new to The Forge, we continue work with schools we know, including two primary schools situated in former mining communities with pupil premium rates of 71.8% and 64.1% respectively. Our "Teaching Things Differently" long-term SEND partner school (the Dales) also serves a particularly vulnerable community of learners, where 100% have a SEN educational, health and care plan, and 66.3% of pupils on roll are designated pupil premium.

All of these benefits are clear, evidenced and relate directly to the charity's aims. In addition, the Trustees do not consider that any significant detriment or harm flows from The Forge's work.

Risk Management

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks. Current circumstances have brought new risks, which the Board is actively reviewing as part of a fresh look at the place and role of the Forge in a post-COVID world.

We have a risk management strategy in place which comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate any risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Risk Management (Cont.)

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place.

The Trustees have for some years considered the key risks facing the charity and the mitigating actions taken to be as follows:

Long-term absence/resignation of Executive Director, Creative Producer or Trustees

- Increasing artistic team improves succession plans for Executive Director
- Increasing Trustees improves resilience and Trustee succession planning
- Increased Board capacity supports Creative Producer absence / recruitment.

Not achieving income targets (trusts and foundations, earned income, individual giving):

- Development of a strategic plan to support further diversification of funding
- Collaboration with national and international partners improves awareness of relevant commissioning and funding opportunities.

Not achieving audience targets:

- Developing a teacher advisory group to support alignment of programme with schools' needs
- Ongoing review of relevance and value of programme
- Work with CBNE and other partners to ensure that Artsmark activity is developed
- Developing a robust marketing plan for every project
- Collaborating with venue partners and Audience Agency, to analyse data
- Increased understanding of audiences informs effective marketing.

Not delivering artistic excellence:

- Engaging a highly experienced artist as a mentor for major projects' creative teams
- Implementation of the Arts Council's Quality Principles for CYP
- Collaborating with exceptional artists
- Sharing work-in-progress with audiences and peers to gain critical feedback
- Evaluating artistic achievements and shortcomings for every project
- Creating plans to continually improve artistic practice.

The Trustees also manage the general financial risks arising by ensuring that:

- Prudent budgets have been set for the next financial year
- The charity maintains a low-cost base
- Regular management accounts are provided, showing the performance against budget
- Contingency plans are in place for the actions which would be taken if income appears unlikely to reach its target
- Reserves policies have been adopted which provide an appropriate amount of uncommitted Reserves which will always enable the charity to meet all its liabilities even if income targets are not achieved.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Achievements in the Year

Teaching Things Differently

Plans for this programme over this time period were to complete all the artist-delivered workshops for the Continuing Professional Development and Learning (CPDL) element of this programme and move towards more intensive collaboration with all of our participants to co-create photography-inspired schemes of work that could be used across all settings. Due to the popularity of the identify-focused Museum of Me work delivered in the first part of the programme, with its strong focus on engaging pupils via self-portraits or portraits of friends and family and then progressing pupils into writing about their lives, we continued with this theme. Teachers and artists agreed to co-create two separate but related schemes of work called Museum of Me in the Past – with a focus on earlier childhood, ancestry and community history, and Museum of Me in the Future, with a focus on future lives, careers, employment and touching upon themes of citizenship and civic responsibility.

The schemes were completed in Summer 2021 with teachers planning to test and deliver elements of the schemes across Autumn 2021. During this test and delivery period, we managed to observe activity in two of our schools – in Woodhouse Primary School and Bede Academy. Both schools approached the delivery in different but equally valuable ways; Woodhouse used the programme to engage their wider community by creating an open event and a selling exhibition of children's work; Bede cascaded their learning through their own school community with four teachers delivering a week-long Museum of Me programme across their year 5 and year 6 classes.

Our final sharing event was delivered in March 2022. This conference-style event was attended by participants from five of our schools, with heads and senior leaders also in attendance. Schools shared an overview of the work they had delivered, sharing examples of pupils' creative work and the impact that the project had had on pupils and staff. A recurring theme from their feedback was the particular benefit that visual literacy and camera-based work has on SEND learners and those who struggle to access the mainstream curriculum. We have identified this observation to our funders as providing an area for possible future research.

Our Teaching Things Differently programme was strongly supported throughout by Paul Hamlyn Foundation and we were grateful for the significant extension to the programme that we were offered. We were also given opportunities to share our learning with other educationalists and culturalists through the PHF newsletter, and to members of our own national cohort of fundees, as well as to cultural leaders and school leaders from more recent funding rounds. The impact of the programme is also the focus for our Creative Producer's doctoral thesis.

There has been strong outside interest in this CPDL programme, with schools requesting the Museum of Me Schemes of Work. We also delivered a bespoke scaled down version of the programme for Westlea Primary School in November 2021 as part of the school's Artsmark plans.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Durham International Brass Festival

The festival, which was scheduled to take place in July, had to be postponed due to the pandemic. All available performance slots had been booked by Durham schools and were offered to them in July 2022.

Artsmark Training for Schools

We continue to play a leading role in the delivery of Artsmark, the only creative quality standard for schools and education settings, accredited by Arts Council England in the North East and beyond and have sustained 25% Artsmark penetration in this region across the year.

At the end of March 2022, we had 289 active Artsmark schools in the North East (25%) – this figure continues to represent the highest proportion of Artsmark schools across all the ACE Bridge regions. We were particularly pleased to see that our stewardship of schools has been successful and that the support we have offered to enrich and support their Artsmark journey has led to a convincing number of re-registrations (above our target figure) for the award.

Recruiting secondary schools proved more of a challenge than primaries and although we succeeded our registration targets, we did not achieve our secondary settings targets. Currently six LEA areas have a minimum of 20% of their secondary schools active Artsmark schools against a target of eight. Overall, however, as the 25% penetration shows, both our recruitment and our retention rate remain high compared with other Bridge areas. School evaluations of our training and support packages have also been hugely positive with participants regularly awarding us full marks for content and delivery.

Training for Emerging Artists and Vulnerable Young People

In Autumn 2021, The Forge successfully delivered a new young artist training course for vulnerable young people in County Durham. This new "Working in the Arts" training programme was developed in partnership with DurhamWorks and offered young people from County Durham, aged 16-24 and designated as Not in Employment, Education or Training, the opportunity to train with an experienced professional participatory artist to develop the skills needed to gain arts industry employment. Two pathways were created for this pilot: a higher pathway for those with college or university experience of the arts, and an access digital arts pathway for those at an earlier stage of their careers. Participants on the higher course worked with a range of different artists to support them in developing their participatory arts skills, with a focus on working in the participatory arts sector. We were delighted to report that 75% of participants on this pathway completed their training and then gained employment in the arts or education sectors. Equally positive was the completion rate on the access course where 100% of participants completed their studies, gained Arts Awards and registered their interest in further arts training. Following the success of these two bespoke programmes, DurhamWorks have now offered us a further contract to deliver further arts-based training for their most vulnerable NEET clients, including their DW3 clients who are those who experience exceptional challenges and require the most support.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Participatory Programmes for Children, Young People and their Families

I Come from a Place – identity focused school projects

As part of our Northern Writes and Defiant Voices programmes, we designed and delivered a new creative writing and animation project which was offered to all Stanley primary schools. "I Come from a Place" took its inspiration from the community-focused writings of Tommy Armstrong and gave Stanley children the opportunity to reflect on their own identities, lives and communities – and to celebrate the richness of their lives through a series of spoken word poems and short animated films. The project was delivered by creative writers Katharine Goda and Bob Beagrie and film animator Sheryl Jenkins.

We also delivered an extended Arts Award focused version of this programme in partnership with Consett Academy and Durham Records Office. In this extended version, 19 year 9 pupils from Consett Academy were given the opportunity to develop their own unique creative responses to the "I Come from a Place" brief, using archival footage and documents from Durham Records Office as the starting point for their individual reflections. They were then able to work with poet Bob Beagrie and animator Sheryl Jenkins who helped them to develop spoken word and animated responses to capture and share their views about the place they call home. All partners were delighted that all 19 pupils succeeded in gaining their Bronze Arts Awards for their work.

Partnership Investment Programme

The Forge has been working in close partnership with Culture Bridge North East, Durham County Council and other cultural partners to devise and deliver a two-year culture-led mental health wellbeing programme across three schools in Stanley, one of the most deprived areas in the County. The aim of the programme is to develop an innovative culturally led solution to some of the mental health and wellbeing challenges facing young people in schools that is scalable, replicable and sustainable. During 2021-2022, we succeeded in developing a support infrastructure for County Durham Cultural Education Partnership (CDCEP) going forward and appointed an artist-lead who will act as the Creative Producer for the programme.

