

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC
TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025
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HEAR ME OUT MUSIC TRUSTEES' REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

The Trustees, who are also Directors of the charitable company, present their report and the financial statements for Hear Me Out (HMO), formerly Music In Detention, for the year ended 31st March 2025.

COMPANY INFORMATION

REGISTRATION	Company number: 5943893 Charity number: 1119049
BOARD OF TRUSTEES	The following persons have served as members of the Board during the year and up to the date of this report: Clare Scott Booth Aksa Canolli (appointed 11/12/25) Kidu Gerbreegziabher (appointed 11/12/25) Kaveh Ghandizadeh Lamin Joof (resigned 4/7/25) Vebi Kosumi Sue Lukes Marie-Anne Mackie Ardavan Nikaeen (appointed 11/12/25) Bridget Rennie Joanna Ridout Kai Syng Tan (resigned 28/11/24) Hannah Wilkinson
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER	John Speyer
FINANCE OFFICER	Wendy Lee
REGISTERED OFFICE	Rich Mix 35-47 Bethnal Green Road London E1 6LA
BANKERS	Co-operative Bank PLC PO Box 101 1 Balloon Street Manchester M60 4EP
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER	Tom Wilcox FCIE Counterculture Partnership LLP 23 St Leonards Road Bexhill-on-Sea East Sussex TN40 1HH

PURPOSES AND BENEFITS

Since 2006, Hear Me Out (previously Music In Detention) has been using the connecting, empowering medium of music to improve the situation of some of people held in, or recently released from, the immigration detention and asylum system. Our delivery centres on programmes in Immigration Removal Centres, asylum hotels and barracks. Our vision is of a society in which migrants are treated with dignity and humanity, confidently using the power of their voices to make themselves seen and heard, and finding common ground with the people around them.

Our programme of group music-making sessions and individual talent development offers creative outlets that support self-confidence, relationships and agency, and help develop resilience against the trauma of detention. Our work makes creative spaces and platforms in which people's voices are heard and amplified. People with lived experience of detention and asylum play key roles in our artistic programme and organisational decision-making, and we provide practical and emotional support to help people handle the difficulties they face and play a full part in our work.

We bring skilled artists together with people who are or have been detained, to create and share music, and connect them to communities who live nearby and/or have relatable experiences of marginalisation. We use the power of recorded sound and live events, to bring the creative work and stories of people who have undergone the detention experience to a wider public audience, for whom this encounter may be an entirely new experience.

PUBLIC BENEFIT

Hear Me Out's work gives people held in immigration detention and asylum centres, and other marginalised groups in the UK, access to high quality music-making activities that improve their wellbeing and agency. It helps them develop artistic lives and careers. It provides a platform for their music and experiences to reach public audiences via recordings, performances and story-telling. It strengthens community cohesion and understanding.

Hear Me Out's activities thus deliver benefits to the public. We have reviewed these through the year, with reference to our strategic plan and the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

CHARITABLE OBJECTS

Hear Me Out's charitable objects, as revised in 2012, are set out in its governing document, the Articles of Association:

1. The promotion and protection of the physical and mental health of immigrants and asylum seekers, with particular reference to those detained under immigration laws, through the provision of music and other activities.
2. The advancement of education of the public about the position and experience of immigration detainees, and the promotion of good community relations between people from diverse backgrounds, with particular reference to those living in disadvantaged communities, through the provision of music and other activities.
3. The advancement of education of the public, in particular, but not exclusively, current and former immigration detainees, in the creative arts.

VISION, MISSION & STRATEGIC AIMS

The charity's vision and mission statements and strategic aims, as set out in its 2017 strategy, are:

Vision: Migrants and outsiders together create music which excites, challenges, and gets under the skin. Our society treats migrants with dignity and humanity, making detention obsolete.

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Mission: To bring people living in immigration detention centres together with professional musicians and people living in the surrounding community, to create and perform powerful music, increasing wellbeing and empathy, and helping change attitudes to migrants.

Strategic aims:

1. Embed participatory music-making into life in the UK's immigration detention centres, to improve the wellbeing and resilience of detainees.
2. Use music-making to bring detainees' voices to the public, build solidarity between them and people living near detention centres, and help change attitudes to migrants.
3. Through high quality participatory music-making, enable detainees and other marginalised people to create powerful and challenging original music, and convey it to new audiences through live and recorded performance.
4. Govern and manage Hear Me Out effectively, and secure the long-term continuation of its work by building a stable financial base, a resilient business model and dynamic local partnerships.

These statements and HMO's wider strategy are currently under review.

ETHICS AND EQUITY PRINCIPLES

Our ethics and equity principles, which we revised during the year, are:

1. Solidarity	Solidarity is the foundation of HMO's work. We seek to build understanding and mutual support across social divides. We are committed to helping the people we work with make their lives better. We have each others' backs.
2. Voice	The people HMO works with are at the centre of everything we do. Their voices give life and power to our creative work, and one voice can speak for many. We support them to assert their agency through their music and life stories.
3. Power through artistic expression	Authentic expression is at the heart of HMO's artistic work, and essential to its quality and power. We want this work to empower its creators and performers, and inspire its audiences.
4. Equity and lived experience	Racism is a structural problem in our society and immigration system. We want people with lived experience, our artists, team and Board to work together to achieve racial equity in HMO, so that race does not determine our outcomes. This means making sure people of diverse backgrounds and identities can flourish in HMO, and committing to co-creation in our artistic work and decision-making.
5. Independence	HMO works in the immigration system while staying independent of it. We will ensure that decisions about our programmes and creative content stay in the hands of the HMO community.
6. Active curiosity	We seek to explore and understand individual experience in all its variety, rather than making assumptions about the complex systems we work in. We are open to challenge and the learning this can bring. This means an active practice of observation, listening, and using all our senses.
7. Respect and co-operation	Good work comes from respect and trust between everyone involved, including participants, artists and partner organisations. We engage and co-operate with places of detention, to deliver the best possible outcomes for people in them. We manage disagreements with care and sensitivity.

