



The London Ballet Circle

**Trustees' Report and Accounts
for the year ended 31 October 2025**

Charity number 1123258

THE LONDON BALLET CIRCLE 2024/25

Patron: Sir Peter Wright CBE

President: Dame Monica Mason DBE

Vice Presidents:

Dame Merle Park DBE
Wayne Eagling
David Nixon OBE
Darius James OBE
Sir David Bintley CBE
Kevin O'Hare CBE
Dame Darcey Bussell DBE
Carlos Acosta CBE
Tamara Rojo CBE
Aaron S Watkin

The **Trustees and Elected Officers** during the reporting year were:

Susan Dalgetty Ezra (Chair)
Krissie Poyser (Secretary)
Keith White (Treasurer)
Rachel Cavet (from 16 December 2024)
Alexandra Cross (until 28 October 2025)
Fiona Erleigh (until 28 November 2024)
Candace Kuss
Abigail Lilly
Susan Lynas
Jill Samuels
Alastair Thomson
Chen-Chi Tso (from 18 November 2024)
Sylvia Villa (until 18 November 2024)

Registered Charity number: 1123258

Registered Office:

42, The Hyde, Ware, Hertfordshire SG12 0ER

Independent Examiner:

M J Bushell Audit LLP
Kings House
101-135 Kings Road
Brentwood
Essex
CM14 4DR

Bankers:

Unity Trust Bank
Four Brindley Place
Birmingham, B1 2JB

ANNUAL REPORT

The London Ballet Circle was established in 1946 by Stanley Hawkins with Ninette de Valois (regarded as the founder of British ballet) as its first president. The LBC is the world's oldest independent ballet appreciation society. It became a charity in 2008 and its objects were widened in 2019. In summary these are:

- to promote and support dance and the kindred arts for the public benefit.
- to enhance public knowledge and appreciation of ballet and associated dance forms
- to encourage excellence, in particular by awarding bursaries for ballet/dance students
- to offer other charitable assistance for dance but not restricted to dance organisations.

The LBC sets out to achieve this in a number of ways by

- offering talks with dancers and leading creatives to members and the wider public
- arranging visits to ballet schools and company rehearsals
- giving bursaries and awards to dance and ballet students, and charitable donations to ballet companies and organisations to develop new work or to recognise their role in helping us achieve our objectives.
- promoting the art form to members through newsletters and to the world at large through the website and social media

The LBC continues to attract membership throughout the UK and worldwide through its events and online talks, where it is possible to arrange speakers from anywhere in the world and minimise the disruption to their busy schedules. Talks are free to members with a small charge for the public. Where live meetings are also screened online as a hybrid event, a charge is made to all members to cover the increasing cost of London venues with again a differential higher charge for others. All bookings are made through the website to eliminate cash handling.

The LBC remains committed to offering a wide range of dance-related speakers and both live and online events. Successful live events are important, but the LBC also needs to fulfill its charitable duties and not just seek financial viability.

ACHIEVEMENTS 2024-2025

Activities

In the year 2024/25 the LBC hosted 42 events. Over 1000 members and guests tuned in to the ever-popular Zoom In Conversations with dancers, choreographers and directors, and over 550 attended a wide variety of visits to vocational ballet schools and companies in London and beyond. This included observing classes at the English National Ballet School, Elmhurst Ballet School, Central School, Masters of Ballet Academy and the London Vocational Ballet School in Shepherd's Bush and attending rehearsals of Northern Ballet's *Jane Eyre* at Sadler's Wells theatre and London City Ballet's rehearsal of an early Balanchine piece *Haieff Divertimento* at their studio in Islington.

Members were also invited to watch rehearsals by two winners from the previous year's Gainsbury Award – at the children's company Let's All Dance (to watch an early run-through of their new production of *Puss-in-Boots*), and to watch a rehearsal of Matthew Ball's *Acts of Exaltation* choreographed for the New English Ballet Theatre.