We will now work with that lead to:

- Develop an action research programme to test how a cultural programme of active participation can improve the mental health and wellbeing of children in Durham
- Co-create a programme with cultural practitioners, teachers, health specialists and young people to influence and shape how mental health support is delivered in schools
- Provide a robust evaluation and recommendations for future delivery.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Supporting the Development of Durham's Cultural Infrastructure

Executive Director Tony Harrington has been very active in his role as Chair of Culture Durham in leading the Durham City of Culture Bid for 2025. This was a transformational opportunity for the cultural sector in Durham and the North East. Working in partnership with Durham County Council and Durham University, an expression of interest was submitted in July 2021 and the County was shortlisted in September 2021. Durham reached the final four and, although not successful, there is a momentum and commitment from all partners to create an ambitious strategy to develop the infrastructure for creatives in the County for the next ten years.

Financial Review

The out-turn for the year is an unrestricted deficit of £(7,739) (2021: Surplus £2,376). The deficit will be deducted from Unrestricted Reserves, leaving a balance on Unrestricted Funds, including Designated Funds, at 31 March 2022 of £237,745.

In the course of 2021/22, The Forge Officers and Board continued to work hard to develop the sustainability of the organisation. This included short, mid and long-term planning and financial modelling. We have a two-pronged approach to income generation which includes:

- Direct earned income for services
- Income generated from external funders to deliver produced programme

We were proactively responding to pressure on school budgets and strengthening our resilience through;

- Developing staff skills
- Raising our academic and research profile
- Development of evidence-based arts interventions that appeal to school leadership priorities
- Securing funding from a wider range of non-arts based social action funding streams
- Deepening our relationship with existing funders through responsive stewardship
- Diversifying and developing our market share to include FE and Sixth Form Colleges

Although the pandemic raised risks for the organisation financially, operationally and creatively, we continued to deliver well against the majority of our targets and anticipate that we will continue to operate effectively in this changing climate. Due to our sound financial management and healthy reserves, we were able to continue to trade without furloughing staff or seeking Arts Council Cultural Recovery Fund support. This was also due to low running costs and our flexibility to respond to change and innovate new approaches in programme design and delivery. We are confident that this adaptability will stand us in good stead in facing the unpredictable times ahead.

The Finance and HR Sub-Group takes a hands-on approach to resilience and feeds back to the full Board on a quarterly basis. Arts accountancy specialist Pete O'Hara has continued in his role as a financial advisor to the Board.

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PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

The Charity continues to operate in a tough environment caused by a combination of economic and fiscal pressures that had been making life difficult for schools and other agencies which work with children and young people. The pandemic has heightened the pressures and further impoverished the towns and communities with which we work in every sense: resources are stretched to the limit and the world in which children, their families and their communities live has narrowed.

The evidence is that things will be even more challenging as we start to emerge from the pandemic. It is this landscape that must shape and drive our programme over the next five years. Whilst our overall Strategic Objectives remain, we are realistic and pragmatic in our approach to creating and delivering activities that fulfil the Strategic Objectives whilst also recovering from a period of close-down and restricted programming.

We have a pivotal place in contributing to social recovery post Covid-19 within the underrepresented communities in the County. We will work with Durham County Council, Stanley and Derwentside Area Action Partnerships, voluntary and community sector partners, school networks, community groups and other partners in the region to sustain and expand this approach to school improvement, arts and cultural entitlement and community development.

We view this coming year as a period of review and transition for the organisation.

We have built a regional and national reputation for developing exemplary participatory arts practice with young people, but we are not complacent. We will look at our business model, governance, relationship with artists, role within communities and creative programme, as well as delivering outstanding projects with and for schools and communities. We believe that the arts have a unique role to play in young people's lives, helping them to engage successfully in their communities and reach their full potential. We believe that embedded organisations like The Forge are fundamental to the ambition in 'Let's Create' to "make a nation, by 2030, that experiences universal levels of cultural participation in all parts of our diverse country".

As part of the process of creating a new business plan for the period 2022-2023 the Board committed the organisation to the following vision statement.

Vision

To create outstanding participatory arts projects with diverse communities, with a particular focus on children and young people (CYP) within areas of socio-economic deprivation; we will extend horizons, build individual and collective confidence, and help people see and achieve their creative potential.

Mission

To maintain our existing activities and develop new work informed by careful reflection with our partner organisations, shaped by accurate and up-to-date data, pertinent and up-to-date research, and by observed and informed evidence of the need and the opportunity to deliver.

In this way we will extend our reach, maximise our impact, and ensure resources are used to best effect.

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For the year ended 31 March 2022

PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS (CONTINUED)

Strategic Objectives for 2022 - 2023

- **Programme** - Develop and deliver inspirational imaginative programmes to enrich the lives of CYP and communities particularly in North Durham, but beyond where need is identified
- **Research** – further develop our research capacity to ensure our actions are evidence led. Champion the use of research to inform direct actions
- **Cultural leadership** – Drive best practice across cultural and educational networks through leading the Durham Cultural Partnership, chairing the Durham and Darlington Music Education Hub, advice, advocating, and acting as a proactive change maker
- **Supporting artists** – Provide support for the community of skilled and emerging participatory arts practitioners, particularly supporting those from economically disadvantaged areas
- **Investment Principles** – Work with our Board and stakeholders to develop The Forge's unique response to the challenges of "Let's Create" and its four Investment Principles.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work with the Board and staff to embed the Investment Principles of "Let's Create" across the organisation
- Deepen our relationship with Durham County Council (DCC) to support the growth, quality and spread of arts and culture to children in County Durham schools
- Expand multi-agency and cross sectoral approach with community-based organisations in Durham (prioritising North Durham) to inform and develop creative programmes for the most vulnerable members of the community
- Use the evidence of our own research and impact measurement and other sources such as Durham Insight area profile data and Government school performance data tools (formerly EduBase) to inform programme plans
- Deliver current activity and develop new plans for interventions in the coming years, growing our work with schools to embed creativity into the delivery of the curriculum
- Provide strategic support to the cultural sector in Durham through our involvement in the Durham LCEP, Global Durham and chairing the Durham Cultural Partnership
- Support other cultural organisations in the County - critical friend to East Durham Creates, Trustee for Northern Heartlands, chairing the Durham and Darlington Music Education Hub Advisory groups and chairing the newly constituted charitable Board of TIN Arts
- Work as creative catalysts to share best creative practice and drive systemic changes with our partner schools and other CYP focused organisations
- Promote internationalism via working with Global Durham and DCC International Office
- Maintain our use of the ACE Quality Principles for children and young people, and continue to use Lundy (2007) framework, Lucas et al (2012) Creative Dispositions Tool, and Kress (2003) multiliteracy framework to develop, deliver and evaluate our creative programmes
- Support the development of participatory arts practitioners through bespoke training, mentoring, and guidance programmes, with a focus on emerging practitioners from County Durham in partnership with DurhamWorks
- Maintain our lead role in the development of Artsmark in partnership with Culture Bridge North East (CBNE)
- Promote and embed Arts Award more effectively through our creative programme
- Continue to strengthen The Forge's use of digital strategies and platforms in the design, delivery, and dissemination of creative programme.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT
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RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of County Durham Arts In Education Agency for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period.

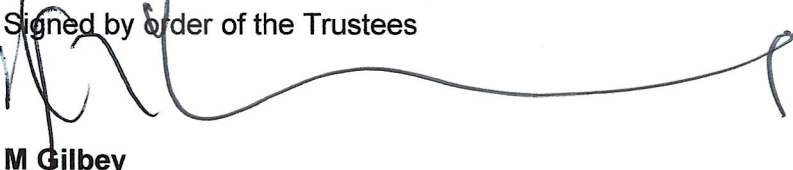
In preparing these financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards 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 operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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. The Trustees 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.

In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by Section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed by order of the Trustees


**M Gilbey
Chair/Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621**

27 July 2022

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

I hereby report to the Trustees/Members of County Durham Arts In Education Agency (Charity Registration Number 1086471) on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 set out on pages 17 to 29.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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



Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales
4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

27 July 2022

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

	Note	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Income					
Income from Investments	3	1,285	-	1,285	2,460
Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies	4	22,975	28,000	50,975	90,223
Income from Charitable Activities	5	72,854	99,042	171,896	40,316
Total Income		97,114	127,042	224,156	132,999
Expenditure					
Expenditure on Raising Funds	6	31,995	-	31,995	30,656
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	7	72,858	108,143	181,001	122,743
Total Expenditure		104,853	108,143	212,996	153,399
Net Income/(Expenditure)		(7,739)	18,899	11,160	(20,400)
Balance brought forward at 1 April		245,484	65,153	310,637	331,037
Balance carried forward at 31 March	13	£237,745	£84,052	£321,797	£310,637

The notes on pages 19 to 29 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
BALANCE SHEET/STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS AT 31 MARCH 2022

	Notes	2022 £	2021 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets	10	31,720	4,630
Current Assets			
Debtors	11	4,741	18,252
Cash At Bank & In Hand		331,826	315,108
		<u>336,567</u>	<u>333,360</u>
Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year	12	(46,490)	(27,353)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>290,077</u>	<u>306,007</u>
Total Net Assets	13	<u>£321,797</u>	<u>£310,637</u>
Represented by:			
Unrestricted General Funds	14	102,745	110,484
Unrestricted Designated Funds	14	135,000	135,000
Restricted Funds	14	84,052	65,153
		<u>£321,797</u>	<u>£310,637</u>

The notes on pages 19 to 29 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2022 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

These financial statements were approved and signed by a Member of the Board of Trustees on 27 July 2022.

