



## Annual Report

01.01.23– 31.12.23

Shropshire Bookfest aims to inspire, encourage and nurture in primary school-aged children a love of reading for pleasure and creative writing.

### Reference and Administration Details:

Shropshire Bookfest Registered Charity Number: 1120177

Principal Address: Chaney Plough, Exfords Green, Longden, Shrewsbury, SY5 8HH

Constitution adopted: 21st May 2007

### Trustees:

Jane Payton. (Acting Chair from Jan 2023) Sian Marshall (Treasurer), Elly Winter, Lucy Morris, Annabel Warburg (Secretary),

Officers nominated at Trustees' meeting (AGM) held 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023:

- Treasurer: Sian Marshall – term of office: up to 3 years with 6 months' notice (3 years have already now been served)
- Secretary: Annabel Warburg – for the next 12 months
- Chair: Jane Payton is Acting Chair until permanent replacement found.

Christopher Tay joined 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Caroline Graham joined 27<sup>th</sup> September 2023

### Additional Committee Members:

Joanna Hughes (Co-ordinator for Book Award and Readers to Writers from 01.10.12), Alison McGowan (School Co-ordinator), Nelia Byers, Jo Prosser, Jackie Hampson, Julie Holmwood, Jan Elms, and Val Green

### Structure, Governance and Management:

The charity continues to be operated by an elected committee of 7 Trustees, with non-trustee members providing additional assistance and expertise.

A self-employed coordinator, Joanna Hughes, continued in her position as Project and Marketing Coordinator, responsible for the organisation and planning of school-based projects, with major decisions agreed by the Trustees.

Alison McGowan completed her sixth full year in the post of School Coordinator (self-employed) and continues to work alongside Joanna, providing child-centred materials suitable for use in the classroom.

All events/financial decisions are presented to the Board of Trustees for approval with estimated budgets.

## Objectives:

In pursuit of the charity's aims and objectives, Shropshire Bookfest works with teachers, literacy coordinators, children, authors and specialists in reading, drama and art to support and enhance the literacy curriculum in primary schools by developing, running and promoting creative projects that support and extend children skills and enjoyment in reading and creative writing. These projects shall be open to all, irrespective of academic ability, nationality, religious opinion, political party, race, colour, gender or sexual orientation.

The main vehicle by which these objectives are achieved is through a structure of biennial classroom-based projects for Shropshire primary schools. In 2023 it was the turn of Readers to Writers aim to help and encourage all children to develop a love of reading and writing - regardless of reading ability.

Key objectives for the year were:

- To complete the successful delivery of *Readers to Writers 2023*.
- To continue with the roll out of '*Leading in Reading*' accreditation scheme.
- To launch *Big Book Award and Picture Book Award 2024*.

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### Chair Report December 2023

Since the last AGM there have been some changes to the Shropshire Bookfest Team. It was a huge shock to receive the news that Huw Peach, Sophie's husband, had been taken ill and then died on 7th March, just nine weeks after he was diagnosed..

As a result Sophie Peach asked me to take on the role on Acting Chair in the interim. Sophie has since decided to resign as Shropshire Bookfest's Chair of Trustees .

She has been part of Bookfest for over 20 years, almost since it first began in 1999. She moved very quickly from bringing her children to Bookfest events, to volunteering, to becoming a Trustee and then, in around 2005, to being asked by Caroline Thewles to take on the role of Chair. Sophie has a very rare blend of skills and talents: a clear sense of vision, professionalism combined with warmth, diplomacy, the ability to draw people together and bring out the best of them, to spot opportunities and potential allies, and to take a strong lead. These have been absolutely fundamental to the flourishing of Bookfest, including the winning of a Queen's Award back in 2010.

She has told us that Bookfest will always have a special place in her heart, and we hope that she will come back as a volunteer when she is ready. But in the meantime, we will miss her enormously. And we are incredibly grateful to her for the hundreds of hours of hard work and expertise she has put into Bookfest over the years - and for everything she has done to bring us to where we are today.

