

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.

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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 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.

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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.

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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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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.

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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 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.

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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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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.

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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

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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.

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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.

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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**

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	Unrestrict ed 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
TRADING AS THE FORGE
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
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.

**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**

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.

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

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

**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**

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).

**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**

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

**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

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				

**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**

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

**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**

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).