M Gilbey
Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)**

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. Accounting Policies

Charity Information

County Durham Arts In Education is a private company, limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ.

The charity is a public benefit entity.

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 – 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 2 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Such income is only deferred when the donor or funder has specified that the grant or donation can only be used in future accounting periods or where the donor or funder has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Investment income, including interest on funds held on deposit, is recognised on a receivable basis.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised when a liability is incurred.

- Expenditure on raising funds are those costs of seeking potential funders and applying for funding
- Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the planning and delivery of artistic productions and associated activities. This includes both the direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.
- Support or Indirect costs are those costs incurred in support of the charitable objectives. These have been allocated to the resources expended on a consistent basis that fairly reflects the true use of those resources within the organisation, such as allocating staff costs by time spent and other costs by their usage.
- Governance costs are those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements.

Pensions

The charity contributes to two pension schemes; one is a multi-employer defined benefit final salary scheme and the other is a defined contribution scheme. Further details can be found in Note 9.

The assets of the multi-employer scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. However, it is not possible to identify the charity's specific share of the underlying assets and liabilities. Consequently, the scheme has been accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme; and in accordance with FRS17 the costs of the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities.

For the defined contribution scheme the amount charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

Furniture, Fittings, IT & Office Equipment - 25% straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind which qualify as basic financial instruments. Such instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

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 charity.

Designated Funds comprise unrestricted funds set aside by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Restricted Funds reflect income received which a funder or donor requires must be spent on a particular purpose or where funds have been raised for a specific purpose. Such income and associated expenditure is shown as Restricted in the Statement of Financial Activities, whilst any unspent balances at the year-end are carried forward as Restricted Funds.

Taxation

County Durham Arts In Education Agency meets the definition required of a charitable company for UK Corporation Tax purposes. Consequently, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively for charitable purposes.

2. Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the circumstances of the charity and consider that adequate resources continue to be available to fund the activities of the charity for the foreseeable future. The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

3. Income from Investments

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Bank Interest Receivable	1,285	-	1,285	2,460
	£1,285	£-	£1,285	£2,460

The 2021 total of £2,460 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

4. Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Donations	-	-	-	498
Grant Income				
Arts Council England – NPO	58,554	-	58,554	58,554
Children In Need	-	47,152	47,152	-
Digital Drive County Durham Fund	-	-	-	1,953
Durham CC – CBNE Partnership	-	20,000	20,000	-
Durham CC – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	800	-	800	-
Durham CC/Stamley AAP – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	-	21,890	21,890	-
Durham County Council Adult & Community Services	13,500	-	13,500	13,500
Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	-	10,000	10,000	-
Paul Hamlyn Foundation – Teaching Things Differently	-	-	-	15,718
	£72,854	£99,042	£171,896	£90,223

Of the 2021 total of £90,223, £72,552 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £17,671 to Restricted Funds.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

5. Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Arts Award	475	-	475	7,643
Artsmark Development Days	-	28,000	28,000	28,173
Critical Friend Income	3,600	-	3,600	4,500
DurhamWorks Fees	16,000	-	16,000	-
Education Programme	2,000	-	2,000	-
Speaking Fees	900	-	900	-
	£22,975	£28,000	£50,975	£40,316

Of the 2021 total of £40,316, £12,316 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £28,000 to Restricted Funds.

6. Expenditure on Raising Funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2022	2021
	£	£	£	£
Salaries & On Costs	31,995	-	31,995	30,656
	£31,995	£-	£31,995	£30,656

The 2021 total of £30,656 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

7. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Artistic Production/Project Costs				
Programme Costs	9,228	46,062	55,290	23,630
Salaries & On Costs	44,640	51,344	95,984	91,969
Support Costs				
Premises Costs	9,040	-	9,040	-
Administration & Office Costs	4,040	1,981	6,021	4,478
Bad Debts	-	-	-	(800)
Depreciation	2,731	8,756	11,487	1,845
Governance Costs				
Independent Examiner's Fees	1,200	-	1,200	1,200
Other Finance/Accountancy Fees	470	-	470	261
Board Development	1,000	-	1,000	-
Governance Meeting Costs & Expenses	509	-	509	160
	£72,858	£108,143	£181,001	£122,743

Of the 2021 total of £122,743, £54,296 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £68,447 to Restricted Funds.

8. Net Income/(Expenditure)

	2022 £	2021 £
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Independent Examiner's Fees – current year	1,200	1,200
Depreciation of owned Tangible Fixed Assets	11,487	1,845

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

9. Staff Costs & Trustees' Remuneration

	2022	2021
	£	£
Gross Salary Costs	101,838	97,752
Employer's National Insurance	6,294	5,724
Employer's Pension Contributions	19,847	19,149
	£127,979	£122,625

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2021 - Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	2022	2021
	No.	No.
Fundraising	1	1
Artistic Production and Support	2	2
	3	3

Key Management Personnel are defined by the organisation as the Trustees.

No remuneration has been paid to any Trustees/Directors in the year (2021: £Nil).

No reimbursement was made in the year to Trustees for Travel and Subsistence expenses incurred in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2021: £Nil).

Pension benefits for senior staff are provided through Durham County Council Pension Fund, which is a defined benefit scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2022 County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of 20.5% of pensionable pay.

Pension benefits for other staff are provided through a Group Personal Pension Scheme, which is a defined contribution scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2022 County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of 3% of pensionable pay, provided that the employee made a minimum contribution of 5%.

These amounts are paid over to the scheme on a monthly basis.

Contributions of £665 were outstanding at 31 March 2022 (2021: £627).

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	IT & Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2021	15,721	15,721
Additions in year	38,577	38,577
Disposals	(8,348)	(8,348)
At 31 March 2022	45,950	45,950
Accumulated Depreciation		
At 1 April 2021	11,091	11,091
Charge for year	11,487	11,487
Disposals	(8,348)	(8,348)
At 31 March 2022	14,230	14,230
Net Book Value		
At 31 March 2022	£31,720	£31,720
At 1 April 2021	£4,630	£4,630

11. Debtors

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade Debtors	2,275	8,503
Other Debtors	1,846	50
Prepayments	620	8,012
Accrued Income	-	1,687
	£4,741	£18,252

12. Creditors – Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year

	2022 £	2021 £
Trade Creditors	29,080	24,422
Other Creditors	665	786
Income Received In Advance	6,000	-
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	845	729
Accruals	9,900	1,416
	£46,490	£27,353

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

13. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2022	Total 2021
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	5,452	26,268	31,720	4,630
Debtors	4,741	-	4,741	18,252
Cash at Bank and In Hand	268,337	63,489	331,826	315,108
Creditors – Amounts Due Within 1 Year	(40,785)	(5,705)	(46,490)	(27,353)
	£237,745	£84,052	£321,797	£310,637

14. Analysis of Charitable Funds

	Fund at 1 April 2021	Incoming Resources in Year	Resources Expended/ Transfers in Year	Fund at 31 March 2022
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted Funds				
General Funds	110,484	97,114	(81,853)	125,745
Designated Funds				
Project Fund	80,000	-	(13,000)	67,000
COVID-19 Recovery Fund	55,000	-	(55,000)	-
Strategic Development Fund	-	-	45,000	45,000
	245,484	97,114	(104,853)	237,745
Restricted Funds				
Artsmark - CBNE	-	28,000	(28,000)	-
Children In Need	-	47,152	(20,884)	26,268
Durham CC/Stamley AAP – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	-	21,890	(1,000)	20,890
Durham CC / Newcastle CC – CBNE Partnership	-	30,000	(4,107)	25,893
Defiant Voices - NDA Poetry	3,800	-	(3,800)	-
Defiant Voices - Sacred Heart/Kenton	3,382	-	(3,382)	-
Northern Writes Animation 2	8,000	-	(6,499)	1,501
Teaching Things Differently - PHF	48,471	-	(40,471)	8,000
Teaching Tool	1,500	-	-	1,500
Total Restricted Funds	65,153	127,042	(108,143)	84,052
Total Funds	£310,637	£224,156	£(212,996)	£321,797