ARTISTIC PROGRAMME AND ITS IMPACT

During the 2024-25 year we:

- Ran 128 open-access group music sessions with an estimated 660 people in asylum hotels and barracks in London and Folkestone
- Supported 3 bands, involving 20 people with lived experience of asylum and detention centres, to perform at 6 gigs, to a combined estimated audience of 1450
- Created 2 albums consisting of a total of 5 tracks
- Continued to provide creative mentoring and development for 11 musicians, including 5 with lived experience of asylum and detention centres
- Provided practical and/or emotional support to 11 people with lived experience of asylum and detention centres
- Involved 9 experts by experience in our decision-making and governance

Key events in the 2024-25 year included:

April	April: The Unknowns EP launch gig at Union Chapel . Researchers in our Artist Care partnership begin ethnographic study of current practice at Hear Me Out, Irene Taylor Trust and Good Vibrations
May	Monthly clinical supervision sessions with Partisan resume for artists and staff
June	Band from the Barracks: pop up band from Napier Barracks perform at Hastings City of Sanctuary festival The Unknowns play 3 gigs during Refugee Week, in Wandsworth, Richmond and Tottenham
July	Hear Me Out Band play Leyton Carnival HMO artists perform at Refugee Tales opening event in Oxted, Surrey
August	Summer riots necessitate detailed risk management to ensure we can keep people safe and attend to the stress from the threat of violence Summer social event for colleagues and participants
September	Succession plan put in place for departure of long-standing Chair and Director and making lived experience leadership a key part of our organisation Co-Creation awayday on recruitment processes, ethics/equity framework, board development
October	Mentoring/creative development project completed with first cohort of 11 musicians
November	Practice Forum day for artists, focused on sharing information on/examples of new work, care, skills development
December	HMO featured in Creating connections: The role of arts in bridging divides and bringing communities together , a report by thinktank British Future
January	Artist Care research: ethnographic study of current practice in HMO completed Safeguarding training and reflective session for trustees
February	Showreel for the Hear Me Out Band issued
March	Hear Me Out Band rehearses and works up options for a new band name. Our work with children in asylum hotels reduces from two hotels to one due to shortage of funds

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Since year end, 2025	Jun: Band from the Barracks perform at Dover Multicultural Festival, musician Kwaku Acheampong presents our BBC Radio 4 Appeal Aug: summer project with children in asylum hotel Nov: presented at Youth Music Network webinar on Artist Care, and Arts & Social Outcomes Network event with funders on co-creation & power-sharing Dec: programme at Napier Barracks ends after 4 years due to the Barracks' closure
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WORK WITH GROUPS

In the 2024-25 year we delivered 80 sessions with children and young people in 2 different asylum hotels in east London, and 44 sessions with men at Napier Barracks in Folkestone. We estimate that these programmes reached 630 adults and children (although the fluid nature of participation in these settings means a margin of error on that figure).

Napier Barracks: Through the year we generally ran 2 sessions most Thursdays, in the afternoon and evening. Attendance was 15-30 in each session. Our pattern of work was to divide delivery into 6-8 week blocks, with a 'sharing performance' at the end of each block, and then a gap of 2-3 weeks before the next block. This approach helps build momentum and confidence, and makes the programme more feasible financially. However budget shortfalls obliged us to cut out some of blocks in the later part of the year, reducing total participation compared to previous years. After the year end we resumed the full delivery pattern, until Napier Barracks closed in December, bringing this programme to an end after 4 years.

Every session was led by two of our Associate Artists. Two provided continuity throughout the programme, leading most sessions, while a number of others added diversity and range. Artists offered a variety of activities during sessions, including open jam sessions for everyone to join in, sharing songs from participants' homelands/cultural, drumming, music tuition (bass/drums/keyboard/voice training), and more structured music making, with artists and participants creating and recording new tracks and rapping over the top.

The method is collaborative. As one puts it, 'musical glue is provided by workshop leaders as necessary.' They 'usually try and start with what the participants bring to the table, so that people involved feel ownership of the material,' for example supporting participants to teach their songs to others and take the lead, or using jamming to develop more structured tracks. There's an emphasis on playing things live, to connect participants more with each other. There's often dancing.

Every year of this programme we have assembled a pop-up 'Band from the Barracks' from among the participants in our sessions, and (with the help of Napier staff) taken them to gig for public audiences. In 2024 they gigged again at the [Hastings Sanctuary Festival](#), and in 2025 at [Dover Multicultural Festival](#). The performances have gone down a treat with the public, with audiences singing and dancing along. The impact of these gigs has been two-fold: band members are empowered and celebrated on stage, while audiences experience new music from talented musicians who are not usually given a public platform within our society.

Asylum hotels: We continued our music programme with children and young people at two asylum hotels in east London, two sessions each, most weekends through the year. As at Napier, we divided the work into 6-8 week blocks, which were sadly curtailed in the later part of the year due to lack of funds, lowering the number of participants compared to previous years. Since the year end we have resumed the full delivery pattern at one hotel, but discontinued sessions at the other, to deliver a full programme but within the resources available.

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Every session has been led by two of our Associate Artists. Usually one leads a whole block, for continuity, while the other changes more, for variety. We select artists for this programme for their skills and experience in working with young children, since most participants are 11 and under.

Of course music is our core activity but other art forms have become important elements in this programme, to address the stress and trauma that the children are experiencing, and the insecurity and sterility of their institutional environment. Essentially, dance channels pent-up emotions and visual art calms them. Artists tend to start with arts and crafts activities as an icebreaker to welcome children, young people and parents into the space. Music and dance activities and games on the mats develop later in the session, sometimes in response to the arts and crafts creations. One artist reported that participants enjoyed 'transforming the mats into hiding boxes, dens and drums and there were some lovely interactions with adults around this.'

We continued the programme during the riots in summer 2024, to show solidarity with the families, and we put in place at pace a series of measures to keep our artists safe, adapt our sessions to the circumstances, and allow reflection and debriefing afterwards.

Local Welcome: We delivered 4 music sessions on a heritage theme on behalf of Local Welcome, which brings people together to prepare and enjoy weekend meals in community spaces. Participants in Derby and Norwich, including refugees, asylum-seekers and other local residents, created and performed songs with lyrics about their stories and experiences. This was the first time Hear Me Out was commissioned to deliver work for a partner organisation. After the year end another commission followed, from the Migrant Refugee Health Project.

Bands: We supported three bands during the year. The pop-up Band from the Barracks (see p6) performed once again at the Hastings Sanctuary Festival. The Hear Me Out Band, soon to be renamed, gigged at the Leyton Carnival and worked on its future plans and branding. The Unknowns launched their first EP live to a full house at Union Chapel in Islington, and played Refugee Week gigs at Battersea Arts Centre, York House Richmond and the Bernie Grant Arts Centre in Tottenham. More gigs have followed since the year end.

We also started fundraising for resources to support the Hear Me Out Band and The Unknowns to develop new repertoire, a distinctive sound, an independent brand and online presence, profile with promoters, and community engagement collaborations with Hear Me Out. We look forward to helping them win recognitions as the superb musicians they are, reaching mainstream music audiences, influencing public attitudes and offering role models to people going through the asylum/immigration system.

New programmes: During the year we worked hard to expand this body of work through new programmes in Immigration Removal Centres and other places of detention. As of December 2025 we expect to start delivering music activities at Dungavel IRC (South Lanarkshire) from early in 2026, and within several months to start programmes at Derwentside IRC (County Durham) and RAF Wethersfield (Essex).

WORK WITH INDIVIDUALS

Through the year we continued to work more intensively with a number of individuals, who typically found us first in group music programmes, and then got involved in one or more more individualised activities, often over 2 or more years.

At the heart of this work is an exchange of skills. Hear Me Out is able to support people's creative development, and their knowledge and skills as experts by experience strengthens our decision-making and artistic work. Around this reciprocal relationship sits an offer of practical and emotional support to help people deal with the many challenges they face.

