

THE CHRISTOPHER CENTRE

Trustees' Report

For the year ended 31 March 2025

Administrative Information

The Christopher Centre is a company limited by guarantee, registration no: 6173167 and registered with the Charity Commission no. 1120942.

The Christopher Centre, 10 Gainsborough Street, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2EU

Trustees

Robin Hodgkinson (Chairperson)

Jennifer Wilkins

Kathleen Leigh

David Lowe

Karoline Wells

Susan Ayres

Dave Sullivan

Jesse Carter

Belinda Green

Jan Osborne

Centre Co-ordinators

Linda Adams

Kathy Lee-Rimmer

Company Secretary

David Lowe

Treasurer

David Holmes

Cleaner

Sarah Dovell

Volunteers

Receptionists: Jane Benton, Sarah Dovell, Belinda Green, Sue Howting, Jenny Ince, Jennie Wilkins, Lizzie Alexander, Jen Mullan MBE, Jolanta Giudici, Ann Crowther, Beverly Freeman and Liz Ward.

Volunteer Handyman: Niall Hennessy

Volunteer Graphic designer: M J Watts

Volunteer Photographer/Website Adviser: Ian Matthews

Volunteer Gardener: Lee Young

Structure, Governance & Management

1. Nature of governing document

The activities of *The Christopher Centre* are governed by a Memorandum and Articles of Association that were incorporated by Companies House on 20 March 2007 and approved by the Charity Commission on 21 September 2007.

2. Recruitment and appointment of trustees

The trustees and staff are always on the lookout for potential new trustees who can bring their skills and expertise to assist in the organisation's governance. Potential trustees have access to both the chair and the centre co-ordinators to discuss their involvement. When recruited, new trustees are inducted through meetings and an induction pack, which not only covers information about the organisation but their roles and responsibilities as trustees.

3. Review of the financial position

Total income for 2024/5 was £83,245 an increase of £16,750 on the previous year due to an increase in rent & user charges, increased use of rooms hired and more fundraising and successful grant applications.

Expenditure for 2024/5 was £74,596. an increase of £13,056 on 2023/24.

The net result was an increase of £8,649 in the fund balances carried forward to £45,183. This is a large improvement of the overall financial position.

4. Financial Management

The Christopher Centre accounts are managed by a Treasurer who is not one of the trustees.

Bank accounts continue to be held at the Sudbury branch of Barclays Bank. All cheques require two signatories. The signatories are Robin Hodgkinson (Chair) and Belinda Green, in addition to the Treasurer.

The systems of internal control include written reports submitted by the Treasurer at the quarterly trustees' meetings. Also, consideration of the financial results and forecasting of possible funding shortfalls are discussed in detail at trustee meetings.

5. Reserve Policy

The Christopher Centre has built up a reserve for possible redundancies (£3000). There is also a general reserve fund of around £40,000 which includes a maintenance contingency, for any major repairs to the building.

6. Risk analysis and plan

There are a number of areas that the Trustees consider as potential risks. These are as follows:

- a. The Christopher Centre Building - being an old building there is always a risk of the need for major structural repairs.
- b. The Christopher Centre Users - losing potential hirers of office accommodation and meeting rooms always remains a risk. Organisations' and people's circumstances change and this is obviously out of our hands. The Trustees ensure that rents and meeting room charges are kept at a competitive level to avoid losing users who might otherwise remain. However, office users who do decide to vacate the

accommodation, are required to give three months' notice of their intention and this provides a reasonable window of opportunity to find a replacement.

c. Energy costs - Energy costs have only slightly increased in the year since having a more efficient boiler purchased quite recently.

7. Funding

The running of the Christopher Centre is financed from renting out office space and casual hire of rooms for meetings and community activities and donations or grants.

A number of grants were received during the year. These included:

A Babergh District Council grant of £350

A £1,000 grant from CAS for the Menopause Group.