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)

Name of Designated Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Designated Fund
Project Fund	Towards the cost of specific project initiatives
COVID-19 Recovery Fund	Towards the cost of a range of initiatives to renew the organisation's focus and operational priorities, arising from the impact of the pandemic
Strategic Development Fund	Towards the cost of building capacity and exploring new ways of working and new partnerships
Name of Restricted Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Restricted Fund
Children In Need	Towards the cost of equipment for use with Children & Young People
Durham CC/Stamley AAP – Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives	Towards the cost of Everyday Heroes; Everyday Lives
Newcastle CC/Durham CC/Culture Bridge NE Partnership	Towards the cost of a culture-led mental health wellbeing programme
Defiant Voices - NDA Poetry - Durham Community Foundation	Towards the cost of Defiant Voices - NDA Poetry
Defiant Voices - Sacred Heart/Kenton Poetry - Community Foundation	Towards the cost of Defiant Voices - Sacred Heart/Kenton Poetry project
Northern Writes Animation 2 - Durham County Council	Towards the cost of Northern Writes Animation 2
Teaching Things Differently – Paul Hamlyn Foundation	Towards the cost of Teaching Things Differently
Teaching Tool - Community Foundation	Towards the cost of Teaching Tools

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FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022**

15. Related Party Transactions

The charity has a close working relationship with Arts Council England which is a registered charity and has provided significant project funding which enables the charity to carry out its charitable objectives. In total, grant funding of £57,496 (2021: £57,496) from Arts Council England was recognised in the year.

At 31 March 2022, Nil was owing to County Durham Arts In Education Agency from Arts Council England (31 March 2021: £Nil).

16. Taxation

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

17. Financial Commitments

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial periods.

18. Company Limited by Guarantee

The charity is incorporated under the Companies Act 1985 and is limited by guarantee, each member having undertaken to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1 as may be required in the event of the company being wound up whilst he or she is still a member or within one year thereafter.

There are currently 7 members of the company (2021 - 7 members).

Accounts

Company Registration Number 04027621

Registered Charity Number 1086471

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN
EDUCATION AGENCY TRADING AS
THE FORGE**

(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)

REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

For the year ending 31 March 2021

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION
AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2021***

The Trustees, who are also Directors for the purposes of company law, present their report and the unaudited financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2021.

REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Charity Name County Durham Arts In Education Agency (trading as The Forge)

Charity registration number 1086471

Company registration number 04027621

Registered office The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ

Trustees

For the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, the Board of Trustees is the Board of Directors of the charitable company and is referred to as the Trustees throughout this report.

The Trustees of County Durham Arts In Education Agency during the period and to the date of signing this report are as follows:

Mr M Gilbey (Chair)

Ms G Callaghan

Mrs S Campbell

Ms S Dixon

Mr B Ebbatson

Prof M Fleming

Ms R Robson

Ms J Stirk

Resigned 12 June 2020

Company Secretary Mr A Harrington

Independent Examiner Mr P O'Hara FCA, Chartered Accountant, 4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Aims & Objectives

County Durham Arts In Education Agency's charitable objects are to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

The charity aims to fulfil this by creating participatory arts projects that inspire young people to become successful, confident individuals capable of reaching their full

potential and by making cultural programmes that are courageous, relevant and excellent.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2021***

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Governing Documents

County Durham Arts In Education Agency Ltd is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 5 July 2000, registered in England and Wales under company number 04027621 and governed by its Articles of Association, originally registered upon incorporation, as amended by Special Resolutions dated 26/03/2001 and 23/01/2014.

The charity was registered with the Charity Commission on 3 May 2001.

The Directors of the company are also Trustees of the charity.

Eligibility for membership of the charity, and membership of the Board of Trustees, is governed by the Articles of Association. There are no restrictions in the governing document on the operation of the charity other than those imposed by general charity law.

Charitable Purpose

County Durham Arts In Education agency's charitable objects are to foster and promote the maintenance, improvement and development of the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts in education.

Structure and Governance

The charity currently has a Board of 7 non-executive Trustees.

The Board meets a minimum of four times per year. The Executive Director is in attendance and has no voting rights. Additional committees and working groups are established to explore specific issues.

Detailed written Board reports and an agenda are prepared and circulated in advance of meetings.

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees

The minimum number of Board Members allowed is three and the maximum is 12.

Potential new Board Members are identified through a mixture of formal and informal means, including discussions and recommendations offered by Trustees, outside advisors to the organisation, peer organisations and Arts Council England as well as through a range of advertising channels

Particular emphasis is placed on identifying individuals who can fill any skills gaps within the Board.

Under the Articles of Association, at each Annual General Meeting one third of the Trustees retire by rotation, but they may offer themselves up for re-election.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2021***

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Recruitment and Appointment of Board of Trustees (Cont.)

It's clear that the Arts Council's Investment Priorities emphasise, under the heading of inclusivity and relevance, the view that the make-up of the Trustees of the organisation should reflect the characteristics and diversity of the community we serve. In 2021/22 we will set up a sub-group of the Board to consider whether new appointments are needed the better to meet that requirement.

Trustee Induction and Training

New Trustees are inducted by the Chair of the Board and Director and are provided with a range of resources and publications to support their understanding of County Durham Arts In Education Agency activities, including the latest annual report and accounts, a full role description and information on current and past projects.

The organisation also holds an annual Board development day and Trustees are encouraged to take up training opportunities outside the organisation when they become available.

They are also kept informed on an ongoing basis around developments in both the arts in education and wider charity sectors via the dissemination of relevant information and newsletters from Arts Council England and the Charity Commission.

Organisational Structure

Day-to-day responsibility for the management of the organisation is delegated to an Executive Director, who is supported by a Creative Producer and an Administrator. Line management, supervision and appraisal is undertaken of all staff to ensure the team continues to develop their skills and working practices as part of our drive continually to improve quality.

The Board remains heavily involved in the creation and implementation of key policy.

Key Management Personnel

The Board, who give their time freely and have received no remuneration in the year, have considered who are the Key Management Personnel (KMP) of the charity. Together with the Board, these KMP are those in charge of directing and controlling, running and operating the activities of the charity on a day to day basis.

The remuneration of the KMP is reviewed annually. The Trustees benchmark against pay levels of other charities and similar organisations within the sector and the region. Pay levels are set using this information together with the budget and forecast information, ensuring that the charity can afford any proposed increases. The Board then agrees any uplift to remuneration.

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Reserves Policy

The Trustees have reviewed the charity's needs for reserves in line with the guidance issued by the Charity Commission and have established the required optimum levels of reserves for the organisation.

The Forge often requires a long lead-in time to plan programmes and projects, working within the expected programming schedules of schools, communities and artists. The reserves policy reflects the need to provide a degree of security to support planning, and to provide confidence to stakeholders that artistic plans are soundly-based and funded.

The Trustees aim firstly to hold a level of unrestricted Reserves which enables the charity to have sufficient financial resources to meet various liabilities which would crystallise if The Forge's funding were to be interrupted or withdrawn and/or it were unable to continue operating.

The Trustees have allocated £105,000 to cover a nine-month period to enable the organisation to meet contractual liabilities and to maintain service provision in the event of delays with receipt of funding (£90,000) or should it have to close, resulting in redundancy payments (£15,000).

In addition, the Trustees have then agreed to retain an additional allowance of £135,000 as Designated Unrestricted Funds, as follows:

- Project Funds (£80,000) - to enable the charity to respond flexibly to issues or appropriate initiatives which might be identified outside of its annual budgeting process to:
 - maintain performance despite an economic downturn and severe public sector cutbacks (£20,000)
 - invest in new ICT, including a CRM system to deliver COVID-safe blended learning programmes (£20,000) and
 - to provide funds that can be designated to specific projects including digital innovation, international collaboration and staff development (£40,000)
- Covid-19 Response Fund (£55,000) - the Trustees believe that an extra degree of contingency is required at present to respond effectively to the short and medium term impact of the COVID 19 pandemic. The additional designated sum will be used to renew the organisation's focus and operational priorities, reflecting changes to the cultural and social landscape resulting from the impact of the pandemic, and responding to the economic impact in the areas we serve.

Over three years the sum of £55,000 will be invested in a range of proactive and responsive activities (2021/22: £20,000, 2022/23: £20,000, 2023/24: £15,000).

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STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT (Continued)

Reserves Policy (Cont.)

The detail of the COVID-19 Response Fund covers four strands:

1. Joint work with schools and further education providers, building on our experience and current suite of activities, to show how engagement in the arts can broaden children's experience, currently catastrophically narrowed by the pandemic, and impact on their achievement
2. Joint work with communities, reflecting our current work in Stanley, developing community identity and partnerships through engagement in the arts in the context of the probable severe economic impact of the pandemic
3. Joint work with health partners as a part of the response to the impact of Covid-19 on mental health
4. An overarching fourth strand, reflecting the impact on artists and performers of the pandemic, exploring new ways they can engage with schools and communities.