The LBC was particularly pleased this year to be invited to three new initiatives - a rehearsal of McNicol Ballet Collectives, under the directorship of Andrew McNicol, a behind the scenes introduction to Ballet Nights presented by Jamiel Devernay-Laurence and a Gala de Danza rehearsal held at Rambert. Eight Masterclasses, the brainchild of former Royal Ballet dancer Vanessa Fenton and led by senior dancers within the Company, each sold out within minutes, and more are promised for 2025/26.

An extremely popular 'Tea & Tutus' event, held at the Royal Ballet School, was made possible through a bequest from a former member and from an anonymous donation in memory of another former member. These were given explicitly "for the enjoyment of members" who were invited to a tea party following a highly successful talk from two seamstresses who demonstrated how tutus and costumes are made.

For the third year running the LBC was invited to run a stall at the Royal Ballet School PTA's Summer Fair. This is a very popular event held in the grounds of White Lodge where guests can browse the stalls and watch the young students perform. This is the main fundraiser for the School, and the LBC was pleased to donate a year's membership for the prize raffle draw.

Bursaries and Awards

The LBC has continued with its proud tradition of awarding bursaries, scholarships and prizes to talented young students. The LBC presented the Dame Ninette award at the Royal Ballet School graduating ceremony to Aurora Chinchilla, who was one of seven graduates who joined the Company's Aud Jebesen Young Dancers programme, and to Ptolmey Gidney, who took up a contract with American Ballet Theatre's studio company.

The Sir Peter Wright award was split this year between both the male and female leading graduates at Elmhurst Ballet School, namely Thomas Kujawa and Olivia Cryne, who are destined for the Birmingham Royal Ballet and Ballet do Duoro in Portugal respectively. Alfie-Lee Hall, also from the Elmhurst Ballet School, was the winner of the LBC prize at the annual GradPRO International Showcase competition.

The Stanley Hawkins bursary, named after the founder of the LBC, was awarded to Amelie Jones to attend Ballet Cymru's Summer School. Funding was also granted for three scholarships to the Yorkshire Ballet Seminars.

At the National Dance Awards ceremony, hosted by Graham Watts, Chair of the Dance Critics' Circle, the LBC's prestigious award for Outstanding Male Classical Performance was presented to Aakash Odedra, a classical Indian Kathak dancer. This was the first time in the 25-year history of the NDAs that this was not awarded for classical ballet dance.

Preparations are currently well underway for the 3rd LBC Gainsbury Award (formerly the LBC Choreographic Award) and LBC's President, Dame Monica Mason, will again lead the panel of expert judges to decide how the £10,000 pot is to be distributed. The winner(s) will be announced at the AGM in March.

These Bursaries and Awards are made possible through the generosity of members and through subscriptions. Overhead costs are minimal as the LBC is staffed entirely by a team of volunteers. This means that any donation can go directly towards supporting emerging young talent. The LBC is very grateful to all those who generously give their time, money and efforts.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

The year was again financially successful, with a small surplus of £1,846. Included in this was the transfer to the V&A Museum of the restricted donation of £2,000 made in 2017 for the LBC archive. The delay recognises the long period for the move of the theatre and ballet collections to V&A East which will open in Spring 2026. As indicated above the gift in a will of £1,000 was used to support the Tutu event. In summary the annual transfer of £5,000 to the Gainsbury Fund awards was largely achieved from LBC's activities and not from reducing reserves.

Together with annual commitments to support dance bursaries and awards and other donations, often following visits, the total charitable donations exceeded £17,000. This amounts to over 60% of total non-restricted expenditure. A full breakdown of LBC donations is appended to the Accounts.

Membership increased by 9% to 635 and this ensured continued income growth from subscriptions and event bookings. Only a very small number of members make manual transactions by cheque and while e-commerce has associated costs, it reduces pressure on administration by volunteers. The circulation of newsletters by post is now minimal.

A growing membership is not without some issues, particularly in allocating restricted space at a masterclass or rehearsal events in a fair way and the Trustees are aware that increasingly it may be difficult to meet all member expectations.