### Trustees

The Shropshire Bookfest Team has worked hard to keep everything on track since December. They met a few times over the spring and summer to review roles and responsibilities of the team. The Safeguarding Policy and Privacy Policy were reviewed. Following guidance from the Charities Commission , a checklist for reviewing a charity's internal financial controls was completed.

Two new trustees, Chris Tay and Caroline Graham have been appointed.

Cath Hammond is a new school coordinator.

The trustees are working on a new way of working to ensure everyone is able to share the responsibilities.

### Funding

Two new funding sources have accepted our applications for support-The Harold Hyam Wingate Foundation and the Lintel Trust.

This brings the list of current funders to:

Hall Garth Charitable Trust

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Harold Hyam Wingate

The Haystack Trust

Hilton Jones Charitable Trust

John Thaw Foundation

Lintel Trust

Millichope

Pengwern Land

William Cadbury Charitable Trust

Arts Society Shrewsbury for the Book Award 2024 Art Competition prizes

#### **Weston Charity Awards - PilotLight:**

Further to discussions at the June Trustees' meeting, it was agreed that we would not take part in the Pilotlight Insight programme - the mentor-ship style project taking place over a period of 8 weeks from September 2023, no financial support is offered with this initiative. We discussed this decision with PilotLight and we have agreed to contact with them again in April/May 2024 to update them with all the developments and changes at Trustee and volunteer level that Bookfest was undergoing during 2023 and to ascertain what support from PilotLight might be best suited based on this.

#### **Readers to Writers**

My Shrewsbury magazine's editor, Katy Rink, produced an excellent in-depth piece on the impact and journey of the current Readers to Writers 2023 project in March's issue of the magazine

1,500 pupils at the 29 primary schools in Shropshire doing the Readers to Writers 2023 project worked on their own books after they had their fantastic, in-class creative writing workshops from the team of 9 children's authors.

The authors were chauffeured by 10 Bookfest people to 29 primary schools across Shropshire to deliver 58 creative writing workshops to nearly 1,500 children.

The reception by all the schools and teachers and the response to the authors by the pupils was fantastic and it was clear that teachers had spent a lot of time familiarising their classes with the books by their creative writing workshop leaders. All the pupils have been given blank books in which to write their story, illustrate and design covers to make them look like any other children's book found on the shelves of bookshops and libraries!

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The authors involved were:

Peter Bently  
Tracey Corderoy  
Gareth P Jones  
Josh Lacey  
Jack Meggitt-Phillips  
Ross Montgomery  
Sam Sedgman  
Eloise Williams  
Jenny McLachlan

Ali McGowan, School Co-ordinator, produced inspiring short films which were circulated to all the schools encouraging their pupils and keeping up the momentum and enthusiasm.

Key Statistics:

- Length of project: 8 months (Nov 2022 – June 2023) (schools signed up in September 2022)
- Number of paid Shropshire Bookfest project contractors: 2
- Number of Shropshire Bookfest project volunteers: 9
- Total number of primary schools signed up: 29
- Total number of pupils involved: 1,442
- Number of children's authors delivering in-school workshops: 9 • Number of in-school creative writing workshops: 58
- Number of books by workshop authors purchased by the project: 1,442

Huge thanks to the team of judges who spent Easter carefully reading and reviewing every single one to come up with nine top stories. The competition was split into three age groups - **Key Stage 1** (5-7 year olds); **Lower Key Stage 2** (7-9 year olds) and **Upper Key Stage 2** (9-11 year olds) with 1st - 3rd and two Highly Commended being awarded in each group. This ensured a fair competition with the best stories from each age range.

The project volunteers then went back to the schools to deliver the prizes to the pupils.

Ali McGowan made superb short films, suitably dressed, of the winning stories and these are found on the Bookfest website

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### University of Worcester Research Study

The University of Worcester conducted research into the perceptions of staff and children involved in the [Readers to Writers 2023](#) project. The study aimed to explore how 'Readers to Writers', contributes to the quality of and engagement with the writing process for pupils of primary school age. The researchers were seeking to explore opinions on 'writing for pleasure'.

The reason to conduct this research was to formally evidence the impact of Bookfest's work with primary schools so that we can contribute to national conversations surrounding children's attitudes to reading and writing with fully endorsed data.