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Creative mentoring: During the year we completed a mentoring pilot involving 11 mentees: 3 HMO Associate Artists, 3 new HMO artists from marginalised backgrounds, and 5 musicians with lived experience of detention or asylum centres. Following an initial interview, each mentee was offered a bespoke development package. We took a holistic approach, ie providing not just traditional mentoring but other activities designed to address barriers and support progress – for example instrumental coaching, purchase of equipment, paying relocation costs, psychotherapy, work shadowing. Since the year end we have raised funds to continue this scheme, adapted according to learning from the pilot. For example we will improve the integration of creative mentoring and support/casework, to meet individual needs more effectively.

Experts by experience: People with lived experience continued to tell personal stories, via blogs, webinars and videos, to support our communications and fundraising work; to sit on recruitment panels; and contribute to practice forums & programme planning. Milestones reached during or since the year included:

- Engaging people with lived experience for the first time as workshop leaders
- Kwaku Acheampong, who we first met at Napier Barracks in 2022, presenting a national appeal on BBC Radio 4
- 3 experts by experience joining our Board of Trustees: Aksa Canolli, Ardavan Nikaeen and Kidu Gerbreegziabher.

Practical and emotional support: We've continued to provide tailored, flexible, holistic support over short or long periods depending on need. Constancy is key and we have develop sustained relationships with those we support. Support during the year has included:

- Emotional support, checking in, accompaniment at key/difficult moments
- Access to initial legal immigration advice (referral to lawyer for 30-min session)
- General support (not advice) re Home Office processes
- Letters of support around immigration cases
- Advice/support/referrals around housing, benefits, GP registrations, bank accounts etc
- Support to find volunteering opportunities
- Digital access (refurbished devices, data packages)
- Hardship payments
- Travel costs to/support with key appointments (eg medical, official)
- Travel costs to attend substantive interviews etc
- Support to establish social networks
- Low-cost counselling via Black Minds Matter

Since the year end we have reviewed our individual support work and started to codify our practice over the past 2-3 years, to guide future practice and improve support in complex situations.

IMPACT

Napier Barracks: Here is some of our feedback from participants (translated from Farsi by a member of staff):

So he's saying he as well enjoyed the fact that different languages and cultures coming together and sharing with each other. So there's two hours of pure sort of happiness that would otherwise you know, perhaps, it's sort of a guaranteed sharing of happiness amongst the crowd. And he's saying that he doesn't want to be too sort of harsh. But he said at points I felt like if one person singing, the others could be a bit more, either just play the audience part or to come to a prearranged sort of collaboration or joining in with them.... He's saying, having said everything, I think it should be noted again that everyone has their sort of daily stresses,

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worrying about their case, what's going to happen in the future, the uncertainty - but for these two hours we're all happy, which is the effectiveness of the project.

Yeah, he's saying that the atmosphere that it creates is calming and sort of joyful enough, that it gives everyone the opportunity to sort of, not just to get to know each other and sort of utilise each other's sort of skills, but er... sorry, just to clarify.... Yeah. The ones who share in your happiness or in your joy together, it creates better understanding and appreciation of each other's sort of differences or cultures and things like that. And since then, it's sort of like obvious that if the sessions continue, that sort of order within the sessions will sort of establish itself naturally and organically, because each session, the people who have been there the previous few sessions will know what's expected, or what they expect to do next.

And here are some reflections from our artists:

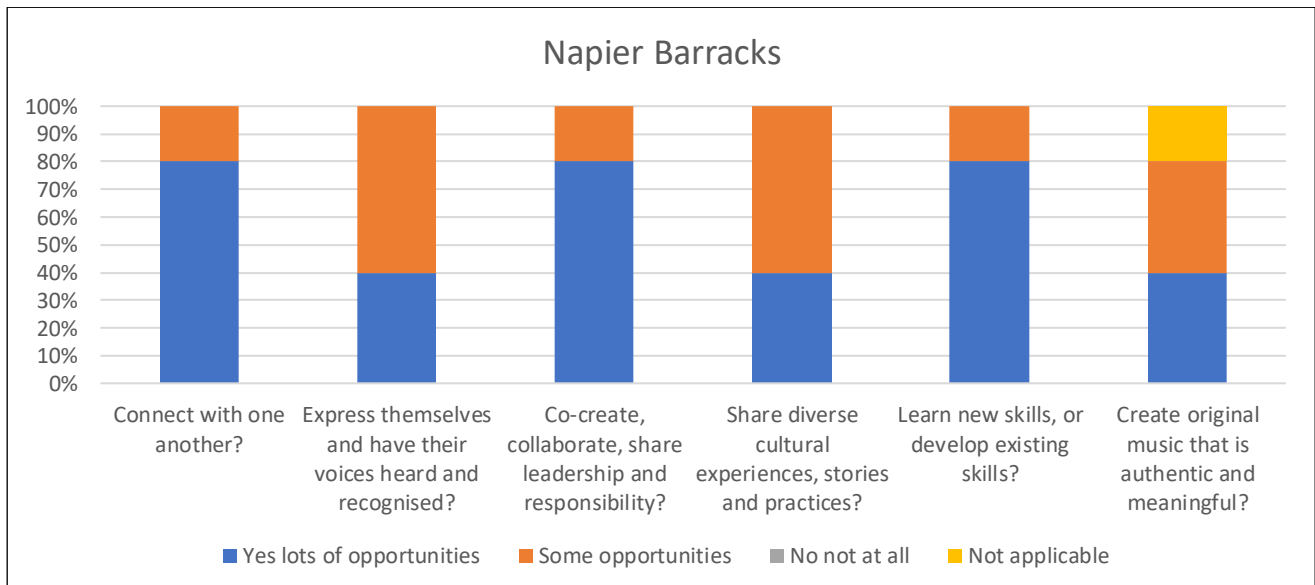
The joy was strong in the room. We have over ten people share songs with us. Everyone joined in with group singing and percussion. Especially one participant who joined the session looking pretty withdrawn. Ten minutes later he was part of the jam, within half an hour he was smiling and joining in.

We recorded a lovely song. We only had one singer however others contributed to the song with drums. Its a powerful message in the lyrics and we feel it came out really well.

One participant used his hands to direct the music in a really beautiful animated way.

It was such a joyful afternoon and evening. A really amazing mix of many cultures and musical style all gelling and together. Extremely inspiring to have been a part of the magic.

The artists also reported, in relation to one block of sessions, that there were 'lots' and 'some' opportunity for all the criteria listed, except in one case where making original music was not a main activity:



Finally, feedback from staff points to the work's wider effect on the centre as a whole:

By the time they're finished with a session or with a series of sessions, they always say, 'I felt like I was given a voice or I was given a platform to express myself'. And yeah, it's always been very, very positive ... I always feel happy to recommend anyone go and attend that session, because it helps, even if they are a spectator it helps.