Donations included:

£670 from sponsorship of five runners in the 2024 Sudbury Easter Fun Run

£750 from Sudbury Freeman's Trust (for the Monday Morning group)

£500 from the Countryside Lodge of Sudbury

£150 from Co-op Community

£46 from the University of The Third Age Archaeology Group

£800 from the Ballingdon Fete

£1,725 from Roys (we were their charity of the year)

£200 from Oddfellows.

We are very grateful to all our benefactors, funders and local organisations for their support and encouragement.

8. Objectives and Activities

The Christopher Centre's objects are primarily for the benefit of the inhabitants of the district of Babergh and surrounding areas (in practice, the Sudbury district) to:

- provide premises for the use of local and community groups, advance education through the provision of advice, advocacy, guidance, training, resources and associated activities
- facilitate and encourage opportunities for local and community groups to come together to identify charitable need, express views on matters of local interest and to establish projects or policies to meet these needs. This includes running its own activities such as drop-ins, a community choir, a vegan supper club, arts and crafts activities.
- develop the capacity and skills of said inhabitants in such ways as is thought fit, and particularly to enhance voluntary participation within the area of benefit
- develop and promote community services for said inhabitants who are in need of such a service because of age, sickness or disability (mental or physical), or poverty, or because of a lack or availability of adequate and safe public services
- improve or assist in the improvement of the physical and social environment in an effort to enhance the quality of life for said inhabitants.

The Christopher Centre has continued to fulfil its objects in a number of ways:

- by providing office space within the building for affordable and reasonable rents for a number of different voluntary and community groups
- by providing rooms available for hire by voluntary, community and statutory local groups

- by offering space free of charge within the reception area for local groups and services to promote their work, display leaflets and posters etc
- by utilising volunteers as reception staff who have a good knowledge of the local area and who can therefore offer information about local activities.
- by looking at ways of supporting or setting up community groups to help people who are disadvantaged or vulnerable to provide them with opportunities to learn new skills, make friends and build their confidence and self-esteem.

9. Meeting the Principles of Public Benefit

The Christopher Centre has continued to fulfil its objects in a number of ways:

- through its facilities, activities and information services which are open to all voluntary and community groups, The Christopher Centre provides services which help local groups to meet, exchange information and develop their own services to a wide variety of people within the local community. It also develops its own services to help vulnerable and isolated members of the community through activities such as the Monday morning Drop-in Coffee and Chat, the Monday lunchtime Community Lunches, the Community Choir, monthly Community Markets etc.
- it provides a community resource which members of the public can visit to find out information about local groups, events and services.
- The Christopher Centre is a Grade 2 listed building and the staff, volunteers and trustee board are therefore maintaining and preserving an important piece of Sudbury heritage, ensuring that any improvements and refurbishments made are in keeping with local heritage regulations.

10. Achievements & Performance

2024/2025 has probably been the busiest year we have ever had at the Centre with a host of new hirers booking rooms for their meetings and activities. These include the Veterans Foundation, Rainbird Counselling, Apricot Art Therapy and Suffolk Dramatic Society. This has almost all been due to the tireless efforts of our wonderful Centre Co-ordinators, Linda Adams and Kathy Lee-Rimmer who have been brilliant in publicising the Centre and welcoming new groups into the fold. In addition, the Centre's own group activities continue to flourish - the Monday morning coffee mornings and community lunch continues to attract good numbers, the monthly menopause group regularly attracts 20 people, with a list of high-profile speakers. The Community Singers and the Vegan Supper group continue to flourish. The Christopher Centre has linked up with Macmillan Cancer Support to set up regular support group meetings. In addition, regular users like the Diabetic Eye Clinic have extended their bookings and several commercial companies have used the centre for their training. The Christopher Centre has also gained recognition as a preferred NHS provider. New facilitators were found to help run the Menopause and Macmillan Cancer Support groups.