[10 primary schools](#) came forward to take part in this study. At the start of the summer term, pupils were given a class activity to complete and their teachers came together for an online discussion with the University's researchers.

Both the University of Worcester and Bookfest will meet shortly to discuss the publication and sharing of this report in the New Year to ensure that the report is circulated nationally as well as locally.

For now, this summary paragraph goes some way to summing up the overwhelmingly positive outcome of the research study

***This evaluation report has one golden thread running throughout the presentation of the findings and that is the voice of the children who have taken part in this project during the academic year of 2022 to 2023.***

***Their voices have led to the sub themes of this report; namely, transformation (affective and academic), context (support from family, authors, the effect of the environment, practical strategies) and process (empowerment, autonomy, ownership of a product and self-growth). This, in itself, speaks volumes about the reasons why schools continue to sign up to Bookfest – the journey of young readers into young writers***

### Waterstones/BookTrust Children's Laureate 2024/2026 Nominations:

Once again, Bookfest was invited by BookTrust to submit nominations (one for a children's author and one for a children's illustrator) for the Children's Laureate 2024/2026. Thanks to Ali McGowan, Joanna Hughes and Chris Tay for their help, advice and knowledge in discussing and confirming the Bookfest nominations.

The selected Children's Laureate will be told at the end of 2023 – but the news of their appointment will remain confidential until the official appointment held on 2 July 2024.

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### Children's Big Book Award and Picture Award 2023/24

Over the summer publishers were invited to submit up to five of their best titles for 9 to 11 year olds, published between 1st August 2022 and 31st July 2023 to the longlist for the Big Book Award 2024. A huge thanks to Joanna ( and her postman) who received the books and provided the link to the publishers.

A steering group met to plan for the project. This time, Bookfest is able to provide every pupil with a copy of a shortlisted book, for both BIG Book Award and PICTURE Book Award - this is a huge boost for schools, making their libraries and bookshelves full to brimming with contemporary, peer-reviewed books..At the start of term around 11-12 primary schools put forward their best readers from Year 5 and 6 to read through this longlist and their feedback, thoughts and comments were analysed by the Bookfest Book Award 2024 Steering Group to identify the six books that went to form the shortlist for the Big Book Award 2024.

BOOK AWARD TOTAL (Big and Picture), the figures are: 38 schools and 2,426 pupils from Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin are taking part.

Breakdown is:

BIG Book Award: 33 schools and 1,325 pupils

PICTURE Book Award: 26 schools and 1,101 pupils

The shortlisted books are:

The Boss of Everyone by Danny Wallace, published by Simon & Schuster. Put forward by St John's Catholic Primary School

The Night Animals by Sally Ann Jukes, published by Simon & Schuster. Put forward by West Felton Primary School

A Tricky Kind of Magic by Nigel Baines, published by Hachette Children's. Put forward by St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Lost on Gibbon Island by Jess Butterworth, published by Hachette Children's. Put forward by St Leonard's Primary School

Moon Flight by Gill Lewis, published by David Fickling Books. Put forward by Packwood Haugh School

The Piano at the Station by Helen Rutter, published by Barrington Stoke. Put forward by Cheswardine Primary School

### Sound of Reading Conference

The importance of developing the spoken word around reading has been receiving much attention recently. This year's conference, titled **The Sound of Reading**, brought together advice from authors, practitioners and academics on the important

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social aspects of reading and other ways in which the printed word is brought alive for the young reader.

The Conference was held on 15<sup>th</sup> November. The University of <sup>Chester</sup> ~~Worcester~~ kindly allowed us to use their building as a venue..

75 teachers from the primary schools taking part in Book Award 2024 joined together on 15th November at the University Centre Shrewsbury for the Bookfest conference.

Three workshop leaders gave excellent workshops to inspire the teachers ready for the Big Book Award and Picture Book Award

**Joseph Coelho**- Waterstones Children's Laureate and an award-winning performance poet, playwright and children's author based in Kent. He brought a special blend of Poetry Prompts and demonstrated different approaches to using poetry in the classroom in fun and accessible ways.