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So generally, it lifts up the mood. Because ... when you're not here, we feel the difference then, sort of the whole week is monotonous, rather than looking forward to having a bash on Thursday and having a having a laugh, or having a, you know, for some people, its not just a laugh, they come and do very sort of follow more melancholic or serious or sad songs, and it's like a purge. They always say, feel more relaxed or lighter at the end. ... As staff, we always know when Hear Me Out hasn't been in for a while, because soon as you guys are in again and the session starts, the mood, even though not everyone comes, you know, comes to partake, but you know, happiness and positivity spreads as well. So when, when we've had a few sessions, then we can see the difference. It's always uplifts the mood the whole time.

Asylum hotels: Evaluation indicated that we have been able to create a safe, secure space for the children and young people in the midst of the stress of their asylum hotel existence, in which they have been able to relax, connect with caring and parent-like extra adults, imagine and make things they like and can take pride in, choose outcomes, work together, form closer friendships and play well together. Signs of trauma continue, but we are able to respond well, for example using lullabies and songs to calm children upset by sudden loud noises. In more detail, we been able to deliver on three outcomes:

(a) *Wellbeing:* We've seen numerous examples of positive engagement with music, dance and visual arts. Participants expressed themselves through creative activity, improved their concentration spans, and developed new skills. Sample evaluation indicated that all of the sessions involved 'lots of' or 'some' self-expression and skills development. Children developed their musical skills in:

- Instrumental work, eg trying out keyboard, guitar, vocals, ukelele, recorders, drums
- Song-writing and composition
- Music tech software (Logic, Garageband)
- Knowledge of music notation, eg bars and rhythms

Some of the children aged 10+ particularly improved their musical abilities and imaginative scope. A girl who was silent in our sessions began after 5-6 months to talk.

(b) *Resilience:* We've seen children getting absorbed in creative activity (a sign of inner escape), and making creative decisions. Parents told us their children looked forward to our sessions every week, an indicator of deeper engagement.

An artist observed that 'every week the kids want to create a range of dens which feels quite poignant as they live in this transient, crowded, hotel setting.' Participants enjoyed 'transforming the mats into hiding boxes, dens and drums.' This suggests our creative sessions allowed children to reimagine their situation: an expression of agency and perhaps an act of self-protection.

Sample evaluation indicated that all sessions involved 'lots of' or 'some' co-creation or leadership by participants, and ¾ of them involved 'lots of' or 'some' creation of original music. The latter is less frequent largely because it can be difficult in this work to get a whole group to focus on one thing for an extended time.

(c) *Connection:* We've seen children co-operate with each other and make friends. At one hotel staff often joined in too. Based on previous work we expect these connections feed through into interactions generally, ie not just when we are there. Big mural type projects on long paper rolls was often a good focal point for a group activity, as well as singing and playing together. In one instance we understood that children were taking origami techniques and songs they had learned with us to school, to teach them to other pupils (surely a resilience outcome too).

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Sample evaluation indicated that all of the sessions involved 'lots of' or 'some' connection between participants, and almost all (94%) involved 'lots of' or 'some' sharing of cultures. The latter is less frequent because this type of activity is an option rather than a constant feature.

LEARNING

Hotels and barracks: We view these as places of detention, and in many ways (eg their effect on the people held in them) working in them is very like our previous experience in detention centres. But there are substantial differences too (eg fewer restrictions on communication, minimal activity programmes), and so we have learned and adapted our methods. Now, nearly 4 years since our first sessions in these settings, we have reached a level of maturity in this work. Early experiments have brought us to a more settled stage where ways of working are well established, we continue to refine them and respond to change in the settings, and we are asked and able to support others to develop their own creative programmes for people in asylum hotels in their areas.

Work with children: We've seen many examples of creative outputs, inc art works, song lyrics based on participant emotions, improvised duets, sound-scapes. But the environment's fluidity (necessary for access), and the range of activity (to meet different interests and maintain stimulus), sometimes make it difficult to do concerted work on artistic material. This matters because producing something really good together strengthens participants' identities and relationships. There's no straightforward solution, because this part of our practice is always a balancing act. We continue to explore options.

Support: We've learned from experience what people needed help with, what we can actually do, and which other providers are effective. A couple of complex cases have led us to think carefully about boundaries, and the limits of our support capacity. We have started writing up guidance / protocols to guide future work. For example signposting to other sources of support is vital but sometimes we find that this is not in practice available and must do what we can ourselves.

Far right activism: The riots of summer 2024 made us attend closely to risk management – we mitigated risks to physical safety and emotional wellbeing in our participants, artists and team, and upgraded our risk systems accordingly. We did not anticipate that the spike in violence would evolve into the current climate of ongoing hysteria, in which charities supporting migrants are subjected to lurid accusations, buildings attacked and staff are threatened. HMO has not been targeted as yet, but of course we know others who have been.

We've continued to take stock of this new difficulty, which is not going to end any time soon, and have agreed protective steps. These include upgrading cybersecurity, an 'openness audit' to consider what information we can and can't continue to put into the public realm, issuing a public statement of solidarity with the people we work with, and doing what we can to protect individuals' privacy. The last being limited in scope, it's also necessary to ask individuals in the organisation to consider their own appetite for the raised, unpredictable risks we all now face.

SUPPORTING AND SUSTAINING QUALITY AND IMPACT

RACE EQUITY & CO-CREATION

Our Co-creation Hub continued to meet through the year, chaired by an external specialist. During and since the year this group has continued to oversee the implementation of our Co-Creation Action plan. In particular it worked on the following areas of co-creation practice:

- Reviewing Hear Me Out's ethics/equity framework (see p4)

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- Developing a new recruitment procedure, which codifies recent more inclusive practice
- Helping the Board design a recruitment process for new trustees and make its practice more informal & inclusive
- Starting a major review of our Equity & Diversity policy

Meanwhile co-creative practice has spread, as learning has developed and decision-makers have diversified. For example:

- Artists with lived experience have begun to lead group music sessions
- People with lived experience routinely sit on recruitment panels, attend our annual Practice Forum alongside artists and staff, and help plan/review delivery
- A musician with lived experience presented our Radio 4 Appeal in Jun25.
- After the year end the number of Trustees with lived experience rose from 1 to 4

Bringing together artists, people with lived experience, trustees & staff in the Co-Creation Hub has been a key step. The group has become well bonded & more equal, the space is safe & reflective, agendas make room for the people round the table, it's an efficient way to get a range of perspectives, and is influencing other meetings/ groups, including the Board.

People with lived experience who are involved in this work have said this new experience is upskilling them. They and artists are finding out more about how HMO runs & the challenges it faces. We're all learning about inclusive decision-making that brings our artistic method into the organisation.

Evaluation has shown that co-creation processes have their own outcomes: *"I have never been put into that kind of position, like having to contribute an opinion on who to hire or which one is better. So it's like it lifts up whatever potential I have inside of me."*

TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE AND ARTIST CARE

Clinical supervision: Monthly reflective practice sessions with [Partisan](#) have continued, and during and since the year were opened to artists and people with lived experience, as well as staff. The sessions have provided a supportive space for difficulties to be aired and practice to be refined, perhaps especially for those working with young children in asylum hotels – eg how to combine different art forms, and respond to challenging behaviours with care and firmness.