The total reserves required by the organisation, including designated funds, are therefore £240,000.

The charity's total unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2021 are £245,484.

The charity's 'free' unrestricted Reserves at 31 March 2021, defined as non-designated unrestricted funds, excluding the value of Tangible Fixed Assets, are £105,854.

This policy will be reviewed by the Trustees on an annual basis as part of the charity's budgeting processes.

Grant Making Policy

The charity does not currently engage in grant-making activity.

Fundraising Policy

The charity is required to report how it deals with fundraising from the public. The charity does not use a professional fundraiser or commercial participator to raise funds. Any monies raised direct from the public follows all guidelines set out by the Charity Commission and UK law in every respect. We respect the privacy and contact preferences of all public donors.

Investment Policy

The Forge's cash reserves, over and above those required for day-to-day working capital, have typically been invested in a combination of a higher-rate, instant access deposit account and various fixed-term cash deposit accounts.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
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OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Public Benefit

The Trustees understand and have discussed the implications of the provisions of the Charities Act 2006, which state that all charities must demonstrate that they are established for public benefit, and have had due regard to the public benefit guidance issued by the Charity Commission. The Trustees believe that the charity meets both of the key principles.

- ☐ Principle 1 - There must be an identifiable benefit, or benefits
- ☐ Principle 2 - Benefit must be to the public, or a section of the public

There is clear evidence of a demand for our work as we continue to grow the number of school partners from County Durham and across the North East and increase the number of participants engaging in our programme. Whilst we have not been able to have face to face contact with schools during the year, through our online training offer we have worked with 37 schools and 87 children in the year directly through our programmes and 12,385 children indirectly through Artsmark and wider programmes. We have trained 66 teachers through CPD sessions and Artsmark.

By targeting our work using census and school data, we support those who face the most challenges in access and economic well-being. We use census data and information from the indices of deprivation (alongside DfE school data on SEND and pupil premium ratios) to focus our engagement and impact. At least 95% of the schools' programme is in places with the least engagement, as defined by the Active People data. This focus can also be seen in our Artsmark recruitment: over 20% of recruitment is in the most deprived 10% areas in the country (IDACI decile rank of deprivation of Lower Super Output Area). As well as extending our reach to additional schools, we continue work with schools we know, including two primary schools situated in former mining communities where 70% of pupils are in receipt of free school meals (FSM), and another where 51% of pupils receive FSM. Secondary schools on which we have focused are from similarly deprived wards with 45.1% (Greenfield), and 51% (North Durham Academy) in receipt of FSM. Our long-term partner school in Blyth is situated in an area of high poverty (33% child poverty) and high long-term unemployment.

We have made advances in embedding the Arts Council Creative Case for Diversity into our work. Our approach is shaped by our participants who in the main live in areas of high deprivation and economic disadvantage. 98.98% of the population of County Durham is White British, compared to 90.92% in England. In Northern Writes we gave a platform to unheard working-class voices. Through the Defiant Voices Programme, we placed holocaust awareness, exclusion and intolerance at the forefront of our creative programme.

All of these benefits are clear, evidenced and relate directly to the charity's aims. In addition, the Trustees do not consider that any significant detriment or harm flows from The Forge's work.

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For the year ended 31 March 2021

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Risk Management

The Trustees regularly review the major governance, operational and financial risks which the charity faces as part of its annual business planning process and confirm that systems have been established to mitigate these risks. Current circumstances have brought new risks, which the Board is actively reviewing as part of a fresh look at the place and role of the Forge in a post-COVID world.

We have a risk management strategy in place which comprises:

- an annual review of the strategic risks the charity may face via the business plan
- the establishment of systems and procedures to mitigate any risks identified
- the implementation of procedures designed to minimise any potential impact on the charity should those risks materialise.

The Trustees are satisfied that appropriate financial systems and controls and employment policies and practices are in place.

The Trustees have for some years considered the key risks facing the charity and the mitigating actions taken to be as follows:

Long-term absence/resignation of Executive Director, Creative Producer or Trustees

- Increasing artistic team improves succession plans for Executive Director
- Increasing Trustees improves resilience and Trustee succession planning
- Increased Board capacity supports Creative Producer absence / recruitment.

Not achieving income targets (trusts and foundations, earned income, individual giving):

- Development of a strategic plan to support further diversification of funding
- Collaboration with national and international partners improves awareness of relevant commissioning and funding opportunities.

Not achieving audience targets:

- Developing a teacher advisory group to support alignment of programme with schools' needs
- Ongoing review of relevance and value of programme
- Work with CBNE and other partners to ensure that Artsmark activity is developed
- Developing a robust marketing plan for every project
- Collaborating with venue partners and Audience Agency, to analyse data
- Increased understanding of audiences informs effective marketing.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
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For the year ended 31 March 2021

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIVITIES (CONTINUED)

Risk Management (Cont.)

Not delivering artistic excellence:

- Engaging a highly experienced artist as a mentor for major projects' creative teams
- Implementation of the Arts Council's Quality Principles for CYP
- Collaborating with exceptional artists
- Sharing work-in-progress with audiences and peers to gain critical feedback
- Evaluating artistic achievements and shortcomings for every project
- Creating plans to continually improve artistic practice.

The Trustees also manage the general financial risks arising by ensuring that:

- Prudent budgets have been set for the next financial year
- The charity maintains a low-cost base
- Regular management accounts are provided, showing the performance against budget
- Contingency plans are in place for the actions which would be taken if income appears unlikely to reach its target
- Reserves policies have been adopted which provide an appropriate amount of uncommitted Reserves which will always enable the charity to meet all its liabilities even if income targets are not achieved.

In March 2021 it became apparent that COVID presented a significant risk to the company. In addition, we needed to adhere to Government's instructions. Our response had two levels: organisational and operational.

In organisational terms, we managed a timely move from our offices in Stanley and all three staff established themselves as home workers. Our IT infrastructure proved resilient, allowing a smooth transfer to home working. All staff have full access to systems and data ensuring that ongoing operations and management are not compromised.

Effective communications between staff, with Board members, and with operational partners are maintained through use of Zoom and Teams, and formal meetings of the Board have continued to schedule ensuring continued effective governance.

Funders have shown great understanding and patience and resources for existing projects continue to be drawn down.

The move to remote learning and online training has so far been successful and we have developed our blended offer. The team has gained experience in the use of a number of platforms including Zoom, MS Teams and Google Hangouts.

Our focus now is to look carefully at operational opportunities and priorities in the post-COVID world, so that, with the benefit of a sound financial and operational base,

we can make the most effective contribution to recovery and well-being in the schools and communities we serve.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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For the year ended 31 March 2021

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

Achievements in the Year

Teaching Things Differently

At the beginning of lockdown, we were fortunate in that we had successfully delivered all of the planned CPDL sessions, delivering the final session on 10 March 2020, just prior to school closures and widespread lockdowns. The focus of the CPDL programme we had delivered was to raise teachers' understanding of the catalytic possibilities of visual literacy techniques in the classroom. Anecdotal feedback within the sessions and written feedback from the teachers and artists indicates that this first phase of the programme was successful in achieving this. However, our plan that teachers would then independently lead face-to-face projects in school had to be revised in light of the pandemic (specifically lockdowns, school "bubbles" and social distancing) prompting us to liaise with schools and artists and funder to create realistic alternatives. As part of this project recovery process, the year one artists created a digital resource (a compilation of all of the learning activities and resources from the seven CPDL sessions) to support teachers during lockdown and to help them with their autumn project planning. This was identified as a useful teaching resource by the participants. In direct response to school requests, we also commissioned a poet, Bob Beagrie, to support three of our partner schools during the autumn term by delivering image-themed workshops directly to the students via Zoom workshops.

Throughout the whole year, we continued to deliver our project remotely via Zoom sessions and successfully moved on from the initial "taught phase" of the project (where teachers had little or no understanding of photography compositional or technical skills, or of the symbiotic relationship between visual and traditional literacy) to a more confident and agential co-creation stage. While the first year of our project focused on teaching photography skills to our participants, this second year has been marked by a more blended approach to workshop design, seamlessly combining photography and writing.

Our decision to employ two new artists was driven by this need to blend the two artforms and by the demands of our learning environment which required synchronous online sessions rather than face-to-face delivery. To ensure that any prospective applicants were aware of the complexity of this project (in terms of its pedagogical ambitions), we hosted open webinars as part of our recruitment drive. The two artists we appointed – Madeleine Waller and Katherine Goda – both demonstrated a sophisticated awareness of the benefits and challenges of this work. Their brief was to weave together the writing and photography strands of the work to balance delivery and prevent writing from being a "bolt on" activity. By working closely with both artists, generating, refining and reviewing ideas, and then rehearsing and tweaking workshop content, this was achieved.