RESERVES AND ACCOUNTING

While most of the expenditure is charitable donations, which could be varied according to income to maintain a suitable financial position, in practice the LBC has a number of long-standing student awards and annual donations which it wishes to sustain to provide certainty to the receiving organisations. Having built up the expectations of a larger and more dispersed membership, the LBC also needs funds to meet those expectations, while still being able to respond to unexpected needs and costs.

The Trustees' policy is to seek reserves that provide for one year's expenditure to keep the charity functioning and for the annual commitments to student awards. Currently this total is around £12,000. The LBC has free reserves (excluding restricted funds) substantially in excess of this and plans over a number of years to expand charitable donations and further choreographic awards on a sustainable basis.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records and preparing financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the financial position in accordance with legal requirements. They are required to select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently; make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent; and prepare financial statements on a going concern basis. They are also responsible for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

GOVERNANCE AND RISKS

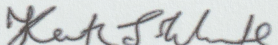
The LBC continues to review its policies and risk register on a regular basis, particularly in relation to safeguarding, volunteers and guidance for members.

The biggest single risk remains a failure to attract enough Trustees with suitable experience and skills to maintain and develop its expanding programme and serving a growing membership. During the year the LBC lost three and gained two Trustees.

The sound financial position has mitigated some of the risks that exist in holding events and being reliant on membership payments and donations. The lack of suitable and affordable venues with technology to reach a world-wide audience still concerns the Trustees. The LBC continues to use the excellent facilities of The Royal Ballet School on a regular basis. The School will be increasing its charges significantly in the next year following a review and this will lead to some increases in event charges. However, the LBC remains committed to using venues within the ballet community where possible.

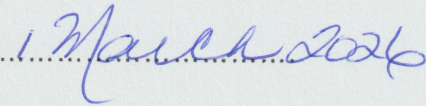
The Trustees present their report and examined accounts for the year ended 31 October 2025.

On behalf of the Trustees:

signed  (Treasurer)

dated 1 March 2026.

signed  (Chair)

dated  1 March 2026

THE LONDON BALLET CIRCLE
Receipts and payments Accounts

Charity registration number 1123258
1 November 2024 to 31 October 2025

	Note	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total	2023/ 24
RECEIPTS						
Memberships		12215	0	0	12215	11570
Donations		2195	0	0	2195	4177
Gift Aid	1	2094	0	0	2094	2416
Events (Talks/Visits)		15346	0	0	15346	14775
Bequests and legacies		0	0	0	0	1000
Interest		670	0	0	670	700
Other		138	0	0	138	206
TOTAL RECEIPTS		32658	0	0	32658	34844
PAYMENTS						
Bursaries and donations						
Bursaries and Awards to students	2	5220	0	0	5220	6020
Donations to ballet organisations	2	11905	0	0	11905	14948
LBC Gainsbury Award		0	0	0	0	10000
sub total		17125	0	0	17125	30968
Administration and Governance						
AGM costs		35	0	0	35	40
Examination of accounts		600	0	0	600	0
Charity insurance		143	0	0	143	143
Bank and transaction charges		1096	0	0	1096	1093
Computer software		463	0	0	463	394
Newsletter (Printing and Postage)		0	0	0	0	188
Website (+ member database)		1545	0	0	1545	1502
General administration	3	121	0	0	121	158
sub total		4003	0	0	4003	3518

	Note	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total	2023/ 24
Event costs						
Talks / visits *	4	5835	0	1000	6835	1413
Zoom licences		849	0	0	849	843
sub total		6684	0	1000	7684	2256
Transfer of archive donation to V&A	4	0	0	2000	2000	0
TOTAL PAYMENTS		27812	0	3000	30812	36742
NET RECEIPTS (PAYMENTS)		4846	0	-3000	1846	-1898

* includes costs of £2,535 for Vanessa Fenton Masterclasses (8)

Statement of Assets and Liabilities at 31 October 2025

	Note	Unrestricted	Designated	Restricted	Total
Cash funds at bank		18861	8475	1525	28861
Other monetary assets					
Gift Aid repayable	1	413	0	0	413
less Liabilities		0	0	0	0
NET ASSETS at 31 October 2025		19274	8475	1525	29274

Unrestricted funds are freely available for use by the trustees to further the charity's purposes. **Restricted funds** are received and used for purposes specified by the donor. **Designated funds** are allocated by the trustees for a particular purpose (and can be undesignated at their discretion).