Artist Care: This major research project progressed to the next stage, with the University of Wolverhampton leading an ethnographic study of artist care at Hear Me Out, Good Vibrations and the Irene Taylor Trust. The HMO ethnography *"highlight[ed] the strides taken by HMO to support the well-being of their workforce"*, noted much good practice, and suggested improving access and individualisation. The [research as a whole](#) identified 6 draft Artist Care principles:

- A cultural shift is needed across arts sector, including inclusion in budgets
- Support is needed to diversify the sector workforce, as a way to address intersectional inequalities
- Artist care must recognise & support the specialist facilitation (as well as musical) skills needed for work in complex settings.
- Artist care must be connected to care of staff, trustees & participants, and to all working relationships and operations.
- There is no 'typical freelance artist', so a one-size-fits-all approach is not adequate.
- A creative approach is needed to develop care practices that are not contingent on funding

Along with the other partners, we have shared the research and consulted on the principles around the sector. During the year we also established a Sector Reference Group (from arts sector, funder

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& research organisations) to help guide the research and situate it in its wider context. So the project has become much more widely known and its relevance recognised. For example after the year end we ran a session for Youth Music's practice network. Currently we are bringing new partners into the project and reviewing the plan for the remaining research stages, which was drawn up in 2020.

EVALUATION

Evaluation activities continued during the year in line with our growing range of activities. We carried out surveys, focus groups and interviews with participants, and questionnaires with audiences, to find out their opinions of our work and its impact on them.

Our evaluation review continued. With the updated framework in place, we focused during and since the year on a reset of evaluation tools, indicators, priorities, sampling & schedules. All this is nearly complete and an analysis & report on data since 2020 will follow.

ETHICS & SAFEGUARDING

We have continued to use our Ethics & Equity Framework to provide practical guidance to the team on the application of our ethics principles. We are in the process of adding practical guidance on the application of the revised principles (see p4) in different

Safeguarding work puts our ethics into practice. We continued during the year to take up safeguarding issues when they arose. Our trustees undertook safeguarding training focused on their role. Following this our external safeguarding specialist ran a session to draw out learning and key issues. An action plan was drawn up focused on three areas for improvement:

- Transition from reassurance to assurance
- Improve systems
- Address risk of normalization

The Board is updated every 6 months on the implementation of this action plan.

COMMUNICATIONS

A consistent communications operation through the year increased our reach. For example our Instagram following rose to 1387, our YouTube channel showed growth with 15 new subscribers, and the [full video of the Unknowns live at Union Chapel](#) being our top video (303 views). We also produced a video [showreel](#) for the Hear Me Out Band. The summer months were especially busy, with a series of gigs to promote (see p5). In summer 2025 we also produced a [video interview](#) and other materials to support our BBC Radio 4 Appeal.

During the year we decided to leave X (Twitter), in common with many others, due to the growth of racist and far-right content on the platform, and to join Blue Sky, a new and somewhat untested platform but more in keeping with our values.

FUNDRAISING

Fundraising continued through the year to be delivered by freelancers, working with our Director, and supported by a small (1 day pw) grants fundraising role within the staff team. We appreciate very much the support of all our donors, without whom we could not operate.

Individual giving: During 2024-25 we raised a total of £42k from individual donations, our best ever annual total (2023-24: £40k). Of this total, about £24.5k (58%) came from the Christmas and 'Arts for Impact' public appeals, hosted on the Big Give website. These intensive campaigns, with

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match funding and tight deadlines, continue to be our most effective method of motivating individual donors, and are now established part of our calendar. About 60 regular donors provided a further £9.2k (22%). Within the total donated, we continued to see a growth, albeit more modest than in 2023-24, in the number and total value of larger donations, mostly from committed supporters whose generosity we hugely appreciate.

Grants fundraising: During 2024-25 we secured 24 grants totalling £277k, a conversion rate of 30% (2023-24: 18 grants, £189k, 26%). The total raised, £88k (47%) more than in the previous year, has only been exceeded twice in the last 10 years. This was a very good result at a time when fundraising was getting so difficult across the whole charity sector.

However the previous year's lower total meant a lower opening balance, the amount of income already secured in previous years was much lower (mainly due to the end of substantial multi-year funding from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation), and a number of the new grants were awarded late in the financial year. So the budget for the year was very tight, and far from being able to ease this by exceeding fundraising targets, it looked likely for a while that we might fall short. Significant expenditure cuts were thus a serious possibility, that we were happily able to avert in the end.

Wider context: Our best fundraising results, in 2020-23, enabled Hear Me Out to grow. But in 2023-25 fundraising has become a great deal more difficult. Broadly, high needs and low public funding are placing huge pressure on grantmakers; some major trusts have narrowed or refocused their priorities, making us a poor fit, or closed to restructure, taking resources out of the sector. Several longstanding funders have ended their support, and growing pressures on migrants and migration charities are forcing funders in that space to prioritise.

We've also seen indications of lower public donations, probably due to the cost of living, and perhaps also the increasing hostility to migrants, although our established donors remain committed, for which we are very grateful.

In response to these difficulties, throughout 2025 we have been conducting an income strategy review, to identify options for growing and diversifying income: for example, earned income, applying for regular (NPO) Arts Council funding, and building relationships with individuals able to make major donations. In the coming months we will select options for further work. But new income streams will take time to develop. Meanwhile our growth is proving hard to maintain.

To manage these problems in the shorter term, we set a budget for 2025-26 with expenditure reduced by 12%, through cuts to delivery and staff hours. This has made in-year fundraising more manageable, although results have been slow and modest further cuts have been necessary.

As we approach 2026-27 we will be carefully assess our income position , and if necessary reduce costs further. The range of work described in this report is delivered by a team in which each role is distinct and each needs all the others. If significant additional cuts prove necessary, we will have to consider whether this model remains feasible, or if the scope of the work will have to narrow.

STAFF & VOLUNTEERS

The Trustees thank Hear Me Out's small team of salaried and freelance staff for their hard work and great commitment in challenging times. During the year there were 4.4 full time equivalent staff. Following the above savings after the year end, there are now 4.0 full time equivalent staff, nearly all part-time. The roles are:

- Director
- Artistic Director
- Programme & Evaluation Manager
- Communications Manager
- Participation & Safeguarding Manager
- Support Worker

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- Administration & Finance Co-ordinator
- Finance Officer
- Grants Fundraising
- Individual Giving

STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

GOVERNING DOCUMENT

Hear Me Out Music, formerly Music In Detention, is a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. Incorporated on 22nd September 2006, its original Memorandum and Articles of Association were amended in 2007 and comprehensively reviewed in 2011. New Articles of Association were adopted at the Annual General Meeting on 31st January 2012 and continue to govern the charity's work. An amendment, adopted on 12th February 2014, ensures a minimum annual turnover of Trustees. The change of name was registered with Companies House on 19th March 2021.