During the year the trustees signed a new ten year lease with Sudbury Common Lands Charity and in October 2024 a celebration was held to mark the Centre's 30th birthday. This provided an opportunity to also mark the retirement of the Common Lands long-standing Clerk by renaming the Babergh Room as the Adrian Walters Room. During the year staff helped to promote the Centre by attending both the Sudbury and Lavenham health Awareness Days.

A lot of maintenance jobs were undertaken during the year. The Vanners Room and Commonlands Room were refurbished, the Adrian Walters Room floor was replaced, old window frames were repaired, and new internal signage was introduced. In addition, the Centre now has its own tool shed in the Cart Lodge, kindly erected by the Stour

Valley Men's Shed group. CCTV has been introduced to the building, both inside and out to improve security.

Staffing and governance have remained the same this year. Sarah Dovell, our cleaner ensures that the building is spotless. Kathy and Linda continue to ensure that the building is well-used and have created a very welcoming atmosphere. David Holmes, our Treasurer, has completed his first year in the role and provided excellent and accurate financial management. Of course, the centre would not survive without all our volunteers, and it is estimated that the volunteer time given to the Centre totals around a monetary value of £50,000.

We would like to thank all the volunteers who have contributed to a very successful year, whether helping out at reception, keeping the outside of the building tidy, doing odd jobs or helping with publicity and marketing.

11. Future Plans

The Centre will continue to offer an excellent service to the local community and through increased marketing, will attract even more hirers to the building. Already in 2025/6 we have received donations of £1,124 from the White Horse Custom and Classic Bike Rally and Oddfellows have donated a further £750. A new project starting in September is the creation of a Volunteer Hub at the Centre one afternoon a week. This would provide a service whereby people wanting to volunteer in the local area could be linked with groups who are looking for volunteers. We have received a grant of £3000 from Suffolk Community Foundation to take this forward.

Maintenance tasks have continued including refurbishing the toilets upstairs. We have also purchased a new projector and screen recognising that we have increased the number of business and commercial hirers who want to run meetings and training courses at the Centre.

I would finally pay tribute to my fellow trustees, who have discharged their duties and responsibilities as trustees and directors with pragmatism and good sense. Although the Charity Governance Code suggests that trustees should only serve a maximum term of nine years before stepping down, a number of our trustees have served for much longer than that. Their knowledge and experience of the Centre, the local area and good governance is invaluable, and the Board has ensured that newer trustees have been recruited to ensure that new ideas and new approaches are considered and welcomed.



Robin Hodgkinson

24th September 2025

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of The Christopher Centre

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2025 which are set out on pages 7 to 11.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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



Signed:

Name: Nick Farr FCA
Moore Green

Address: 22 Friars Street
Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 2AA

Date: 29th September 2025

Statement of Financial Activities for the Year ended 31 March 2025

For the Christopher Centre (Charity no.1120942 and company limited by guarantee, registration no: 6173167)

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	2025	2024
Income & Expenditure					
Incoming Resources					
Voluntary income	2a	4,788	-	4,788	1,341
Activities for generating funds	2b	-	-	-	1,161
Income from investments	2c	449	-	449	327
Charitable activities	2d	73,808	4,200	78,008	63,666
Other incoming resources	2e	-	-	-	-
Total Incoming resources		<u>79,045</u>	<u>4,200</u>	<u>83,245</u>	<u>66,495</u>
Resources Expended					
Cost of generating voluntary income	3a	-	-	-	-
Fund raising trading costs	3b	-	-	-	-
Charitable activities	3c	66,908	6,578	73,486	60,275
Governance costs	3d	1,110	-	1,110	1,265
Total Resources Expended		<u>68,018</u>	<u>6,578</u>	<u>74,596</u>	<u>61,540</u>
Net movement in funds for the Year					
		11,027	(2,378)	8,649	4,955
Fund Balances Brought Forward		31,402	5,132	36,534	31,579
Fund balances carried forward		<u>42,429</u>	<u>2,754</u>	<u>45,183</u>	<u>36,534</u>