**Rachel Clarke** is the Director of Primary English Education Consultancy Limited. She promotes Reading for Pleasure through Book Talk. She led workshops entitled: Promoting Reading for Pleasure through Book Talk. The workshops looked at oracy – the art of teaching children how to speak and how to learn through talk – which is currently making headlines in primary education.

**Sarah Finigan** is an actor and education practitioner. As an actor Sarah has worked widely across theatre, TV and film. She works with Pentabus Theatre Group.

She delivered sessions bringing together research-focused knowledge about reading development and her expertise to support teachers in using performance-based approaches to reading in their own classrooms

Chris Tay has secured a room at the University of Shrewsbury to host three twilight sessions to build on the Pentabus workshop delivered at the Bookfest Conference. The focus is on performance-based approaches to reading and will offer support and training to Y5/6 teachers wishing to implement the ideas explored at the conference and, specifically, to implement a performance-based approach to reading in their classes.

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### **Shropshire Bookfest Leading in Reading Award**

The ***Leading in Reading*** accreditation scheme has been developed by Shropshire Bookfest in partnership with the University Centre Shrewsbury to recognise the real commitment shown by schools across the county in promoting reading for pleasure.

In the Autumn term Ali McGowan and Jane Payton visited Cheswardine Primary School. They had submitted an application to become a Leading in Reading school.

Shropshire Bookfest were delighted to verify the evidence that the school deserved the award.

Further, the school was inspected by Ofsted in October 2023 and was awarded a 'Good' rating with the Ofsted inspector Chris Wright saying "Leaders prioritise pupils' personal development. Despite being a small, rural school, staff work hard to ensure that pupils get meaningful opportunities to deepen their learning and to try new things. The Shropshire Star also highlighted this and the school's Leading in Reading Award.

Danielle Battams , English Lead teacher at the school, talked through her past experience of Big Book Award and Picture Book Award .

She was then awarded the Leading in Reading Award by Julie Holmwood Senior Lecturer In Primary Education at the University of Shrewsbury. Thank you to the university for supporting the accreditation.

### **Shortlisted Books**

A highlight of the conference was the unveiling of the shortlist for Big Book Award 2024!

Ali Mc Gowan explained to the teachers the process of the project .

The shortlisted books, a copy for each child, are being delivered by the volunteers to schools before the Christmas holidays. Teachers will be provided with Teacher Pack which includes teaching ideas and resources related to each shortlist book. Thank you to Ali McGowan for producing this. There will also be Voting Cards, a voting box and posters for each school.

The Arts Society Shrewsbury has generously offered their expertise and judges for the Big Book Award 2024 Art Competition. This competition offers pupils the opportunity to express their thoughts by way of painting or drawing a scene from any one of the shortlisted books They has also offered to donate the prizes to each school winner and top winners. We are hugely grateful for their experience and advice throughout this competition



### Christmas Tree Festival – St Chad's:

We have been invited again to sponsor and decorate a Christmas tree in St Chad's Church Shrewsbury at a cost of £50.. This is a public place to showcase what Bookfest is currently doing in the county. Thanks to the efforts of Lucy Morris' design skills.

Jane Payton

Acting Chair Shropshire Bookfest

## Finance

All financial decisions are presented to the Trustees for approval with detailed and accurate budgets being prepared for all elements of the year's events.

Shropshire Bookfest completed the year with a total balance of £56,335.29

The accounts for 2023 will be submitted to a registered independent Financial Examiner.

## Reserves Policy

Shropshire Bookfest is a registered charity set up in 2007. It operates across the county of Shropshire and has an annual income of around £52,000. Of this £52,000, approximately £25,000 comes from local primary schools. The charity has no fixed assets and all projects are overseen by two part-time, self-employed coordinators who work on an annual rolling 'agreement'. Each year the charity provides one significant project for Shropshire primary schools focused on providing a creative initiative to help support teachers in encouraging children to develop a love of reading and writing for pleasure. Shropshire Bookfest has reserves of £14,062.29.