Music In Detention was registered as a charity with effect from 2nd May 2007. Its charitable objects (see p3) were revised during the 2011-12 year, approved by the Charity Commission on 25th October 2011, and included in the new Articles of Association referred to above. The name change to Hear Me Out was accepted by the Commission on 2nd June 2021.

BOARD & SUB-COMMITTEES

The charity's Board of Trustees met four times during the year. Our Finance Sub-Committee and Co-creation Hub (see p11-12) also each met four times. After the year end we established a Strategy Working Group which meets monthly.

The Trustees all give their time voluntarily and received no benefits from the charity for their role as trustees.

Information about remuneration of trustees for work undertaken that fell outside their role as trustees is provided on p26.

STAFF & PREMISES

Through the 2024-25 year the charity employed 7 salaried staff and 5 freelances (see p14), not including freelance artists. The employed staff resource at the year end was 3.8 (full time equivalent). Including freelances the total resource was 4.4. The highest salary was 2.2 times the lowest. The charity continued to rent office space at Rich Mix in central/east London.

RISK MANAGEMENT

The Trustees note their duty to identify and review the risks to which the charity is exposed and to ensure appropriate controls are in place to provide reasonable assurance against fraud and error. A new risk register was produced during the year and is reviewed every 6 months.

The riots in summer 2024 posed significant risks because of our work in asylum hotels. The charity continued this work throughout this period, and took steps to mitigate the risks to the physical safety and emotional wellbeing of our participants, artists and team. These risks have been kept under review, in the light of the continuing threats arising from far-right activity, and further actions have been taken since the year end to protect as far as possible the safety of individuals with roles in the charity.

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During the year the charity continued to operate robust safeguarding procedures. Training was carried out for trustees, an action plan was produced, and the Board is being updated every 6 months on its implementation.

Hear Me Out's activities during the year were delivered by freelance artists engaged directly by Hear Me Out, under contracts and schedules of work.

During the year the charity continued to monitor and manage its finances closely. The Finance Sub-Committee met on a quarterly basis and made recommendations to the Board. Actions to support this work included income analysis, finance reviews, and detailed tracking of planned and pending bids, with bids for new projects separated from those for existing operating costs.

During the year the charity modestly increased its contingency reserve (see below) in order to protect the charity against continuing uncertainty in its operating environment and fundraising prospects.

At the time of writing the Board of Trustees has approved the use of £20,000 of the charity's contingency reserve, should this prove necessary, to support the charity's budgeted expenditure in the 2025-26 financial year. In this event the remaining contingency reserve will be more than that required for the charity to meet its legal obligations in the event of closing down.

On this basis the charity has secured all but approximately £20,000 of the grant income and individual donations required to cover all projected activities in the 2025-26 year, and so our grant fundraising efforts are now mainly focused on future years.

The Finance Sub-Committee will continue to follow its established procedures to manage the funding available, continue effective operations, and (if necessary at any point in the future) make savings to ensure a positive closing balance for the year.

FINANCIAL REVIEW

RESULT FOR THE YEAR

The Board of Directors reports a surplus of expenditure over income of £38,700.

RESERVES

The accounts show reserves of £117,921 of which £21,000 are restricted funds and £96,921 are unrestricted. £49,653 of these unrestricted reserves were designated to a contingency reserve, which is managed according to the reserves policy set out below.

The balance of the unrestricted funds, £47,268, are not restricted in their purpose by the funder, but have been raised to further Hear Me Out's planned activities and priorities, and will be spent on the artistic programme and operating costs in 2025-26, in accordance with those plans and the expectations of funders.

RESERVES POLICY

In line with best practice in the charity sector, Hear Me Out needs to build up a reserve. Hear Me Out's reserves policy has five aims:

- To buffer unexpected falls in income
- To allow the taking of opportunities which may arise
- To support strategic development

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- To ensure that the charity has financial resilience and good financial management
- To ensure that the charity can meet its legal obligations in the event of closing down

Reserves will only be expended in pursuit of the above aims and as a result of a decision by the Board.

When reserves are below our target we will normally manage income shortfalls by controlling expenditure and use reserves only for the above purposes. We will retain in the reserve sufficient funds to meet our legal obligations in the event of closure.

We aim to accumulate reserves equivalent to three months' costs, defined (by a Board decision after the year end) by average expenditure over the current and previous two years. In 2024-25 (based on average expenditure 2022-25) that translates into £87,282 (2023-24: £78,909). On 31st March 2025 the amount held in the contingency reserve was £49,653 (2023-24: £49,037). We plan to meet target of three months' costs by March 2028.

We will not divert to reserves any restricted income or donations towards specified activities. This reserves policy was reviewed in 2022.

During the 2024-25 year, investment income of £616 was transferred into the contingency reserve (2023-24: £1,307 of investment income).

PRINCIPAL FUNDING SOURCES

Hear Me Out acknowledges with appreciation the financial support during the year of:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • A B Charitable Trust | • Kent Community Foundation |
| • Alchemy Foundation | • Lady Marian Gibson Trust |
| • Arts Council England | • Leigh Trust |
| • Awards For All | • Lightbulb Trust |
| • BBC Children In Need | • Lochlands Trust |
| • Bergman Lehane Trust | • Musgrave Family Charitable Trust |
| • Bromley Trust | • Network for Social Change |
| • Charles S French Charitable Trust | • Pat Newman Memorial Trust |
| • Evan Cornish Foundation | • Paul Hamlyn Foundation |
| • Garden Court Chambers Special Fund | • Postcode Society Trust |
| • Garfield Weston Foundation | • Promenaders Musical Charities |
| • Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation | • Souter Charitable Trust |
| • Imagine Foundation | • And one anonymous trust |

STATEMENT OF TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

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 surplus or deficit of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the directors are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently;
- Make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in operation.

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The directors are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006.

They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking responsible steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities

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

Signed:



Date: 9th January 2026

Sue Lukes
Chair
On behalf of the Board

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

To the Trustees of Hear Me Out Music (charity number 1119049)

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charitable company for the year ended 31st March 2025.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND BASIS OF REPORT

As the charity's Trustees (who are 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.

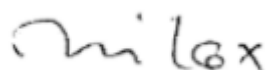
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

Since the Charitable 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 can confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination by virtue of being a Fellow Member of the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA), 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 that in any material respect:

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 and 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 (FRS 102).

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.



Tom Wilcox FCIE
23 St Leonards Road
Bexhill-on-Sea
East Sussex
TN40 1HH

The date upon which my opinion is expressed is: 23rd January 2025

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC

Statement of Financial Activities (including income and expenditure account) For year ended 31 March 2025

		2025 <u>Unrestricted</u> <u>funds</u>	2025 <u>Restrict</u> <u>ed funds</u>	2025 <u>TOTAL</u> <u>FUNDS</u>	2024 <u>TOTAL</u> <u>FUNDS</u>
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>Income</u>					
Donations	2	294,736	63,957	358,693	281,174
Income from charitable activities:	3	12,052	0	12,052	3,034
Investment income	4	616	0	616	1,307
Total Income		307,404	63,957	371,361	285,515
<u>Expenditure</u>					
Costs of raising funds		28,238	0	28,238	32,364
Expenditure on charitable activities	5-7	237,875	66,548	304,423	331,745
Total expenditure		266,113	66,548	332,661	364,109
Net income/(Expenditure)		41,291	(2,591)	38,700	(78,594)
Transfer between funds		0	0	0	0
Net movement in funds for the year		41,291	(2,591)	38,700	(78,594)
<u>RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS</u>					
Total funds brought forward		55,630	23,591	79,221	157,815
Total funds carried forward		96,921	21,000	117,921	79,221

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year.
All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 22 to 27 form part of these accounts.