In light of the significant changes we had to make to our programme, we were able to access a "pandemic response" uplift in our grant amounting to an additional £15,718 to enable us to extend our programme three months beyond its original September 2021 deadline.

It is perhaps worth noting that two of the artists employed on this Paul Hamlyn programme (Julia Parks, photographer; Katherine Goda, writer) both took part in The Forge's Emerging Artists training programme (developed for Northern Heartlands) and have, since completing the programme, achieved successful careers as participatory artists within their individual fields.

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TRUSTEES' REPORT
*For the year ended 31 March 2021***

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Northern Writes

Tommy Armstrong Centenary Programme

We were unable to deliver the original programme that we had designed to celebrate the centenary of Tommy Armstrong's death due to lockdown and social distancing regulations. Following our discussion with Daniel O'Brien, Stanley Area Action Partnership, and in consultation with the Tommy Armstrong Society, schools, community groups and advisory artists, we were able to develop a revised proposal offering a Covid-safe alternative pathway – the resultant "Everyday Heroes, Everyday Lives" project celebrates Tommy Armstrong and the lives of Stanley people through photographic commissions and a proposed online/offline Stanley-wide participatory programme. This revised proposal was submitted to the AAP in February 2021 (confirmation of funding was received in June 2021).

Defiant Voices – Spoken Word

Delivery of our two Defiant Voices school programmes funded through #iwill funding (via the Community Foundation and County Durham Community Foundation) was unavoidably delayed due to the pandemic and school closures/social distancing measures. Therefore a new pathway was needed to deliver this spoken word programme. Following discussions with the original artists we had approached (Bob Beagrie, Lisette Auton and Rowan McCabe), and with our four school partners, Kenton School, Sacred Heart High School, North Durham Academy and Durham Sixth Form Centre, we were able to work together to design an online alternative to the original programme and to trial and rehearse the content for this prior to its planned summer term delivery. Rather than live performance outcomes, we designed these spoken word programmes so that they would result in digital outcomes - film-poems - that would be accessible to audiences regardless of social distancing restrictions. Despite the immense challenges faced by all our school partners, all four schools engaged with the programme throughout. One of our artists - disability activist and poet Lisette Auton - decided not to participate in this revised online pathway, instead she has continued to work with The Forge in an advisory capacity, supporting us with advice around potential access and inclusivity.

International Development

Jersey City Theatre

Jersey City Theater Center (JCTC) is a non-profit, arts organisation committed to inspiring conversations about important topics of our times through innovative and progressive performing and visual arts. We were invited to present The Tin Ring as

part of the annual Voices International Theatre Festival. This year's festival focused on diversity and inclusion driven by the Black Lives Matter debate. It encompassed companies from across the world including South Africa, Russia, United States, Israel and many more. On this occasion it was not possible to present the performance live so we filmed the piece. Taking the work online and developing the digital learning programme around piece opens up new opportunities for The Forge. It was very well received by the international audience and there is an offer to return to Jersey at some point in the future.

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ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

International Development (Cont.)

International Virtual Exchange

Following Bev Brigg's attendance at Newcastle University's International Virtual Exchange Conference in September 2020, we have been liaising with a partner organisation in Mexico – affiliated to the University of Monterrey to explore possible partnerships between UK schools and Mexican school partners. We have now introduced two Artsmark schools – Bede Academy and Duchess, to join us in this conversation. Both schools have attended a meeting with virtual exchange organisers from Monterrey and both are now keen to develop arts-based virtual exchange projects focusing on collaborations around art and literature.

Brass Festival 2020

The festival, which was scheduled to take place between 10 and 19 July had to be cancelled due to the pandemic, however the commissioning organisation Durham County Council decided to take the festival online and it took place from Monday 13 to Saturday 18 July, via the Brass website. The Forge contacted Durham schools encouraging them to take part in the festival and DCC were very pleased with viewing figures over the week reporting 6,888 views of the online content, and 28,581 individual page impressions.

Artsmark

We continue to play a leading role in the delivery of Artsmark, the only creative quality standard for schools and education settings, accredited by Arts Council England in the North East and beyond.

- We 285 active Artsmark schools in the North East (24%)
- In 2020/21: 10 new schools registered against a target of 16 and 20 re-registered against a target of 38
- 10 LEA areas have a minimum of 20% of their schools active Artsmark schools against a target of 11 (under 20% are Darlington (need 2), Redcar & Cleveland (need 5))
- 6 LEA areas have a minimum of 20% of their secondary schools active Artsmark schools against a target of 10 (under 20% are Darlington (need 2), Gateshead (need 1), Middlesbrough (need 2), R&C (need 1), Stockton (need 1), Sunderland (need 2))

Notable Artsmark Achievements:

- Recruitment: Artsmark recruitment in the North East remains the highest (proportionally) of all Bridge regions (25% at 31 March 2021)
- Over the year, ten LEA areas (against a target of 11) had a minimum of 20% of their schools active Artsmark schools
- Artsmark Retention: Our retention rate is strong (compared to all Bridges), indicating a responsive stewardship of schools throughout a difficult and turbulent year

- Developing an accessible online training programme – all Artsmark training was redesigned and successfully delivered online - Development Days were condensed into a two-hour session with optional follow-up one-to-one support
- Support – one-to-one support for schools (via email or Zoom or telephone conversation) was offered throughout the year with substantial take-up.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE) TRUSTEES' REPORT

For the year ended 31 March 2021

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Achievements in the Year (Cont.)

Arts Award and Artsmark

We responded to the challenges of the pandemic by working in partnership with Culture Bridge North East and one of our most successful Platinum Artsmark schools to develop a training programme for Artsmark primary schools that could be delivered in the classroom or at home. "Discover in a Bubble/Discover at Home" was designed to offer schools a teacher-informed, teacher-developed Arts Award pathway programme with supporting log-book that teachers could use remotely with pupils or can use to deliver the Discover award within the classroom.

Aligned to the development of this new resource, and thanks to DfE funding (via CBNE), we also offered free Adviser Training (Discover and Explore) to 11 Northumberland schools.

Digital Drive

We were accepted onto Digital Drive Durham; an ERDF funded programme designed to help small businesses make better use of digital technology to improve their business productivity. The project ran until August 2020 and we took advantage of the benefits offered from the programme including:

- a Digital Health Check
- a one-to-one meeting with an advisor
- the team have attended training session on Canva and digital media
- funding to support the purchase of additional equipment.

Financial Review

The out-turn for the year is an unrestricted surplus of £2,376 (2020: Surplus £1,099). The surplus will be added to Unrestricted Reserves, leaving a balance on Unrestricted Funds, including Designated Funds, at 31 March 2021 of £245,484.

In the course of 2020/21, The Forge Officers and Board continued to work hard to develop the sustainability of the organisation. This included short, mid and long-term planning and financial modeling. We have a two-pronged approach to income generation which includes:

- Direct earned income for services
- Income generated from external funders to deliver produced programme

We were proactively responding to pressure on school budgets and strengthening our resilience through;

- Developing staff skills
- Raising our academic and research profile
- Development of evidence-based arts interventions that appeal to school leadership priorities
- Securing funding from a wider range of non-arts based social action funding streams
- Deepening our relationship with existing funders through responsive stewardship
- Diversifying and developing our market share to include FE and Sixth Form Colleges

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE (A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE) TRUSTEES' REPORT

For the year ended 31 March 2021

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE (CONTINUED)

Financial Review (Cont.)

COVID, and its impact on schools, had a direct and fundamental impact on those plans. We have now had several exploratory meetings with our partners and are trialling new approaches and developing a strategy to maintain our impact within the restrictions imposed by COVID. Much depends on schools' organisational response to the new constraints. But we are confident that we are uniquely placed to contribute to the recovery of schools and communities, and to enriching the lives of children and families for whom COVID has meant a narrowing of horizons.

Despite the continued difficult operating climate for all charities, 2020/21 was a highly successful year. We maintained a rich mix of programmes, delivered effectively in the context of the pandemic. The impact of the pandemic on our income streams was less great than we had feared. Much of the focus for this year has been delivering the Paul Hamlyn-funded programme Teaching Things Differently (£140,147 over two financial years). We use the expertise of the staff to generate income with external commissions including working with East Durham Creates and we have maintained our contractual agreements with DCC and CBNE with contracts to the value of £41,500.

The Finance and HR Sub Group takes a hands-on approach to resilience and feeds back to the full Board on a quarterly basis. Arts accountancy specialist Pete O'Hara has continued in his role as a financial advisor to the Board.

COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

As part of the process of creating a new business plan for the period 2018-2022 the Board committed the organisation to the following vision statement.

The Forge will create outstanding participatory arts projects with diverse communities, with a particular focus on the children and young people within them: we will extend horizons, build individual and collective confidence, and help people see and achieve their potential.

We outlined the following strategic objectives for the period 2018-2022:

- Sustain and develop our leading role in delivering Artsmark across the region
- Develop our methodology in creative practice through the delivery of The Defiant Voices and other produced programmes
- Deepen our role in County Durham through our partnership with Durham County Council to improve the cultural offer to children in schools across the County
- Maintain our focus on Internationalism, developing new partnerships that will develop our practice, provide unique opportunities for children and young people from different countries and cultures to communicate through the arts, and enrich our work in the North East
- Deliver an innovative artist development programme to include training and professional development and self-evaluation opportunities for artists and teachers
- Lead best evaluative practice within the sector by developing action research and University partnerships to test the impact of our work
- Work with University partners to facilitate research into the impact of the arts on the identities of Children and Young people
- Develop, with school partners, a young-person-friendly evaluative framework, based on the Quality Principles, to ensure that our key participants and audiences have a strong voice in shaping and feeding back on our programme.

Clearly, restrictions forced on us by COVID mean that some of these objectives will be managed and delivered in a different way. Some may not be delivered at all. But we think that, from a position of financial stability and drawing on our experience of developing excellent programmes for schools and communities, we are uniquely placed to be a part of the recovery within the framework of those objectives, which still have great currency.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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TRUSTEES' REPORT
For the year ended 31 March 2021**

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE TRUSTEES

The Trustees (who are also the Directors of County Durham Arts In Education Agency for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the Trustees' Annual 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 year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company 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 in the Charities SORP;
- ☐ make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- ☐ state whether applicable UK Accounting Standards 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 operation.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that 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. The Trustees 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.

In preparing this report, the Trustees have taken advantage of the small companies exemptions provided by Section 415A of the Companies Act 2006.

Signed by order of the Trustees



**M Gilbey
Chair/Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621**

26 August 2021

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS ON THE UNAUDITED ACCOUNTS OF COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY TRADING AS THE FORGE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

I hereby report to the Trustees/Members of County Durham Arts In Education Agency (Charity Registration Number 1086471) on the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2021 set out on pages 18 to 30.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5) (b) of the 2011 Act.

Independent Examiner's Statement

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000, your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountant in England and Wales, which is one of the listed bodies.

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

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view' which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods or principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities (applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102)).

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

**Pete O'Hara, FCA, Chartered Accountant
Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England
& Wales**

4 Stoneyhurst Road West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne NE3 1PG

26 August 2021

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

	Not e	Unrestricte d Funds £	Restrict ed Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Income					
Income from Investments	3	2,460	-	2,460	1,966
Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies	4	72,552	17,671	90,223	207,546
Income from Charitable Activities	5	12,316	28,000	40,316	46,480
Total Income		87,328	45,671	132,999	255,992
Expenditure					
Expenditure on Raising Funds	6	30,656	-	30,656	28,408
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	7	54,296	68,447	122,743	159,437
Total Expenditure		84,952	68,447	153,399	187,845
Net Income/(Expenditure)		2,376	(22,776)	(20,400)	68,147
Balance brought forward at 1 April		243,108	87,929	331,037	262,890
Balance carried forward at 31 March	13	£245,484	£65,153	£310,637	£331,037

The notes on pages 20 to 30 form part of the financial statements.

All of the activities of the company are classed as continuing.

The Statement of Financial Activities includes all gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
BALANCE SHEET/STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL
POSITION
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021**

	Notes	2021 £	2020 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible Fixed Assets	10	4,630	2,697
Current Assets			
Debtors	11	18,252	60,768
Cash At Bank & In Hand		315,108	300,436
		<u>333,360</u>	<u>361,204</u>
Creditors - Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year	12	(27,353)	(32,864)
Net Current Assets/(Liabilities)		<u>306,007</u>	<u>328,340</u>
Total Net Assets	13	<u>£310,637</u>	<u>£331,037</u>
Represented by:			
Unrestricted General Funds	14	110,484	108,108
Unrestricted Designated Funds	14	135,000	135,000
Restricted Funds	14	65,153	87,929
		<u>£310,637</u>	<u>£331,037</u>

The notes on pages 20 to 30 form part of the financial statements.

The Trustees are satisfied that for the year ended 31 March 2021 the charity was entitled to exemption under section 477(2) of the Companies Act 2006.

The Trustees also confirm that the Members have not required the charity to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006

The Trustees acknowledge their responsibilities for:

(i) ensuring that the charity keeps adequate accounting records which comply with section 386 of the Act, and

(ii) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss for the financial year in accordance with the requirements of section 393, and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Act relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the charity.

These financial statements were approved and signed by a Member of the Board of Trustees on 26 August 2021

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'M Gilbey', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

M Gilbey
Trustee
Company Registration Number 04027621

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

1. Accounting Policies

Charity Information

County Durham Arts In Education is a private company, limited by guarantee, incorporated in England and Wales. The registered office is The Forge, Stanley Education Centre, King Edward VIII Terrace, Stanley, County Durham, DH9 0HQ.

The charity is a public benefit entity.

Basis of Accounting

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable United Kingdom accounting standards, including Financial Reporting Standard 102 - 'The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland' ('FRS 102'), and with the Companies Act 2006 and the Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP FRS 102) "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" and the Charities Act 2011.

The financial statements have been prepared on the historical cost basis, modified to include certain financial instruments at fair value.

Advantage has been taken of the provisions in the SORP for Charities applying FRS 102 Update Bulletin 2 not to prepare a statement of cashflows.

The financial statements are prepared in sterling, which is the functional currency of the charity.

Income

All income is included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SOFA) when there is entitlement, certainty of receipt and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Such income is only deferred when the donor or funder has specified that the grant or donation can only be used in future accounting periods or where the donor or funder has imposed conditions which must be met before the charity has unconditional entitlement.

Investment income, including interest on funds held on deposit, is recognised on a receivable basis.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Expenditure

All expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and is recognised when a liability is incurred.

- Expenditure on raising funds are those costs of seeking potential funders and applying for funding
- Charitable activities include expenditure associated with the planning and delivery of artistic productions and associated activities. This includes both the direct costs and support costs relating to these activities.
- Support or Indirect costs are those costs incurred in support of the charitable objectives. These have been allocated to the resources expended on a consistent basis that fairly reflects the true use of those resources within the organisation, such as allocating staff costs by time spent and other costs by their usage.
- Governance costs are those incurred in the governance of the charity and its assets and are primarily associated with the constitutional and statutory requirements.

Pensions

The charity contributes to two pension schemes; one is a multi-employer defined benefit final salary scheme and the other is a defined contribution scheme. Further details can be found in Note 9.

The assets of the multi-employer scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. However, it is not possible to identify the charity's specific share of the underlying assets and liabilities. Consequently, the scheme has been accounted for as if it were a defined contribution scheme; and in accordance with FRS17 the costs of the scheme are charged to the Statement of Financial Activities.

For the defined contribution scheme the amount charged to the Statement of Financial Activities in respect of pension costs is the contributions payable in the year. Differences between contributions payable in the year and contributions actually paid are shown as either accruals or prepayments in the balance sheet.

Tangible Fixed Assets and Depreciation

Depreciation is provided on any fixed assets at rates calculated to write off the assets over their remaining useful lives as follows:

Furniture, Fittings, IT & Office Equipment - 25% straight line

A full year's depreciation charge is applied in the year of acquisition and no charge is made in the year of disposal.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

1. Accounting Policies (Continued)

Financial Instruments

The charity only has financial assets and liabilities of a kind which qualify as basic financial instruments. Such instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measured at their settlement value.

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 charity.

Designated Funds comprise unrestricted funds set aside by the Trustees for a specific purpose.

Restricted Funds reflect income received which a funder or donor requires must be spent on a particular purpose or where funds have been raised for a specific purpose. Such income and associated expenditure is shown as Restricted in the Statement of Financial Activities, whilst any unspent balances at the year-end are carried forward as Restricted Funds.

Taxation

County Durham Arts In Education Agency meets the definition required of a charitable company for UK Corporation Tax purposes. Consequently, the company is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively for charitable purposes.