The Christopher Centre
(Registered Charity No: 1120942)

BALANCE SHEET as at 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
Fixed Assets			
Tangible assets		-	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
Current Assets			
Bank Current Account		2,380	9,703
Tracker Account	6	38,018	27,518
Petty Cash		81	63
Prepayments		3,921	-
Debtors/Accrued Income		4,985	-
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		49,384	37,284
Current Liabilities			
Creditors		-	-
Accruals	7	4,201	750
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		4,201	750
Net Assets		<hr/>	<hr/>
		45,183	36,534
Funds			
Unrestricted (General)		42,429	31,402
Restricted		2,754	5,132
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		45,183	36,534


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(Registered Charity No: 1120942)

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies' regime and in accordance with FRS 102, the Financial Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland. For the year ended 31st March 2025, the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Directors' responsibilities:

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit of its financial statements for the year in question in accordance with section 476; the directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and preparation of financial statements.



Robin Hodgkinson

24th September 2025

The notes (below) form part of these financial statements.

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025

1 Accounting Policies

- a. The accounts are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with applicable accounting standards.
- b. Income is not anticipated, but recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities only when it is received. Grants and donations are credited to income in the year to which they relate.
- c. Full provision is made for all known liabilities (expenses and losses) whether the amount is known with certainty or is a best estimate in the light of the information available.
- d. Only fixed assets under five years of age are capitalised and depreciation is calculated on a straight-line basis from the year of purchase so as to reduce their value to nil at the end of five years. Computer equipment is depreciated over three years.

2 Incoming Resources	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total 2025	Total 2024
a. Voluntary income				
Donations	4,788		4,788	1,341
Activities for generating funds				
b. Fund raising	0		0	1,161
c. Income from investments				
Bank interest	449		449	327
d. Charitable activities				
Grants	1,700	4,200	5,900	14,616
Other income			0	0
Rent & user charges	72,108		72,108	49,050
e. Other incoming resources	0		0	0
Total Incoming Resources	79,045	4,200	83,245	66,495
3 Resources Expended				
a. Cost of generating voluntary income			0	0
b. Fund raising trading costs			0	0
c. Charitable activities				
Restricted grant		6,578	6,578	6,996
Salaries	21,635		21,635	17,505
Council tax & waste	1,751		1,751	1,699
Rent	13,304		13,304	15,646
Insurance	639		639	570
Stationery & postage	1,019		1,019	721
Telephone	1,269		1,269	1,282
Legal Fees	2,980		2,980	0
Advertising	0		0	289
Volunteer expenses	54		54	457
Repairs & maintenance	8,657		8,657	5,152
Gas, electric & water	10,931		10,931	5,855
Furniture & equipment	1,873		1,873	2,282
Cleaning	1,123		1,123	825
Other admin	1,673		1,673	996
Depreciation	0		0	0
	66,908	6,578	73,486	60,275
d. Governance costs				
Independent examination	1,110		1,110	1,265
Company House			0	0
	1,110	0	1,110	1,265
Total Resources Expended	68,018	6,578	74,596	61,540

4 Donations

Donations received from private individuals, local businesses and charitable trusts. The amount does not include any Gift Aid tax refunds.

5 Lease

The lease for the Christopher Centre was extended in 2024 for a further 10 years with 3 yearly reviews. The current cost of the lease is now £18,600 per annum, but with concession. It is paid quarterly with building insurance payments to the trustees of *the Sudbury Common Lands Charity*.

6 Tracker Accounts

The tracker account is an interest earning account with Barclays Bank.

7 Accruals

Expenses received after the year end which related to goods received or expenses incurred during the year ended 1.3.25

8 Trustee Remuneration & Related Party Transactions

No member of the Trustee Board received any remuneration during the year.

No trustee or other person related to the charity had any personal interest in any contract or transaction entered into by the charity during the year (2023/4- nil).