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC

Registered Charity no 1119049 and Company Limited by Guarantee - Reg no 5943893

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2025

		<u>2025</u>		<u>2024</u>	
	<u>Notes</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>	<u>£</u>
<u>Current Assets</u>					
Debtors	13	53,671		16,115	
Cash at bank		74,365		80,472	
Total current assets			128,036		96,587
<u>Current Liabilities</u>					
Creditors falling due within one year	14	10,115		17,366	
Total current liabilities			10,115		17,366
Net Current assets			117,921		79,221
Total assets less current liabilities			117,921		79,221
<u>The funds of the charity</u>	21				
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
Designated funds - contingency reserve		49,653		49,037	
General unrestricted funds		47,268		6,593	
Total unrestricted funds			96,921		55,630
Restricted funds			21,000		23,591
Total funds			117,921		79,221

For the financial year ended 31 March 2025 the Directors are satisfied that the charitable company was entitled to exemption from audit under Section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 and no notice has been deposited under Section 476. The accounts have been examined by an Independent Examiner, in accordance with section 145 of the Charities Act 2011. His report appears on page 19.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for: (a) ensuring that the company keeps accounting records which comply with Section 386 of the Companies Act 2006, and (b) preparing financial statements which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the company as at the end of the financial year and of its profit or loss (surplus or deficit) for each financial year in accordance with the requirements of Section 394 and 395 and which otherwise comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 relating to financial statements, so far as applicable to the company.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies and constitute the annual accounts required by the Companies Act 2006.

Signed:



Name:

Clare Scott Booth, Treasurer

Approved by the Board of Trustees on: 9th January 2026

The notes on pages 22 to 27 form part of these accounts.

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC
Notes to the accounts

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charitable company's Articles of Association, the Charities Act 2011 and "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice – Accounting and Reporting by Charities (SORP (FRS102), second edition issued in January 2019)", the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

Hear Me Out Music meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes(s).

(b) Preparation of the accounts on a going concern basis

The trustees consider that there are no material uncertainties about the charity's ability to continue as a going concern.

(c) Income

Income is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the item(s) have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

(d) Donated services and facilities

Donated professional services and donated facilities are recognised as income when the charity has control over the item, any conditions associated with the donated item have been met, the receipt of economic benefit from the use by the charity is probable and that economic benefit can be measured reliably. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) general volunteer time is not recognised but is referred to in the trustee's annual report.

(e) Expenditure and irrecoverable VAT

All expenditure is included on an accruals basis and is recognised when there is a legal or constructive obligation to pay for its expenditure. All costs have been directly attributed or proportionally charged to the functional categories of resources expended in the SOFA. Expenditure includes any VAT which cannot be fully recovered and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

(f) Fund accounting

Unrestricted Funds are funds received which have no restrictions placed on their use and are available to spend on activities that further any of the purposes of the charity. Designated funds are unrestricted funds of the charity which the trustees have decided to set aside to use for a specific purpose. Restricted funds are funds which are to be used for purposes specified by the funder.

(g) Debtors

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

(h) Cash at bank and in hand

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

(i) Creditors

Creditors and provisions are recognised where the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors and provisions are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any trade discounts due.

HEAR ME OUT: REPORT OF TRUSTEES, YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC

Notes to the accounts

	2025 £	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £
	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS				
<u>Grants received</u>				
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust			0	5,000
A B Charitable Trust		4,000	4,000	25,000
Alchemy Foundation	1,000		1,000	500
Arts Council England		3,000	3,000	0
Awards For All		19,957	19,957	0
BBC Children In Need		19,000	19,000	11,000
Bergman Lehane Trust	1,500		1,500	1,500
Bromley Trust	25,000		25,000	15,000
Charles S French Charitable Trust		4,000	4,000	0
D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust			0	4,000
Evan Cornish Foundation	7,500		7,500	0
Foyle Foundation			0	15,000
Garden Court Chambers Special Fund	2,000		2,000	0
Garfield Weston Foundation	30,000		30,000	30,000
Hadrian Trust			0	1,000
Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation		5,000	5,000	5,000
Imagine Foundation	10,000		10,000	10,000
Kent Community Foundation		5,000	5,000	0
Lady Marian Gibson Trust	2,000		2,000	0
Lawson Trust			0	2,000
Leigh Trust	3,000		3,000	3,000
Lightbulb Trust	30,000		30,000	0
Lochlands Trust	2,500		2,500	0
Lucille Graham Trust			0	5,000
Michael Guest Charitable Foundation			0	2,000
Musgrave Family Charitable Trust		1,000	1,000	0
Network for Social Change	8,010		8,010	0
Orange Tree Trust			0	2,500
Palca Stevenson Giving CIO			0	1,000
Pat Newman Memorial Trust	1,000		1,000	0
Paul Hamlyn Foundation	80,000		80,000	80,000
Peguera Trust			0	500
Postcode Society Trust	25,000		25,000	0
Promenaders Musical es	20,100		20,100	0
Schroder Charity Trust			0	3,000
Souter Charitable Trust	3,000		3,000	0
Thomas Sivewright Catto Charitable Settlement			0	750
Victoria Wood Foundation			0	5,000
Whitaker Charitable Trust			0	2,000
Youth Music			0	10,813
Anonymous trust		3,000	3,000	0

HEAR ME OUT: REPORT OF TRUSTEES, YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC Notes to the accounts

	2025 £	2025 £	2025 £	2024 £
	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>2. INCOME FROM DONATIONS (cont'd)</u>				
Donations from individuals	38,015		38,015	34,475
Gift Aid Receivable	5,112		5,112	5,385
Pro bono contributions			0	750
	<u>294,736</u>	<u>63,957</u>	<u>358,693</u>	<u>281,174</u>
<u>3. INCOME FROM CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</u>				
Other income and contributions	12,052	0	12,052	3,034
	<u>12,052</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>12,052</u>	<u>3,034</u>
<u>4. INVESTMENT INCOME</u>				
Deposit account interest			616	1,307
<u>5. EXPENDITURE ON CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES</u>				
Asylum hotels			27,393	30,957
Napier Barracks			13,196	23,777
Remote delivery - DIY radio			0	2,333
Hear Me Out Band residency & gig			0	6,019
Hear Me Out Band			1,958	7,437
The Unknowns			3,823	2,520
Other music making activities			4,860	25
Mentoring & individual support			3,491	830
Co-Creation			3,246	6,539
Quality & impact			13,624	14,540
Artistic and audience development			3,007	1,568
Support costs (note 6)			227,901	231,932
Governance costs (note 7)			1,923	3,269
			<u>304,423</u>	<u>331,745</u>
<u>6. SUPPORT COSTS</u>				
Staff costs (note 9)			193,119	191,785
Financial management fees			5,250	7,356
Travel expenses and conferences			2,830	4,841
Office costs			24,871	25,282
Communications and website costs			1,832	2,667
			<u>227,901</u>	<u>231,931</u>
<u>7. GOVERNANCE COSTS</u>				
Board meeting and company costs			442	2,167
Trustee expenses			642	550
Independent Examiner			840	552
			<u>1,923</u>	<u>3,269</u>

Three trustees received reimbursement of expenses totalling £642 during the year (2024: 3 trustees - £550).