2. Going Concern

The Trustees have reviewed the circumstances of the charity and consider that adequate resources continue to be available to fund the activities of the charity for the foreseeable future. The Trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

**COUNTY DURHAM ARTS IN EDUCATION AGENCY
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NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2021**

3. Income from Investments

	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restrict ed Funds £	2021 £	2020 £
Bank Interest Receivable	2,460	-	2,460	1,966
	£2,460	£-	£2,460	£1,966

The 2020 total of £1,966 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

4. Income from Donations, Grants & Legacies

	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restrict ed Funds £	2021 £	2020 £
Donations	498	-	498	-
Grant Income				
Arts Council England - NPO	58,554	-	58,554	57,496
#iwill Fund at the Community Foundation - Kenton/Fenham Schools	-	-	-	4,400
#iwill Youth Social Action Programme at the Community Foundation - Defiant Voices	-	-	-	4,650
Community Foundation - Teaching Tool	-	-	-	2,500
Digital Drive County Durham Fund	-	1,953	1,953	-
Durham County Council Adult & Community Services	13,500	-	13,500	13,500
Paul Hamlyn Foundation - Teaching Things Differently	-	15,718	15,718	125,000
	£72,552	£17,671	£90,223	£207,546

Of the 2020 total of £207,546, £70,996 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £136,550 to Restricted Funds.

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5. Income from Charitable Activities

	Unrestrict ed Funds	Restrict ed Funds	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Arts Award	7,643	-	7,643	2,500
Artsmark Development Days	173	28,000	28,173	28,000
Consett Academy	-	-	-	750
Critical Friend Income	4,500	-	4,500	3,600
Education Programme	-	-	-	1,630
Northern Writes	-	-	-	10,000
	£12,316	£28,000	£40,316	£46,480

Of the 2020 total of £46,480, £8,480 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £38,000 to Restricted Funds.

6. Expenditure on Raising Funds

	Unrestrict ed Funds	Restrict ed Funds	2021	2020
	£	£	£	£
Salaries & On Costs	30,656	-	30,656	28,408
	£30,656	£-	£30,656	£28,408

The 2020 total of £28,408 was wholly attributable to Unrestricted Funds.

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7. Expenditure on Charitable Activities

	Unrestrict ed Funds £	Restrict ed Funds £	Total 2021 £	Total 2020 £
Artistic Production/Project Costs				
Programme Costs	(414)	24,044	23,630	57,934
Salaries & On Costs	49,519	42,450	91,969	85,223
Travel & Subsistence	-	-	-	1,263
Support Costs				
Premises Costs	-	-	-	4,500
Administration & Office Costs	3,414	1,064	4,478	3,881
Bad Debts	(800)	-	(800)	2,202
Depreciation	956	889	1,845	2,230
Governance Costs				
Independent Examiner's Fees	1,200	-	1,200	1,080
Other Finance/Accountancy Fees	261	-	261	725
Governance Meeting Costs & Expenses	160	-	160	399
	£54,296	£68,447	£122,743	£159,437

Of the 2020 total of £159,437, £51,935 was attributable to Unrestricted Funds and £107,502 to Restricted Funds.

8. Net Income/(Expenditure)

	2021 £	2020 £
Net income/(expenditure) is stated after charging/(crediting):		
Independent Examiner's Fees – current year	1,080	1,080
Depreciation of owned Tangible Fixed Assets	1,845	2,230

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9. Staff Costs & Trustees' Remuneration

	2021	2020
	£	£
Gross Salary Costs	97,752	95,197
Employer's National Insurance	5,724	6,566
Employer's Pension Contributions	19,149	11,868
	£122,625	£113,631

No employee received remuneration of more than £60,000 during the year (2020 - Nil).

The average number of staff employed during the year, calculated as full-time equivalents, was as follows:

	2021	2020
	No.	No.
Fundraising	1	1
Artistic Production and Support	2	2
	3	3

Key Management Personnel are defined by the organisation as the Trustees.

No remuneration has been paid to any Trustees/Directors in the year (2020: £Nil).

No reimbursement was made in the year to Trustees for Travel and Subsistence expenses incurred in respect of their attendance at meetings of the charity (2020: £Nil).

Pension benefits for senior staff are provided through Durham County Council Pension Fund, which is a defined benefit scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2021 County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of 20.5% of pensionable pay.

Pension benefits for other staff are provided through a Group Personal Pension Scheme, which is a defined contribution scheme. The assets of the scheme are held separately from those of the company in a separately administered fund. In the year to 31 March 2021 County Durham Arts In Education Agency made an employer's contribution of 3% of pensionable pay, provided that the employee made a minimum contribution of 5%.

These amounts are paid over to the scheme on a monthly basis.

Contributions of £627 were outstanding at 31 March 2021 (2020: £822).

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10. Tangible Fixed Assets

	IT & Office Equipment £	Total £
Cost		
At 1 April 2020	11,943	11,943
Additions in year	3,778	3,778
At 31 March 2021	15,721	15,721
Accumulated Depreciation		
At 1 April 2020	9,246	9,246
Charge for year	1,845	1,845
At 31 March 2021	11,091	11,091
Net Book Value		
At 31 March 2021	£4,630	£4,630
At 1 April 2020	£2,697	£2,697

11. Debtors

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade Debtors	8,503	1,236
Other Debtors	50	50
Prepayments	8,012	582
Accrued Income	1,687	58,900
	£18,252	£60,768

12. Creditors - Amounts Falling Due Within 1 Year

	2021 £	2020 £
Trade Creditors	24,422	26,075
Other Creditors	786	1,464
Other Taxes & Social Security Costs	729	1,090
Accruals	1,416	4,235
	£27,353	£32,864

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13. Analysis of Net Assets between Funds

	Unrestrict ed Funds	Restrict ed Funds	Total 2021	Total 2020
	£	£	£	£
Fixed Assets	1,962	2,668	4,630	2,697
Debtors	18,252	-	18,252	60,768
Cash at Bank and In Hand	252,623	62,485	315,108	300,436
Creditors - Amounts Due Within 1 Year	(27,353)	-	(27,353)	(32,864)
	£245,484	£65,153	£310,637	£331,037

14. Analysis of Charitable Funds

	Fund at 1 April 2020	Incomin g Resourc es in Year £	Resource s Expend ed/ Transfers in Year £	Fund at 31 March 2021
	£			£
Unrestricted Funds				
General Funds	108,108	87,328	(84,592)	110,484
Designated Funds				
Project Fund	80,000	-	-	80,000
COVID-19 Recovery Fund	55,000	-	-	55,000
	243,108	87,328	(84,592)	245,484
Restricted Funds				
Artsmark	-	28,000	(28,000)	-
Defiant Voices - NDA Poetry	4,400	-	(600)	3,800
Defiant Voices - Sacred Heart/Kenton	3,882	-	(500)	3,382
Digital Drive County Durham	-	1,953	(1,953)	-
Northern Writes Animation 2	8,000	-	-	8,000
Teaching Things Differently - PHF	70,147	15,718	(37,394)	48,471
Teaching Tool	1,500	-	-	1,500
Total Restricted Funds	87,929	45,671	(68,447)	65,153
	£331,037	£132,999	£(153,399)	£310,637
Total Funds				

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14. Analysis of Charitable Funds (Cont.)

Name of Designated Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Designated Fund
Project Fund	Towards the cost of specific project initiatives
COVID-19 Recovery Fund	Towards the cost of a range of initiatives to renew the organisation's focus and operational priorities, arising from the impact of the pandemic
Name of Restricted Fund	Description, Nature & Purpose of the Restricted Fund
Artsmark	Towards the cost of Artsmark activity
Defiant Voices - NDA Poetry - Durham Community Foundation	Towards the cost of Defiant Voices - NDA Poetry
Defiant Voices - Sacred Heart/Kenton Poetry - Community Foundation	Towards the cost of Defiant Voices - Sacred Heart/Kenton Poetry project
Digital Drive County Durham Fund	Towards the cost of new ICT equipment and installation
Northern Writes Animation 2 - Durham County Council	Towards the cost of Northern Writes Animation 2
Teaching Things Differently - Paul Hamlyn Foundation	Towards the cost of Teaching Things Differently
Teaching Tool - Community Foundation	Towards the cost of Teaching Tools

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15. Related Party Transactions

The charity has a close working relationship with Arts Council England which is a registered charity and has provided significant project funding which enables the charity to carry out its charitable objectives. In total, grant funding of £57,496 (2020: £57,496) from Arts Council England was recognised in the year.

At 31 March 2021, Nil was owing to County Durham Arts In Education Agency from Arts Council England (31 March 2020: £Nil).

16. Taxation

The company is a registered charity and no provision is considered necessary for taxation.

17. Financial Commitments

No material financial commitments have been made in respect of future financial periods.

18. Company Limited by Guarantee

The charity is incorporated under the Companies Act 1985 and is limited by guarantee, each member having undertaken to contribute such amounts not exceeding £1 as may be required in the event of the company being wound up whilst he or she is still a member or within one year thereafter.

There are currently 7 members of the company (2020 - 7 members).