Statement of funds 2024/25

	Cash funds at 31 October 2024	Receipts	Payments	Transfers	Cash funds at 31 October 2025
Unrestricted funds					
General Fund	19428	32658	-27812	-5000	19274
Designated funds					
General Fund	0	0	0	0	0
LBC Gainsbury Award	3475	0	0	5000	8475
Restricted funds					
General Fund	3000	0	-3000	0	0
LBC Gainsbury Award	1525	0	0	0	1525
Total Funds	27428	32658	-30812	0	29274

The Choreographic Awards Fund was set up by trustees on 1 September 2023 with the aim of supporting choreographic initiatives in the classical genre within ballet schools and companies. It is intended that awards are made every 2 years with funds transferred from general reserves every year. It was renamed in 2024 in memory of Linda Gainsbury, who initiated the awards when Secretary. The LBC Gainsbury Award balance at 31 October 2025 was £10,000.

NOTES

- 1 - Gift aid claimed covered the period 1 November 2024 to 30 September 2025. The claim for the period 1 October to 31 October 2025 will be made in 2025/26.
Gift aid repayable from HMRC is recognised as income at the time of the donation.
- 2 - The following bursaries, awards and donations were made in 2024/25:

TO STUDENTS	Amount £
ANNUAL AWARDS	
Ballet Cymru (Stanley Hawkins prize)	750
Elmhurst Ballet School (Sir Peter Wright award)	750
Royal Ballet School (Dame Ninette awards)	1500
Yorkshire Ballet Seminars (3 students)	2220
TOTAL STUDENT SUPPORT	5220

TO BALLET ORGANISATIONS	Amount £
DONATION FOLLOWING VISITS	
Ballet Nights	300
Central School of Ballet	375
Dance Forward	300
Elmhurst Ballet School	375
English National Ballet School (2 visits)	1425
Gala de Danza	1090
Let's All Dance	120
London City Ballet	565
London Vocational Ballet School	300
Masters of Ballet Academy	110
McNichol Ballet Collective	275
New English Ballet Theatre (2 visits)	510
Northern Ballet	820
Royal Ballet School	1495
Sadlers Wells	120
OTHER	
Central School of Ballet (via Big Give)	750
Dancers Career Development (via Big Give)	1000
GradPro (annual donation and support for semi finals)	1375
TOTAL CHARITABLE DONATIONS TO BALLET ORGANISATIONS	11305
Non charitable sponsorship of National Dance Awards	600
GRAND TOTAL	17125

3.- Trustee expenses

There were no trustee expenses. Trustees purchase goods and services on behalf of the charity. Transactions with trustees are as ordinary members.

4.- Restricted Funds

The charitable donation made in 2017 by the Company of Actuaries was passed on to the V&A Museum in 2025 for the LBC Archive. The gift of £1,000 in the will of a former member was used to assist the funding of catering for the Tutu event in January 2025.

THE LONDON BALLET CIRCLE

Year ending 31 October 2025

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

To the Trustees of The London Ballet Circle

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 October 2025.

Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner

The Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The Trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of Independent Examiner's Report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as Trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent Examiner's Statement

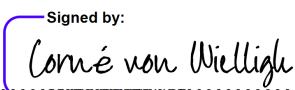
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act and with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice : Accounting and Reporting by Charities

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed by: 
Signed: Dated: 09 March 2026
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M J Bushell Audit LLP
Ground Floor, Kings House
101-135 Kings Road
Brentwood
Essex CM14 4DR