HEAR ME OUT: REPORT OF TRUSTEES, YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC

Notes to the accounts

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
	£	£
8. NET OUTGOING RESOURCES		
The Operating Surplus is stated after charging:		
Depreciation	0	0
Accountancy services	5,250	7,356
Independent Examiner fee	840	552
Trustee Emoluments	<u>642</u>	<u>820</u>

9. ANALYSIS OF STAFF COSTS, AND TRUSTEE REMUNERATION AND EXPENSES

Salaries	172,104	140,558
Employer's National Insurance Contributions	14,637	12,393
Less - Employment Allowance	(5,000)	(5,000)
Employee salary sacrifice contributions to pension	3,555	2,373
Employer's pension contributions	7,080	8,572
Recruitment	5	3,530
Other costs	738	29,360
	<u>193,119</u>	<u>191,785</u>

No employees received employee benefits exceeding £60,000 (2024 - nil).

10. COMPARATIVE FOR THE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

	2024	2024	2024
	£	£	£
	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Income			
Donations	231,861	49,313	281,174
Income from charitable activities:	3,034		3,034
Investment income	1,307		1,307
Total Income	<u>236,202</u>	<u>49,313</u>	<u>285,515</u>
Expenditure			
Costs of raising funds	32,364		32,364
Expenditure on Charitable activities	236,479	95,266	331,745
Total expenditure	<u>268,843</u>	<u>95,266</u>	<u>364,109</u>
Net Income/(Expenditure)	(32,641)	(45,953)	(78,594)

RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS

Total funds brought forward	88,272	69,543	157,815
Total funds carried forward	<u>55,631</u>	<u>23,590</u>	<u>79,221</u>

11. STAFF NUMBERS

The average monthly head count during the year was seven (2024: five and a half).

12. PENSIONS

Employees of the charity are entitled to join a defined contribution 'money purchase' scheme. The charity contribution is restricted to the contributions disclosed in note 9. The costs of the defined contribution scheme are included within support costs. The designated money purchase plan is managed by NEST although staff may choose other plans. The plan invests the contributions made by the employee and employer in an investment fund to build up over the term of the plan. The pension fund is then converted into a pension upon the employee's normal retirement age, which is defined as

HEAR ME OUT: REPORT OF TRUSTEES, YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC Notes to the accounts

12. PENSIONS (cont'd)

when they are eligible for a state pension. The total expense ratio of the NEST plan is 0.3 % and this is deducted from the investment fund annually. The charity has no liability beyond making its contributions and paying across the deductions for the employee's contributions.

	2025	2024
	£	£
<u>13. DEBTORS</u>		
Grants Receivable	0	0
Trade debtors	0	400
Other debtors	410	227
Prepayments and accrued income	53,261	15,488
	53,671	16,115

14. CREDITORS

Trade creditors	3,444	7,675
Taxation & social security	3,588	3,209
Other creditors		612
Accruals	3,085	5,868
	10,116	17,364

15. COMPANY STATUS

The charitable company is limited by guarantee and therefore has no share capital. Each member's liability under the guarantee is restricted to a maximum of £1.

16. POST BALANCE SHEET EVENTS

There were no significant post balance sheet events.

17. CONTINGENT LIABILITIES

The charitable company had no material contingent liabilities at 31 March 2025 (2024: none).

18. RELATED PARTIES

During the year 1 trustee, Lamin Joof, was paid a total of £558 in fees for work on communications and the artistic programme, carried out in his capacity as a person with lived experience of immigration detention. The rate of remuneration was the same as paid to non-trustees providing similar services. The work was procured in accordance with clauses 6.3 & 6.5 of the Articles of Association, and was additional to his role as a trustee, for which he was not remunerated. He was also loaned £600, interest-free, to assist in a family emergency; repayment instalments began after the year end and the loan is due to be repaid in full by July 2026. No other remuneration or other benefit was paid to him or any other trustee in 2024-25. (2024: 1 trustee, Lamin Joof, was paid £2,000 for work on communications and the programme.)

19. ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	General Funds	Designated Funds	Restricted Funds	Total Funds
	£	£	£	£
Cash at bank and in hand	3,712	49,653	21,000	74,365
Other net assets /(liabilities)	43,556	0	0	43,556
	47,268	49,653	21,000	117,921

HEAR ME OUT: REPORT OF TRUSTEES, YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

HEAR ME OUT MUSIC Notes to the accounts

20. STATEMENT OF FUNDS

	Balance at 31 Mar 2024 £	Incoming Resources £	Resources Expended £	Transfers between funds £	Balance at 31 Mar 2025 £
<u>Unrestricted funds</u>					
Designated funds	49,037	616			49,653
General funds	6,593	306,788	266,113		47,268
	55,630	307,404	266,113		96,921
<u>Restricted funds</u>					
AB Charitable Trust		4,000	4,000		0
Anonymous trust		3,000	3,000		0
Arts Council England	7,591	3,000	10,591		0
Awards for All		19,957	19,957		0
BBC Children In Need		19,000	19,000		0
Charles S French Charitable Trust		4,000	4,000		0
Craignish Trust	5,000				5,000
Hadrian Trust	1,000				1,000
Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation		5,000			5,000
Kent Community Foundation		5,000	5,000		0
Musgrave Family Charitable Trust		1,000	1,000		0
Sir James Knott Trust	5,000				5,000
Victoria Wood Foundation	5,000				5,000
	23,591	63,957	66,548	0	21,000
TOTAL FUNDS	79,221	371,361	332,661	0	117,921

- Unrestricted funds are available to be spent for any of the purposes of the charity.
- Designated funds have been set aside by the Trustees to provide for contingencies, as outlined in the reserve policy. £616 was added to this fund to bring it toward the reserves target (2024: £1,307).
- Funds from the Craignish Trust will be used in 2025-26 for work at Dungavel IRC.
- Funds from Sir James Knott Trust and the Hadrian Trust will be used in 2025-26 for work at Derwentside IRC.
- Funds from the Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation will be used in 2025-26 for work at Napier Barracks.
- Funds from the Victoria Wood Foundation will be used in 2025-26 for work with asylum seekers in Cumbria.