The Trustees discussed the following factors in arriving at their reserves policy:

- Money should only be kept in reserve for specific reasons. Trustees acknowledge that money should not be hoarded; it is also clear that sensible planning for known events should be catered for.
- The Board of Trustees agreed that the main investment that recurs every five years is the revamp of the website. Therefore £5k has been set aside for this cost. The idea of a website redesign will be revisited on an annual basis.
- Shropshire Bookfest has no fixed overheads, but based on an average month it was felt appropriate to keep a minimum of two months' running costs in reserve

Policy: it is the policy of Shropshire Bookfest to keep the five-yearly website update costs and two months' running costs in reserve to cover unforeseen emergencies. Therefore the reserves



account now has a balance of £14k. The Trustees declare that they have approved the Trustees' Report above.

Signed on behalf of the Charity's Trustees:

NAME SIAN MARSHALL

CHRIS TAY



SIGNATURE



Original signed

Original Signed

POSITION Treasurer

Chair at time of signing





CHARITY COMMISSION  
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Shropshire Scoutnet

1120177

## Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period  
from

Period start date  
01/01/2023

To

Period end date  
31/12/2023

### Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
<b>A1 Receipts</b>					
Grants	26,900	-	-	26,900	25,000
Sponsorship	2,500	-	-	2,500	-
Ticket sales	124	-	-	124	185
Schools Income - Readers to Writers	14	-	-	14	25,366
Schools Income - Book Award	25,525	-	-	25,525	1,536
Interest / other	72	-	-	72	-
<b>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</b>	<b>55,135</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>55,135</b>	<b>52,087</b>
<b>A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>55,135</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>55,135</b>	<b>52,087</b>
<b>A3 Payments</b>					
Fees artist	12,470	-	-	12,470	2,410
Fees coordinator	12,207	-	-	12,207	15,848
Venue hire	-	-	-	-	2,391
Travel/Entertainment/Accommodation	6,714	-	-	6,714	3,281
Publicity/advertising	470	-	-	470	638
Checks / insurance	501	-	-	501	477
Postage	-	-	-	-	27
Stationery	30	-	-	30	33
Events materials	-	-	-	-	638
IT	850	-	-	850	1,694
Film	1,310	-	-	1,310	2,225
Book purchases	14,553	-	-	14,553	12,632
Prizes/Sundry	2,374	-	-	2,374	7,931
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>51,479</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>51,479</b>	<b>50,225</b>
<b>A4 Asset and investment purchases. (see table)</b>					
	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>51,479</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>51,479</b>	<b>50,225</b>
<b>Net of receipts/(payments)</b>	<b>3,656</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,656</b>	<b>1,862</b>
<b>A5 Transfers between funds</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>A6 Cash funds last year end</b>	<b>52,679</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52,679</b>	<b>50,817</b>
<b>Cash funds this year end</b>	<b>56,335</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>56,335</b>	<b>52,679</b>

## Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B1 Cash funds</b>	Main account	42,273	-	-
	Reserve account	14,062	-	-
			-	-
	<b>Total cash funds</b>	<b>56,335</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	OK	OK	OK


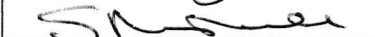
	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
<b>B2 Other monetary assets</b>		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B3 Investment assets</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
<b>B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use</b>			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-
			-	-

	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
<b>B5 Liabilities</b>			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	
			-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	CHRISTOPHER TAY	27.3.24
	SIAN MARSHALL	27.3.24





Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/  
members of

Charity Name  
Shropshire Bookfest

On accounts for the year  
ended

31 December 2023

Charity no  
(if any)

1120177

Set out on pages

1-2

(remember to include the page numbers of additional sheets)

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2023.

Responsibilities and  
basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent  
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention (~~other than that disclosed below~~ \*) in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records

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

*\* Please delete the words in the brackets if they do not apply.*

Signed:

C Moelwyn-Williams

Date:

8/5/2024

Name:

C Moelwyn-Williams

Relevant professional  
qualification(s) or body  
(if any):

BSc FCA

Address:

TCA Accountants, Third Floor, 21 St Mary's Street, Shrewsbury, SY1 1ED

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

No matters noted